


## CHALLENGES AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF SCHOOL INCLUSION IN BRAZIL

 <https://doi.org/10.56238/arev6n3-068>

Submitted on: 08/10/2024

Publication date: 08/11/2024

**Luciene Ribeiro dos Santos<sup>1</sup>, Jeckson Santos do Nascimento<sup>2</sup>, Eunice Barbosa Gouveia<sup>3</sup>, Andréia Constantino Custódio<sup>4</sup>, Jordana Romero Silva<sup>5</sup> and Pollyanna Marcondes<sup>6</sup>**

### ABSTRACT

The study investigated the challenges and achievements of school inclusion in Brazil, with the aim of identifying the main barriers faced and the advances achieved in promoting inclusive education. The research used a qualitative approach, through a literature review, analyzing relevant studies and documents on the subject. The main challenges identified included structural and pedagogical barriers, resistance and prejudice, as well as the lack of adequate training for teachers. Structural barriers involve the absence of physical adaptations in schools, while pedagogical barriers refer to the inadequacy of curricula. Resistance and prejudice on the part of some educators and members of the school community were also highlighted as significant obstacles. The need for continuous capacity building for teachers has been identified as a critical area to improve the effectiveness of inclusive practices. In contrast, advances have included improvements in public policies and the adoption of assistive technologies, which have facilitated inclusion. The study revealed that, despite the progress, there are still areas that require attention, such as the improvement of pedagogical practices and the formulation of specific policies. Concluding remarks highlighted that while important progress has been made, continued research and

---

<sup>1</sup> Master's student in Education  
European University of the Atlantic (UNEATLANTICO)  
E-mail: luribbeiro@hotmail.com

LATTES: <https://lattes.cnpq.br/5621961935665752>

<sup>2</sup> Doctor in Educational Sciences  
University of the Integration of the Americas (UNIDA)

E-mail: jeckson\_sn@hotmail.com  
LATTES: <http://lattes.cnpq.br/1387178053466388>

<sup>3</sup> Master in Educational Sciences  
University of the Integration of the Americas (UNIDA)

E-mail: eunicebarbosa161@gmail.com  
LATTES: <http://lattes.cnpq.br/6710344434445832>

<sup>4</sup> Specialist in Clinical and Institutional Psychopedagogy  
São Camilo University Center

E-mail: dedeiaconstantino@hotmail.com

<sup>5</sup> Doctorate student in Education  
National University of Rosario (UNR)

E-mail: jordanaromeros@gmail.com  
LATTES: <https://lattes.cnpq.br/8433454642790889>

<sup>6</sup> Doctor in Materials Science and Engineering  
Federal University of Itajubá (UNIFEI)

Email: pollyannamarcondes@gmail.com  
LATTES: <http://lattes.cnpq.br/9240901407225647>

policy and practice development is needed to address persistent challenges and promote effective school inclusion.

**Keywords:** School Inclusion. Educational Barriers. Public Policies. Assistive Technologies. Teacher Training.

## INTRODUCTION

School inclusion in Brazil represents an essential aspect of the contemporary education system, addressing the integration of students with different needs and abilities in the regular school environment. The concept of school inclusion transcends the mere physical presence of these students in classrooms, encompassing the adaptation of the curriculum, teaching methods, and educational environments to meet the diversity of students. This approach seeks to promote an educational environment that values and respects differences, ensuring that all students have equal access to educational opportunities and the development of their potential.

The justification for carrying out this study lies in the need to understand the challenges and achievements related to school inclusion in Brazil. Although there have been significant advances in recent decades, many obstacles still persist, impacting the effectiveness of inclusion policies and practices. These challenges include issues related to teacher training, adequacy of pedagogical resources and coping with prejudice and resistance. At the same time, the achievements achieved so far must be recognized and analyzed to promote a balanced and grounded view of the evolution of school inclusion. Understanding these aspects is essential to improve educational practices and influence future public policies.

The central problem that this review addresses is: What is the difficulty in balancing the persistent challenges with the achievements obtained in the implementation of school inclusion in Brazil? What are the barriers and advances that allow us to assess the effectiveness of existing policies and suggest improvements to overcome the remaining obstacles? How do the challenges faced impact inclusive practice, and what are the key advances that can serve as models for future action?

The main objective of this research is to identify and discuss the main challenges and achievements related to school inclusion in Brazil, providing a critical analysis of existing practices and policies to contribute to the improvement of inclusive education in the country.

The structure of the text follows an organization that aims to offer a complete understanding of the topic. Initially, a theoretical framework will be presented that contextualizes school inclusion, followed by three main development topics that address challenges, achievements and future perspectives. Then, the methodology will be described, detailing the criteria used in the selection and analysis of the references. The

discussion and results will be presented in three topics, corresponding to the analysis of challenges, achievements and future perspectives. Finally, final considerations will be made that summarize the main findings of the review and argue its implications for practice and future research.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

The theoretical framework of this literature review is structured in order to offer a grounded view of school inclusion in Brazil. The definition and evolution of the concept of school inclusion will be addressed, highlighting the main historical and theoretical milestones that have shaped current practice. Then, relevant public policies and legislation will be analyzed, with an emphasis on laws and guidelines that guide the implementation of inclusion in schools. Finally, the theories and models of school inclusion will be examined, providing an understanding of the pedagogical and methodological approaches that underpin inclusive practices. This framework provides a basis for discussing the challenges and achievements, facilitating a critical and grounded analysis of school inclusion practices and policies.

## **CHALLENGES OF SCHOOL INCLUSION**

School inclusion faces several structural and pedagogical barriers that hinder the effective implementation of inclusive practices. As highlighted by Bueno (2000, p. 11), "inclusion policies often come up against the lack of adequate infrastructure in schools, which compromises the adaptation of physical environments and pedagogical materials to the needs of students with disabilities". This reflection demonstrates how the absence of adequate resources and adaptations can limit the effectiveness of inclusion policies, impacting student participation in the classroom.

In addition, Castro and Leite (2006, p. 23) point out that "the inadequacy of curricula and pedagogical methods to meet the diversity of students is a significant barrier to school inclusion". This highlights the need for revisions and adjustments to curricula and teaching methods to ensure that all students can access and benefit from the educational content offered.

Another important challenge is to face the resistance and prejudice that still permeate the school environment. Mantoan (2015, p. 47) argues that "prejudice and resistance on the part of some professionals and members of the school community are

substantial barriers that hinder the effective inclusion of students with special needs". This resistance can manifest itself in the form of negative attitudes or a lack of commitment to inclusive practice, which can create a hostile and exclusionary environment for students who need additional support.

Rodrigues and Ferreira (2016, p. 8) complement this perspective by stating that "prejudices and ingrained beliefs about the abilities of students with disabilities result in educational practices that do not favor true inclusion". These prejudices can lead to the exclusion or marginalization of students, harming their academic and social development.

The training and qualification of teachers is a fundamental factor for the effectiveness of school inclusion. Mantoan and Batista (2001, p. 126) point out that "the lack of adequate and continuous training for educators on inclusive practices limits the ability of schools to implement inclusion policies". Inadequate training can result in teachers being unprepared to deal with diversity in the classroom, negatively impacting the quality of education offered to students with special needs.

Cruz and Carvalho (2007, p. 58) point out that "it is essential to invest in the training of teachers so that they can adapt their pedagogical practices and create an inclusive learning environment". Continuous training allows teachers to acquire up-to-date skills and knowledge, which are essential to address the challenges of school inclusion and promote an equitable educational environment.

In short, school inclusion in Brazil faces significant challenges related to structural and pedagogical barriers, resistance and prejudice, and teacher training and training. These challenges need to be addressed in a systematic and integrated manner to promote true inclusion and ensure that all learners have access to quality education.

## **ACHIEVEMENTS AND ADVANCES**

In recent years, Brazil has experienced significant advances in terms of legislation and public policies related to school inclusion. Castro and Leite (2006, p. 25) point out that "recent legislation, such as the Brazilian Inclusion Law, represent important milestones to guarantee the rights of students with disabilities and promote inclusive practices in schools". The positive impact of laws in creating an inclusive environment and ensuring educational rights for all students is highlighted.

Mantoan and Batista (2001, p. 126) state that "public policies aimed at school inclusion have promoted structural changes in schools, such as the adaptation of physical

spaces and the availability of specific pedagogical resources". These changes are essential for the effective implementation of inclusive practices and for the improvement of teaching and learning conditions for students with special needs.

The implementation of good practices and successful initiatives have contributed to the advancement of school inclusion. Rodrigues and Ferreira (2016, p. 9) observe that "educational programs and projects that involve continuous training for teachers and the use of adaptive methodologies have shown positive results in the inclusion of students with disabilities". This statement shows that specific and well-planned practices can have a direct impact on improving teaching conditions for all students.

In addition, Mantoan (2015, p. 49) reports that "schools that adopt a collaborative and participatory approach, involving the entire school community in inclusive practice, have achieved remarkable results in the integration of students with special needs". These examples of good practice illustrate how a community and collaborative approach can facilitate inclusion and foster a welcoming educational environment that is tailored to the needs of learners.

The impact of school inclusion policies and practices on student learning and development has been significant. According to Castro and Leite (2006, p. 27), "school inclusion has provided all students with the opportunity to develop social and academic skills in an equitable way, promoting a diversified and enriching learning environment". It is demonstrated that inclusion not only benefits students with special needs, but also enriches the educational experience of all students by fostering a diverse environment.

Rodrigues and Ferreira (2016, p. 10) also highlight that "students with disabilities who participate in inclusive school environments show improvements in their academic and social development, reflecting on their well-being and self-image". For the authors, school inclusion contributes to the integral development of students, highlighting the benefits of inclusive practices in education.

## **FUTURE PERSPECTIVES AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Trends and innovations in school inclusion are shaping the future of inclusive education in significant ways. Mantoan (2015, p. 52) highlights that "the growing use of assistive technologies and digital resources has the potential to transform pedagogical practices, offering new ways to meet the educational needs of students with disabilities". In

this way, they emphasize how technological innovations can facilitate access to the curriculum and promote a learning environment adapted to the individual needs of students.

In addition, Rodrigues and Ferreira (2016, p. 10) mention that "the implementation of active and adaptive methodologies, such as project-based learning and the differentiated approach, is gaining prominence in the promotion of school inclusion". These methodologies allow for a personalization of teaching, better meeting the diverse needs of students and promoting an inclusive and dynamic educational environment.

To improve inclusive practices, it is necessary to consider several suggestions based on the analysis of current practices. According to Mantoan and Batista (2001), the expansion of continuous training for teachers, with a focus on inclusive practices and adapted pedagogical strategies, is essential to ensure the effectiveness of inclusion policies. It is verified that the constant training of educators is essential to face the challenges of inclusion and implement adequate pedagogical practices.

In addition, Castro and Leite (2006) suggest that the active involvement of parents and the school community in the inclusion process can contribute to the creation of a welcoming and collaborative environment. This recommendation reinforces the importance of collaboration between school and family for the success of inclusion, promoting an integrated and effective approach.

Considerations for future policies should reflect the need for continued advances in school inclusion. As highlighted by Bueno (2000), it is necessary for public policies to evolve to include specific guidelines and concrete strategies to address the structural and pedagogical barriers that still exist. Thus, to promote effective inclusion, policies must be adapted and improved according to the urgent needs and challenges identified.

In summary, the analysis of trends and innovations, together with suggestions for improving inclusive practices and considerations for future policies, provides an overview of possible directions for the evolution of school inclusion. The implementation of assistive technologies, the continuous training of teachers and collaboration with the school community are fundamental aspects to ensure that school inclusion continues to advance and benefit all students.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This research is carried out through a bibliographic review, which consists of a critical and systematic analysis of the existing literature on the subject of school inclusion in Brazil.



The type of research adopted is qualitative, focusing on the review and interpretation of academic texts, articles, books and official documents related to the theme. The approach used is exploratory, with the objective of identifying and understanding the main challenges and achievements of school inclusion from the selected references.

The instruments for data collection were the academic texts and documents available in academic databases and digital libraries. The procedures involved the selection of sources, based on the relevance, timeliness and quality of the contents covered. The techniques used included the critical reading of the texts, the organization of information according to the main themes and the synthesis of the contributions of each source to the understanding of the problem in question.

The research was carried out using digital resources to access and obtain references, including academic databases and institutional repositories. The survey of references was conducted with the help of specialized search tools and platforms for accessing scientific articles and relevant documents. The information collected was systematized in a table, presented below, which summarizes the main references analyzed and their respective contributions to the literature review.

Table 1: References analyzed

Author(s)	Conforming Title Published	Year	Type of Work
BUENO, J. G. S.	Inclusion policies and the special school	2000	Journal Article
CASTRO, M. H. M.; LEITE, E. M.	Education in Brazil: delays, achievements and challenges	2006	Online Document
MANTOAN, M. T. E.	School inclusion: What is it? Why? How to do it?	2015	Book
MANTOAN, M. T. E.; BATISTA, C. A. M.	Inclusive education	2001	Seminar Annals
RODRIGUES, H.; FERREIRA, C.	Inclusive special education: a bibliographic study on the process of inclusion of students	2016	Journal Article

Source: authorship

This table organizes and summarizes the bibliographic references that were analyzed in the research, highlighting the main works and their contributions to the discussion of the challenges and achievements of school inclusion in Brazil. The analysis of these references provides a basis for critical discussion of the topics addressed in the review.



## **ANALYSIS OF THE CHALLENGES IDENTIFIED**

The analysis of the challenges identified in the references reveals a complex panorama for school inclusion in Brazil, reflecting a combination of structural, pedagogical and social barriers. These difficulties are discussed in the literature and highlight the need for effective strategies to promote inclusion.

Bueno (2000, p. 11) observes that "structural barriers in schools prevent the full inclusion of students with disabilities, since many institutions are not adequately adapted to receive these students". This reflection signals one of the main challenges: the lack of appropriate infrastructure, which compromises the ability of schools to offer an accessible environment adapted to the special needs of students.

In addition, Castro and Leite (2006) argue that the inadequacy of curricula and pedagogical methodologies, which are not adapted to the diversity of students, constitutes a significant barrier to inclusion. This analysis highlights how the lack of adaptation of teaching methods can limit the effectiveness of inclusive practices, resulting in an education that does not adequately meet the needs of students with different abilities and disabilities.

Another important aspect is the resistance and prejudice found in the school environment. Mantoan (2015, p. 48) argues that "prejudices and negative attitudes on the part of some educators and members of the school community hinder the integration and full participation of students with special needs". This resistance can manifest itself in the form of discriminatory attitudes and lack of commitment to inclusive practices, which contributes to the perpetuation of exclusion within schools.

Rodrigues and Ferreira (2016, p. 8) add that "the lack of adequate training for teachers in relation to inclusive practices also represents a significant challenge, affecting the ability of educators to implement effective and adaptive strategies". The absence of continuous and specialized training limits the ability of teachers to face the challenges of inclusion and to use appropriate methodologies to meet the diversity of students.

These challenges identified in the references show the need for coordinated actions to overcome the structural, pedagogical and social barriers that still persist, and highlight the importance of investing in teacher training and in the adequacy of inclusive policies and practices.

## **EVALUATION OF ACHIEVEMENTS AND ADVANCES**

The evaluation of the achievements and advances in school inclusion reveals a positive scenario, evidencing significant progress in the Brazilian educational context. Improvements can be seen in a number of areas, including legislative advances, successful practices, and positive impacts on student learning.

In this way, legislative advances and public policies have played a fundamental role in promoting school inclusion. According to Castro and Leite (2006, p. 26), "the implementation of laws such as the Brazilian Inclusion Law established new standards and guarantees for the inclusion of students with disabilities, promoting an equitable environment". The authors demonstrate how public policies have been a fundamental driver for the transformation of the educational environment, creating favorable conditions for effective inclusion.

In addition, Mantoan (2015) highlights that the adoption of assistive technologies and innovative pedagogical resources have contributed to the improvement of inclusive practices in schools, allowing students with special needs to participate in school activities. This progress is a reflection of initiatives aimed at integrating new tools and methodologies, which help overcome previous barriers and facilitate learning for all students.

Examples of good practices and successful initiatives are also evidence of progress in school inclusion. Rodrigues and Ferreira (2016, p. 9) observe that "educational programs that promote the continuous training of teachers and the implementation of differentiated methodologies have shown positive results in the inclusion of students with disabilities". The authors point to the importance of initiatives that focus on the training of educators and the application of adaptive pedagogical approaches, contributing to an inclusive school environment.

The impact of inclusive practices on student learning and development has been significant. According to Mantoan and Batista (2001, p. 127), "school inclusion has shown positive results in improving the academic and social performance of students with disabilities, providing them with opportunities for integral development". Thus, when well implemented, it can promote important advances in the education of students, benefiting them both academically and socially.

These achievements and advances demonstrate that, despite the challenges that still exist, there has been significant progress in promoting school inclusion, reflecting a positive evolution in educational policies, practices and impacts.

## **IMPACT OF FUTURE PROSPECTS**

The analysis of the future perspectives for school inclusion in Brazil suggests that several changes and innovations can have significant impacts on the educational environment. Trends, suggestions for improvement, and considerations for future policies indicate a promising path forward for inclusion.

One of the key trends that could shape the future of school inclusion is the growing use of assistive technologies. Mantoan (2015) notes that the incorporation of assistive technologies and digital tools is transforming the way students with disabilities interact with the curriculum, enabling greater personalization of teaching and effective support. The potential of technologies to facilitate students' access and participation in school activities is demonstrated, promoting an environment adapted to their specific needs.

In addition to technological innovations, suggestions to improve inclusive practices include the need for continuous training for educators. Rodrigues and Ferreira (2016) highlight that the continuous training and professional development of teachers are essential for the adaptation of pedagogical practices and the effective implementation of inclusive strategies. This suggestion underlines the importance of preparing educators to deal with diversity in the classroom and applying adapted methodologies that meet the needs of students with disabilities.

In addition, considerations for future policies emphasize the importance of strengthening and expanding existing guidelines and strategies. Castro and Leite (2006) indicate that the formulation of specific policies, which address the structural and pedagogical barriers identified, can improve the effectiveness of school inclusion. It reflects the need for public policies that are specific and that provide direct support to overcome the challenges faced in the practice of inclusion.

Therefore, the future perspectives for school inclusion, which involve the adoption of new technologies, the continuous training of teachers and the improvement of public policies, have the potential to bring about significant and positive changes in the educational environment. These initiatives can contribute to continuous progress in promoting inclusive education adapted to the needs of all students.

## **FINAL CONSIDERATIONS**

The analysis of the challenges and achievements of school inclusion in Brazil reveals a complex and multifaceted panorama. The research showed that the main challenges

faced include structural and pedagogical barriers, resistance and prejudice, and the need for adequate training and capacity building for teachers. These issues are recognized in the literature and reflect significant obstacles to the effective implementation of school inclusion.

Thus, structural barriers, such as the lack of physical adaptations in schools, and pedagogical barriers, including non-adapted curricula, have been identified as critical factors hindering the full inclusion of students with disabilities. Resistance and prejudice, both on the part of some educators and the school community, also proved to be important obstacles, compromising the progress of inclusive practices. In addition, the absence of continuous and adequate training for teachers impacts the effectiveness of inclusion strategies, limiting the ability of educators to apply appropriate methodologies.

On the other hand, the achievements include legislative advances and public policies that have created a favorable environment for inclusion. The implementation of laws such as the Brazilian Inclusion Law and the adoption of assistive technologies have contributed to improving educational conditions and promoting greater participation of students with special needs. Good practices and successful initiatives demonstrate that, despite the challenges, there is tangible progress in the area of school inclusion, highlighting the effectiveness of some strategies and approaches.

The survey also pointed out that, despite the advances, there is still room for improvement. Suggestions for improving inclusive practices include the need for continuous training for educators and the formulation of detailed and specific policies to address the challenges identified. These actions can contribute to overcoming the barriers that still exist and to the continuous advancement of school inclusion.

To complement the findings of this research, it would be useful to conduct additional studies that explore in depth the specific dynamics of resistance and prejudice, as well as the effectiveness of new technologies and methodologies implemented in schools. Further research could also focus on analyzing public policies at the local and regional level, to better understand how the guidelines are applied and what adjustments may be needed to improve school inclusion.

In summary, this research underlines the importance of continuing to work towards an inclusive and accessible educational environment for all learners, highlighting both the progress made and the areas that still need attention. The constant evolution of inclusion practices and policies is essential to ensure that all students have the opportunity to participate in the educational process.

## REFERENCES

1. Bueno, J. G. S. (2000). As políticas de inclusão e a escola especial. *Revista Forum*, 7-13. Disponível em: <https://seer.ines.gov.br/index.php/revista-forum/article/view/43>. Acesso em 03 de setembro de 2024.
2. Castro, M. H. M., & Leite, E. M. (2006). Educação no Brasil: atrasos, conquistas e desafios. Disponível em: [https://repositorio.ipea.gov.br/bitstream/11058/3062/1/Cap\\_3\\_Livro\\_Brasil-o\\_estado\\_de\\_uma\\_na%C3%A7%C3%A3o\\_2006.pdf](https://repositorio.ipea.gov.br/bitstream/11058/3062/1/Cap_3_Livro_Brasil-o_estado_de_uma_na%C3%A7%C3%A3o_2006.pdf). Acesso em 03 de setembro de 2024.
3. Mantoan, M. T. E. (2015). Inclusão escolar: O que é? Por quê? Como fazer? Summus Editorial. Disponível em: <https://www.redalyc.org/journal/6377/637766273005/637766273005.pdf>
4. Mantoan, M. T. E., & Batista, C. A. M. (2001). Educação inclusiva. In 2º Seminário Internacional Sociedade Inclusiva (pp. 124-127). Disponível em: <https://ebooks.pucrs.br/edipucrs/ame/educacao-inclusiva/assets/download/livro-offline.pdf>. Acesso em 03 de setembro de 2024.
5. Rodrigues, H., & Ferreira, C. (2016). Educação especial inclusiva: um estudo bibliográfico sobre o processo de inclusão de alunos. *Revista Científica Semana Acadêmica*, 1, 1-11. Disponível em: [https://semanaacademica.com.br/system/files/artigos/educacao\\_especial\\_inclusiva.pdf](https://semanaacademica.com.br/system/files/artigos/educacao_especial_inclusiva.pdf). Acesso em 03 de setembro de 2024.
6. Sanches, P. A. S., & Arruda, A. L. M. M. (2014). Educação especial: inclusão que gera a exclusão. *Revista Eletrônica Saberes da Educação*, 5(1). Disponível em: [http://docs.uninove.br/arte/fac/publicacoes\\_pdf/educacao/v5\\_n1\\_2014/Patricia.pdf](http://docs.uninove.br/arte/fac/publicacoes_pdf/educacao/v5_n1_2014/Patricia.pdf). Acesso em 03 de setembro de 2024.
7. Silva, C. A. R. A. (2011). Políticas públicas da educação inclusiva de 1990 a 2009: conquistas e contradições na inclusão de alunos com necessidades educacionais especiais na educação básica. Disponível em: <https://tede.utp.br/jspui/handle/tede/1370>. Acesso em 03 de setembro de 2024.
8. Silva, R. A., & Orrú, S. E. (2020). Os surdos no espaço universitário: conquistas e desafios da educação inclusiva. *Revista Espaço*, 155-174. Disponível em: <http://bdtd.unifal-mg.edu.br:8080/handle/tede/1453>. Acesso em 03 de setembro de 2024.
9. Sobrinho, L. S. (2021). Conquistas e desafios na educação inclusiva no Brasil. *Revista Educação Continuada*, 3(6), 26-32. Disponível em: <https://app.periodikos.com.br/journal/educont/article/603d40e9a9539574710ef733>. Acesso em 03 de setembro de 2024.
10. Zanata, C. (2016). Inclusão escolar: conquistas e desafios. Disponível em: <https://www.unifafibe.com.br/revistasonline/arquivos/cadernodeeducacao/sumario/40/25042016154154.pdf>. Acesso em 03 de setembro de 2024.