



INCLUSION VERSUS INTEGRATION IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION CLASSES

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Abstract:

In the field of Special Education, it is challenging to include people with disabilities in regular classes. The access and permanence of these students as successful learners, rather than as enrolment numbers, is defiant for the school community. With a qualitative approach, this case study, through direct non-participant observation and semi-structured interview, sought to identify whether Physical Education classes in Primary Education are inclusive or integrated for students with disabilities. It was revealed that Primary School teachers have an integrated methodology, leaving students with disabilities under the responsibility of auxiliary teachers or doing activities whenever they want. The role of the Physical Education teacher concerning the inclusion of students with disabilities is complex and arduous, since it must reconcile the interests of the group, respecting the individual characteristics of each student and the time of learning.

Keywords: physical education, inclusive education, integrated education

1. Introduction

Historically, people with disabilities have been segregated, victims of prejudice, excluded from society, and hindered from studying and learning in regular schools, deprived from social life and without any prospect of development.

A situation slightly modified during the period of segregation/institutionalization, when society's behaviour towards disability was marked by charitable and philanthropic actions, linked to the political-economic hegemony of Catholic Church. Both phases correspond to the pre-scientific period of society's

relation with disability, when the explanation for physical and mental disabilities, which were considered "deviations from normality", was attributed to a spiritual dimension that escaped from human understanding (Fernandes, 2011).

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, special education was conducted in institutions restricted mainly to blind and deaf people, who were more likely to participate in the intensifying process of industrialization (Bueno, 1993).

During the 1960s, there was an increase in the number of specialized institutions for people with disabilities. From that on, segregated education started to be questioned, initiating the movement for the rights of people with disabilities to be educated in classrooms of regular schools. In a first moment in history, this battle was represented by the school integration movement which aimed to guarantee the presence and participation of these students in regular schools (Silva, 2010).

In 1988, the new Brazilian Federal Constitution was published intending to start a democratic State. In addition, it guaranteed the right to education for people with disabilities, emphasizing that it should take place, preferably, in the regular network of education and following its proposed curricular components (BRASIL, 1988).

In order to guarantee not only the presence of students with disabilities in classrooms of regular education, but also the development of instruments to a successful academic achievement and consequently, permanence in regular school, from the 1990s onwards the school inclusion movement is strengthened (Mantoan, 2001; Carvalho et al., 2017).

Spain 1994, organized by UNESCO, the *World Conference on Special Needs Education: Access and Quality* produced the Salamanca Declaration. Considered the main document regarding the rights of people with disabilities, the declaration is signed by leaders of several countries, including Brazil. It highlights the necessity and urgency on providing education for children, youth and adults with special educational needs within the regular education system (BRASIL, 1994). The declaration proclaims that the learning process must fit to the needs of each child, instead of each child adapting to the supposed principles regarding the pace and nature of the learning process (Briant; Oliver, 2012; Mendes, 2006).

Nowadays, the historical movements marked by exclusion and segregation of people with disabilities have been replaced by inclusive proposals. Instead of the traditional approach, the progress on debating issues of inclusive education, considering the right of access and quality permanence in school, is also present in the movements for inclusive education contemplating students with disabilities.

To include students with disabilities in regular school presupposes a major reform of the educational system. It implies flexibility or adequacy of the curriculum, with modifications of the teaching and evaluation methods; it also implies working with groups in classroom and creating the physical structures that enables the entrance and circulation of all people (Frias, 2009).

For Cardoso (2003) the inclusion of students with disabilities in the regular school is both a perspective and a challenge for the 21st century, guaranteeing the advancement in learning as well as the individual development in its integrity.

In this regard, inclusive theories and practices for people with disabilities begin to strengthen in face of the multiple curricular components in school; however, this issue still needs more attention.

Physical Education, for example, has historically served varied objectives, sometimes adopting a traditional and exclusive practice, and sometimes ensuring a practice concerned with the inclusion of all in pedagogical activities. To provide equal education for all still seems far in Physical Education, especially to achieve the ideal of an inclusive Physical Education.

The *National Curriculum Parameters of Physical Education* (BRASIL, 1997b) concerning Primary School presents, in its general objectives, the expectancy of students being able to: participate in bodily activities, recognizing and respecting physical characteristics and performance of oneself and schoolmates', without discrimination on personal, physical, sexual or social grounds, in addition to knowing, valuing, appreciating and cherishing some of the different manifestations of bodily culture, adopting a non-prejudiced or discriminatory attitude.

In this respect, Sasaki (1997), Cidade and Freitas (2002) emphasize that it is the Physical Education teacher's role to develop the potentialities of all students observing not to exclude any of them. However, it is possible to witness the opposite in Physical Education classes, as teachers choose to dismiss certain students from activities, especially students with disabilities, claiming that the student does not keep up with class, does not understand the motor and cognitive requirements to participate in them. By following this logic, Physical Education classes cannot be classified as inclusive, in fact opposing from the one proposed by Saviani (2001) when he states that the teacher's role in the inclusion process as fundamental, since, he or she must be the mediator of the teaching / learning process of students with disabilities. To consider the students' individual differences is important for school's coexistence; recognizing the differences will facilitate the resources adaptation for better learning and thus, guarantee the real education of the student with disabilities (Pedrinelli, 1994).

Therefore, this paper investigates the perception of Physical Education teachers concerning students' with disabilities inclusion in a philanthropic private school in the municipality of Boa Vista, Roraima, Brazil.

2. Material and Methods

This paper has a Qualitative approach, of the Case Study type. The sample was a non-probabilistic one by convenience, since it occurred because the researcher already had contact with the school and the teachers investigated (Gaya, 2008).

The study included 03 Physical Education teachers from Primary School, SESC Educational Center, Boa Vista - RR (Table 1 - below). All teachers were invited to participate in the study with a previous meeting, in which the objective and methodological procedures were presented.

After the reading, explanation and signing the Informed Consent Form, the interview was conducted.

Table 1: Sample Characterization

Teacher	Age	Gender	Education Background	Time of Actuation	
				In area	In school
T1	27	M	Bachelor (P. E.)	4 years	2 years and 8 months
T2	24	F	Bachelor (P.E.) Specialized in Psychomotricity	4 years	1 year and 6 months
T3	N/A*	F	Bachelor (P.E.)	4 years	4 years

*No Answer (N/A): teacher T3 did not inform her age.

Information was collected through semi-structured interview and non-participant direct observation (Lakatos; Marconi, 2006).

The semi-structured interviews were carried out at a defined time and place between the researcher and the teachers. Each interview had an average duration of 19 minutes, which made it possible for teachers to freely discuss the proposed topic. To record the information, a *Stereo MP3 Recording Panasonic RR-US551* audio recorder was used, allowing all responses to be archived, as well as pauses, nuances and intonations.

The script of the interview was consolidated through the idealization of the issues determined as main objectives of the study and was improved in the course of work. Thus, the interview script was settled as described below:

1. How do you conceive Physical Education?
2. Do you know the national policy for students with special educational needs? And the policy within SESC?
3. Do you recognize differences between the integration and inclusion process? What are them?
4. Is there a differentiated way to teach when you have students with special educational needs in your class? Why? What are these differences?
5. The methodology used by you in your classes provides an integration or inclusion action from your students? Why?

Content Analysis (Bardin, 2010) was used to analyze the information collected. Initially the full transcription of the interviews was carried out to later identify the essential elements in the speech of each teacher. The study followed the norms of the National Health Council (Resolution NHC, 196/96).

3. Results and Discussion

The analysis of the teachers answers consisted of grouping the ones that were coincident and separating the ones with great differences to allow a more detailed discussion.

The **first question** relates to the concept of Physical Education. T1 replied:

"[...] I understand school's Physical Education as the discipline that introduces and integrates the student into the movement's body culture. Then he goes ... as a means of physical education, we will try to work to train a good citizen, to produce it, to reproduce

it, to enable everything in the area of the movement's body culture that are games, sports, dances, fights, gymnastics to become a critical citizen. People think that physical education works only with physical exercise, not (pause). It works the psychological, the motor."

The idea presented by T1, in spite of his difficulty to communicate his thinking, complies with the National Curriculum Parameters recommendation regarding the Physical Education concept, according to BRASIL (1997, p. 28):

"Among the productions of this Movement's body culture; some were incorporated by Physical Education in its contents: the game, the sport, the dance, the gymnastics and the fight; [...] they all legitimize human body culture and do so by using a playful attitude. [...] It is the Physical Education task, therefore, to guarantee the students' access to practices of the body culture, to contribute to the development of a personal style to exercise them and to offer the necessary instruments to appreciate them critically."

Another great aspect is that through observations it can be inferred that T1 works with substantial playfulness in his classes and this is fundamental, as Kishimoto (2002) states *"the playful activity meets the demands of development, and cannot be considered worthless. It has an important long-term role in the human formation. "*

T2 stated that:

"[...] since my academic training, I've always had the idea of physical education as no longer" that discipline "or I did not want to fit into a statistic I spent my whole life doing, that being to see my teachers sit down and throw a ball and we did what we wanted, that said, when I entered SESC I had a very big rejection from the students because they were used to a certain methodology and I arrived with quizzes, papers, "but this teacher is crazy", "I'm going to study for a PE quiz?!"; the students were commenting. Today, they already understand physical education as a discipline like any other, I try to value it. So my concept is that Physical Education is a discipline like any other. There is a lot that we can study in physical education: body awareness, good nutrition, the importance of physical activity; there are diseases of the century, most of them caused by sedentary lifestyle and poor diet, so it is something we can approach."

By closely observing the answer above, we notice that T2 does not clearly specify what Physical Education is in her perspective. She affirms that Physical Education is the same as any other subject, and it is important because it can address various health related issues. Considering the goals for Primary Education, BRASIL (1998, p.7) states: *to know one's body and to take care of it, valuing and adopting healthy habits as one of the basic aspects for quality of life and acting responsibly in relation to its health and collective health.*

In this regard, one can affirm that physical inactivity, which leads to sedentarism, is a decisive factor for disease development; to add to students' life the

practice of physical activities, and the awareness towards health care could lead to lifestyle change and provide early learning for children and adolescents.

As for classes' observations, T2 works very freely, by motivating students to participate in some of the games students' groups chose as "physical activity". Also, one might infer that a didactic-pedagogical structure is not perceived in classroom; therefore, the objectives, matters, procedures and evaluation were not clearly identified and organized. There is a distinction between the teacher's speech and the daily practice observed.

Unlike T2, T3 states:

"[...] it is a process that occurs in P.E. classes when the child is working the body, mind and spirit, then, at this moment when it is being worked, the natural movements happen during classes."

The explanation above shows a clear separation of the human being into three units, disregarding the overcoming in favor of wholeness. In addition to completely neglect the battle concerning the discussion of what is natural in contrast to what is cultural. In this respect, everything is naturalized and, therefore, the roles of both education and teacher are limited to what nature allows, and there is no way to overcome the limitations, including disability itself.

Medina (1987, p.34) understands Physical Education as a subject in which one uses the body through its movements to develop an educational process, contributing to the growth of all human dimensions.

Human development refers to the changes that occur to the individual throughout his life - physical, intellectual and emotional. One must not divide the human being into three or more parts, because it is precisely the perspective of its integrality in interaction with environment that has strong effects on the development of any individual.

Regarding **the second question**, in addition to the Federal Constitution enacted in 1988, several other laws have arisen to add to and to supplement inclusive education. *Do you know any of these laws / policies? And the guidelines of the institution where you work?* All teachers answered, indirectly, in a negative way. T1 replied *"to be honest I don't know much, I try to work in the best way possible"*. T2 says:

"About knowing, I know because I studied in college, but I tell you, if today I know more about the special needs, on this subject really, I am aware by having gone through this in college, but if today I have brought this to my reality, I do not have."

T3 pointed out that: *"Yes, I know. I never got to read something like this, but I have knowledge."*

Accordingly, to what Marco (2013) points out, many physical education teachers do not even know the *World Declaration on Education for All*. It presents objectives, goals, principles of action and conceptualizes policies to improve education, towards an

inclusive society. Teachers are also unaware of *The Salamanca Statement*, compiled in 1994, considered one of the main documents for the social inclusion movement.

Through the **third question**, we tried to identify if the teachers could tell the difference between the integration process and the inclusion process. Both T1 and T2 have inverted the definition:

T1: *"Integration, as I already said, the student is integrated when he has participation in all activities [...]. In Inclusion I may very well be working with the class at certain times and I get the special student and do another activity aside."*

T2: *"Inclusion is a statistic; it is when you include the student in a regular class, so you have a special student in school and you have a special student in class. Integration is to make this student feel part of that, part of the whole process."*

T3 answered: *"Integration is when students have their needs and we must include them in a regular school. Inclusion is a dynamic which goes along with integration; it would be to include the children in every class, in everything as a so called normal student does, the disabled students have to do."*

Opposing from T1 and T2, and corroborating with T3, the authors Santiago and Fumes (2005, p.78) cite on integration:

"We begin by stating that school inclusion of a student with disability differs greatly from simply allowing him or her to share physically the same learning spaces as their peers, or that he or she shares a few tasks during the school day with its colleagues. Those types of involvement are expected when we think that the student with disabilities should be integrated."

On the other hand, inclusion in regular schools must meet all the needs of students with disabilities, providing the means to achieve academic success. In inclusion, the whole transforms into the part, recalling the metaphor used by Forest and Lusthaus (1987, p. 6) in which inclusion resembles a kaleidoscope, *"The kaleidoscope needs all the pieces that compose it. When you remove pieces of it, the drawing becomes less complex, less rich. Children develop, learn and evolve best in a rich and varied environment."*

In the **fourth question**, teachers answered if there was a differentiated method of teaching when there were students with disabilities in their class, why and what were these differences?

T1 and T3 responded that there is a difference in the activities proposed to students, mainly to the ones with cognitive deficits that have an assistant teacher, and this teacher is responsible to try to get them to participate in class. T2 reported that there is no difference in activities, but she makes some adaptations.

T1: *"I don't think it's the same thing. Because, wanting or not, I will give more attention to these students. The student X socializes and participates in classes more independently, but the student Y does not participate. He socializes when I do some differentiated activity separated from class, in some corner."*

T2: *"He has to do everything I do with the other students, is up to me as a teacher to find a way for him to do that activity, or work on that sporting modality. According to what the student can do, I will be able to adapt it for him, but never differentiate what I am going to give this to this student and that for that one."*

T3: *"I differ according to the content and according to the child's needs; I have students who, when I pass one activity, do everything and one that doesn't. The differences happen with the students who do not understand, it is when I ask the help of the auxiliary teachers, I ask them to try to make the special student do that particular activity that I am doing with the class, because they are more familiar with them, they are closer."*

In Physical Education classes, one can make adaptations, although without losing the essence of the game, without leaving it too easy to the point when all students lose their activity motivation. The teacher cannot plan his classes based on only of one or two students, he has to be flexible by making the necessary adjustments for the interest of all. According to Brazil (1997, pp. 27 and 28), *"Physical Education in schools should provide opportunities for all students to develop their potential, in a democratic and non-selective way, aiming their improvement as human beings."*

As for the **last question**, teachers commented about the methodology applied, if it provided actions of integration or an inclusion in their classes.

Recalling **question 3**, **T1** and **T2** inverted the definition of inclusion and integration, but due to the interviewer's correction, when answering **question 5** they declared that the methodology used by them is the inclusive one. **T1** replied that: *"As you already corrected me, it is inclusion"* and **T2** said that *"I fit more in the inclusion one"*.

However, when talking about the inclusion process, one cannot separate or differentiate one student from the other because they have or a preserved cognitive function or cognitive deficits. All students participate in all activities; each with its own limitation and the inclusive Physical Education teacher makes the necessary adjustments so students with disabilities feel as capable as others and actively participate in class

In this regard, all three teachers reported that:

T1: *"The student X socializes and participates in classes more independently, but the student Y does not participate, he socializes when I do some differentiated activity separated from the class in some corner."*

T2: *"But when there are situations in which you can do or work, I try to put them into my activities, but most of the time it is not because of the limitations, but the irritated, aggressive students who do not want to participate."*

T3: *"When students are more independent they participate in the class without help, they are included; but when students are dependent, especially on the auxiliary teacher, they are integrated."*

The Physical Education teacher develops the potentialities of all his students observing to not exclude any of them. However, teachers choose to dismiss certain students from activities, claiming that he or she does not understand, or leave them with the auxiliary teachers.

In the researched School, Primary School I has an auxiliary teacher for each student with a report of disability, and Primary School II does not have. As already reported, to not let students participate in class due to not understanding what is proposed or any other reason, does not classify Physical Education classes as inclusive. By pretending that these students are taking classes means to assume not being an inclusive teacher.

4. Conclusion

Law No. 9394/96, the Law on National Educational Bases and Guidelines, recognizes Special Education as a teaching modality and makes it clear that there are no separate methods of education. Special Education is not a subsystem and regular schools should have a set of resources so all students can develop their skills with respect and dignity, including students in need of differentiated support.

This study aimed to diagnose whether Physical Education classes of the researched institution were inclusive or integrated, through field research (observations and interviews). It was revealed that the three practicing teachers in Primary School have an integrated methodology. Although they try to include the less compromised students, it was also revealed that they are integrative teachers, because students with disabilities either stay under the responsibility of the assistant teachers or do the activities whenever they want.

The role of the Physical Education teacher, like any other teacher, for the real inclusion of students with disabilities is complex and arduous, since it must reconcile the interests of the group with those having some special need, comprehending the individual characteristics of each one, making them equally learn (respecting their pace) and participate in any and all activities.

It is possible to perceive the long road to the inclusion process. There are still prejudices to break, on all fronts of work such as regular school, specialized school, the educational system and society. It is important to understand that inclusion is a process involving people. That is why one can never affirm that an inclusion model will be ideal for all people, everywhere. It is fundamental to comprehend that what will give quality

and promote each inclusion process is the collective effort to deeply reflect about it, propose and support inclusive ideas and also, to have the courage to put them into practice, assuming the risk of making mistakes, but always having the willingness to learn from them, and then create new practices.

The Physical Education teacher has to believe in inclusion, believe that he or she has the significant instruments to make inclusion effective; because one can use procedures that improve the quality of life of students with special needs, valuing the diversity.

It is believed that Physical Education can contribute to an inclusive education, using creative methodological proposals, using the body, the movement, the game, the expression and the sport to remember the differences and provide to students experiences that enhance cooperation and solidarity.

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