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The teacher and the inclusion of autistic children

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Summary

The inclusion of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in regular schools is a recurrent and current theme in the educational context, laws defend the right of children with disabilities in regular education even with several discussions about this topic, there are a series of questions about inclusive practice and the teaching role, are teachers prepared to deal with the difficulties arising from inclusive teaching? Since this article has as its problematic: The role of the teacher in the inclusion of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). In the aforementioned work, the Teacher is observed as a mediator of the inclusion process, as he is the one who promotes the child's first contact with the classroom, being responsible for immersion in methodological and group activities, with the class. This article seeks to investigate the role of teachers in the inclusion of students with autism in the regular education system. As it is a bibliographical research, theoretical material from authors who develop studies relevant to the theme of the article was used and of great importance, some of them being Galdino (2011), Lopez (2011), Mello (2004), Melo; Lira; Facion (2008), Mousinho *et. al*(2010), Órru (2003). In general, the results indicated the need for teachers to be prepared for school inclusion, which means, in this case, introducing differentiated teaching methodologies aimed at serving students with autism. The data also indicated the importance of establishing a good relationship between the teacher and the student with autism in order to guarantee their permanence and learning. Therefore, the relationship between a teacher and his role in dealing with students with disabilities, specifically autism, can become essential for school inclusion to occur successfully. **Key words:**Teacher. Inclusion. Child. Autistic

Abstract

The inclusion of children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in mainstream schools is a recurring and current theme in the educational context, laws defend the right of children with disabilities in mainstream education even with various discussions on this topic, there are a number of questions about inclusive practice and the teaching role, are teachers prepared to deal with the difficulties arising from inclusive education? Since this article is problematic: The role of the teacher in the face of the inclusion of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). In that work, the Teacher is seen as a mediator of the inclusion process, as he is the one who promotes the child's first contact with the classroom, being responsible for immersion in methodological and group activities with the class. This article seeks to investigate the role of teachers in the face of the inclusion of students with autism in the regular education system. As it is a bibliographic research, theoretical material from authors who developed relevant studies on the subject of the article was used and of great importance, some of them, Galdino (2011), Lopez (2011), Mello (2004), Melo; Lira; Facion (2008), Mousinho*et. al*(2010), Órru (2003). In general, the results indicated the need for the teacher to be prepared for school inclusion, which means, in this case, to insert differentiated and focused teaching methodologies. for the care of students with autism. The data also indicated the importance of establishing a good relationship between the teacher and the student with autism in order to guarantee their retention and learning. Therefore, the relationship of a

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teacher and his role vis-à-vis students with disabilities, specifically here autism, can become essential for school inclusion to happen successfully.
Keywords: Teacher. Inclusion. Kid. Autistic

1. Introduction

Inclusive education is a recurring and current theme in the educational context, laws defend the right of children with disabilities in regular education even with several discussions about this topic, there are a series of questions about inclusive practice and the teaching role, teachers are prepared to deal with the difficulties arising from inclusive education?

When we highlight the INCLUSION of autistic children in regular schools, we have to consider whether the teacher who will receive this student is prepared to receive him, without exclusion, comparison or even distinction. Since this article has as its problematic: The role of the teacher in the inclusion of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). In the aforementioned work, the Teacher is observed as a mediator of the inclusion process, as he is the one who promotes the child's first contact with the classroom, being responsible for immersion in methodological and group activities, with the class. This article seeks to investigate the role of teachers in the inclusion of students with autism in the regular education system.

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The article began by portraying historical considerations about Autism, emphasizing its origin based on pioneering studies by psychiatrists such as Léo Kanner and Hans Asperger and what were the first reports on the syndrome, also addressing the main ideas and characteristics of this disorder in children, taking into account investigations by scholars on the environmental and biological aspect of the spectrum. Soon after, the inclusion of autistic children in regular schools, supported by laws, was described as permeating the need to include, and not integrate, which is what actually happens in most schools.

Continuing, the teaching role was reported, as a mediator of the learning process, being fundamental in the inclusion of autistic students. During the final considerations. The role of the teacher in relation to inclusion is emphasized, as his action is fundamental to contributing in an affective way, permeating cognitive, psychopedagogical and

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motor. Not always being valued and recognized in order to remain in continuous training to better include these students.

2 Theoretical foundation

The name Autism has Greek origins meaning "one's own" or "of oneself" and is normally used to name human behaviors that refer to the individual himself. Praça (2011, p.25) shows that children with autism:

> [...] remains in her inner world as a means of escaping the stimuli that surround her in the external world. Another reason for autistic people to remain in their inner universe is the fact that, in general, autistic people experience difficulty in relating and communicating with other people since they do not use speech as a means of communication. Not communicating with other people ends up giving the impression that the autistic person always lives in a world of their own, created by them and that they do not interact outside of it.

In psychiatric literature, the term Autism was used for the first time in 1906, and was actually recognized in 1912, from the moment that Eugene Bleuler, associated himself with the term to describe symptoms of schizophrenia, defining it as "escape from reality" when the child refuses to interact with the external environment, some time later, psychiatrists Léo Kanner and Hans Asperger, to name diagnostic symptoms in their patients, also started to use the term Autism, it is worth mentioning that the symptoms of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) can undergo several variations ranging from mild, moderate and severe levels, the symptoms are distinct and vary from patient to patient and this can be characterized as a mental disability, depending on the level and characteristics of each individual, they may even be able to live normally .

Considering the historical aspects of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Klin (2007) states that in 1943, Leo Kanner described eleven cases called "Autistic Disorders of Affective Contact", being able to perceive something in common in these cases as they were all incapable of relate. Also according to Klin, unusual responses to the environment were also observed, which included mannerisms, stereotyped engines, resistance to change or insistence on monotony.

Kanner's study, through these eleven children diagnosed with schizophrenia, observed the presence of Autism Spectrum Disorder as a pronounced characteristic, further stating that Autism was innate because it could be characterized with characteristics before the child reached three years of age. During the course of the study, where she interacted more closely with her patients, she realized that the families of these children treated them with fraternal coldness, that is, this fact could lead to hostile attitudes and behaviors developed unconsciously by the children.

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Kanner, supposed that there was an influence on the psychoanalytical framework of the syndrome, pointing to a psychological and/or emotional cause in order to explain how autism develops, having as its precursors the psychoanalysts Bruno Bettelheim and Francis Tustin Bettelheim, believing that a failure mother could be responsible for the development of the Disorder, Tustin stated that there is an autistic phase of normal development, and in this phase maternal affection works as a bridge between the child's developmental stage and social life, that is, if the child's mother If you denied affection to the baby or acted cold, the child would not be able to leave this stage, becoming stuck in the autistic phase. However, autism was considered a disorder of biological origin affecting the nervous system, supposedly caused by the interruption of the development of cells in the brain's limbic system, in the 1960s.

The Autism Disorder Spectrum has a wide degree of severity, as it has many etiologies [...]. It has been established that autism is just one of the (multi)dimensionally defined brain development disorders that affect complex human behaviors (RAPIN; TUCHMAN, 2009, p. 20-22). During a long journey, Autism Spectrum Disorder underwent several discoveries and became classified as a neurological deficit, that is, it is born with the child compromising cognitive development, and can also be defined as Invasive Developmental Disorder (PDD) with four manifestations, being ; qualitative deficiencies in social interaction, difficulties in communication, stereotyped behavior prototypes and a limited repertoire of interests. Mello (2004, p.114-115), points out the main characteristics and manifestations caused by Autism,

> • Communication difficulties - characterized by difficulty in making sense of all aspects of verbal and non-verbal communication.
> • Difficulty socializing - this is the crucial point in autism and the easiest to generate false interpretations.
> • Difficulty using imagination - characterized by rigidity and inflexibility and extends to various areas of the child's thinking, language and behavior. Example: obsessive and ritualistic behaviors.

Children with autism commonly present severe behavioral disorders, including abnormal sensitivity to sensory stimuli, aggression, self-mutilation, among others. Autism, unlike other pathologies, brings complexity, as very little is known about its causes, as there is no complete understanding of this, many scholars and scientists are looking for the factors that cause it, but it is known that autism arises with a combination of biological factors, starting the process with the multiple combination of genes.

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2.1 Inclusion in regular education

Social principles have shown changes and acquisitions of new values, society is more present in matters relating to inclusive education. As a result of various laws and public policies developed aiming at the inclusion of children with disabilities in regular schools, significantly favoring access and inclusion in the scope of school education, highlighting the need and importance of adapting educational environments to the needs of disabled people of any type . The education system that previously excluded and denied the enrollment of children with disabilities is now challenged to promote viable quality teaching methodologies, showing goals to be achieved and objectives achieved, overcoming the obstacles encountered.

According to Rodriguez (2006), exclusion is probably due to cultural factors, which lead us to think that difference is dangerous. Care is required for people who are different – be it sexual identity, socioeconomic identity, ethnic disability, etc. Society's ideas about what is different cause it to exclude, isolate and banish, which results in the need to identify and create programs to combat exclusion, thus generating an opposite concept: inclusion.

Klein (2010) states that the word "inclusion" has been used as jargon in educational institutions marking practices that we would like to see were more fair, supportive and democratic for others. The fact of inclusion goes far beyond integration, to include is to make the individual part of a whole, being able to avoid different characteristics and behaviors. In teaching that educates in an inclusive way according to Melo, Lira and Facion (2008, p.65),

> [...] requires the construction of a project that will not happen by chance or from one moment to the next and that is not an individual task. On the contrary, it is a collective work, which involves discussions and clashes between different spheres (government, society, school and individual) in which it is possible to reflect on which school we want to build and which individuals we intend to train.

For inclusion to actually occur in practice, schools must be created and/or physically adapted, training of teachers and school staff must take place, bringing with them the singularities of each child and then being able to offer quality education with equal conditions for all. . According to Lopez (2011, p. 16),

> Teachers, counselors, supervisors, school management, other employees, families and students need to be aware of the uniqueness of all students and their specific demands. This awareness can make the school a space where teaching and learning processes are available and within reach of everyone and where different knowledge and cultures are mediated through

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> in different ways by all members of the school community, making the school an understandable and inclusive space.

In view of the inclusion of autistic children in the classroom, it is essential that it happens in a conscious and clear way with the school as a whole, having solid pedagogical support, actually effecting the inclusion of the student in the educational context, thus becoming an environment of easy assimilation, having The main point is the evolution and overcoming of everyone's limitations, including the autistic child.

It is worth mentioning that in addition to overcoming one's own challenges, it ends up being just as important, ensuring that this student creates bonds and stays at school without this creating harm to their development.

In this sense, the principles of inclusive schools must guarantee the right to education; the right to equal opportunities, which does not mean an “equal way” of educating everyone but rather giving each person what they need, depending on their individual characteristics and needs; responsible and good quality schools; the right to learn; and the right to participation.

Inclusive education for autistic children in a regular classroom is not as simple as it seems, this fact guides many discussions regarding its complexity, targeting the different spectrum and characteristics of autism, it is worth remembering that autistic children in most cases She is sometimes aggressive towards classmates and teachers. However, when the teacher receives an autistic child in the classroom, he is usually challenged with the inclusion process, as in addition to almost always not having differentiated teaching resources, he also has to scrap the few remaining materials in the case of public education. In addition to all the challenges of autism itself, such as the great difficulty in interaction. About this, Felício (2007, p. 25),

> It is important to highlight that, in order to educate an autistic person, it is also necessary to promote their social integration and, at this point, school is, without a doubt, the first step towards this integration taking place, making it possible through it to acquire important concepts for the course of life.

It is common to think about the difficulties of socialization when we talk about regular education for autistic children, this problem is the cause of many discussions, because for the real inclusion of autistic people to occur it is necessary for the school to have a pedagogical structure and very well trained professionals. , to provide the best possible treatment for students, considering the different behavioral characteristics presented by these children. It is worth remembering that the inclusion of autistic students in any level of education is provided for by law, guaranteeing the student the right to education, depending only on the choice of

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parents whether or not to enroll their child in regular education. For the educational institution to be inclusive, it is necessary to promote collective learning practices, offering clarification on the importance of family development with the school, in addition to physical and structural changes, it is also very important to change methodological means, offering a curriculum suited to the needs of the included students. For Paulon; Freitas; Pinho (2005, p. 25-26),

> Schools, in general, are aware of the existence of laws regarding the inclusion of people with special educational needs in the school environment and the obligation to guarantee a place for them. The management teams respect and guarantee the entry of these students, showing themselves to be in favor of the inclusion policy, but point out some obstacles due to the lack of necessary support, such as the absence of more structural definitions regarding special education and support. necessary for its implementation.

Often during the school experience, disrespect and prejudice from colleagues and even employees of school institutions is notorious, however such disrespect is unacceptable, as educators part of our mission is to protect them and always fight for equal rights, bullying does not should be tolerated at any level. For this reason, information and clarification must be persistent and effective.

2.1 The teaching role in the inclusion of children with autism spectrum disorder.

When inclusive teaching is discussed, it is essential that questions about the teaching role in the teaching-learning process take place, after all, most of the time, the teacher is the one who establishes continuous and lasting contact with their students, with the new considerations established by society having been occurring. new assignments and responsibilities for the teacher, such as the continuous search for knowledge through training, in addition to challenges such as the daily situations included in the education of autistic children.

It is important to remember that when we refer to the teaching role throughout this, we presuppose the need for a mediated intervention in the sense that the teacher ceases to be the holder of all the knowledge to be transmitted, becoming a guide, that is, starting to stimulate learning and development, not only of the autistic student but of the entire class. Further clarifying that mediation "is done through the process of intervention of intermediary elements in a relationship; it is no longer direct, but is mediated by that element" (OLIVEIRA, 1997, p.26). Directly linked to the teaching-learning process, inclusion goes beyond integrating the student into school, it is necessary to offer the student methodologies

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flexible and diversified, thus achieving positive results during their intellectual training. The teacher must fulfill these requirements regardless of the heterogeneity in the formation of the classroom in which he works.

Lopez (2011) establishes that the role of the teacher and mediator is to favor the interpretation of environmental stimuli, drawing attention to fundamental aspects, attributing meaning to the information conceived, enabling and favoring intellectual development.

The teacher responsible for the education and inclusion of autistic students has a role fundamental because he is the one who establishes the first contact with the child, regardless of positive or negative, becoming largely responsible for making the inclusion process happen, with development possibilities for all his students. The adequacy of methodologies is fundamental and necessary for successful inclusion with favorable results.

According to Mousinho,*et. al*(2010) children who in their daily lives present behavioral difficulties and difficult socialization, generally eccentric, making relationships with colleagues and the role of the teacher difficult to include and teach simultaneously.

Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) have difficulty understanding human relationships and social rules, permeating the naivety of common sense, with great difficulty in accepting changes and almost always being vulnerable and anxious. Physical contact is basically unacceptable for people with this syndrome. Professionals who work with autistic children must be very attentive during the activities to be carried out, as it is important to avoid as much as possible that the child is bullied, that is, ridiculed by other children, even With all these specificities of ASD, autistic people want to be part of the social world, but have difficulty making friends and relating.

Teaching has the function of making the socialization of autistic children viable, whether in the classroom or in any other school environment, adapting appropriate teaching methodologies. Teacher sensitivity is necessary to include the child in group activities, including them in the direct environment in which they are inserted, after all, it ends up being during the socialization process that childhood learning develops, the teacher has to detect any possible difficulties and investigate the development levels of these students, highlighting the factors and aspects that still need to be worked on for the child to develop better. According to Santos (2008, p.30),

> The level of development of autistic learning is generally slow and gradual, therefore, it will be up to the teacher to adapt their communication system to

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> each student. The student must be assessed to place them in an appropriate group, considering their overall age, provided by the PEP-R, development and level of behavior. It is the teacher's responsibility to pay special attention and raise awareness among students and those involved in knowing who these autistic students are and how they behave.

A prepared, informed and aware school team is essential during the autistic person's school life. All employees in the school sector where the child is inserted must know the characteristics and difficulties caused by autism, remembering that for a beneficial result, activities must be planned where the child does not suffer from discriminatory, prejudiced and bullying actions. About this Orrú (2003, p.1) says,

> It is essential that the educator and any other professional who works with people with autism is knowledgeable about the syndrome and its inherent characteristics. However, such knowledge must serve as positive support for planning the actions to be practiced and executed [...].

To achieve good results during the process, the teacher must have full knowledge about Autism Spectrum Disorder, with the seriousness and sensitivity to be developed in the classroom, seeking, creating and reinventing inclusive methodologies and acts being of utmost importance. , in order to contribute to the student's cognitive and social development.

During my experience as a teacher and practitioner of the educational reality faced in the country. I observe and evaluate that teacher training is not solid in relation to autism in regular education, as little is seen in inclusive aspects, specific to autism, where basically teaching "pretends" to include leaving the school as a child's deposit, the lack of understanding and inclusion in a correct and serene way of these students implies motor, cognitive and social delay, inclusive methodologies are needed to teach autistic children. In addition to a lot of study and continued training, the teacher who actually carries out inclusion must be responsible for providing knowledge and different incentives for the student to develop self-confidence and independence.

Final considerations

According to what was studied, analyzed and researched during the construction of this article, it was possible to understand the important teaching role during the training of students with Autism Spectrum Disorder, challenges that range from including them to ensuring that they remain in school society In regular education, the law determines that everyone is equal, and has the right to study, however it was found that it is not an easy task, to include and make the environment inclusive, for this task to occur successfully, actions are necessary

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government, school and family, and to function both need to work together.

Providing quality education is not the teacher's only obligation, the teacher must seek continued training, and everything necessary so that he knows what all the characteristics and spectrums of the disorder are, so as to be able to offer effective methodological conditions and possibilities for the autistic development, the inclusive process is directly linked to the teaching-learning process of disabled children.

Through this, we identify the teaching role as mediating inclusion, whether by creating activities, actions and methods that provide opportunities for the child's education process, whenever necessary to manage conflicts, making everyone understand that differences are human characteristics and we are all different , regardless of whether they are disabled or not. In addition to pointing out that the lack of professionals with solid training aimed at students who need inclusive intervention reflects negatively on teaching practice, it is very necessary for these teachers to continue their studies continuously, as this is the only way to improve their practical performance. .

It is possible and well known that, even in the face of many difficulties in the education system, the inclusion process is possible, as long as there is commitment from the teaching team, to be able to develop specific pedagogical means and methods based on the different spectrums of autism according to with the needs of each student, in addition to, of course, the support of the school team as a whole and the family.

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