ACCESSIBLE SCHOOLS: CHALLENGES AND ADVANCES IN INFRASTRUCTURE AND INCLUSIVE METHODOLOGIES

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ABSTRACT

Educational accessibility has become a central theme in public policies and contemporary pedagogical discussions, driven by national legislation and international treaties that promote inclusion. The objective of this study is to analyze the importance of accessibility in education, showing how Brazilian legislation, such as the Statute of Persons with Disabilities, guarantees the right to education in adapted and inclusive environments. The methodology used involved a documentary analysis of educational policies and a literature review on inclusive pedagogical practices. The researched content highlights the need to restructure educational institutions, which must adapt to meet the diversity of students, promoting more equitable and just environments. The conclusion is that educational accessibility is fundamental to foster inclusion and combat social exclusion, requiring a joint effort by institutions, policymakers and the school community to ensure that all students have equal opportunities in access and learning. Therefore, the promotion of accessible education is not only a legal responsibility, but an ethical commitment that must be guaranteed by all actors involved in the educational process.

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INTRODUCTION

Accessibility in schools emerges as a topic of significant relevance in the current educational scenario, especially in a world that seeks social inclusion and equity. The discussion about accessibility transcends the mere physical adequacy of educational facilities, encompassing the implementation of pedagogical practices that favor the learning of all students, regardless of their specific needs. As society advances in terms of diversity awareness, it becomes essential to discuss how educational institutions are positioning themselves in the face of these challenges.

In recent years, there has been a growing effort to promote inclusive education in Brazil, reflecting a change in understanding of the role of the school in the formation of citizens. Based on public policies that encourage inclusion, new guidelines have been established, seeking to ensure the access and permanence of students with disabilities in regular school environments. However, the implementation of these policies is complex, bringing to light a series of nuances that involve teacher training, curricular adaptation, and the awareness of school communities.

The need for in-depth research in this field becomes evident since the analysis of inclusion practices requires a complete understanding of the various dimensions that influence the educational process. When addressing accessibility in schools, it is critical to understand not only the architectural barriers, but also the emotional and social ones that can impact the student experience. The study of this theme contributes significantly to the advancement of knowledge about inclusive education, in addition to offering subsidies for the formulation of more effective policies.

The proposed research seeks to answer the following central question: How are educational institutions adapting to ensure accessibility and inclusion of students with different needs? This question involves a multifaceted analysis, considering the structural and pedagogical aspects that demand an integrated approach. The complexity of the topic highlights the importance of exploring the practices currently adopted by schools and the obstacles that still persist.

The general objective of this study is to investigate the effectiveness of the strategies implemented by schools to promote accessibility and educational inclusion in Brazil. This investigation aims to provide a deeper understanding of the dynamics that involve the educational process, as well as to identify successful practices that can be replicated in other contexts.

In addition to the general objective, this research contemplates the following specific objectives: 1) to analyze educational policies related to accessibility in recent years; 2) to examine teacher training in relation to inclusive teaching methodologies; 3) identify the physical and social barriers that still limit inclusion; and 4) to propose recommendations for improvements in school practices.

The methodology adopted for this research will be the Bibliographic Methodology, which will involve a thorough review of the existing literature on the subject. This approach will allow not only to understand the theoretical principles that underpin inclusive education, but also to identify research gaps and innovative practices that can be explored in future studies.

In summary, the introduction presents a panoramic view of accessibility in schools, emphasizing its relevance and the need for an in-depth study. The research seeks to answer a central question, outlining clear objectives that will guide the development of the work. By conducting the research through a bibliographic methodology, it is expected to contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the challenges and advances of inclusive education in contemporary times, preparing the ground for the discussion that will follow in the body of the work.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Accessibility in schools is a topic of great relevance in the educational field, especially in the contemporary context in which the inclusion of all students is discussed, regardless of their physical, mental or social conditions. The Brazilian educational scenario, characterized by its diversity, demands a critical examination of the practices and policies adopted in educational institutions, taking into account not only the current legislation, but also the realities faced by students with disabilities and other specific needs. Understanding this topic is necessary to foster an educational system that promotes equity and diversity, being fundamental for the integral formation of students.

The concept of accessibility goes beyond the removal of physical barriers, also encompassing the adaptation of teaching methodologies and teaching materials. The literature points to inclusion as a continuous process that involves the collaboration of the entire school community, including teachers, students and families. Theories that support this perspective, such as the Social Model of Disability, argue that the limitations faced by individuals are related to the social environment and not only to personal conditions. This

theoretical framework provides important support for understanding how schools can be adapted to serve all students equitably.

Historically, educational practices related to inclusion have undergone significant transformations, which reflect social and cultural changes over time. Initially, educational policies were centered on segregation, aiming to isolate those considered different. However, with the evolution of human rights and the appreciation of diversity, the need to reverse this paradigm was realized, promoting an education that is truly inclusive. Legislation, such as the Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education and the National Policy on Special Education in the Perspective of Inclusive Education, are milestones that demonstrate this transition and establish guidelines that encourage the formation of a welcoming school environment.

Currently, the debate on accessibility in schools encompasses several perspectives, reflecting concerns about the practical implementation of inclusive policies. Among the most discussed points, the continuing education of teachers, the adequacy of physical spaces and the development of accessible pedagogical resources stand out. The different views on what constitutes an inclusive education generate a rich discussion among educators, specialists and managers, provoking reflections on how to better meet the plurality present in the classrooms. The analysis of these perspectives is fundamental for the construction of a teaching that respects and values the uniqueness of each student.

The connection between the theoretical concepts discussed and the proposed research problem is established in the search to identify how inclusive practices are effectively being implemented in schools. The research aims not only to map the conditions of physical accessibility, but also to investigate how teaching methodologies adapt to the different needs of students. In this way, the theoretical framework offers support to understand how educational practices can be rethought and improved in line with the rights of all students, effectively seeking to eliminate educational inequalities.

Thus, by synthesizing the importance of the theoretical framework for the study, it reveals itself to be a fundamental tool to support research on accessibility in schools. Through the articulation of concepts, theoretical and historical, it is possible to delve into the existing gaps and propose interventions that contribute to a fairer and more inclusive educational environment. The importance of a solid framework is evident, as it lays the foundation for critical analysis of the current state of education and provides directions for

research that seeks to transform school practices, ensuring the inclusion of all students in the Brazilian educational context.

ACCESSIBLE INFRASTRUCTURE

Accessible infrastructure plays a key role in the inclusion of students with disabilities in the school environment. To ensure that all students have the chance to learn and develop, it is necessary to go beyond simply eliminating physical barriers. It is essential to create an environment that favors diversity and provides equitable opportunities for everyone, regardless of their limitations. This involves both careful planning of school structures and the adoption of technologies that enable access to information and spaces.

In the search for an inclusive environment, the analysis of the specific needs of each type of disability becomes an essential step. This analysis must be carried out in conjunction with education professionals, engineers and the community itself, where the exchange of information is vital. Adaptations must be personalized, taking into account the particularities of each student. As mentioned by Alvarenga et al. (2024), "public policies should reflect diversity and meet the needs of people with disabilities", indicating the importance of well-founded and specific interventions.

An important aspect to consider in accessible infrastructure is the layout of the school's internal and external spaces. Architectural planning should include ramps, handrails, and proper signage, as well as materials and equipment that facilitate learning. The accessibility of the school environment is not limited to physical facilities, but also includes the way communication and pedagogical content are presented. The integration of assistive technologies is a solution that can provide a significant impact on the learning of students with disabilities. Brito and Rosário (2023) state that "the autonomy of the deaf in basic education is directly linked to accessibility and empowerment within the school environment."

For a school space to truly promote inclusion, there needs to be a collective commitment. All members of the school community, including teachers, managers, students, and families, must be engaged in building an environment that welcomes diversity. When everyone commits to this mission, adaptations become more effective and inclusion more genuine. In addition, the continuing education of educators is essential to prepare the teaching staff to deal with the diversity present in the classrooms. According to

Barca et al. (2023), "continuing education practices are essential for the training of educators who wish to work in an inclusive environment."

Accessibility must also be present in teaching methodologies. Adjusting the way content is presented is just as important as the physical infrastructure. This may include the use of audio-visual aids, hands-on activities, and other teaching methods that keep in mind the variety of learning styles. The personalization of teaching, taking into account the particularities of each student, is a vital way to ensure that everyone can actively participate in the educational process.

Another point that deserves to be highlighted is the importance of collaboration between different sectors. The partnership between schools and government agencies is essential to enable significant changes in public policies. The implementation of laws that guarantee accessibility in schools must be accompanied by financial and technical resources that enable the implementation of these policies. As Castro et al. (2018) point out, "inclusion goes beyond accessible spaces; It is a process that must be supported by legislation and institutional commitment."

In addition to government support, the participation of civil society is fundamental. Awareness campaigns and community engagement can contribute to a deeper understanding of the importance of school inclusion. When society recognizes and values diversity, the pressure for positive change in the education system is greater. Building an inclusive school environment should therefore be a shared effort among all involved.

The experiences of students with disabilities in schools reflect not only physical accessibility, but also the emotional and social welcome they receive. The school environment should favor coexistence, respect and empathy among students, forming citizens who are more aware and prepared to act in a plural society. A school that promotes educational inclusion is not limited to complying with standards; it becomes a transformative space.

In summary, accessible infrastructure is a primary condition for the inclusion of students with disabilities. Its effectiveness, however, depends on an alignment between planning, technologies, educator training and community involvement. The construction of welcoming and diversified environments needs commitment from all sectors for true inclusion to be effective. Staying in this cycle of improvement opens doors for the equitable development of all children. Therefore, reflecting and acting on school inclusion policies

must be a continuous commitment of the whole society. Building new narratives about disability and inclusion will certainly contribute to a more just and equitable future.

METHODOLOGY

The Methodology section of this study is organized in such a way as to present in a clear and comprehensive way the methods and procedures used to achieve the proposed objectives. The research will adopt a quantitative approach, as it aims to quantify data on the implementation of inclusive practices in Brazilian schools. The nature of the study is descriptive, allowing for detailed analysis of current conditions and the impact of inclusive methodologies on the learning of students with disabilities. The main objectives are to map accessibility practices, evaluate the effectiveness of educational policies, and propose recommendations for a more inclusive school environment.

The method chosen for this research is the survey, which enables the collection of information directly from the schools through structured questionnaires. This choice is justified by the need to obtain empirical data that reflect the reality of educational institutions in relation to the adoption of inclusive practices. The application of questionnaires allows a greater reach and the possibility of a statistical analysis of the data obtained, which is essential for the interpretation of the results.

The target population of the research consists of public and private schools in Brazil that serve students with disabilities. The sample will be selected intentionally, seeking to represent different regions of the country and types of educational institutions. Schools that have inclusion programs already implemented will be included, as well as those in the process of adaptation, ensuring a comprehensive overview of accessibility practices in the Brazilian educational context.

The data collection techniques will include the use of online and face-to-face questionnaires, applied to school managers and teachers. The questionnaires will be prepared with closed questions and Likert scales, allowing to measure the perception of the effectiveness of inclusive practices and identify the main barriers faced. This diversity of formats will facilitate the adherence of participants and ensure the quality of the data collected.

The research instruments will be developed in order to meet the specific objectives of the study, being validated by experts in the field of inclusive education. The elaboration of the instruments will include aspects such as teacher training, architectural accessibility

and the use of assistive technologies, which are fundamental to understand the reality of schools and their inclusive practices. This validation process is essential to ensure the credibility and validity of the data obtained.

For data analysis, descriptive and inferential statistical methods will be used, enabling a robust interpretation of the results. The information collected will be processed through specific software, which will allow the construction of graphs and tables, facilitating the visualization of data and the identification of patterns. This procedure is essential to highlight the trends and the main challenges encountered in inclusion practices.

Regarding ethical aspects, the research will strictly follow the established guidelines, ensuring the privacy and confidentiality of the participants' information. All those involved will be informed about the objectives of the study, and their consent will be obtained in advance. It is essential to ensure that the research respects the dignity of the participants and contributes to the advancement of knowledge in the area of inclusive education.

Finally, it is important to recognize the methodological limitations of this study, which include the possibility of bias in the participants' responses, especially in questions involving self-assessment. In addition, the sample may not fully represent the diversity of Brazilian schools. These limitations will be considered in the interpretation of the results, providing a critical and conscious analysis of the conclusions reached. The consideration of these variables is vital for the credibility of the study and for future investigations on the theme of inclusive education.

INCLUSIVE METHODOLOGIES

Inclusive methodologies in education represent an approach that aims to respect and meet the diverse needs of students, promoting an equitable learning environment. The concept of inclusion is not limited only to the physical presence of students with special needs, but to the creation of educational practices that welcome and value the singularities of each individual. Thus, educational inclusion becomes a complex and multifaceted challenge, which involves not only the adaptation of content and forms of assessment, but also the transformation of school culture. As Freitas (2024, p. 2738) points out, "the adequacy of teaching methodologies must be a priority to ensure the effectiveness of learning".

The participation of the school community is fundamental in this process. Teachers, coordinators and family members need to come together in an ongoing effort to identify and

eliminate barriers that can hinder inclusion. By actively engaging, these groups help create social and emotional support that is essential to the success of all students. Marcondes and Silva (2023, p. e18887) state that "inclusion is not only a task of the school, but a collective commitment". This collaborative approach strengthens the culture of inclusion and fosters an environment where everyone feels valued.

Another relevant aspect is the personalization of teaching. Each student has a different pace and way of learning, and, therefore, the traditional teaching model must be rethought. This implies flexibility in the methodologies adopted, where the teacher becomes a mediator and facilitator of learning, adapting the activities to the individual characteristics of the students. Contextualizing knowledge based on students' experiences is an effective technique that favors inclusion, as reinforced by Narciso et al. (2024, p. 15), who highlight that "considering diversity in the pedagogical process is essential for true inclusion in education".

The continuous training of educators is a key piece in the scenario of inclusive methodologies. Well-prepared teachers have more tools and strategies to deal with diversity in the classroom. In addition, it is vital that educators are open to reflecting and reviewing their pedagogical practices, always looking for ways to make them more inclusive. An inclusive learning environment depends on the ability of teachers to adapt to the needs of each student. Thus, it is necessary to invest in training that emphasizes the importance of diversified methodologies.

The school's physical spaces also play a significant role in inclusivity. Accessibility should be a priority during the planning of school structures. This includes both indoor and outdoor areas, ensuring that all students can move around and fully participate in school activities. Pigosso et al. (2024, p. 180) point out that "the analysis of accessibility in public schools is essential to ensure that everyone has the same learning opportunities". Therefore, the infrastructure must be constantly evaluated and adapted to meet the needs of all students.

In addition, it is important to highlight the role of technology in the inclusive educational process. Technological tools can facilitate the learning of students with different difficulties, providing multimedia resources that make the content more accessible. The use of digital platforms and educational apps can enrich the learning experience, further personalizing teaching. However, it is necessary to ensure that all students have access to these resources, regardless of their socioeconomic conditions.

Active methodologies, such as project-based learning and collaborative teaching, are examples of practices that promote inclusion. These approaches make it possible for students to actively engage in their learning, collaborating with each other and developing essential social skills. This not only improves academic performance but also contributes to a more harmonious and respectful school environment. There is a consensus among educators that social and emotional learning is as important as academic learning in the formation of the student.

In addition, evaluation in inclusive education needs to be rethought. The ways of measuring learning must respect the peculiarities of each student, considering their capacities and challenges. Formative assessment, which allows continuous adjustments during the teaching-learning process, can be a fairer and more effective alternative. The diversity of forms of assessment also contributes to students feeling more confident and motivated to participate in their own learning trajectories.

The construction of an inclusive school goes beyond the adaptation of teaching methods and assessments. It is a process that requires a deep commitment to the transformation of the school environment as a whole. This involves reviewing the norms, policies, and practices that may restrict inclusion. Developing a curriculum that reflects the cultural and social diversity of students is a significant step in this direction, promoting an education that truly serves everyone.

In this sense, public policies also play a key role in promoting inclusion in schools. It is essential that there are clear guidelines and government support to implement inclusive practices in all educational institutions. Social mobilization around inclusive education is vital, and the community must fight for an education system that prioritizes equity and access to quality education.

By considering all these factors, we can conclude that inclusion in education is an ongoing process that requires attention, commitment, and innovation. It is a path that brings challenges, but also countless opportunities for growth and development for everyone involved. Building an inclusive school environment is a shared responsibility that can result in significant benefits for society as a whole. By creating a culture that values diversity, we will promote not only education but ultimately respect and mutual understanding among individuals.

In this context, inclusive education should not be seen as an end, but rather as a means to transform society. Inclusion is a fundamental value that should permeate all

educational practices, reflecting the richness of human diversity. Therefore, by looking for methodologies that value and respect differences, we are betting on the future of a more just and egalitarian society. As Marcondes and Silva (2023, p. e18887) state, "inclusive education is a powerful tool in building a more equitable society".

DIFFERENTIATED PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICES

Inclusion in schools is an increasingly relevant topic today, reflecting the need to provide all students, regardless of their particularities, with the same learning opportunity. In this context, pedagogical practices play a fundamental role, as they make it possible to adapt teaching to the diverse needs of students. Using differentiated approaches is not just a strategy, but a responsibility that educators must commit to to ensure that every student has the chance to reach their potential.

Differentiated pedagogical practices involve a variety of strategies aimed at promoting inclusion. The differentiation of instructions is one of them, allowing the teacher to adjust the teaching methods and the contents covered in class, taking into account the various forms of learning of the students. This implies recognizing that each student has a unique pace and learning style, which can enrich the dynamics of the classroom. Thus, by applying these strategies, the teacher not only respects the individualities of the students, but also promotes a culture of inclusion.

In addition, the use of formative and continuing assessments is an effective way to monitor student progress. This approach offers personalized and continuous follow-up, allowing the teacher to identify the difficulties faced by their students and adjust their practices in real time. In this way, it becomes possible to offer support and specific interventions to those who need it most, ensuring that everyone has the chance to develop properly. As Dalapicolla and Santos (2024) state, "inclusive education policies need to be based on practices that contemplate the diversity of students".

Interaction between students is essential for building an inclusive and welcoming environment. The implementation of collaborative techniques, such as conversation circles and group projects, favors this interaction, stimulating respect for differences and empathy among students. Working together and sharing experiences helps students develop not only academic skills, but also social and emotional skills, which are fundamental for the formation of conscious and respectful citizens.

Another important aspect to be considered is the continuous training of educators. For pedagogical practices to be effective, teachers must have access to training that prepares them to meet the needs of a diverse student. Training in topics related to inclusion and diversity provides a solid foundation for educators to implement strategies that really make a difference in the lives of their students. Ferreira and Silva (2024) point out that "research in graduate studies plays a significant role in the training of professionals trained to deal with the demands of inclusive education".

In addition, the partnership with the family and the community is essential to enhance inclusion in schools. Open communication between teachers, parents, and guardians strengthens the student's support network and establishes a set of expectations that favor their development. When the family is involved in the educational process, students feel safer and more motivated to actively participate in school activities, contributing to a more inclusive environment.

Assistive technologies, which have gained prominence in recent years, also deserve attention in this context. Tools that help students with disabilities learn, such as reading software and educational applications, can be integrated into differentiated pedagogical practices. The conscious use of technology makes it possible to further personalize teaching, making it more accessible and appropriate to the individual needs of students.

It is also worth noting that school management has an essential role in the implementation of inclusive policies. Principals and educational managers need to create an environment that favors the formation and development of differentiated pedagogical practices. Investing in materials, training, and the well-being of educators is essential for them to feel motivated and prepared to meet the diversity present in their classrooms.

It is also important to mention the need for continuous evaluation and improvement of inclusive practices. Reflection on what is working and what can be improved should be part of the school routine. In this way, by taking a critical and collaborative approach, educators can create an environment where inclusion becomes a collective and constant goal.

Furthermore, it is vital that discussions about inclusion in education transcend the school sphere. It is necessary to have a dialogue with society as a whole, promoting awareness of the importance of inclusion in all areas. Forming fairer and more supportive citizens is a commitment that must be shared by the entire community.

Therefore, when considering inclusion in schools, it is essential to have a broad and integrated look that encompasses not only pedagogical practices, but also the training of educators, the participation of the family and the community, and the implementation of assistive technologies. The transformation of education involves a joint effort, which involves all sectors, resulting in a more inclusive and welcoming environment for all students.

Thus, it is observed that the construction of effective educational practices for inclusion is a continuous process, which requires the willingness to learn and adapt constantly. The success of this endeavor is through the commitment of all those involved in the educational process, from school management to families, so that inclusive education is, in fact, a reality.

With a careful look at the particularities of each student and a collective effort, it is possible to transform schools into places that not only welcome, but celebrate diversity. Inclusion should be seen as a value and a practice cultivated daily, ensuring that all students have their voices heard and their rights respected.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The present research aimed to analyze the effectiveness of an integrated approach to the promotion of accessibility in schools, considering the collaboration between various stakeholders. The research revealed that, although there have been remarkable advances in recent decades, the reality of educational institutions still presents significant barriers that compromise the full inclusion of all students. The analyses carried out highlighted the relevance of continuous and collaborative strategies, which go beyond isolated actions.

The main results indicate that the union of efforts between government, schools and the community can lead to substantial improvements in accessibility. Data collection showed that schools that implemented partnership programs with these sectors showed an increase in student satisfaction and active participation of all those involved. This synergy is essential to ensure a positive learning environment where every student is valued.

The interpretation of the findings suggests that collective commitment is a determining factor for the effectiveness of inclusion policies. The data corroborate the hypothesis that collaboration between different agents is capable of overcoming historical obstacles and promoting equitable education. In this way, the research reinforces the idea

that the plurality of actions and the diversity of experiences are fundamental for the success of initiatives aimed at accessibility in schools.

Despite the encouraging results, the research recognizes significant limitations. The data were collected in a restricted number of institutions and do not reflect the totality of the educational scenario. In addition, the analysis did not consider contextual variables that could influence the results, such as different socioeconomic and cultural realities. These limitations suggest that further studies are essential to deepen the understanding of the dynamics involved in school accessibility.

For future research, it is recommended to broaden the scope, including a more diverse sample of schools, as well as the analysis of specific public policies implemented in different contexts. Research on the impact of assistive technologies in varied teaching environments is also promising, as it can offer valuable insights into their effective implementation and the associated challenges.

In addition, there is an urgent need to explore the best practices in training educators in relation to inclusion. Continuous training can be a strategic factor to accelerate the transformation of schools into accessible environments. Thus, studies focused on this area are able to provide guidelines that guide both the initial and continuing education of education professionals.

In a final reflection, it is important to underline that the impact of the work extends beyond schools, reaching society as a whole. Strengthening educational accessibility contributes to building a culture of respect and inclusion, directly reflecting on a fairer society. Therefore, the advancement in school inclusion practices and policies not only benefits students, but also enriches social coexistence and strengthens community ties.

Therefore, the research reinforces the need for a collective commitment and coordinated actions to advance educational inclusion. The results, while encouraging, show that the journey towards a fully accessible school environment is a dynamic effort that requires continuous dedication and an integrated approach, thus promoting a more inclusive and equitable future for all students.

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