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The Deployment of Inclusive Education Programs in a Brazilian Municipality: The Guarantee of an Effective Teaching-Learning Process?

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Abstract: The purpose of this paper is to address the policy of inclusive education implemented by the Brazilian federal government, with the objective of investigating whether the deployment of relevant programs has led to the guarantee of an effective teaching-learning process for pupils with disabilities. The municipality chosen for the study is located in the interior of Brazil. It is considered a magnet for the deployment of programs and serves as an articulator and multiplier of the actions of the Ministry of Education in the region.

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Our discussion of the guarantee of an effective teaching-learning process was based on data from the School Census carried out by the National Institute for Educational Studies and Research Anísio Teixeira – INEP. The analysis revealed the increasing number of enrollments of pupils with disabilities in regular schools in Basic Education, as well as a concentration of enrolments in the first years of school, which indicates a lack of educational progress for that specific population. It also showed that there are still enrolments in the special education school in the region. Although the public education network is currently responsible for the schooling of the entire population, its actions exhibit fragility when the characteristics of the local education are taken into consideration.

Keywords: special education; inclusive education; educational programs.

Implantação de programas de educação inclusiva em um município brasileiro: garantia de efetivação do processo ensino-aprendizagem?

Resumo: Neste artigo, propomo-nos a abordar a política de educação inclusiva em execução pelo governo federal brasileiro, com o objetivo de investigar se a implantação de programas pertinentes tem levado à garantia de efetivação do processo ensino-aprendizagem de alunos com deficiência. Para seu desenvolvimento, foi escolhido um município do interior do Brasil, considerado polo para a implantação de Programas, servindo de articulador e multiplicador das ações do Ministério da Educação para a região. Para a discussão sobre a garantia de efetivação do processo ensino-aprendizagem, foram analisados dados do Censo Escolar do município, disponibilizados pelo Instituto Nacional de Estudos e Pesquisas Educacionais Anísio Teixeira – INEP. A análise dos dados assinalou o crescimento do número de matrículas nas escolas comuns da Educação Básica e a concentração de matrículas de alunos com deficiência nos primeiros anos de escolaridade, indicando a não progressão escolar dessa população. Verificou-se, também, a manutenção de matrículas na escola especial da região. Conclui-se que, embora atualmente a rede pública de educação seja, através de suas escolas comuns, incumbida de assumir a escolaridade de toda a população, suas ações demonstram fragilidades, quando apreciadas as características da educação local.

Palavras-chave: educação especial; educação inclusiva; programas educacionais.

La implementación de programas de educación inclusiva en una ciudad brasileña: ¿garantía de la eficacia del proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje?

Resumen: Este artículo propone analizar la política de educación inclusiva en ejecución por el gobierno brasileño, con el objetivo de investigar si la implantación de programas de esta política tiene llevado a garantizar el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje de alumnos con discapacidades. Para su desarrollo, se eligió una ciudad en el interior de Brasil, considerado polo para la implantación de programas y que sirve como articulador y multiplicador de acciones del Ministerio de Educación para la región. Para el abordaje sobre la garantía del proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje, fueron analizados datos del Instituto Nacional de estudios e investigaciones pedagógicas “Anísio Teixeira”. Los análisis de los datos indican incremento del número de matrículas en las escuelas regulares de la Educación Básica y concentración de registro de alumnos con discapacidad en los primeros años de escolaridad, revelando que esos alumnos no están progresando en sus estudios. Fue verificado todavía la manutención del número de matrículas en la escuela especial de la región. Aunque la red pública de educación,

con sus escuelas regulares, sea responsable por la educación de toda la población, sus acciones presentan inconsistencias cuando son averiguadas las características de la educación local.

Palabras-clave: educación especial; educación inclusiva; programas educativos.

Introduction¹

In the second half of the twentieth century, the climate of uncertainty in the world economy and politics raised a serious social crisis. It was a crisis of rationalist and humanist theories embraced by both liberal capitalism and communism, making possible a brief, but decisive alliance against fascism, which rejected them (Hobsbawm, 1995).

It was not a crisis of a specific form to organize societies, but of all forms. The odd claims in favor of a not specified "civil society", of a "community", were the voices of lost and adrift generations. They were heard in a time when such words, having lost their traditional senses, had become flat. There was no other way to define a group identity, but marking those who did not belong to it (Hobsbawm, 1995, p. 20-21).

Such claims resonated in social policies and international cooperation agreements between developed and peripheral countries, still latent with regard to social policies in Brazil, among them, those of Education and Special Education. This condition features capitalist States of peripheral countries: the State entrusts its functions to nonprofit institutions, so they can rely on public sponsoring from time to time (Draibe, 1998; Sader & Gentili, 2008). The tension is constant, although its manifestation can be seen most clearly in more critical and decisive moments, such as those of educational policies legislation and regulation.

During this century in the Special Education field, philanthropy, by means of specialized institutions disguised as civil society, took over spaces previously waived by the State (Bueno, 1991; Ferreira, 1992; Jannuzzi, 2004, 2006, & Mazzotta, 2001). Simultaneously, this period witnessed a greater concern within international agencies of multilateral cooperation with populations in social vulnerability or with minority groups. It was evidenced by the development of documents displaying data on the situation of social insertion of these people, as well as statements on their social rights (UNICEF, 1959; UNESCO, 1978). From the assertion of the universality of these rights (UN, 1948), this movement was reaffirmed to specific populations in the 1980s and 1990s, including the right to education (UNESCO, 1990, 1994, 1999).

In the 1970s, a government agency created in Brazil for the education of those with disabilities, under the Ministry of Education supervision, started to develop and guide Special Education policies in the country. This agency, then named National Center for Special Education², was guided by the *standardization* and *integration* ideals (Bueno, 1991; Jannuzzi, 2004), disseminated, among others, by U.S. advisors during the formulation of its actions (Jannuzzi, 2004; Kassar, 2013). The resulting policy of this period was featured by the sharing of actions

¹ Article developed from surveys which relied on funding from the Brazilian National Council for Scientific and Technological Development - CNPq and from the Education Observatory Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel – CAPES.

² Later, this agency gave place to the Department of Special Education of the Ministry of Education. Currently, the Board of Special Education policies fulfills this function.

between the public and private sectors, so that the public sector, based on the principles described above, added to the *integration of processes* until then external to the typical school, invested in creating special classes and pedagogical workshops in public schools in different states. Sharing with the private sector was possible with public financial aid and technical assistance to charitable specialized institutions, which provided substitute assistance to schooling, also present in most parts of the country.

Starting from the 1990s, Special Education began to hold a hegemonic discourse of embracing all students, including those with more severe disabilities in standard school settings: the discourse of *school inclusion*, much under the influence of multilateral organisms, especially after the signing of the documents entitled Declaration of Education for All in 1990, and the Declaration of Salamanca in 1994. There were disputes and conflicts regarding its legitimacy and implementation, both by institutions that provided specialized care, as a substitute, and by field scholars, especially those who advocated unrestricted democratization of schooling, ensuring satisfaction of objective/material conditions.

These disputes penetrated the first decade of the twenty-first century, when Brazil underwent numerous changes with regard to the proposition of public policies. As for the education of students with disabilities, measures to strengthen the public schools began to be implemented in order to serve such students, mainly after the development and propagation of a guiding document called the National Policy on Special Education through the Perspective of Inclusive Education in 2008. The document states that the Brazilian State, among other actions, should ensure "[...] the transversal teaching mode of special education" (Brazil, 2008a, p.14) throughout the disabled students' journey during school years, also considering the global developmental disorders and high abilities/giftedness, reaffirming the right to specialized educational services to support school inclusion (Brazil, 2008a). Since then, according to the national policy under implementation, Special Education should not be a substitute for standard schooling, something that, according to the document itself, persisted until that moment, as the service was relegated largely to private assistance institutions supported by state grants. In its prologue, the Policy of 2008 (Brazil, 2008a) positioned itself to change this framework, claiming to be "[...] overcoming the opposition between regular education and special education" (p. 11).

In recent years, the educational legislation has not mentioned the service for people with disabilities as a priority in special classes or schools, featuring Special Education as complementary or supplementary to typical schooling, through forecasting the demand and the provision of specialized education service in the schools themselves or in institutions of private assistance (Brazil, 2006a, 2008a, 2008b, 2011).

Prior to the publication of the 2008 Policy, in 2003, with the election of Brazil's President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, the term *inclusion* started being used more often. One example of the spread of this term is its relevance in items of the Multi-Annual Plans (PPA)³: in 2004-2007 PPA, named "Brazil for All: participation and *inclusion*", and the 2008-2011 PPA, "Development with social *inclusion* and quality education"(Brazil, 2007a). It is highlighted that in 2008-2011, PPA education is presented as a priority and is linked with attention to diversity and social inclusion (Maciel & Kassar, 2011).

³ Brazil adopts an instrument of governmental planning called the Multi-Year Plan, which establishes guidelines, goals and actions of public administration for a four-year period, aiming, among other objectives, to ensure coordination between different administrations.

Garcia (2004) asserts that, among the international documents and national public policy propositions, several terms are adopted. *Inclusion* is one of those terms from which the context must be considered, since its change in meaning is under review and analysis (Bakhtin, 1995).

The change of meaning is always, ultimately, a *reassessment*: the displacement of a given word in a creative context to another. The word is either elevated to a higher level, or down to a lower level (Garcia, 2004, p. 135, emphasis in original).

In the context of a discourse on social inclusion, different actions have been implemented in the field of education, particularly focused on the care of people with disabilities in basic education⁴, among which we highlight the *Inclusive Education Program: The right to Diversity* and the *Implementation Program of Multifunction Resources Rooms*, for being taken as guidelines and examples of the federal government's inclusive education policy, currently functioning, and for being present throughout the national territory. It is noteworthy that the development of these programs, articulated to other actions⁵, has constituted a milestone in the distribution of technical and financial resources by the Federal Government to public education systems for the dissemination of educational inclusion policy, to create "inclusive educational systems" (Brazil, 2004): the first as a promoter of training for education professionals and the second by implementing multifunctional resources to the organization of specialized educational service. In this article, we propose to examine whether the implementation of these programs has led to the ensuring of effective teaching-learning process.

The *Inclusive Education Program: The right to Diversity* (Brazil, 2004) has as its administrative body, the municipality which, by the Brazilian Constitution of 1988, became a politically autonomous public sphere, as a federal entity and so is responsible for implementing the program on schools. The Constitution determines that the municipality has the primary action power in relation to education (Article 211), in elementary school and preschool. Therefore, for the preparation of this work, a town in the countryside of Brazil was chosen and considered "hub-municipality" to implement the *Inclusive Education Program: The right to Diversity*, in order to serve as a multiplier and articulator of actions of the Ministry of Education in the region.

Located in the western Brazilian border in the state of Mato Grosso do Sul, on the border with the countries of Bolivia and Paraguay, the city of Corumbá (MS) currently has just over 103 thousand inhabitants. Its main economic activities are processing industries, mineral extraction and livestock. It is the third largest Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the state; and has an economically active population of 14,932 people. Although rural areas constitute the largest part of the territory, 90.1% of the population lives in urban areas (IBGE, 2010).

⁴ It is observed that, since the 1990s, Brazil has been adopting democratization actions of teaching, aimed at the universalization of basic education. However, from 2003, more forceful actions have been registered directed to the enrollment of students with disabilities in typical public schools.

⁵ These programs have been incorporated into the Education Development Plan (PDE) to be articulated with other educational programs underway in the country.



Figure 1. Corumbá, Mato Grosso do Sul. Google Maps.

The poverty incidence of the population is 40.37% and the incidence of subjective poverty is around 33.98%. The city presents a low average wage, since the monthly average income for people aged ten year-olds or older in private residences is approximately \$210.00; 42.2% of the population has a monthly household income per nominal capita up to half of the Brazilian minimum wage⁶ (IBGE, 2010), similar to 64.5% of the Brazilian population income (IBGE, 2011). The municipality was chosen because it is considered a reference in the acceptance/reception of projects and proposals from the federal government and has a relatively small school network, enabling more detailed analysis. It is also part of a group of municipalities with between 20,000 and 500,000 inhabitants, which corresponds to 28.8% of Brazilian municipalities (IBGE, 2011). Like hundreds of other municipalities, it is far from the political, economic and financial center of the country and from the state itself, allowing the observation of possible changes due to general policies in the organization of their educational services.

For a discussion on ensuring an effective teaching-learning process, data from the School Census related to the municipality was analyzed, and is available on the website of the National Institute for Educational Studies Anísio Teixeira - INEP, which is faced with documents produced by the federal government - micro data from the school census - can be accessed for free on the Federal Government web pages. For a statistical treatment, the IBM SPSS Statistics software was used.

The Inclusive Education Program: A Proposal for Teacher Training

As stated earlier, the municipal sphere is the main body responsible for implementing an inclusive education system. The main guidelines of the *Inclusive Education Program: The right to Diversity* stated in the guiding documents are: To disseminate inclusive education policy throughout Brazilian municipalities and support the training of managers and educators in order to transform the existing education systems into inclusive ones. The principle underlying the

⁶ In 2014, the Brazilian minimum wage is approximately \$317 American US Dollars.

Program is that of "ensuring the right of students with special educational needs of access and permanence, with quality, within schools of the standard education system" (Brazil, 2006b).

An official letter from the Board of Education of Policies in Human Rights and Citizenship, of SECADI, April 2014, reports that the Program consisted of two steps. The first, from 2003 to 2010, focused on training managers and educators for the "inclusion of people with disabilities to public education systems of teaching" (DPEDHC / SECADI / MEC, 2014, p.1). The second stage occurred from 2011 to 2014 and aimed at the contribution of training managers and educators with themes such as: Human Rights and Citizenship Education, Environmental Education, Racial and Ethnic Relations, Field and *Quilombola* Education, Indigenous Education, Special Education and Youth and Adult Education for the development of inclusive education systems.

According to the Ministry of Education⁷, the program has reached more than 160 hub-municipalities that offered seminars (Inclusive Education Seminars: The Right to Diversity), in which education professionals called "multipliers" were formed. The Ministry also said that, from 2003 to 2007, the training attended 94,695 education professionals, with the participation of 5,564 municipalities, which corresponds to 100% of Brazilian municipalities. Therefore, the program was considered implemented throughout the national territory.

The materials included in the editorial set of the program claim that the school should ensure the learning process of each student, regardless of ethnicity, gender, age, disability, social status or any other status. Thus, the school would meet the propositions of the Salamanca Statement (1994).

In order to enable the training of managers and teachers, official documents need to ensure the involvement of the entire network in the process, especially the schools. Therefore, according to one of the reference guides, for the implementation of the program, a letter was sent to the Education Secretaries of the possible hub-municipalities including a term of agreement, which should be signed by the highest administrative body of each municipality. After the signing of the terms of the Program, the town would become a hub-municipality. As signing of program terms got underway, meetings started to be held in Brasilia (Brazil's administrative capital) in 2003, with representatives from all over the country for the training of multipliers from different hub-municipalities. After these meetings, each representative should return to their place of origin and organize local meetings, extending the invitation to the municipalities in its area of coverage. These areas were determined by the Ministry of Education. According to what the literature on the Program says and the participants from the town being studied, there was no clarification on the criteria for division of these areas in the national meetings (Leijoto & Brandão, 2008; Caiado & Laplane, 2009a).

The meetings for the training of multipliers, called Inclusive Education Seminar: the right to diversity, as described above, aim to promote the training of managers and educators of hub-municipalities and municipalities within the scope, for the implementation of inclusive education networks. Its structure consisted, generally, of an opening conference and ten lectures, totaling 40 hours per year (usually concentrated in a week).

Professionals sent to Brasília should be people involved in education. Upon return, they had autonomy and infrastructure to implement the Program in their locus. However, some problems occurred in sending these professionals, as described by an expert of the municipality:

[...] there was no selection, indeed. The training was for managers, so I went to represent the secretary of education who was then teacher 'A', and who accompanied me was 'B', who was the pedagogy coordinator - Expert in Special Education (Brandão & Leijoto, 2008, p. 9).

After their return, they had neither autonomy nor infrastructure, for their position did not give them enough autonomy to make important decisions for the realization of the Program.

⁷ Data collected in August, 2013 from MEC WEB page reported 162 hub-municipalities; the official notice n. 44 of April, 2014 recorded the development of the program in 166 hub-municipalities.

In general, participants reported that, in the national seminars, they verified growth in the enrollment of children with special educational needs in public schools throughout the country and noticed that this number was already significant in their own cities.

Regarding the regions within the scope area determined by the government for the town studied, the number of cities remained practically the same during the implementation of the Program. However, this has not occurred in other municipalities that, each year, had growing numbers of cities under their responsibility. Caiado and Laplane (2009a) analyze the constraints of the Program in relation to its expansion:

The issue of increase in the scope of the program, every year, draws attention to a possible mismatch between means and ends as there is no foresight of new forms of organization and appropriate budget to implement the training actions and to ensure guidance, the continuance and the sharing of experiences with the new municipalities incorporated (p. 309).

The authors, pondering on the region of Campinas (SP), reported that the work was planned during the year of 2005 with 20 municipalities in the area of scope. In 2006, it was extended to 40 other cities. According to the declaration of one of the experts of that municipality, this change resulted in a decrease in the effectiveness of the actions of the hub-municipality, which was still formulating strategies for cooperation with the original 20 municipalities. Subsequently, the scope of the Program was even greater, from 40 to 68 municipalities. The experts evaluated this change, saying that the increase year by year prevented the actions of training activities and the hub-municipality to play the role of reference (Caiado & Laplane, 2009a).

In the region focused on this study, despite there not having been changes in relation to municipalities of scope, there were problems that were due mainly to the fact that most regions⁸, although neighbors, are at great distances, which raised difficulties of greater dialogue.

Regarding the dissemination itself, each municipality should, in each seminar, send two professionals to attend the training in the hub-municipality (designated by the Program). Upon return, they would multiply the training in their locus, transferring ideas about inclusive education for teachers, principals and coordinators in their region. However, some obstacles were found on the road to accomplish this goal especially with regard to the fact that the municipalities in range, at many times, failed to multiply it after training, as proposed by the Program. Just as occurred in the hub-municipality in sending experts to Brasília, the choice of the participants of municipalities in range for the training was often at random, not always involving professionals who would later have the possibility of acting.

There is a record of lack of consistency in the participation of experts in training every year, and it is common to find professionals from towns within the pre-determined range for the program who only participated of one seminar in the hub-municipality.

Garcia and Costa (2008) evaluate the diffusion of the Program in the region and state that, despite the concern to form multipliers, there was no systematic monitoring of the actions implemented in municipalities. The authors illustrate the situation with the declaration of an expert: "When I arrived, I sent all the material for the Secretary of Education [...] they did not ask me anything [...] nothing was done" (Technique of a municipality of_scope) (p.12).

This information indicates that the seminars were characterized as an action of prompt training and, although serving 100% of Brazilian municipalities (according to the Ministry of Education), the outreach was restricted. One can evaluate that, as pointed out in earlier texts, the entire Program was marked by "[...] tensions and theoretical, methodological and ideological conflicts in the conception and implementation of inclusive policy" (Caiado & Laplane, 2009a, p .310).

⁸ Except Ladário, located within the municipality of Corumbá, all other municipalities are more than 200 miles away, with transport routes crossing wetland area.

The Implementation Program of Multifunctional Resource Rooms: Proposal for Specialized Educational Service

The *Implementation Program of Multifunctional Resource Rooms*, along with the other programs created by the federal government, has been an anchor of actions for Special Education in the country in the last several years. Despite the prominent role given to the program among other governmental actions, the knowledge of its operation is still limited, presently under the control of the Department of Continuing Education, Literacy, Diversity and Inclusion (SECADI).

Started in 2005 and legally established by Normative No. 13 April 24, 2007 (Brazil, 2007b), the *Implementation Program of Multifunctional Resource Rooms* integrates the Educational Development Plan (PDE), seeking to support teaching systems in the implementation of multifunctional resource rooms, with pedagogical materials of accessibility, for the offer of specialized educational, complementary or supplementary service to schooling. The rooms are spaces for specialized education and can be classified as types II, the second type having additional resources to serve visually impaired students and I. The intention is to serve students with disabilities, global developmental disorders and high ability/giftedness enrolled in classes of standard school in the opposite shift of their standard schooling (in a complementary or supplementary form). The program is intended for state and municipal school networks and specialized institutions, provided that the students with the characteristics mentioned be included in the School Census (MEC/INEP).

The agency called SECADI provides equipment, furniture, pedagogical and accessibility materials for the setting of multifunctional resource rooms⁹, where the implementation of programs depends on a series of elements such as demand as presented in the Joint Action Plan (PAR), a school recommendation to establish the program by the Ministry of Education Technology Management System (SIGETEC), by means of public bidding, acquisition and distribution of equipment and other resources through the National Fund for Education Development (ENDF), a federal agency under the Ministry of Education that provides financial and technical assistance and run actions which contribute to the quality of education.

The Department of Education of the municipality or state is responsible for the registration of the schools included, via SIGITEC. Upon request of rooms, the Departments of Education make a commitment to the goals of the program and perform the following steps in the system: a registration of the following items : municipality manager (Mayor), state or federal district (Secretary of Education), school recommendation according to the program's criteria, confirmation of physical space for the necessary rooms for the program and confirmation of an existing teacher or teachers to work in specialized educational service (Brazil, 2010).

According to the program implementation manual, the Ministry of Education has the responsibility to acquire the resources required in the rooms, also responsible for information about the availability of spaces and adopted criteria, monitoring of the delivery and installation of items to schools, guides for training systems for setting up and offering specialized educational services, registering schools with rooms with installed multifunction resources, promoting the continuing education of teachers involved in the program, creating and publishing donation contracts, update the resources of the rooms created by the program and support accessibility in schools with implanted rooms. Visits by technicians to multifunctional rooms from MEC are also planned as well as offering the schools a journal called "Inclusion Magazine" and other publications that could be of help. All multifunction rooms must keep their functioning registry updated in the School Census (Brazil, 2010).

The donation of the items represents the delivery of public assets to beneficiaries who will guard and care for those. "The Donation Contract" of multi-functional resource assets is

⁹ Between 2005 and 2011, this function was performed by the Department of Special Education, now extinct.

formalized by the Ministry of Education, which forwards it to be signed by the Secretariat of Education, and is expected to be returned within 30 days. After signing of the document by the Secretariat of Education, the contracts are published in the Republic's Official Gazette, and all copies are sent to its respective Departments of Education. (Brazil, 2010).

After a recommended school gets confirmed and the availability of rooms is established by the program, the Departments of Education must: inform schools about their acceptance, monitor the delivery and installation of resources, guide the institutionalized provision of specialized educational service in the pedagogical policy project, observe the functioning of the special rooms according to the objectives, validate the enrollment information in the School Census INEP/MEC, promote technical assistance, offer maintenance and security help, support teacher participation in training courses for specialized educational services, sign and return the Donation Contract of resources to MEC (Brazil, 2010).

In the period from 2005 to 2011 it is noted that 39,301 multifunction resource rooms were made available in 5,046 municipalities. Of all rooms implemented in the period, 36,350 are Type I, 1,451 and I are Type II¹⁰.

Materialization of Inclusive Education Policy and the Assurance of Teaching-Learning Process

As for the materialization of implementing Special Education Programs, it is necessary to consider some facts related to the town highlighted in this study. The town has 82 schools and the illiteracy rate (considering people aged 15 years old or older) is 6.4%, which is 2.6% lower than numbers shown by the Census of 2000 (IBGE, 2010). General indicators of students' academic performance in the city are below national rates.

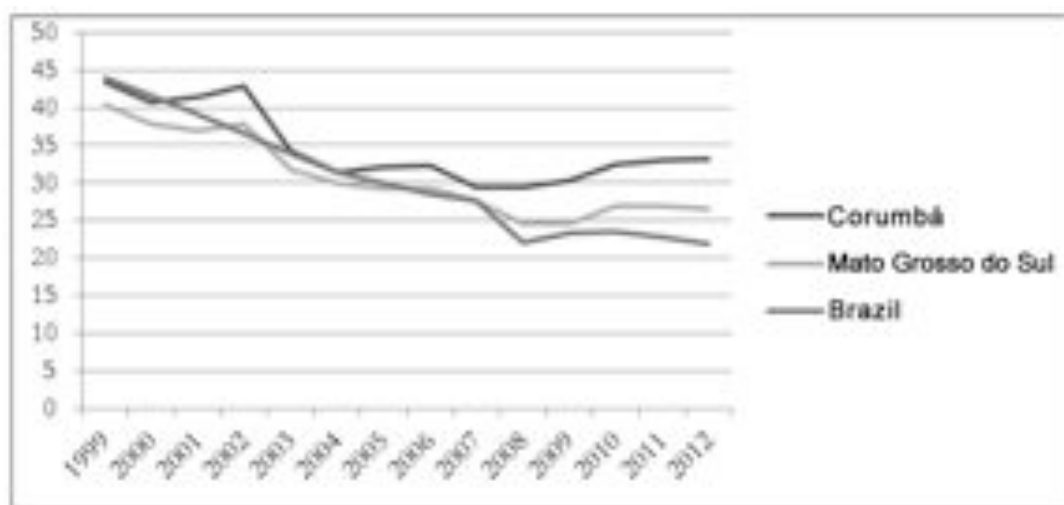
One of the important indicators is the age-grade¹¹ distortion, shown in the chart below. Comparing the results of Corumbá with the state of Mato Grosso do Sul and Brazil, except for the years 1999 and 2000, we see that Corumbá has equal or superior indexes during this period. However, while there is a downward trend in Mato Grosso do Sul and in Brazil, Corumbá has displayed growth trend of age-grade distortion rate since 2008.

¹⁰ Data collected in February, 2014.

¹¹ The age-grade distortion is the result of the division between the number of enrollments of superior recommended age for the level of education in certain grades or group of grades and the total enrollment at a teaching level in a particular grade or group of grades, multiplied by 100 (Rigotti & Cerqueira, 2004).

Graphic 1

Age-grade distortion in Corumbá, Mato Grosso do Sul and Brazil (1999-2012)

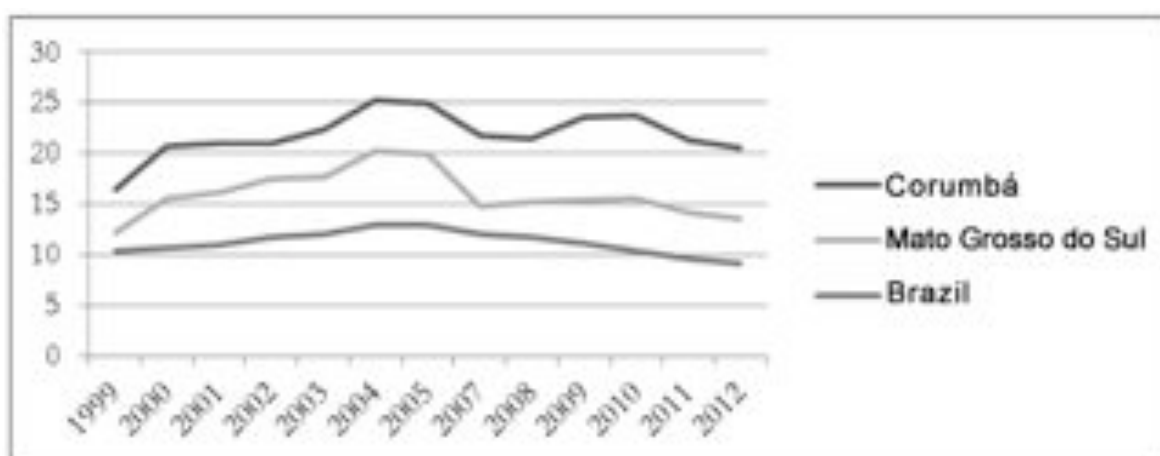


Source: Microdata from the school census 2009 – 2012. Chart created by the article author, with contribution of Fernanda Gomes Seraphim. From 2007, it includes data regarding Elementary Education with students aged 8 and 9 years old.

Another important indicator for the awareness of schooling conditions in the region is the repetition rate. The chart below highlights this aspect in Corumbá, Mato Grosso do Sul and Brazil.

Graphic 2

The repetition rate in Corumbá, Mato Grosso do Sul and Brazil (1999-2012)



Repetition rate: proportion of the total enrollment of students who failed in a particular grade and year. Source: Microdata from the school census 2009 – 2012. Data from 1999 to 2005 was collected from a no longer active source (EDUDATA/MEC, data bank which linked Census information from 1997 to 2006). The data for 2006 was not found. The article author created chart.

In the period above, Mato Grosso do Sul had repetition rates higher than the national benchmark. In its turn, Corumbá, showed repetition rates higher than the state and national averages: around 50% higher than the national rate and 25% higher than the state's figure.

Considering the information about age-grade distortion and repetition rates seen in this town, it can be concluded that this region lists major problems regarding the quality of education in general.

With these elements in mind, we seek to examine the enrollment status of students with disabilities, global developmental disorders and high skills in typical public elementary schools. In relation to this population, an enrollment increase was noticed in the period: 139 in 2007 and 206 in 2012.

Enrollments were separated by school year and grade, allowing us to observe that the major number of students concentrate, largely, in the early years of elementary school:

Table 1

Total enrollment of students with disabilities in the regular school system in Corumbá per grade in the period from 2007 to 2012, with data from Early Childhood Education (Nursery, Pre-School), Elementary School with students aged 9 years old and High School

Grade	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Nursery	0	1	0	1	1	2
Pre-School	3	5	2	6	5	4
ES 1 st year	15	4	3	12	8	10
ES 2 nd year	26	30	31	47	59	59
ES 3 rd year	25	15	11	20	36	27
ES 4 th year	28	9	14	20	21	29
ES 5 th year	20	11	11	15	19	17
ES 6 th year	9	11	9	12	15	14
ES 7 th year	7	6	8	9	12	13
ES 8 th year	0	10	5	6	5	12
ES 9 th year	2	1	5	4	3	4
HS 1 st grade	2	3	2	4	6	7
HS 2 nd grade	1	1	2	2	4	4
HS 3 rd grade	1	1	1	2	1	4
Total	139	108	104	160	195	206

Source: Microdata from the school census 2009 - 2012 Developed by Rafael Verão Françaço.

In view of this region education characteristics (high repetition and age-grade distortion rate) and considering that this town does benefit from the Implementation of the Multifunctional Resource Rooms Program, we decided to analyze the offer of specialized education service - SES. It was verified that the growth recorded in the enrollments of students with disabilities in regular schools has not been matched by the growth of supplemental specialized education service in the same proportion, as proposed by the current policy. Below, data from Corumbá and from Mato Grosso do Sul confirm this observation.

Table 2

Supplemental specialized education services (SES) in the town of Corumbá (2009-2012)¹²

Year	General amount of enrolments	General amount of NEE enrolments in ER	% of NEE enrolments in ER in relation to total amount	General amount of enrolments in SES	% of enrolments in SES in relation to NEE enrolments
2009	33.368	104	0,31	86	80,37
2010	32.708	160	0,49	85	52,8
2011	32.579	195	0,6	77	39,48
2012	31.735	206	0,65	63	30,58

Source: Microdata from the school census 2009 – 2012. Chart created by the article author with collaboration of Rafael Verão Françaço.

Table 3

Supplemental specialized education services (SES) in Mato Grosso do Sul (2009-2012)

Year	General amount of enrolments	General amount of NEE enrolments in ER	% of NEE enrolments in ER in relation to total amount	General amount of enrolments in SES	% of enrolments in SES in relation to NEE enrolments
2009	687.084	5.574	0,81	4.477	80,32
2010	677.137	7.540	1,11	5.093	67,54
2011	681.843	8.981	1,31	5.925	65,97
2012	673.445	10.238	1,52	6.253	61,07

Source: Microdata from the school census 2009 – 2012. Chart created by the article author with collaboration of Rafael Verão Françaço.

An attendance drop occurred despite of the significant increase in the number of resource rooms implemented. According to the "MEC Control Panel" site (<http://painel.mec.gov.br/>), Corumbá had, in 2011, 15 schools with resource rooms (nine installed in municipal schools and seven in state schools). However, in a survey conducted in 2012, Rebelo (2012) found that by the beginning of 2012, enrolments had been made in only six of these rooms (four in municipal schools and two in state schools). Different classes offered can be seen in graphic 3

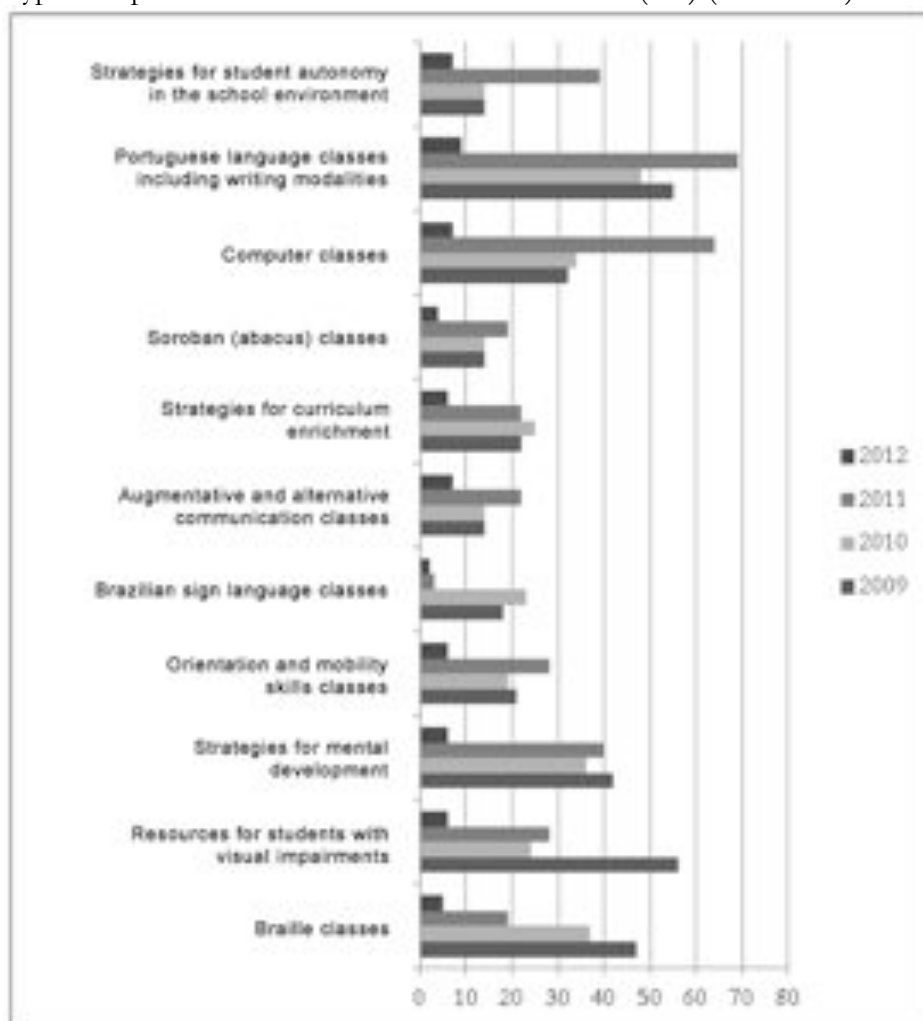
Regarding the type of service offered in multifunctional resource rooms (graphic 3), in 2009 the use of resources for students with low vision was predominant (though there is no room with resources for the blind/low vision listed in INEP). In the years 2010 and 2011, Portuguese language and the written modalities classes showed higher numbers of activity along with computer classes in 2011. The offer of Braille and the use of "resources for students with vision impairment has decreased since 2010. Attention is drawn to the reducing number of specialized educational services in all categories in 2012.

The *Implementation Multifunction Resource Rooms Program* began in 2007. From that year until 2010, there was an increase of 65.98% in the enrollments of students with disabilities, global developmental disorders and higher skills in typical, standard public schools in Corumbá. However, this growth was followed by a marked decrease in program coverage. In 2009, service was offered to 80.37% of these students in the town, reaching 52.8% in 2010, 39.48% in 2011 and 30.58% in 2012, following state trends more closely in the same period (tables 02 and 03). Therefore, it has been noted that every year the range of specialized educational services has been declining among the population enrolled in standard public schools.

¹² Data relating to Supplemental specialized education services (SES) only began to be collected by the Ministry of Education in the 2009 School Census.

Graphic 3

Types of specialized education service in Corumbá (MS) (2009-2012)



Source: Microdata from the school census/INEP 2009-2012. Chart created by the article author.

¹Computer classes include computer accessibility classes for students with disabilities. The same student may receive more than one type of specialized service.

We can still hypothesize the existence of a population of school-aged individuals served neither by standard school, nor by any type of specialized service. Substitute specialized service in the region shows the following situation:

Table 4

Enrollments of students with disabilities in Special Education (alternative) in Corumbá, MS (2007-2012)

2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
137	142	140	148	157	149

Source: Microdata from the school census 2007-2012. Chart created by the article author with collaboration of Rafael Verão Françaço.

Based on data for alternative specialized service (enrollment in special schools), it is not possible to state that this modality of education has weakened. As demonstrated above, enrollments remained constant during the period.

The restricted amount of enrollments of students with disabilities, global developmental disorders and high levels of skill in the region led to a mapping development of each student's

age, year by year, in order to check the progress. To acquire such piece of information, all enrollments of elementary school (standard and special) were compiled from the macro-region of Corumbá, which covers also the city of Ladário¹³.

Table 5

Enrollments of students with disabilities in Elementary School (standard and special) in the macro-region of Corumbá.

Grade	Ideal Age	Total 2007	Right age %	Total 2008	Right age %	Total 2009	Right age %	Total 2010	Right age %	Total 2011	Right age %	Total 2012	Right age %
Nursery	3	-	-	2	100%	4	75%	2	100%	3	33%	3	100%
Pre-school	5	12	67%	19	100%	18	67%	22	77%	17	59%	18	72%
1 st Year	6	28	18%	14	21%	29	34%	39	31%	34	9%	39	28%
2 nd Year	7	147	5%	154	2%	145	3%	177	7%	195	7%	176	2%
3 rd Year	8	28	4%	22	5%	17	6%	27	7%	49	14%	55	2%
4 th Year	9	28	25%	11	0%	16	0%	23	0%	25	8%	35	14%
5 th Year	10	20	5%	11	18%	13	8%	18	11%	23	0%	20	10%
6 th Year	11	9	0%	12	0%	9	11%	15	7%	17	6%	17	0%
7 th Year	12	7	0%	6	0%	9	0%	12	8%	15	0%	15	7%
8 th Year	13	0	-	10	0%	6	0%	6	0%	7	0%	14	0%
9 th Year	14	2	0%	1	0%	5	0%	5	0%	5	20%	7	0%

Source: Microdata school census 2007 – 2012. Preparation/Developed by Rafael Verão Françaço.

We can see that only in kindergarten and pre-schools 100% of students are at the right age. The presence of students in the expected age group becomes rare in late years of schooling.

Final Considerations

In the period between 2007 and 2012, the enrollments of students aged nine years old with disabilities in Elementary School and in High School increased 48% (table 01) in the municipality shown. It is observed, therefore, that at least in relation to the amount of total enrollments, school inclusion policy has impacted the growth in access to education for disabled students. However, the number of students enrolled in the late years of Elementary School and High School is comparably less than the number of students enrolled in the early years, indicating that these students do not remain throughout the entire schooling period. This data is indicative of disabled students not having benefitted effectively by the teaching-learning process, or at least in a good enough level to promote progress. This occurs despite the implementation of milestone programs such as those mentioned in this study aimed to achieve an inclusive education policy.

Corumba fully implemented the program actions as hub-municipality and held annual training seminars such as *Inclusive Education Program: The right to Diversity* from 2004 to 2011, when specialized education service teachers of, standard school teachers, state and municipal managers were trained.

Regarding the implementation of the *Multifunction Resource Rooms Program*, the record shows continuous implementation of the program in schools in the region. However, the data shows a coverage decrease. The rate of service offered however, which reached 80.37% in 2009, turned to 30.58% in 2012, which shows decrease in the offering of specialized service for most of these students.

A policy can be a source of guidance, but its implementation depends on a number of aspects. The continuity of enrollment of students in the modality "Special Education" (alternative) can be taken as an example to highlight the existence of different dynamics. Shiroma, Campos and Garcia (2005) call attention to the fact that the concepts are disseminated through

¹³ Smaller municipality located within the municipality of Corumbá. Much of the specialized service offered to students in this municipality is held in special schools in Corumbá.

discussions on the subject and bring ideas that are embedded in society and therefore inserted in schools. The same discourse of inclusion can be used both to fight for the assurance of access for students with disabilities to standard schools, and for the right of families and students themselves to choose the kind of service they find most appropriate to them (including special schools). This positioning may help us to understand the framework of enrollments including alternative service schools. In Corumba, the growth in enrollment in standard school did not cause a decrease in the enrollment in the alternative service schools, since the numbers had little change over the period studied (table 04). Maintaining enrollment levels in the alternative teaching modes can also be explained by the low percentage of students who receive specialized education service in standard school systems (table 02).

Despite the introduction of the National Policy on Special Education on the Perspective of Inclusive Education in 2008, and the legal documents arising from such perspective as well as the increase of enrollments of students with disabilities in the traditional education network, the existence of specialized institutions has not been extinguished and seems to remain strong. Thus, although the network of public education is, by the current policy, entrusted to take actions for schooling of the entire population, the institution traditionally dedicated to Special Education remains responsible for a great amount of students with disabilities. Thus, as discussed by some studies (for instance, Caiado & Laplane 2008, 2009b; Adrião & Peroni, 2005; Kassar & Correa, 2010), the historical relations between the public and private power in Brazil apparently remain.

Another aspect to be noted is the overall small number of students with disabilities, global developmental disorders and high levels of skill enrolled in any of the education modes. If we consider the total enrollment of students in specialized institutions of Special Education, added to the students enrolled in standard schools, it is observed that there were only 355 enrollments of students with disabilities in 2012 (149 in alternative schools + 206 in standard schools), in a universe of more than 30,000 students enrolling in school during general enrollment period (disabled students represent approximately 1% of total enrollments). Such information shows how educational policy still needs to move forward so that people with disabilities can have effective, real access to schooling.

As stated earlier, the limited number of these enrolments allowed monitoring, year by year, of the progress of each student with disability in Elementary School. This analysis concluded that cases with no records of failures or dropouts become rare from the 1st school year, so that within a few years no student enrolled is found at the right grade at the expected age (table 05). This is a relevant aspect to be considered when attempting to bring about higher levels of schooling for students with disabilities.

Finally, we should not set aside the retention of students in the early years of Elementary School (table 01). This situation be explained based on aspects directly related to the implementation of general educational policy, since this situation does not differ drastically from the scenario of all students of Basic Education in the region, whose age-grade distortion is one of the largest in the country: a rate of 33.2% in 2012, a year in which the Brazilian national rate on age-grade distortion was 22%. However, it may also relate to the implementation of the Brazilian inclusive education policy, whose programs' features (such as continuous training offered in quick annual meetings by multipliers and aiming specialized educational services that each year, seem to serve even fewer students) have major limitations, which bring doubts in terms of its effectiveness.

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