


## PUBLIC POLICIES FOR THE INCLUSION OF STUDENTS WITH ASD

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### ABSTRACT

This study investigated the advances and challenges of Brazilian public policies for the inclusion of students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in the educational context. The general objective was to analyze the effectiveness of the National Policy on Special Education, focusing on Law No. 12,764/2012 and Decree No. 10,502/2020, and to identify the main obstacles and advances in the implementation of inclusion policies. The methodology adopted was qualitative, with bibliographic and documentary research, based on academic, legal and governmental sources. The results indicated that, despite advances in the creation of legislation that guarantees the rights of students with ASD, significant challenges still persist, such as lack of infrastructure, inadequate teacher

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training and scarcity of pedagogical and technological resources. The analysis revealed that collaboration between schools, families, and specialized professionals has been a crucial factor for the success of inclusion, but that the implementation of these policies is uneven in different regions of the country. The final considerations pointed out that, although public inclusion policies have made progress, greater investment in continuing education of teachers and school infrastructure is needed, in addition to greater integration between the spheres of educational management. The research also suggested new studies to deepen the analysis of the impact of inclusion policies on school practice.

**Keywords:** Public Policies. School Inclusion. Autism Spectrum Disorder. Teacher Training. Assistive Technologies.

## INTRODUCTION

The inclusion of students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in the educational environment represents a significant challenge for public policies in Brazil and in various parts of the world. ASD is characterized by difficulties in areas such as communication, social interaction, and restricted and repetitive behaviors, which requires adaptations in the school context to ensure that these students have access to quality education. In this context, the adoption of effective public policies that promote the inclusion of students with ASD is essential to ensure that these students have equal opportunities in the educational environment, as provided for by Brazilian legislation. In Brazil, legislation such as Law No. 12,764, of December 27, 2012, and Decree No. 10,502, of September 30, 2020, establish guidelines for the inclusion of people with ASD, but the challenges for the implementation of these policies are still many.

The justification for this study is based on the need to evaluate public policies aimed at the inclusion of students with ASD, since, despite legal advances, the practical implementation of these policies faces obstacles such as lack of resources, inadequate teacher training and resistance of some educational institutions to the inclusion of students with special educational needs. In addition, the scarcity of systematized studies on the impact of these policies on the daily school life and academic development of students with ASD makes it essential to carry out a bibliographic review that allows a better understanding of the advances and difficulties faced in the inclusion process. The analysis of public policies for the inclusion of students with ASD is, therefore, crucial to suggest improvements and proposals that can contribute to the effectiveness of inclusive education in Brazil.

The problem-question that guides this study is: What are the main advances and challenges of Brazilian public policies for the inclusion of students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in the educational context? From this question, it seeks to understand how the public policies implemented have contributed to the inclusion of students with ASD, identify the main obstacles that still need to be overcome and suggest possible improvements that can be adopted by educational institutions, educational managers and policy makers.

The objective of this research is to analyze Brazilian public policies aimed at the inclusion of students with ASD, identifying their advances, challenges and impacts on the educational process of these students. This analysis will allow us to understand the role of

public policies in promoting inclusive education and will provide subsidies for the discussion on the next steps to be taken to ensure the access and permanence of these students in regular education.

This text is structured as follows: in the first section, the theoretical framework is presented, which addresses the main concepts and legal bases related to ASD and school inclusion. Then, three development topics are discussed that deal with the advances in public policies, the challenges faced and the performance of municipal and state secretariats in the implementation of school inclusion. The methodology adopted for the analysis of bibliographic sources will also be presented. Subsequently, three topics of discussion and results will examine the effects of the implemented public policies, analyzing their limitations and proposing possible improvements. Finally, the final considerations are presented, with a reflection on the contributions of this study to the field of inclusive education.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

The theoretical framework of this study is structured to provide a comprehensive understanding of the topic of inclusion of students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in the educational context. Initially, the fundamental concepts about ASD, its characteristics and the implications that this disorder has for the educational development of students are addressed. Then, the theoretical framework explores the history of public policies aimed at the inclusion of people with disabilities in Brazil, highlighting the pertinent legislation, such as Law No. 12,764/2012 and Decree No. 10,502/2020, which establish guidelines for the inclusion of students with ASD. The main principles of school inclusion are also discussed, such as equity, accessibility and equal opportunities. Finally, issues related to teacher training and pedagogical challenges in serving these students are analyzed, highlighting the importance of teacher training for the effective implementation of public inclusion policies.

## **THE IMPACT OF PUBLIC POLICIES ON THE EDUCATIONAL CARE OF STUDENTS WITH ASD**

The National Policy on Special Education, instituted by Law No. 12,764/2012 and Decree No. 10,502/2020, has played a fundamental role in the educational service of students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in public schools. The implementation of

this policy aims to ensure the inclusion of these students in regular education, providing them with adequate conditions for educational development, in accordance with the rights established by the Brazilian Constitution and with international guidelines for inclusive education. The impact of this policy has been discussed in the literature, especially with regard to the effectiveness of the measures implemented and the challenges that still need to be overcome. According to Arruda and Dikson (2017, p. 220):

CNE/CEB Resolution No. 4/2009 defines the operational guidelines for Specialized Educational Service in Basic Education. This provision reinforces the importance of integrating specialized care into the school's pedagogical plan, ensuring articulation with other public policies and promoting the inclusion of students with disabilities in regular education effectively.

Several studies indicate that, although legislation has created a solid foundation for inclusion, the reality in schools still presents significant obstacles. Pimenta (2021, p. 15) points out that, despite the creation of laws that guarantee the rights of students with ASD, many schools still lack an adequate structure to serve these students, including specialized pedagogical resources and teacher training. The lack of adequate training for teachers, as pointed out by Silva and Alves (2022, p. 310), is one of the biggest challenges faced by schools, since teachers often do not have the necessary skills to deal with the diversity present in the classroom, making it difficult for students with ASD to fully include them.

On the other hand, Ferreira and Lima (2021, p. 50) state that, when implemented correctly, public inclusion policies can result in significant advances for the educational care of students with ASD, especially in schools that have a management committed to the adaptation of pedagogical processes. Gurgel and Lima (2021, p. 102) corroborate this idea, highlighting that public policies have generated greater awareness of the importance of inclusive education, but there is still a long way to go, especially with regard to the implementation of pedagogical practices adapted to the needs of these students.

Studies by Almeida and Moreira (2020, p. 75) also reinforce that the implementation of public policies must be closely monitored, as the reality in Brazilian public schools varies according to the region and the level of available resources. According to Santos and Corrêa (2022, p. 130), the performance of municipal education departments is crucial for the success of these policies, since they are responsible for adapting national guidelines to the local reality and ensuring the continuous training of professionals involved in the care of students with ASD.

Therefore, the analysis of the implementation of public policies aimed at the inclusion of students with ASD reveals both significant advances and persistent challenges. While public policies have had a positive impact, especially in raising awareness of inclusion and adapting curricula, effective implementation depends on factors such as the adequacy of resources, teacher training, and the performance of education departments, which need to work in an integrated manner to ensure that the rights of students with ASD are fully met.

## **CHALLENGES AND ADVANCES IN PUBLIC POLICIES FOR THE INCLUSION OF STUDENTS WITH ASD**

The implementation of public policies aimed at the inclusion of students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) faces several challenges that compromise the effectiveness of these actions in schools. One of the main obstacles, as pointed out by Silva and Alves (2022, p. 312), is the lack of adequate resources for the implementation of policies, which includes everything from the scarcity of pedagogical materials to the insufficiency of assistive technologies, which are fundamental for the development of students with ASD. The lack of investment in public school infrastructure is one of the reasons why many students with ASD are unable to access the necessary adaptations, limiting their educational opportunities.

In addition, resistance to inclusion, which still persists in some educational institutions, is also a considerable challenge. Gurgel and Lima (2021, p. 104) highlight that the inclusion of students with ASD often encounters cultural and social barriers within schools, which hinders the implementation of public policies. The traditional view of teaching, which prioritizes uniform and homogeneous learning, generates resistance to the adaptation of pedagogical processes to meet the needs of students with ASD, who demand different approaches. Pimenta (2021, p. 16) also points out that, often, resistance comes from professionals who are not clear about the benefits of inclusion or who have insufficient training to deal with diversity in the educational context.

Another critical challenge is inadequate teacher training. Ferreira and Lima (2021, p. 52) point out that the training of teachers to work with students with ASD is still incipient, and the lack of specific continuing education for this audience has hindered the implementation of effective pedagogical practices. The scarcity of specialized courses and the lack of pedagogical strategies adapted to ASD contribute to teachers not feeling

prepared to work with these students, making it difficult for them to be fully included in regular classrooms. According to Goudouris et al (2013, p. 406):

Public policies for digital inclusion should promote not only access to information and communication technologies, but also ensure adequate conditions for teachers and students to use them in their educational practices. This includes the provision of technological infrastructure, pedagogical and technical support, and the continuing education of teachers, allowing them to integrate ICTs in an effective and innovative way into the teaching-learning process. These actions are essential to overcome existing barriers, enabling a more democratic and inclusive education that prepares students for the challenges of the digital society.

Despite these challenges, there are significant advances in public policies aimed at the inclusion of students with ASD. The creation of inclusion mechanisms, such as assistive technologies, has provided important support for the learning of these students. Almeida and Moreira (2020, p. 78) state that assistive technologies, such as educational software and adaptive devices, have contributed to students with ASD being able to access content autonomously, facilitating their participation in the school environment. These technologies are especially important for students who have difficulties in communication and social interaction, as is the case with many students with ASD.

In addition, adapted pedagogical practices have been developed to meet the specific needs of students with ASD. Santos and Corrêa (2022, p. 135) highlight that the use of differentiated strategies, such as technology-mediated education and specialized educational service (SES), has shown positive results in increasing the inclusion of these students. Such practices seek to provide an individualized approach, respecting the rhythm and specific needs of each student, which favors their academic and social development within the school.

Therefore, although there are significant challenges to the implementation of public policies for the inclusion of students with ASD, such as lack of resources, resistance to inclusion, and inadequate teacher training, it is also possible to observe important advances, especially with regard to the use of assistive technologies and the adaptation of pedagogical practices. These advances are essential to promote inclusive education, which allows all students, regardless of their conditions, access to quality education.



## **THE ROLE OF MUNICIPAL AND STATE DEPARTMENTS IN THE SCHOOL INCLUSION OF STUDENTS WITH ASD**

The performance of municipal and state departments of education plays a crucial role in the implementation of public policies aimed at the inclusion of students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). According to Santos and Corrêa (2022, p. 132), the departments of education are responsible for adapting national guidelines to local realities, ensuring that policies are effectively applied in schools. This responsibility involves coordinating actions ranging from the distribution of resources to the organization of teacher training, in order to ensure that the needs of students with ASD are adequately met. In addition, the secretariats must ensure that schools have an accessible environment, both from a physical and pedagogical point of view, so that students with ASD can enjoy the same educational opportunities as other students.

One of the main challenges faced by education departments, as pointed out by Gurgel and Lima (2021, p. 106), is the lack of an integrated approach between the different spheres of educational management, which can compromise the effective implementation of public inclusion policies. The performance of the secretariats needs to be coordinated with other governmental and social bodies, such as health and social assistance services, to ensure complete care for students with ASD. In this sense, collaboration between different professionals and institutions is essential to promote true and effective school inclusion. According to Ribeiro (2022, p. 22):

The school is a collective space for learning, a place of appropriation of the culture produced by humanity, a culture that is currently permeated by the presence of the New Digital Technologies of Information and Communication (DICT). School is a place for people of all kinds, from the most diverse ways of being and presenting themselves. School is a place to learn, but to learn far beyond the contents and the formal curriculum. So are the digital spaces, represented here by the social network Facebook (FB), a place for virtual meetings of people driven by the same interests or who want to learn new things.

However, there are examples of good practices that demonstrate the ability of secretariats to successfully implement inclusion policies. Silva and Alves (2022, p. 315) highlight the importance of state and municipal programs that offer continuous training to teachers, ensuring that these professionals are prepared to deal with the diversity present in the classroom. In some locations, specific training courses have been established for the care of students with ASD, focusing on adaptive methodologies and the use of assistive technologies, which have shown positive results in improving specialized educational



service. In addition, Almeida and Moreira (2020, p. 80) mention the creation of specialized educational service centers (SES) in several municipalities, which have played a key role in supporting the inclusion of students with ASD. These centers are responsible for offering specific pedagogical resources, in addition to continuous monitoring of students, which has contributed to their better adaptation and learning in the school environment.

On the other hand, Pimenta (2021, p. 17) points out that, despite the advances, there are still significant challenges related to the implementation of public policies. In many regions, especially in remote ones, the secretariats face difficulties in ensuring the equitable distribution of resources and the adequate training of professionals, which can compromise the effectiveness of inclusion actions. The lack of adequate infrastructure in schools and the distancing of some public policies from the specific needs of students with ASD are issues that still demand attention from education departments.

Therefore, the role of education departments in the school inclusion of students with ASD is essential for the implementation of public policies, and their performance must be guided by strategies that ensure accessible and quality education for all. Examples of good practices, such as teacher training and the creation of SEA centers, show that, when well implemented, public inclusion policies can result in significant advances. However, it is essential that the departments of education continue to face the existing challenges, especially with regard to the distribution of resources and the continuous training of education professionals.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The present research is characterized as a bibliographic research, with the objective of analyzing Brazilian public policies aimed at the inclusion of students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). The approach adopted is qualitative, since it seeks to understand and interpret the advances, challenges and impacts of public policies in the educational context of these students. The research was based on secondary sources, such as books, academic articles, dissertations, theses and official documents that deal with issues related to ASD and school inclusion. For data collection, resources such as academic databases, institutional repositories and websites of government agencies were used, which provide legislative documents and reports on the implementation of public policies for inclusion. The analysis of the sources was carried out through a systematic review of the literature, with emphasis on the identification of main themes and trends that

are related to the inclusion of students with ASD. The analysis techniques involved the critical reading and interpretation of the selected texts, allowing the organization of the information in order to answer the question-problem of the research.

The following is a table with the main references used in this research, in order to facilitate the understanding of the bibliographic material consulted. The following table summarizes the data of the authors and publications that were used as a basis for the theoretical analysis and the construction of the arguments of this research.

Chart 1 - References Used in the Research

Author(s)	Conforming title published	Year	Type of Work
BRAZIL	Law No. 12,764, of December 27, 2012. Establishes the National Policy for the Protection of the Rights of Persons with Autism Spectrum Disorder and provides other provisions.	2012	Law
BRAZIL	Decree No. 10,502, of September 30, 2020. Establishes the National Policy for Special Education: Equitable, Inclusive and with Lifelong Learning.	2020	Decree
ALMEIDA, C. B.; MOREIRA, T.	The impact of the National Education Plan (PNE) on the care of students with ASD in Brazil.	2020	Article
PIMENTA, T.	The inclusion of students with ASD in regular education: challenges and advances in Brazilian public policies.	2021	Article
FERREIRA, S. A.; LIMA, J. R.	Public policies for the inclusion of students with ASD: critical analysis of advances and challenges.	2021	Article
GURGEL, J. C. A.; LIMA, A. S.	Implementation of Law No. 12,764/2012 in the educational context: challenges in the access and permanence of students with ASD.	2021	Article
WITH ONE, A. M.; TEIXEIRA, L. P.	Inclusive policies and teacher training: specialized educational care for students with ASD.	2021	Article
OLIVEIRA, F. S.; PINTO, M. C.	Public policies and the continuing education of teachers for the inclusion of students with ASD.	2021	Article
SILVA, M. L. C.; ALVES, P. R.	The National Policy on Special Education and the impacts on the educational	2022	Article

	service of students with ASD.		
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SANTOS, R. P.; CORRÊA, D.	The performance of municipal education departments in the implementation of inclusion policies for students with ASD.	2022	Article
BOECHAT, Gisela Paula Fatinanti; REZENDE, Antonio Pinheiro de; OLIVEIRA, Clebereson Cordeiro de Moura.	Assistive technologies in the process of school inclusion of children with autism.	2024	Book Chapter
GONÇALVES, Luciana Marinho Soares; BOECHAT, Gisela Paula Fatinanti; REZENDE, Antonio Pinheiro de.	Teacher training for the inclusion of students with autism: challenges and opportunities.	2024	Book Chapter
SANTOS, Silvana Maria Aparecida Viana; FRANQUEIRA, Alberto da Silva; SANTOS, Urbanize Cunha.	Teaching strategies for visually impaired students in regular classrooms.	2024	Book Chapter
SANTANA, Telma Lustosa Silva; BORÉ, Aline Paula; GONÇALVES, Cristiane da Silva Reis; MARTINO, Lourdes Miranda; SILVA, Ludimila Fernandes da; SILVA, Wellington José Rosa.	Challenges in teacher training for inclusive evaluations in the context of basic education.	2024	Book Chapter
CABRAL, Denise; CHERUBINI, Adriana de Oliveira Ramos dos Santos; SIMONASSI, Adriana Lisboa Martins; BORÉ, Aline Paula; OLIVEIRA, Daniela Medeiros de; RODRIGUES, Joseana Lopes.	The use of digital tools for cognitive development in early childhood education.	2024	Book Chapter

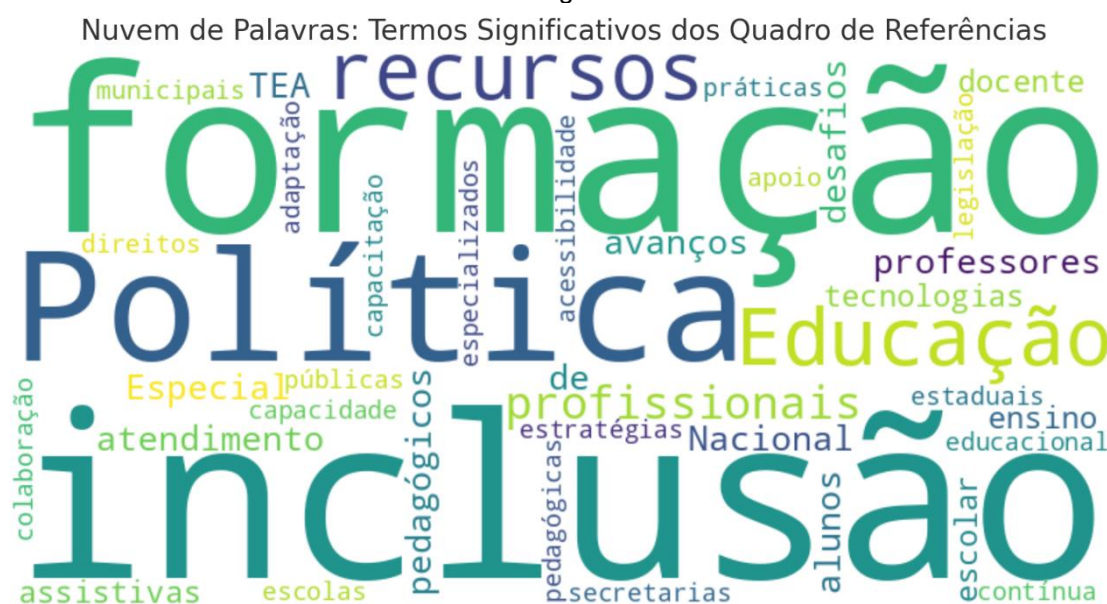
Source: authorship

After inserting the table, it is important to highlight that the information contained in it reflects the main sources that support the discussions and analyses carried out throughout this study. These references were selected with the objective of providing a broad view of

public inclusion policies for students with ASD, covering everything from legislative aspects to educational practices adopted in Brazil. The board serves, therefore, as a support tool for understanding the concepts and approaches that underlie the research.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Image 1



Source: authorship

Next, the word cloud is presented, which was generated from the frequent and significant terms found in the frame of reference. These terms will be addressed in the subsequent topics, as well as in the results and discussions of this research, offering a visual view of the main issues related to public inclusion policies for students with ASD, such as teacher training, the challenges faced by schools, the use of pedagogical resources and the role of assistive technologies in inclusive education. The analysis of these keywords will contribute to a deepening of the discussions on the effectiveness and advances of educational inclusion policies.

### CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE NATIONAL POLICY ON SPECIAL EDUCATION

The National Policy on Special Education, established by Law No. 12,764/2012 and Decree No. 10,502/2020, aims to ensure the educational inclusion of students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in Brazil. However, the effectiveness of these regulations has been the subject of critical analysis. Law No. 12,764/2012 was an important milestone, as it

officially recognized Autism Spectrum Disorder as a disability, ensuring educational rights to students with ASD. However, as Silva and Alves (2022, p. 312) point out, the implementation of such rights still faces challenges, especially with regard to teacher training and the adaptation of schools. The lack of adequate material and human resources, such as the insufficiency of SEA (Specialized Educational Service) rooms and the scarcity of trained professionals, compromises the practical application of the law in public schools, limiting its real impact on the inclusion of these students.

In addition, Decree No. 10,502/2020, which complements the legislation, establishes the National Policy on Special Education, focused on inclusive education and the continuing education of teachers. However, Ferreira and Lima (2021, p. 51) highlight that, although the decree has been an advance, its implementation is uneven between states and municipalities, reflecting the disparity of resources and the lack of a cohesive educational structure. In some regions of Brazil, the adaptation of schools to receive students with ASD is still limited, and specialized educational services are not offered in a systematic way. The difficulty in implementing this policy in schools reflects a lack of financial support and a clear strategy for the training of all those involved in the teaching-learning process.

Comparing with the public policies of other countries, it is observed that the Brazilian legislation is still in the adaptation and implementation phase when compared to models of educational inclusion in developed countries. Gurgel and Lima (2021, p. 105) indicate that, in countries such as the United States and some European countries, policies for the inclusion of students with ASD have been consolidated and integrated into the educational system since the 1990s, with greater investment in infrastructure and specialized programs. These countries, such as the United States, have laws such as the IDEA (*Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*), which guarantee not only inclusive education, but also continuous training and expert support for teachers. Compared to this, Brazil still faces significant challenges, such as cultural resistance to inclusion and the lack of sufficient resources to ensure that the education of students with ASD is fully accessible and of quality.

On the other hand, in Latin America, countries such as Argentina and Chile have also advanced in the inclusion of students with ASD, although with limitations similar to those found in Brazil. Pimenta (2021, p. 18) points out that, in these countries, inclusion policies have expanded, but there are still difficulties regarding teacher training and

adequate funding for schools. The comparison with these countries highlights both the advances and the limitations of public policies in Brazil, highlighting the need for greater integration between the federal, state and municipal spheres to ensure the effective educational inclusion of students with ASD.

In summary, the evaluation of the effectiveness of Law No. 12,764/2012 and Decree No. 10,502/2020 reveals advances in the recognition of the rights of students with ASD, but also points out significant challenges in the implementation of public inclusion policies, especially with regard to teacher training and adequate funding for schools. Compared to policies in other countries, Brazilian legislation is still in the process of consolidation, requiring continuous investments and the overcoming of cultural and structural barriers to ensure a truly inclusive education.

## **CHALLENGES IN IMPLEMENTING SCHOOL INCLUSION OF STUDENTS WITH ASD**

The implementation of school inclusion of students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) faces a series of challenges that compromise its effectiveness in schools. One of the main obstacles is the lack of adequate infrastructure to meet these specific educational demands. Silva and Alves (2022, p. 310) point out that many schools still do not have the necessary physical conditions to ensure quality inclusive education, such as adapted classrooms and accessible environments for students with ASD. In addition, the scarcity of material resources, such as assistive technologies and specific pedagogical tools, aggravates the situation, making it difficult for students with this disorder to learn.

Another relevant challenge is the lack of qualified professionals to deal with the particularities of teaching students with ASD. Gurgel and Lima (2021, p. 103) emphasize that teacher training, in many cases, is not enough to meet the needs of students with ASD, since most teachers do not receive specific training during their initial training. The lack of continuous training, as Ferreira and Lima (2021, p. 52) observe, also contributes to the lag in the implementation of adapted pedagogical methodologies, which compromises the effectiveness of inclusion policies in schools. These professionals often do not have the necessary knowledge to apply specific pedagogical practices that favor the learning of students with ASD, which results in incomplete or superficial inclusion.

The scarcity of adequate teaching materials is also a significant obstacle. Pimenta (2021, p. 17) points out that the availability of specific materials, such as adapted books and software, is limited in many public schools, which hinders the teaching-learning



process for students with ASD. The absence of these resources compromises the personalization of teaching and the adaptation of activities to the individual needs of each student. In addition, the lack of a diversified pedagogical approach, which takes into account the learning specificities of students with ASD, prevents these students from having the same educational opportunities as others.

These challenges are corroborated by Santos and Corrêa (2022, p. 133), who emphasize the importance of a solid educational structure, which involves both the continuous training of teachers and the availability of material and human resources. The lack of these elements therefore compromises the effective implementation of school inclusion policies, making the inclusion of students with ASD in schools still, in many cases, a reality far from true inclusive education.

## **GOOD PRACTICES AND EXAMPLES OF SCHOOL INCLUSION OF STUDENTS WITH ASD**

Several case studies and practical examples demonstrate that, when implemented effectively, public policies for school inclusion can generate significant advances in the education of students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Almeida and Moreira (2020, p. 77) highlight that some municipalities have stood out in adapting the curriculum and in the continuing education of teachers, creating inclusive environments and offering adequate support to students with ASD. Such practices include the adaptation of school spaces, with the creation of multifunctional resource rooms, and the use of assistive technologies that facilitate the learning and communication of these students, as is the case of some municipal schools in regions of the Southeast of Brazil. These measures have contributed to the improvement in the academic and social performance of students with ASD, promoting their greater participation in school activities.

The joint action between schools, families and specialized professionals has proven to be a determining factor for the success of the school inclusion of students with ASD. Gurgel and Lima (2021, p. 108) emphasize that collaboration between these three groups is essential for the development of effective pedagogical strategies. The active participation of families in the educational process allows teachers to better understand the needs of students and adapt their teaching practices according to these specificities. In addition, the presence of specialized professionals, such as psychopedagogues and occupational therapists, in the school environment, is essential to offer continuous support for both

students and teachers. The integration between these professionals allows for a holistic and personalized approach, contributing to the creation of an inclusive and supportive learning environment.

Examples of good practices can also be observed in some public schools that have invested in teacher training programs aimed at serving students with ASD. Pimenta (2021, p. 16) points out that schools in cities such as São Paulo and Belo Horizonte have implemented continuing education programs, training teachers to use differentiated methodologies, such as structured teaching and alternative communication, to meet the needs of students with ASD. In addition, schools have worked in partnership with universities and research centers to develop adapted pedagogical materials, which has generated positive results in school inclusion.

These examples show that the successful implementation of school inclusion of students with ASD depends on a combination of factors, such as the adaptation of the school environment, the continuous training of teachers, and collaboration between schools, families, and specialized professionals. The integration of these practices has proven effective in promoting quality inclusive education, where students with ASD can reach their full potential.

## **FINAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Public policies aimed at the inclusion of students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in Brazil, as analyzed throughout this study, have revealed significant advances, but also persistent challenges that compromise their effectiveness. Law No. 12,764/2012 and Decree No. 10,502/2020, although they established a legal framework to guarantee the educational rights of students with ASD, were unable to completely overcome the obstacles faced by schools in the implementation of these policies. The question that guided this research, "What are the main advances and challenges of Brazilian public policies for the inclusion of students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in the educational context?", was partially answered by showing that, despite improvements in legislation and increased awareness of the importance of inclusion, the effective application of these policies still depends on several factors, such as teacher training, the adequacy of school infrastructure and the provision of adequate pedagogical resources.

The main findings of this study indicate that, although the National Policy on Special Education has advanced in terms of recognizing the rights of students with ASD, there are

still significant challenges in the practical implementation of these policies in schools. Lack of adequate training for teachers, scarce funding for school infrastructure, resistance to inclusion in some regions, and scarcity of teaching materials and assistive technologies are the biggest obstacles identified. These challenges directly impact the quality of educational care offered to students with ASD, compromising effective inclusion in regular education. In addition, the data analyzed indicate that the departments of education have a fundamental role in adapting public policies to local realities, but face difficulties due to the lack of integration between the spheres of management and the inequality in the distribution of resources between the regions.

On the other hand, the survey also revealed positive examples of successful implementation of inclusion policies. Some municipalities have stood out in the use of assistive technologies and in the adaptation of pedagogical practices, showing that, when there is committed management, it is possible to promote the effective inclusion of students with ASD. Collaboration between schools, families and specialized professionals has been a decisive factor for the success of these initiatives, demonstrating that school inclusion goes beyond the physical adaptation of the school environment, also involving a transformation in pedagogical practices and in the interaction between the various educational agents.

This study contributes to the understanding of the advances and limitations of public policies for school inclusion for students with ASD in Brazil, offering subsidies for the improvement of these policies. By highlighting the main challenges, such as insufficient teacher training and the lack of adequate resources, the research proposes a reflection on the need for continuous investments in teacher training, in the adaptation of schools and in the provision of specialized pedagogical resources. In addition, the importance of an integrated performance of the education departments and a greater articulation between the different spheres of government becomes evident, in order to ensure that inclusion policies reach all regions in an equitable manner.

However, this study also points to the need for research that deepens the analysis of the impacts of inclusion policies on school practice. Future studies can investigate in detail how schools that have implemented good inclusion practices have promoted the academic and social success of students with ASD, in addition to exploring the perceptions of teachers and students themselves about public inclusion policies. The analysis of the effectiveness of assistive technologies and other innovative pedagogical resources also

deserves to be investigated deeply, in order to identify which approaches are effective in meeting the specific needs of students with ASD. Thus, the continuity of research on this topic is essential to improve public policies and ensure quality inclusive education for all students with ASD.

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