


THE ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES IN MEXICO AND BRAZIL: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

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Gildásio Macedo de Oliveira¹, Reginaldo Célio Sobrinho², Euluze Rodrigues da Costa Junior³, Claudiana Raymundo dos Anjos⁴ and Leoneida Ladeira Rodrigues Macedo⁵

ABSTRACT

This article analyzes the organizational structure for students who receive support from Special Education in Mexico and Brazil. In this sense, it seeks to reflect on whether and how the way that the instituted modality of Special Education in different realities [can] guide educational processes and practices. The present study is related to a postdoctoral internship research linked to the Graduate Program in Education (PPGE) of the Federal University of Espírito Santo (UFES). From this study, we delimit substantive beacons such as the broad right to education; the positive bet on the schooling process and on the educability of all subjects in regular school; the social responsibility of seeking approximations with local contexts and problems, to understand reality and collectively build possibilities. From the methodological point of view, it is an international comparative study that uses official documentary data and legislation from Mexico and Brazil. The analysis shows that in Mexico the list of students who demand Special Education services is much broader than that of the Brazilian reality, as it tries to encompass a broader conception of school inclusion. In addition, it has a coordination with national design with well-defined contours. In Brazil, we realized that despite having a delimitation of the Special Education public, funding is still an expensive issue for the area, as the data is difficult to access. It is concluded, therefore, that despite the different proposals, there are many approximations,

¹ Postdoctoral Fellow (PPGE-UFES)
Federal University of Espírito Santo
E-mail: gildasiomacedoadv@gmail.com
Lattes: <http://lattes.cnpq.br/2081934494743848>
Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2019-6322>

² Doctor in Education (PPGE-UFES)
Permanent Professor (PPGE-UFES)
E-mail: reginaldo.celio@ufes.br
Lattes: <http://lattes.cnpq.br/8290558218053006>
Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4209-2391>

³ Doctor in Education (PPGE-UFES)
Permanent Professor (PPGE-UFES)
E-mail: euluze.costa@ufes.br
Lattes: <http://lattes.cnpq.br/7139754637047241>
Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1448-4099>

⁴ Doctor student (PPGE-UFES)
Federal University of Espírito Santo
E-mail: claudianaanjos.profe@gmail.com
Lattes: <https://lattes.cnpq.br/6392258811748349>
Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1885-1738>

⁵ Master's student in Education (PPGE-UFES)
E-mail: leoneidalr@gmail.com
Lattes: <http://lattes.cnpq.br/4167582574550539>
Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1539-1900>

and that Special Education, despite the challenges in common, both realities are in a process of construction and consolidation of a perspective of full school inclusion.

Keywords: Special Education. Comparative Research. Comparative Education. School Inclusion. Specialized Services.

INTRODUCTION

The sharing of socially produced knowledge, intentionally organized and passed on by generations, has proved to be an indispensable pillar for the full exercise of citizenship. In this sense, schooled education, disciplined by the State, gains notoriety and becomes an inalienable right. In other words, a fundamental human right that sustains the bases for the maintenance and advancement of the Democratic Rule of Law, in which popular sovereignty and social justice are imposed against the arbitrariness of the rulers of the occasion.

The Brazilian nation, under the aegis of the 1988 Constitution, as well as the United Mexican States, in its 1917 Constitution, ensure education as a way to improve human coexistence, raising it to the level of a potestative social right. However, this emancipatory and decolonial perspective brings with it the challenge of guaranteeing the quality of compulsory education and the realization of this right to citizens according to the capacity of each one, regardless of their social position, physical, psychic or religious beliefs.

Both nations align themselves with international conventions that hold that Learning and Participation Barriers (BAP) are social rather than individual. In other words, disability is not found exclusively in the body, even if affected by a physiological, psychological or anatomical, congenital or acquired disability (biomedical model), but is located in the relationship between the individual and the limiting/limiting social reality he faces. This adopted paradigm sees difference as an essentially human characteristic and diversity as a power, forging a collective consciousness of non-discrimination.

Considering the inclusive educational perspective announced, our research group Policies, Management and School Inclusion: contexts and social processes (GRUPGIE) has been dedicated to analyzing the processuality of policies for the access and permanence of people with disabilities in common education in these two countries. Among the various issues, the need to make notes on the way in which the school modality of Special Education is structured in the different realities and to reflect on how the formats guide the educational processes and practices stands out.

Researchers such as Costa Junior (2021), Kautsky (2021), Anjos (2020), Valadão (2020), Godoy (2018) and Oliveira (2021), when analyzing the reports and practices of teachers and professionals who work in the schooling of students served by Special Education, showed that they recurrently signal some similar weaknesses in these two countries, respecting their singularities.

In this sense, the objective of this text is to reflect on whether and how the form of the instituted modality of Special Education in different realities can guide educational processes and practices. This is an excerpt from the ongoing research that involves master's, doctoral, and postdoctoral internships linked to the Graduate Program in Education (PPGE) of the Federal University of Espírito Santo (UFES), entitled Pedagogical and school management practices constituting inclusive educational processes in Brazilian and Mexican realities.

It should be noted that our institutional relationship with Mexico began in 2013, when the Federal University of Espírito Santo signed a technical-scientific cooperation with the objective of, together with Mexican colleagues, building an agenda of studies aimed at collaborating in the production of an overview of the sociodynamics of inclusion and exclusion within the scope of the civilizing process of our countries. focusing on aspects of educational policies in Special Education (Sobrinho et al., 2015).

The textual organization of this investigation presents, after this first introductory section, the methodology adopted; then, the structure of Special Education in Mexico, highlighting its main supports/principles; in the third section, we bring the Brazilian structure; and, in the fourth section, we present the final considerations, resuming the main findings of the study and our reflections.

METHODOLOGY

We assume an investigative perspective that understands International Comparative Education as a critical and creative social practice that does not neglect the local, accepting that reality is not limited to a single, objective and neutral explanation. We seek to understand the subjective nature of reality and the meaning attributed to it by the different subjects over time (FERREIRA, 2008). As Pantaleão et al (2017, p. 833) clarify, our research group takes a comparative approach beyond the mere description and juxtaposition of realities. In our studies we have "[...] committed to understanding how events relate to the people who experience them. Assuming this investigative perspective supported by the assumptions of Figural Sociology, in our studies we escape a conception of history as linear progress". Additionally, Eliasian assumptions allow us to discuss political, economic, social issues and the processes of individualization from an interdisciplinary perspective, seeking in the historical dynamics the aspects of the general

regularities that guide man's understanding of himself, of "others" and of the world (PANTALEÃO et al, 2017).

Elias (1993, 1994, 1998, 2005) concentrated efforts to understand the peculiar constitution of each individual in the intersection of the ties that bind them to each other, in a continuous, dynamic and flexible way. He thus pondered the need for social scientists to definitively abandon all forms of methodological individualism that is very characteristic of sociological analyses that, based on the image of homo clausus, study human society from the point of view of the "individual", considered in isolation, closed in on himself, outside human and social interdependencies. As much as Elias does not address in his thematic reflections more detailed on the field of Education and also in the field of Special Education, his gaze guides us to the analysis of figurations and changes in social structures, whether at the micro level, in terms of morals, behaviors, affections, as well as at the macro level of organizational hierarchies. In other words, Elias humanizes social structures by giving them processuality, movement, highlighting disputes and tensions. As Leão (2007, p. 29) explains, "Interdependence does not mean harmony, but tensions and conflicts".

In this context, it is considered a fallacy to point to specific moments in the course of history as triggers of social change. Therefore, history is situated in space and time according to the social forces that emanate from the interrelations, and it is not appropriate to circumscribe each and every reality on a common path towards a universal explanation from the colonizer's perspective. Thus, the comparative perspective that we advocate when studying common problems of Latin American countries that do not necessarily occur in the same way, is in the sense of

[...] reflect on the historical way in which each of these countries faced such common problems [...], in order not only to share common problems, but also, and mainly, to think, collectively, singular answers to the same question (SOBRINHO et al, 2015, p.342).

Landini and Leão (2021) consider that the Eliasian procedural perspective is based on a less naïve view of social reality, since historical moments should be seen as ongoing processes of continuity, discontinuity, and unplanned results of transformations over time. That is, the actions of individuals depend on the peculiarities of the figuration in question, since no individual action is enclosed by itself or the center of the whole process.

From the methodological point of view, it is a qualitative-descriptive research that uses official documentary data and educational legislation from Mexico and Brazil, in dialogue and perspective with Brazilian and Mexican authors who are dedicated to researching the modality of special education. In this sense, we understand that qualitative research is characterized by understanding, describing and, sometimes, explaining social phenomena "from within" even if it uses several different ways (GIBBS, 2009).

SPECIAL EDUCATION IN MEXICO

The United Mexican States, Mexico, is politically divided into 32 federative units (states), which add up to 2,470 municipalities. According to the National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI), in the last population census dated 2020, a population of approximately 126 million people (61 million men and 65 million women) was registered.

The data show that the population aged 0 to 19 years with disabilities (people who have great difficulty or are unable to perform at least one of the activities of daily living, such as: seeing, hearing, walking, remembering or concentrating, bathing, dressing or eating, speaking or communicating) add up to about 852 thousand people; with some limitation in daily activities (people who have little difficulty in performing at least one of the activities of daily living, such as: seeing, hearing, walking, remembering or concentrating, bathing, dressing or eating, speaking or communicating), add up to 2 million people; and with mental problems (altered state of mental health - since birth, as a result of mental illness or disorder - includes conditions such as autism, Down syndrome, schizophrenia, mental retardation (mild or severe), etc.); and behavioral, injury or aging process, which makes it difficult for the person to participate in activities of community social life and to interact with other people in a way that is appropriate to the context and their social environment (e.g., family, school, work, neighbors, etc.) add up to 563 thousand people (INEGI, 2020). Adding these groups, we have about 3 million people (about 2% of the population) are potentially recipients of Specialized Educational Services (SEE).

It should be noted that the right to education is guaranteed to all Mexicans. According to article 3 of its Constitution, Basic Education is composed of initial education (0 to 2 years), pre-school (3 to 5 years), primary (6 to 11 years) and secondary education (12 to 14 years); These, together with upper secondary education (15 to 17 years) are compulsory. That is, the State has the duty to guarantee all girls, boys and young men

(MMJ) of compulsory school age three conditions: access, permanence and relevant, useful and meaningful learning achievements for life (MÉXICO, 1917).

Having made these initial considerations, a first point of analysis concerns the composition of current normative contributions around the special educational needs associated with disability.

As pointed out, the Mexican Federal Constitution, as the highest law, ensures that all people have the right to education (universal, inclusive, public, free and secular). It announces unrestricted respect for the dignity of the human person, with a focus on human rights and substantive equality (modification of circumstances that prevent the full exercise of rights).

Regulating the constitutional precepts, the General Education Law (LGE) of Mexico, in its article 7, item II, provides for inclusive education in the sense of eliminating all forms of discrimination and exclusion, as well as all structural conditions that can become BAP. In paragraph d, of the same provision, it establishes that Special Education will make available for all types, levels, modalities and educational options, necessary conditions, considering the prior evaluation of students, with the participation of the family, teaching staff, when applicable, health personnel.

The body of the federal executive branch responsible for the national education policy is the Secretariat of Public Education (SEP). According to its Internal Regulations, specifically in article 22, it is the responsibility of the General Directorate of Curriculum Development (DGPC) to promote the development of educational research projects for all basic education aligned with the guiding criteria of Special Education; in addition to promoting Special Education services, always considering opinion polls and other consultation mechanisms between mothers and fathers or guardians, teachers, employees with management functions in schools, educational institutions, as well as among those sectors involved in Education (SEP, 2020).

For a better reading and understanding of the structure of the Mexican SOEs, it is necessary to review some central concepts. According to article 35 of the LGE, it is the duty of Special Education "[...] to seek equity and inclusion, for all types, levels, modalities and educational options established in this law" (MÉXICO, LGE, 1993). Therefore, in the Mexican context, inclusion is a principle (art. 64), in this sense the SEP understands Special Education as a

Educational service that seeks equity and inclusion, which must be available to all types, levels, modalities and educational options established in the General Education Law, and will be provided under the necessary conditions, based on the decision and prior evaluation of the students, mothers and fathers or guardians, teachers and, when applicable, by health condition, through support that helps eliminate BAP that limits the access, permanence, and egress of students with disabilities and/or exceptional abilities (SEP, PFSEE, 2023, p.31)

In turn, the principle of inclusion is characterized by the SEP as:

[...] a value and an attitude of appreciation and respect for diversity, in which we seek to adapt the system to respond adequately to the needs of each student. It seeks to ensure equity and excellence in education, considering everyone regardless of their characteristics, needs, interests, skills, competencies and learning styles. It also seeks to eliminate all practices of discrimination, exclusion and segregation within the school, promoting the learning of all students. It is related to access, permanence, participation, and learning (SEP, PFSEE, 2023, p.32)

Thus arriving at the definition of Inclusive Education brought in article 61 of the LGE as

[...] set of actions aimed at identifying, preventing and reducing the barriers that limit the access, permanence, participation and learning of all students, eliminating practices of discrimination, exclusion and segregation.

Inclusive education is based on valuing diversity, adapting the system to respond equitably to the characteristics, needs, interests, skills, abilities and learning styles of each of the students (emphasis added).

In accordance with LGE, the General Law for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities (LGIPD), updated in 2024, is also in force. In its article 15, a discipline that, in addition to what is exposed in the LGE, it is also up to Special Education to have as its object

[...] the formation of independent living and attention to special educational needs, which includes, among other severe learning difficulties, behavior, emotions, multiple disabilities or various above-average aptitudes, which allow people to have an equitable academic performance, thus avoiding inattention, desertion, abandonment or discrimination (MÉXICO, LGIPD, 2011).

However, prior to this change, Verduzco and Kral (2022) recall that the World Conference on Education for All (1990), held in Jomtien, Thailand, promoted significant changes in Mexican educational programs, highlighting the educational reform of the LGE in 1993. This reform fostered a new policy of Special Education, which in theory aimed at the elimination of the parallel system of Special Education Schools, called segregated.

With the modifications introduced in the new General Education Law (1993), a new Special Education policy was promoted through the reorganization of services, thus being:

- a) Special Education school services will be transformed into CAM (Multiple Service Centers), institutions that still offer basic education for students with SEN, with or without disabilities and training for work (labor CAM).
- b) Creation of Regular Education Support Services Units (USAER), with the objective of promoting the integration of boys and girls with SEN into regular schools and classes.
- c) Creation of Resource and Information Centers for Educational Integration (CRIE) and Public Guidance Units (UOP), to provide information and guidance for parents, mothers and teachers (VERDUZCO, KRAL, 2022, p. 47, emphasis added).

Cedillo (2018) and Verduzco, Kral (2022), consider that this change was more political than technical. They point out that the current CAMs are still the old special schools, with the difference that they can receive students with any disability (not just severe ones) and who supposedly attend the regular curriculum. For these authors, cases of students who start at CAM and migrate to a regular school are rare. In other words, the structure of Mexican Special Education "[...] start from two distinct educational conceptions: segmented care [CAM] and inclusive care in regular schools [USAER]" (MEJOREDU, 2022, p. 37).

According to Laurrabaquio (2022), the different approaches to Special Education (medical model, educational integration, and recently full inclusion) have represented a challenge, especially for Special Schools professionals, because with the transformation into CAMs, they started to serve groups separated by age and with different disabilities. Having as a criterion the students' need for reasonable and meaningful accommodations, specialized and permanent support.

Since then, according to the current wording of article 37 of the Mexican LGE, the CAM is considered a schooled service. In this "new format", the CAM demands the following basic occupational structure: director; teacher of the group; physical education

teacher; teacher with work training; multidisciplinary team [teacher specialized in hearing and language, psychologist, social worker, physiotherapist]; administrative staff [administrative assistant, educational assistant, general services assistant]. However, if it has students with specific demands, it will also have other specialists on its staff, such as sign language interpreters, for example (SEGEY, 2020)

In addition to the school service, the Mexican National Education System (SEN) has the support of the USAER's regular schools. Cedillo (2018) points out that this service brings a perspective of school integration, in the sense of identifying students with special educational needs and after surveying what support they will need, however, according to the author, these services still present unsatisfactory results.

Each USAER serves an average of five schools and is composed of a principal and specialists in psychology, communication, and social work. Its function is to support the integration of students with SEN with and without disabilities [...] this model of care is producing unsatisfactory results (CEDILLO, 2018, p.54).

This author understands that School Integration (IE) and Radical School Inclusion (IER) have similarities, but they differ conceptually. In the IER, support is aimed at the group as a whole and focuses on the individual's relationship with the reality he encounters. In turn, in EI, the educational need starts from the individual's limitation and from this the BAPs will be identified, eliminated or mitigated.

The advantages of this last perspective [IER] are that, by not identifying individual subjects, they are not discriminated against or stigmatized, and the effort is directed towards improving the education offered to all. The downside is that children who may have very specific support needs (not shared with other students) may not receive them.

For the implementation of radical inclusive education, it is necessary that, upon arriving at school, students with disabilities and other vulnerable conditions have received the necessary support to prevent the onset of disability or to reduce the disadvantage that these children may have to succeed. This situation does not occur in Mexico (CEDILLO, 2018, p. 54, emphasis added).

Miguel (2014, p. 24), complements:

[...] What is at stake is much more than a change in terminology. What is emerging in recent years is a substantial change: from an educational system that forces users to adapt, to an educational system that has to adapt to them.

For Cedillo (2018), Mexico in its current historical moment requires moderate inclusive education, as it is still necessary to identify the needs of children in order to offer the specific support they need. In this sense,

It is possible to say that in Mexico three approaches coexist: that of integration, which recognizes the need for Special Education; moderate inclusion, which in addition to identifying SEN seeks to eliminate BAP, and radical inclusion. Although the latter seeks to abandon the concept of Special Education, this has not yet been achieved (MEJOREDUE, 2022, p. 22)

Mendes (2006) explains that radical or full inclusion preaches the possibility of reinventing the school in order to accommodate all dimensions of the diversity of the human species. On the other hand, those who defend moderate inclusion understand the need for

[...] maintenance of the continuum of services that allows placement from the common class to the hospital services [...] believe that the capacity for change of the common class is finite, and even if a restructuring occurs, the common school will not be adequate for all children [...] (MENDES, 2006, p. 394)

That said, we have that the Mexican federal government, through SEP, grants financial support to all states through an agreement, of optional adhesion, to the Fortalecimiento de los Servicios de Educación Especial (PFSEE) Program. The program funds the Special Education Services (SEE), which are the:

[...] instances that provide public education services, especially those that offer educational attention to all and to students with disabilities and/or with above-average ability in Basic Education. They are part of the National Education System (SEN) and are classified into three types of services:

a) Support: CAPEP [Psychopedagogical Care Center for Pre-School Education], USAER [Education Regulation Support Services Unit], UDEEI [Special Education and Inclusive Education Unit] and UAEBH [Basic Education Support Unit in Hospitals]

b) Schooled: Basic CAM [Basic Multiple Care Center] and Labor CAM [Labor Multiple Care Center].

c) Guidance: CRIE [Resource and Information Center for Educational Integration] and UOP [Public Guidance Unit] (SEP, PFSEE, 2023, p. 32)

In summary, the structure of Special Education in Mexico corresponds to the SOEs that are divided into: a) support schools, the main one being the USAER b) "special schools", with the basic CAM and labor CAM and c) guidance services to the general public.

It should be noted, not without reason, that on October 3, 2018, the Supreme Court of Justice of the Nation (SCJN), in an analysis of the constitutionality of provisions of the LGE and the General Law for the Care and Protection of People with Autism Spectrum Condition of 2015, issued a press release to inform that the offer of support for inclusion in regular education cannot be in any way an argumentative pretext for the permanence of systems of Parallel teaching.

[...] in the Mexican State it is not possible to conceive of the existence of two educational systems: a regular one, for all students, and a special one, for people with disabilities [...] Inclusive mainstream school is the most effective measure to combat discriminatory attitudes, create welcoming communities, build an inclusive society and achieve education for all, as children who are educated with their peers are more likely to become productive members of society and to be included in their community. [...] although it is optional for the student to use the support tools to achieve inclusion in the regular education system – such as the Multiple Care Centers (CAM) and the Regular Education Support Service Units (USAER) –, the truth is that this optionality cannot in any way be used as a pretext to exclude students with disabilities from the Regular Education System (SCJN, 2018, s.p, emphasis added).

Bringing this guideline, it is worth explaining that the Basic CAM, in practice, is still a special school. However, currently, basic education must be offered at all levels (initial, pre-school, primary and secondary), with the necessary adaptations of the curriculum and general programs. In turn, the Labor CAM is a CAM model that, in addition to basic education, offers on-the-job training (cooking and bakery workshops; carpentry, cleaning, sewing, administrative support, etc.) for students between 15 and 22 years of age. As already mentioned, the groups/grade are organized based on the age of the students and

not by disability conditions, which causes groups with different disabilities to be formed (SEP, DGDC, 2023, p. 11).

It is noted that CAMs can also offer complementary support to students in regular schools at alternative times, this help can be directly in regular schools or at the CAM facilities themselves (SEP, 2022, glossary)

When we analyzed the statistical data for the 2021-2022 school cycle, we found that there was a record of 1,613 public CAMs, which together served 98,950 students with different conditions of disability in public basic education (with the highest concentration of enrollments in primary education with 37% - 36,551, followed by training for work 24% - 24,037). The low enrollment in the initial and pre-school stages, 2% and 8% respectively, is noteworthy, followed by a considerable drop in the secondary stage compared to the primary stage (14% less). Finally, we have that only about 9 thousand students of the 98,950 (9%) use CAM services only for complementary support. To serve this universe of students, 12,955 teachers and 6,302 para-teachers were needed (SEP, DGPPYEE, 2022).

In turn, USAER is an operational technical body that operates within the physical spaces of regular schools and offers technical and methodological support, through an interdisciplinary collective of professionals. Each unit serves an average of five schools (primary and/or secondary) (CEDILLO, 2018).

Generally, the USAER is under the leadership of a school unit and its team, when complete, is composed of a principal, a secretarial assistant, a para-teaching team (communication specialist, psychologist and a social worker), as well as teachers specialized in Special Education. This team works on three fronts: school environment; Classes; and socio-family context. The teaching team carries out itinerant work in the unit's target schools, while the support teachers remain at the school during the school week (MEJOREDU, 2022).

With reference to the curriculum and the elimination or minimization of BAP, USAER brings to the school the following idea of inclusion: "[...] it is not the students who have to adapt the schools and their teaching method, but who must adapt to their needs to facilitate their full participation and learning, it is the inclusive spaces" (MEJOREDU, 2022, p. 39).

USAER's main objective is to plan and develop support strategies for the school institution to implement actions for all students, without neglecting specific actions in the context of classes. These strategies/actions are thought out and give rise to the document

called School Support Program (PAE). This document involves school management; pedagogical management; and also the socio-family environment of the students.

Basically, the PAE must contain: general school data; the BAP identified and prioritized; the objectives of the intervention and the implementation of support by context; coverage and quality indicators. The activities proposed in this document are divided into: a) advice, monitoring and guidance (schools, classes and families); b) diversified proposals (aimed at all students); c) specific proposals (in the classroom and for students with disabilities) (SEP, 2011).

The specific activities for students with disabilities are:

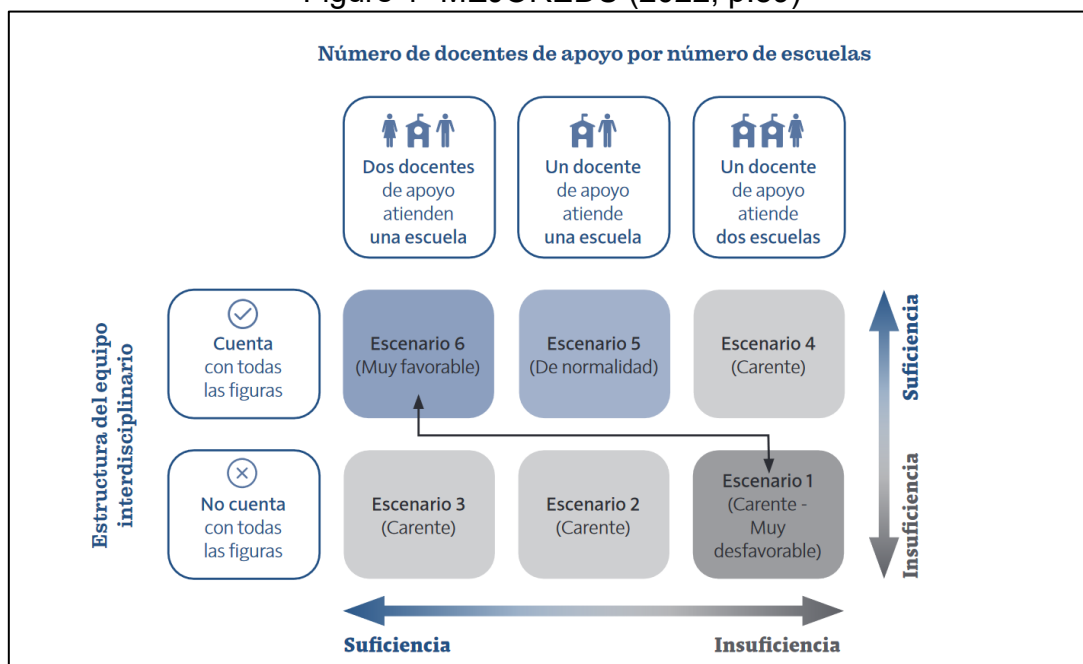
- a) Learn the braille system, means of communication and communication formats for the visually impaired population (blindness or low vision); learn Mexican Sign Language, and promote linguistic identity for people with hearing impairments, auditory and digitized voice systems, among others.
- b) Travel and orientation through mentoring-based work and peer support to strengthen the location, balance and mobility skills of the visually impaired population.
- c) Learning of specific content in the subjects of Spanish and Mathematics for students with visual, intellectual, and hearing impairments through methodologies and didactic sequences (MEJOREDU, 2022, p. 46).

Statistical data for the 2021-2022 school cycle show that the USAERs, through 4,737 teams, served 485,992 students: (70% of primary education – 341,500; 16% of secondary education – 78,200 and 14% of preschool – 66,129; and less than 1% of initial education – 163 students). These units had a total of 30,621 professors and 11,532 para-professors on their staff (SEP, DGPPYEE, 2022).

The data show that SEE (CAMs and USAERs) focus their efforts on primary education (6 to 11 years old), not worrying much about the initial, pre-school and secondary stages.

According to Mejoredu (2022), there are different USAER scenarios found in Mexican territory, as summarized in the following diagram:

Figure 1- MEJOREDU (2022, p.89)



That is, in the very favorable scenario, the team will be complete with all para-teachers and support/specialist teachers serving a single school. The data are more alarming when the study carried out by SEP informs that "[...] in general, the percentage of attention by the unit, including the 03 educational levels [pre-school, primary and secondary] [...], shows low coverage as it does not represent even half of the schools that require its services [which report that there is at least one student who requires specific attention]" (MEJOREDU, 2022, p. 48).

As a curiosity, it should be noted that only in the Mexican capital (Mexico City), there was a reformulation in 2015, which transformed USAER and CAPEP into UDEEI (Special Education and Inclusive Education Unit). However, the administrative records of all entities continue to be captured under the USAER denomination (MEJOREDU, 2022).

The idea of UDEEI was to serve the population in an educational situation of greater risk through a more versatile administrative structure in order to promote the intervention of para-teachers together with teachers, in school and socio-family contexts. The population at greatest risk is understood to be those with "[...] risk of being excluded from or from the school they attend; generally associated with issues of gender, disability, belonging to a certain ethnic group, migration, disease, among other factors" (SEP, AFSEDF, 2015, p. 12).

Having made these considerations, when we analyzed the statistical questionnaire of the 911 format – which captures the statistical information of the students, specifically those

called "CAM-1 Multiple Service Center for Special Education Statistics" and "USAER-1 Unit of Support Services for Regular Education of Special Education Statistics", we identified the public served by the SEE, namely: blindness; low vision; deafness; hearing loss; motor disability; intellectual disability; psychosocial disability; deaf blindness; autism spectrum disorder (ASD); multiple disabilities; attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) (except for initial education – 0 to 2 years); high intellectual abilities; high artistic skills; high/psychomotor skills; high socio-affective skills; high/creative skills - (except for initial education - 0 to 2 years); other conditions.

It is important to clarify that Special Education is not restricted to the care of students with disabilities, it also benefits indigenous, Afro-descendant, and migrant students, with behavioral difficulties and outstanding skills, as long as they face barriers that prevent their access, permanence, and transit in the educational services offered by the State [other conditions] (MEJOREDU, 2023, p.260)

It can be seen that the SEE public in Mexico is quite broad, mainly because it includes in the 911 questionnaire the options of psychosocial disability and other conditions. The Glossary of Disability Terms prepared by the Commission on Government Policy on Human Rights (MÉXICO, CPGMDH, p. 13) explains:

Derived from the social model that incorporates the human rights approach to the medical approach, the term psychosocial disability has recently emerged, which is defined as a restriction caused by the social environment and centered on a temporary or permanent impairment of the psyche due to the lack of timely diagnosis and adequate treatment of the following mental dysfunctions: major depression, bipolar disorder, borderline personality disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder, anxiety disorder, pervasive developmental disorders (autism and Asperger's syndrome), attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, panic disorder with post-traumatic, stress, borderline disorder, schizophrenia, schizoaffective disorder, eating disorders (anorexia and bulimia) and double disorder which is one of these dysfunctions, with one or more addictions.

In the "other conditions" category, NNA is at risk of access, permanence, learning, due to the barriers they face in school contexts, during classes and socio-family, due to aspects derived from their cultural and linguistic diversity (MEJOREDU, 2023, p. 356)

This breadth is a reflection of the National Strategy for Inclusive Education (2019) which, in a national agreement, set the objective

[...] progressively convert the current National Education System characterized by being standardized, centralized, inflexible, inequitable, and fragmented, into an inclusive, flexible, and relevant system that identifies, addresses, and eliminates BAP that occur within the education system and the environment, to promote girls' access, advancement, permanence, learning, participation, and completion of education, boys, adolescents and young people from all over the country, in their wide diversity, in equal conditions and opportunities (SEP, ENEI, 2019, p. 75, emphasis added).

When exploring the statistical data collected in the 2021-2022 school cycle, we found that 48% (312,770 students) were in the "other conditions" category, 16% (100,046) with visual impairment, 12% (77,804) with intellectual disability, 9% (58,241) with ADHD, 3% (20,047) with motor impairment, 4% (26,246) with ASD, 4% (22,962) with high abilities, 2% (13,603) with hearing impairment, 1% (330) deaf blind, 1% (7,513) psychosocial disability, 1% (8,463) multiple disability. Totalling 648,205 students, of these 458,269 (70%) benefited from USAER services through 4,737 support units (an average of 137 students per USAER unit) (SEP, DGPPYEE, 2022).

Without losing sight of this information, not without reasons, the current Mexican curriculum framework, based on the LGE, specifically in the second title that deals with the New Mexican School (NEM), established as premises: the quality, excellence and continuous improvement of Education, based on human rights. To this end, it lists inclusion as the first of the seven articulating axes of the curriculum.

Figure 2



Fonte: (SEP, DGCP, 2022)

According to SEP, the articulating axes bring:

[...] An educational perspective that places at the center of the educational processes territory-community, whose pedagogical principle is based on the elaboration of projects aimed at social justice and solidarity with the environment, and is not an individualistic education based on competencies to form human capital. These cross the entire educational curriculum map (SEP, DGCP, 2022, p. 92).

The articulating axis of inclusion contributes to "[...] to look at and question exclusion, racism, inequality and discrimination as a result of colonization processes that constitute violations of human dignity and to prevent the expression and recognition of our diversity" (MEJOREDU, 2023b, p. 05). This axis, according to the current curriculum framework, should prioritize throughout basic education:

- Life and human dignity as values that establish the duties and rights of society, such as the right to health and education.
- An intercultural education based on cooperation, solidarity and reciprocity, learned from other epistemologies equally valid as traditional scientific and humanistic knowledge.
- The formation of citizens for a participatory, deliberative and intercultural democracy, with full awareness of biodiversity and its relationship with human societies (SEP, DGCP, 2022, p. 95).

NEM has brought to the center of public educational policies no longer students or teachers, but the school community. According to article 14, paragraph I of the Mexican LGE, the school must be conceived "[...] as a center of community learning where knowledge, exchanges of values, norms, cultures and forms of coexistence in community and in the nation are built and converged" (MÉXICO, 1917).

Figure 3



Fonte: (SEP, DGCP, 2022)

Once the SOEs are duly presented, the public served by them and how the principle of inclusion is conceptually articulated with the Curricular Framework for Basic Education, it is worth pointing out some points of the Fortalecimiento de los Servicios de Educación Especial (PFSEE) Program.

BRIEF HISTORY OF THE FINANCING OF THE SEE

The Mexican federal government has a long-standing history of funding subsidies to federal entities via the program. As explained below, the PFSEE (S295) has been in force with its current format since 2019, and this is the only federal program with specific funding for the SEE. Historically, the current program is presented as a result of the following government actions, starting with

[...] the Research Project for Educational Integration sponsored by the Mexico-Spain Mixed Cooperation Fund, which operated from 1997 to 2002, coordinated by the Undersecretary of Basic Education, in which 28 federal entities and a sample of schools participated, which resulted in the S033 Program for the Strengthening of Special Education and Educational Integration, created in 2003, of which its main results stand out, as well as those of the Educational Inclusion and Equity Program S244, which operated from 2014 with three educational modalities, where Special Education was a component. Both programs were united in 2020 in PFSEE S295 (SEP, DGDC, 2023, p. 35).

Corroborating what Verduzco points out, Kral (2022), SEP (2006) informs us that from 1993 onwards it promoted a reorientation and reorganization of the SOE. In this way,

the complementary services (Psychopedagogical Centers and Integrated Groups) were transformed into USAERs and the "indispensable special education services" (Early Intervention Centers, Special Education Schools and Special Training Centers) were transformed into CAMs, because in the light of international agreements [World Conference on Education for All (1990); Salamanca Declaration (1994); Uniform Norms on Equal Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (UN, 1993), etc.] came to be considered segregating, as they were services separate from Regular Education and specialized care was focused on the clinical-therapeutic character. Practically in 1995, the USAERs and the organization of the decentralized management of Special Education by the SEP began. In this period, as we have seen in the history of SOE financing,

[...] Research has been carried out both to adapt international diagnostic instruments to the Mexican reality, to have scientific bases for the design of new psychopedagogical diagnostic instruments; pedagogical proposals, guides and materials for different disabilities based on the characteristics of Mexican children and their educational processes (ROSAS; AGUDIN, 2000, p. 29).

However, Cedillo (2018) asserts that it was only in 2017 that the SEP formally presented a proposal called "Route for the implementation of the educational model of inclusive education for Mexico", which consisted of

[...], in a nutshell, to implement ECE in 200 elementary schools and 50 upper middle schools that have voluntarily accepted their participation and that have the support of a USAER, in order to adequately serve students with disabilities and outstanding abilities and abilities. This is a type of pilot study. These schools would be supported to have the necessary infrastructure, teacher training, teaching materials, etc. With this initial strategy, it is thought (not how) that by the year 2030 all schools in the country will be inclusive (CEDILLO, 2018, p. 56-57, emphasis added).

In dialogue and in perspective, the situational analysis of Mexican education described at the beginning of the Sectoral Education Program (PSE-2020-2024) stands out, namely:

Corruption has been a historical burden for the development of the country, a situation that affects, to a greater or lesser extent, all spheres of national public life and all citizens. In the educational sector, the problem has several expressions and the list is long: fictitious schools, false diplomas, lack of school books, discretion in

the granting of scholarships, sale of vacancies, irregularities in the exercise of public spending and bidding, to name a few. In any of its manifestations, corruption affects the quality of education received by girls, boys, adolescents and young people in Mexico, with a greater impact on those who need it most (MÉXICO, PSE, 2020, p. 07).

Cupich and López (2015) report that the change of government in 2012 was marked by a social crisis due to the insecurity and violence of the presidential election. Or

[...] The Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) is reinstated. The actors change and the management of the Five-Year Plan. In the field of education, fundamental reforms in the educational system are promised, and the National Institute for Educational Evaluation is created. On the other hand, the PFEEIE disappears and is reformulated under the Vulnerable Groups Program (CUPICH; LÓPEZ, 2015, p. 10)

As we have seen, as of 2014, the funding of the SOEs became part of the Program for Educational Inclusion and Equity - S244, which operated from 2014 to 2019, with scarce resources. Showing, in a way, the fragility of the program that surrenders to political will and its operation is restricted to a few Special Education teachers (Jacobo and Lopes, 2015). With the election of the current president López Obrador, of the Movement for National Regeneration (Morena) party, for the six-year term (2019-2024), the single program for the financing of the SOEs was resumed, giving rise to the current PSFEE (S295).

Without losing sight of these points, it should be noted that the PSFEE is the main financing mechanism for the ESS. The program obtained a budget of 760 million pesos for the 2023-2024 school cycle. These resources were made available and optionally capitated by the Local Educational Authorities (AEL) - Secretariats of Education; and by the Federal Education Authority of Mexico City (AEFCM) – a decentralized body of the SEP.

The criteria for presenting the work plans/destination of the resources should include: up to 3% for the operationalization of the program, up to 70% for the population with disabilities and up to 50% for actions aimed at the population with high abilities, and the sum of expenses should add up to 100%. The program proposes 03 spending destinations: 1. Academic actions for educational agents on issues of disability and high abilities, 2. Complementary service actions for students with disabilities and/or with high abilities and 3. Specific equipment for the benefit of students with disabilities and/or high abilities (SEP, PSFEE, 2022). The operational rules of the program do not make clear the formula for the

calculations of the transfers, however it informs that SEP will evaluate each work plan according to the

[...] objectives of the PFSEE, taking into account fairness, subsidiarity and budgetary adequacy, under the following distribution criteria:

- Diagnosis presented by the AEL that accounts for the population served and the needs identified in the SOE.
- SEE number attended by students with disabilities and/or high abilities;
- Number of students with disabilities and/or high abilities.
- Number of teachers who are part of Special Education Services (SEP, PFSEE, 2022, p. 41)

When we divide the budget for the 2023-2024 school cycle (760 million pesos) by the number of SEE (6,434 – 1,666 CAMs and 4,768 USAERs), we have just over 118 thousand pesos per year (9.8 thousand pesos per month) for each unit. According to a diagnosis carried out by the General Directorate of Curriculum Development (DGDC), the resources allocated to the program compared to the population estimated to be served are insufficient even to cover the basic needs of the SEE (academic actions for Educational Agents, complementary assistance for the integral development of students, as well as equipment to improve learning and the development of students' skills) (SEP, DGDC, 2023).

With this panorama described in the Mexican SOE, below, we present the data regarding Special Education in Brazil.

SPECIAL EDUCATION IN BRAZIL

The Federative Republic of Brazil is politically divided into 27 federative units (26 states and one Federal District), which add up to 5,570 municipalities, covering a territorial area of 8.5 million km². Brazil is the largest country in territorial area in Latin America and fifth in the world.

According to the demographic census carried out by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE), in 2022 the country registered a population of approximately 203 million people (104.5 million (51.5%) women and 98.5 million (48.5%) men). According to the National Household Survey (2022), Brazil has 18.6 million people aged 2 and over with disabilities, which corresponds to 8.9% of the population in this age group. In this survey, the IBGE considered a person with a disability to be one with a disability

[...] 2 years of age or older who answered "has a lot of difficulty" or "has it, can't do it at all" in at least one of the functional domains investigated (seeing, hearing, walking, upper limb functioning, cognition, self-care, and communication), even using an assistive device (IBGE, 2023, p. 117)

The data cut of the continuous PNAD, by age group, shows that persons from 2 to 9 years old (3.1% - 761 thousand persons) and from 10 to 19 years old (3.1% - 993 thousand persons) have some disability. This means that approximately 1.8 million people with disabilities are in the age group of compulsory education in Brazil (04 to 17 years old). This group is a potential beneficiary of Special Education. However, it should be clarified that although the Continuous PNAD (2023) has made great strides in data collection and is following international standards of comparability based on the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF), according to the methodology of the Washington Group on Disability Statistics (WG), the cut adopted in Brazil as "Special Education audience" is conceptually different. As established by the Special Education Policy from the perspective of Inclusive Education (BRASIL, 2008), Special Education audiences are: students with disabilities [physical; hearing and deafness; blindness, low vision or monocular vision; intellectual; deafblindness and multiple], autism spectrum disorder (ASD)⁶ and high abilities or giftedness (INEP, 2023).

In Brazil, Basic Education is compulsory and free from 4 (four) to 17 (seventeen) years of age and is organized as follows: early childhood education [nursery, 0 to 3 years old; preschool, 4 to 5 years old]; Elementary School [initial years, 6 to 10 years; final years, 11 to 14 years] and High School [15 to 17 years] (BRASIL, 1996).

The Constitution of the Federative Republic of Brazil (CRFB) of 1988 established that education systems must act in collaboration with each other: the Municipalities with priority action in early childhood education; the States and the Federal District with priority in High School; and Elementary Education, under joint responsibility between States and Municipalities.

The CRFB of 1988 establishes that the Brazilian State will guarantee Specialized Educational Service (AEE) to students with disabilities, preferably in the regular school

⁶ "The term pervasive developmental disorder (PDD) was replaced in 2019 by autism spectrum disorder (ASD) in the collection of data from the School Census, in line with changes in national (Law No. 12764/2012) and international (DSM-5) legal regulations" (INEP, 2023, p. 05).

system. In addition, it establishes that the revenue to finance the right to Education will occur through the taxes of the Union (never less than 18%) and the States, the Federal District and the Municipalities (at least 25%). This amount must necessarily be spent on the Maintenance and Development of Education (MDE). However, the Constitution, despite establishing that public resources must be invested in public schools, it also opened loopholes for community, confessional or philanthropic schools to be recipients of public funds, on the condition that they are non-profit.

The Law that establishes the Guidelines and Bases of National Education (LDBEN) is 9.394 of December 20, 1996. This law regulates that SEA must be offered in a transversal way to all levels, stages and modalities, preferably in the regular education network. Thus, in article 59, item I, it establishes that the Education Systems must ensure to the Special Education public:

- I - specific curricula, methods, techniques, educational resources and organization, to meet their needs;
- II – specific terminality for those who cannot reach the level required for the completion of elementary school, due to their disabilities, and acceleration to complete the school program for the gifted in a shorter time;
- III - teachers with adequate specialization in secondary or higher education, for specialized service, as well as regular education teachers trained for the integration of these students in the common classes;
- IV – Special Education for work, aiming at their effective integration into life in society, including adequate conditions for those who do not reveal the ability to enter competitive work, through articulation with related official bodies, as well as for those who have superior ability in the artistic, intellectual or psychomotor areas;
- V – equal access to the benefits of supplementary social programs available for the respective level of regular education.

It is necessary to inform that to date, the Brazilian National Congress is in legislative delay regarding the regulation of the National Education System, that is, since the enactment of the CFRB/1988. This fact generates several obstacles to articulate the collaboration regime between the Education Systems. We agree with Dourado (2013, p. 777-778), when he points out that :

[...] understanding the complexity of Brazilian federalism is vital, especially if it is intended that the SNE be established as a form of organization that enables the

achievement of the purposes of education, in line with the constitutional statute of the regime of collaboration between the education systems (federal, state, district and municipal), making viable what is common to the spheres of public power (Union, states, the Federal District and municipalities): the guarantee of access to culture, education and science (art. 23, item V). [...]

Saviani (2010, p. 381-382) understands that the SNE means:

[...] unity of variety and not unity of identity. [...] system is not a monolithic, undifferentiated unity, but a unity of diversity, a whole that articulates a variety of elements that, when integrated into the whole, do not lose their own identity; on the contrary, they participate in the whole, integrate the system in the form of their respective specificities. This means that a monolithic unity is as averse to the idea of a system as a disjointed multiplicity. [...] the proper way to respond adequately to the educational needs of a country organized under the federative regime is precisely through the organization of a National Education System.

That is, for this author, a basic premise of a public NSS in a continental country like Brazil is the articulation around common purposes and interests, considering the uniqueness and diversity of each location.

Not without reason, at the current moment, when reaching the end of the validity of the National Education Plan (PNE) (2014-2024) about 90% of its goals will not be met.

The PNE is not being complied with. In its place, a series of public policies are put in place that go against what it advocates: discriminatory, exclusionary, censorship policies, and the emptying of the school as a living, democratic, transformative and free place. Thus, non-compliance with the National Education Plan is at the center of the barbarism that takes over national education (CNDE, 2023, p. 03).

In the same sense, Segatto, Oliveira and Silva (2024, p. 14) when evaluating the PNE, understand that:

Although the strengthening of national coordination through the redistribution of resources and national standardization has been fundamental for the reduction of regional inequalities and the guarantee of minimum standards in the provision of this policy, little progress has been made in relation to the strengthening of federative coordination and the collaboration regime, especially between states and municipalities (emphasis added).

Not by chance, there are several different scenarios in Brazil when specifically analyzing the modality of Special Education. For example, in the State of Espírito Santo, Vieira et al (2019) found that there are several types of "improvisations" that impoverish the SEA proposal (caregivers as pedagogical support, interns taking on a teaching role, support in the school shift, etc.). In dialogue with these authors, Oliveira (2021) found that in this state there was a direct allocation of large public resources to non-profit private initiative with the privatization of the AEE. The justification put forward was the need to expand the offer, but this political choice, for this author, is better understood as a stratagem for the maintenance and financial sustainability of specialized philanthropic institutions (OLIVEIRA, 2021). In the state of Paraná, from 2013 onwards, special institutions were transformed into Basic Education Schools in the Special Education modality, signaling that this state, in a way, is not obliged to finance public Special Education (PIAIA, 2016; LEHMKUHL, 2018), which goes against the PNEEPI (2008), as well as weakens the public education system.

Educational statistical data for Brazil from 2023 show that only 10% of students served by Special Education were enrolled in exclusive special schools. However, due to this action "within the state apparatus", the specialized institutions in the state of Paraná are responsible for 36% of the enrollments in Special Education.

It is also worth highlighting the case of the state of Rio de Janeiro, which has registered a concentration of students with disabilities in Youth and Adult Education classes, the "Special EJA" (PLETSCH, 2012); Closing our panorama, statistical data show that in some states we have the maintenance of public specialty centers (recognized by the educational census as public CAEE), such as Deafness Care Centers (CAS); Pedagogical Support Center for the Visually Impaired (CAP/DV); High Abilities/Giftedness Center (NAAH/S) for complementary or supplementary support for schooling, but in others they were simply closed on the understanding of being "privileged" spaces and/or distant from the current educational policy.

It should be noted that the central body responsible for directing public policies in Brazil is the Ministry of Education (MEC). This ministry has a secretariat responsible for Special Education policies, the Secretariat for Continuing Education, Literacy, Diversity and Inclusion (SECADI). Interestingly, this secretariat was extinguished by the previous government, which aimed to highlight exclusive special schools, replacing the 2008 PNEEPI with the infamous National Policy for Equitable, Inclusive and Lifelong Learning Special Education (BRASIL, 2020). However, on the same day of the inauguration of the

current president-elect, Luís Inácio Lula da Silva, in his first acts, he revoked the policy through Decree No. 11,370, of 2023 (BRASIL, 2023) and recreated SECADI.

Landim and Rebelo (2023), when analyzing this imbroglio of "alteration/replacement" of the PNEEPI, point out that, like any public policy, the PNEPPI should be improved based on the most recent research and discussions, however, this premise should not mean, in any way, that we remain under the tension of an "eternal restart".

Without losing sight of these nuances, currently in Brazil there is the following scenario: a well-founded PNEEPI of 2008 that provides that all students must be enrolled in regular education, and the Special Education modality is responsible for offering SEA, complementary or supplementary, to schooling. It can also be offered in nearby schools or in SEA Centers (CAEE), public or private. However, there is still the coexistence of numerous specialized non-profit institutions that raise public funds for the maintenance of exclusive special schools⁷ or privatizing complementary care (SES).

The 2023 school census recorded 47.3 million enrollments in basic education (37.9 million in the public network; 9.4 million in the private network). Of this universe, public students of Special Education correspond to about 4%, that is, 1.8 million students. According to the technical summary of the educational census, there was

[...] an increase of 41.6% compared to 2019. The largest number is in elementary education, which concentrates 62.9% of these enrollments. When evaluating the increase in the number of enrollments between 2019 and 2023, it can be seen that in early childhood education there was an increase of 193% in daycare enrollments and 151% in preschool enrollments (INEP, 2023, p. 50).

Therefore, 90% of Special Education enrollments are concentrated in regular education. However, only 42% of these students adhered to SEA (public or private), which directly impacts the planned public policy, whether in relation to the very concept of support for Special Education or financing.

It should be noted that the offer of complementary or supplementary Special Education support is mandatory by the Education Systems, however adherence is optional by parents and guardians. Adherence to SEA implies a series of significant nuances such as parents' time to return with the child in the opposite shift of schooling, spending on

⁷ It should be noted that specialized private philanthropic institutions are specifically focused on a specific segment of the Special Education public (intellectual disability, ASD and multiple disability), but which corresponds to more than 80% of enrollments in the modality.

transportation, realignment with other demands such as therapies, physiotherapies, clinical consultations, etc.

Certainly, the student with disabilities, whether or not he adheres to the SEA will be in the regular education system on a daily basis. Therefore, it seems to us to be easy to understand that despite the necessary investment in complementary and supplementary SEA, the greatest attention should be given to the moment that the student is in the regular class, together with his teachers and classmates.

DETAILING SOME CONCEPTS: DESIGN OF THE PROPOSAL FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION IN BRAZIL

In Brazil, the so-called specialized activities should be developed in the opposite shift of schooling, in the SEA, in a complementary or supplementary way, not to be confused with propaedeutic teaching that takes place in the regular classroom. The specialized activities listed are: development of cognitive functions (strategies for student autonomy and independence in the face of different situations in the school context); development of autonomous life (activities to take advantage of all school services and spaces, with or without the support of assistive technology); teaching accessible computer science (teaching, for example, the student to use screen readers and voice synthesizers, head tips, alternative keyboards, triggers, software for accessibility, so that the student has autonomy in the regular classroom); teaching of Brazilian Sign Language (Libras); teaching of the Portuguese language as a second language (teaching of the structure of the language, its linguistic system, functioning and variations, for reading and production of texts); teaching of calculation techniques in Soroban (mathematical operations); teaching of the Braille System (reading and writing); teaching orientation and mobility techniques (teaching students with VI how to move around safely, independently and autonomously); teaching the use of alternative and augmentative communication (expansion of communication channels - communication cards, communication boards with symbols, alphabetic boards, etc.); teaching the use of optical and non-optical resources (accessibility in reading and writing activities – adequate use of lighting, inclined plane, contrast, character magnification, notebooks with an enlarged line, thick writing pen, etc.); supplementary curricular enrichment for students with signs of high abilities/giftedness (organization of pedagogical practices supplementary to the curriculum for expansion and deepening in the various areas of knowledge) (INEP, 2023a).

It is perceived that the proposed design is strictly pedagogical, so that the specialist teacher seeks to identify the barriers to participation and learning in the school context and that he is able to eliminate or mitigate them by using and making available to the public student of Special Education a wealth of strategies and resources for the development of their autonomy respecting their singularities. However, there are still some points in Brazil in relation to Special Education that have not yet been settled, namely: what is the complementary workload necessary for this "instrumentalization"? How should this service be performed? How often? Does it have to be at the school itself? In what space? Individual or group care? Group of how many people? Specialist teacher has to master all the strategies listed? Is it necessary to deepen studies in the clinical area / in the type of disability, disorder or high abilities? Does complementary or supplementary SEA have to be in all schools or would it be better to establish "hub schools"?

Although there is no consensus, there is certainly no doubt that the place of SEA (complementary and supplementary) was designed to take place, in this order: in the school space itself, in nearby schools or in public or private CAEEs (OLIVEIRA, 2021).

In Brazil, the space chosen for the SEA was called the Multifunctional Resource Room (SRM), a space designed according to the following description:

Space located in basic education schools where specialized educational service (SES) is carried out. It consists of equipment, furniture, accessibility resources and didactic-pedagogical materials to serve schools with Special Education students. Multifunctional resource rooms can be implemented through a federal program or through the education systems' own resources. In addition, SEA must be carried out by a teacher with training in Special Education (INEP, 2023a, p. 16, emphasis added).

In turn, the "teacher with training in Special Education", commonly called SEA teacher, is responsible for preparing the SEA Plan. This professional prepares the plan

[...] with the participation of the teacher of the regular class, the family and the student, when possible, to meet the specific needs of this public [read complementary or supplementary activities]. During the case study, the first stage in the preparation of the plan, the SEA professor may liaise with health professionals and, if necessary, resort to the medical report, which, in this case, will be a subsidiary document, attached to the SEA Plan (INEP, 2023b, p. 60, emphasis added).

In dialogue with the SEA Plan, the teacher of the regular/regular classroom must prepare the Individualized Educational Plan (IEP). This plan must include the proposals, the planning, the way to monitor the pedagogical activities and the development of Special Education students (INEP, 2023b).

Therefore, in Brazil, the medical report, in theory, is seen as only a subsidiary document for teacher planning. Therefore, "[...] absence of the medical report cannot prevent the student's access to education, that is, to enrollment in school, or to specialized educational service (SES) (INEP, 2023b, p. 60).

Baptista (2011) reminds us that in 1994 a "special class" was provided for in each school, but it was at a historical moment when the advantages and importance of school inclusion were not yet discussed. Unlike this special room, SRM follows a diametrically laid path. According to Baptista (2011), after the PNEEPEI of 2008, we have a new moment, which is praised

[...] the importance of the teacher specialized in Special Education to ensure the existence of satisfactory and challenging school paths for students with disabilities. This importance is supported by the centrality of the resource room as the priority pedagogical device in the contemporary Special Education policy, considering its characteristic of not replacing the space of the common classroom for schooling (BAPTISTA, 2011, p. 65, emphasis added).

In accordance with these data, Pasian, Mendes and Cia (2014) recall that since 2005 this has been a new reality present in Brazilian schools, mainly due to the federal government's investment in the purchase and transfer of equipment, furniture and didactic-pedagogical and accessibility materials for the organization of SRM, in addition to offering training for teachers.

Notably, in Brazil, much progress has been made in terms of legislation and access to public Special Education students in regular schools. However, we agree that:

[...] access alone is not enough, and translating the philosophy of inclusion of laws, plans and intentions into the reality of systems and schools requires knowledge and practice. It is therefore necessary to ask: What is the necessary practice? And the knowledge needed to support the practice? And this is, without a doubt, an exercise for scientific research (MENDES, 2006, p. 402, emphasis added).

In this sense, Kassar (2022), when asking what would be, therefore, the "special" of Special Education, concluded that the "special/specialized" has to do with the purpose of the area of knowledge and not with the specialty. That is, Special Education is "committed to enabling the schooling process, in all the senses that "being a student" involves". For the author:

[...] the excess of specificity favors the idea that "special" issues do not belong to the field of General Education, favoring the invisibility of Special Education students in front of the school. [...] it is up to Special Education today, as a field of knowledge and action, to build paths that can go beyond its specificity, without, however, ceasing to consider its existence (KASSAR, 2022, p. 25, emphasis added).

In dialogue and perspective, the PNEEPEI in force since 2008, guides the inclusive educational process in Brazil. A process that begins even before the classes themselves. That is, it begins with the guarantee of the presence of all students in regular education; in the delimitation of the public to be served by Special Education; with an individual case study to identify barriers to participation and learning; planning and collaborative work with regent teachers; and in the shift contrary to schooling, in a complementary or supplementary way, the offer of resources and strategies to support students in regular classes, so that students can build paths for them to enjoy their right to school education with equality and justice. Therefore, this perspective, guided by an educational system with an emphasis on human rights, is only possible with adequate funding invested in regular public schools (OLIVEIRA, 2021).

The craft of teaching and learning from others is exclusive to the teaching function (teacher in interrelation with his students in a school). Therefore, in this dimension, the changes/adjustments in the physical structure of schools, the expansion of teachers' planning, greater appreciation of the career, in addition to the need to rethink the student-teacher relationship (smaller number of students per class) so that the educational process reaches everyone with equal conditions, gains special relevance.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The data obtained from the comparative analysis between Mexico and Brazil, with regard to the SEE, provide us with a comprehensive view of Special Education. The data show that the way inclusion is thought of guides how specialized support reaches the

school, in the sense of incorporating the social model of disability, detaching itself from the medical-clinical model once and for all. However, the tensions and interests for the permanence of services still based on the medical-clinical paradigm of disability are not denied. It is clear that both countries are in a phase of transition/approximation to the paradigm of full inclusion. The normative system of the two countries is based on the main international conventions that deal with human rights and the rights of people with disabilities. However, the qualitative leap that conventions require seems to arrive very slowly in schools, as their precarious structures for educational provision remain intact.

In Mexico, the Special Education public encompasses a broader conception of school inclusion, encompassing, in addition to students with disabilities, all those who are at risk of not having access, participation or learning. This peculiar characteristic certainly impacts the way support is available and, consequently, the financing, since the support teams are responsible for about five schools, with different realities. In Brazil, although there is a limited public and specialized support is "available" to all schools, funding still lacks greater transparency. In Brazil, there is still a fierce dispute with the non-profit private sector for public resources. In our view, this "normative loophole" of using the so-called specialized non-profit institutions is a clear barrier to the original intention of having a school for all, with quality and with trained teachers and with pedagogical and structural conditions to carry out effective work.

In this sense, an important common point concerns the maintenance of Special Schools, in Mexico through CAMs and in Brazil through APAEs and similar ones. The contradiction lies in the announcement of a school that fully respects human rights and, at the same time, in the interests in maintaining "other spaces" that distance themselves from pedagogical practice. The data indicate that these spaces remain, as there is, in a way, a strong resistance and social appeal regarding the understanding of which would be the place of greatest benefit for students with disabilities. It should always be emphasized that, when talking about students, they are necessarily linked to regular schools.

The implications of the findings of this study, in our view, transcend their purely academic relevance, as they demonstrate that school inclusion involves people, feelings and historical struggles. Without the pretense of having the truth or the final word on the subject, we assume an interdisciplinary perspective of knowledge (ELIAS, 1994). In this sense, it is necessary to rethink Special Education under the axis of the paradigm of full inclusion, but we undoubtedly emphasize that it is necessary to start by problematizing the

structure of the school and the working conditions of teachers, who no longer satisfactorily attended to more homogeneous classes, let alone the most diverse ones that we now desire.

Special Education is by no means the end point of a process. It is a process, it is a path. We understand school inclusion as an experience that takes place in social interrelations — a space of bonds of dependencies and interdependencies that generate ways of life delineated by tensions. That said, it is imperative to recognize the inherent limitations of this study, which is still in development. It includes, therefore, a closer look at the financing of Special Education Services, which in Mexico seems to be more nationally coordinated and in a more focused way, while in Brazil, probably due to the absence of a National Education System, it is very dissipated, so that we have not been able to define whether there is underfunding or simply negligence.

In conclusion, this study contributes substantially to the still timid body of research in Comparative Education focused on Special Education, highlighting the continuing importance of investigations into how and why we do what we do and think what we think.

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