

## **NAPNE e o sucesso de estudantes com necessidades específicas: uma breve revisão de como educar para convivência e aceitação da diversidade**

The NAPNE and the success of students with special needs: a brief review of how to teach how to live with and accept diversity

NAPNE y el éxito de los estudiantes con necesidades específicas: una breve reseña de cómo educar para la convivencia y la aceptación de la diversidad

Mayker Lazaro Dantas Miranda 

Instituto Federal de Mato Grosso do Sul, *Campus* Campo Grande, Campo Grande, MS, Brasil  
[mayker.dantas@ifms.edu.br](mailto:mayker.dantas@ifms.edu.br)

Luiza Helena Araujo de Oliveira 

Instituto Federal do Triângulo Mineiro, *Campus* Uberlândia Centro, Uberlândia, MG, Brasil  
[luizaoliveira@iftm.edu.br](mailto:luizaoliveira@iftm.edu.br)

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### **RESUMO**

Os NAPNEs foram instituídos nos sistemas de ensino brasileiro através da resolução Nº 024/2013 DE 1 DE MARÇO DE 2013, que aprova o Regulamento Institucional do Núcleo de Apoio a Pessoas com Necessidades Educacionais Específicas (NAPNE). Os sistemas de ensino devem matricular todos os alunos, cabendo às escolas organizar-se para o atendimento aos educandos com necessidades educacionais especiais, assegurando as condições necessárias para uma educação de qualidade para todos. Nesse contexto, os objetivos do presente estudo foi compilar, através de uma breve revisão de literatura, como o NAPNE atua para mediar a educação inclusiva; mostrar alguns desafios enfrentados pelo núcleo para fortalecer a política de educação inclusiva no Brasil e evidenciar o mutualismo entre os pilares escola/família/professores/NAPNE. Metodologicamente, esse estudo se classifica como uma pesquisa qualitativa, que se preocupa em entender o fenômeno da inclusão educacional de pessoas com necessidades especiais a partir de cada contexto escolar. Essa breve revisão traz como resultado uma visão ampla dos trabalhos desenvolvidos pelos NAPNEs. Possibilitou mostrar também como os núcleos são importantes para execução de uma verdadeira educação inclusiva, além de despertar

para a necessidade de divulgação dessas ações educacionais para o Brasil e o mundo. As ações desenvolvidas pelos núcleos são valorizadas pelos alunos e seus familiares além de serem fundamentais para o pleno funcionamento das escolas. Em suma, muitos são os desafios da educação inclusiva e poucas são as publicações científicas que descrevem claramente o processo de inclusão dos alunos com deficiência no âmbito escolar.

**Palavras-chave:** Educação Inclusiva no Brasil; Aprender a Ensinar; Pedagogia da Sensibilidade.

## ABSTRACT

The Núcleo de Apoio a Pessoas com Necessidades Educacionais Específicas (NAPNE), which is a Brazilian institution that supports people who have special educational needs, was approved by Resolution no. 024/2013 issued on March 1st, 2013 in Brazil. Teaching systems must enroll every student and schools must organize their structures to assist the ones who have special educational needs and ensure conditions to provide quality Education to all. Therefore, this literature review aimed at compiling data on how the NAPNE works to mediate inclusive Education, at showing some challenges face by the institution to strengthen policies on inclusive Education in Brazil and at highlighting mutualism among four pillars, i. e., school, family, faculty and the NAPNE. Regarding methodology, this qualitative study concerns with the phenomenon of educational inclusion of people who have special needs in the school context. Its results have provided a broad view of work developed by the NAPNE. They also enabled to show how important the NAPNE is to conduct true inclusive Education and to make people aware of the need to publicize its educational activities in Brazil and all over the world. Activities carried out by the NAPNE are not only highly appreciated by students and their families but also fundamental to the whole functioning of schools. In short, inclusive Education has several challenges but there are few papers that clearly describe the inclusion process of students who have special needs in school.

**Keywords:** Inclusive Education in Brazil; To learn how to teach; Pedagogy of Sensitivity

## RESUMEN

Los NAPNE fueron establecidos en los sistemas educativos mediante resolución N° 024/2013, DE 1 DE MARZO DE 2013, que aprueba el Reglamento Institucional del Centro de Atención a Personas con Necesidades Educativas Específicas (NAPNE). Los sistemas educativos deben matricular a todos los estudiantes, y las escuelas son responsables de organizarse para atender a los estudiantes con necesidades

educativas especiais, garantizando las condiciones necesarias para una educación de calidad para todos. En este contexto, el presente estudio tuvo como objetivo recopilar, a través de una breve revisión de la literatura, cómo funciona NAPNE para mediar la educación inclusiva; mostrar los desafíos que enfrenta el núcleo para fortalecer la política de educación inclusiva en Brasil y resaltar el mutualismo esencial entre los pilares escuela/familia/profesores/NAPNE. Metodológicamente, este estudio se cataloga como una investigación cualitativa, la cual se preocupa por comprender el fenómeno de la inclusión educativa de personas con necesidades especiales desde cada contexto escolar. Esta breve reseña da como resultado una visión amplia del trabajo realizado por las NAPNE implementadas en todo Brasil. También permitió mostrar la importancia de los centros para implementar una verdadera educación inclusiva, además de despertar la necesidad de difundir estas acciones educativas en todo Brasil y el mundo. Por tanto, este breve repaso nos permite concluir que las actuaciones desarrolladas por los centros son valoradas por el alumnado y son fundamentales para el pleno funcionamiento de los centros educativos. Sin embargo, existen muchos desafíos para la educación inclusiva y existen pocas publicaciones científicas que describan claramente el proceso de inclusión de estudiantes con discapacidad en el entorno escolar.

**Palabras clave:** Educación Inclusiva en Brasil; Aprender a Enseñar; Pedagogía de la Sensibilidad.

## Introduction

Special Education (SE) in Brazil was first registered in 1854 and in 1857, when the Imperial Institute of Blind Boys and the Imperial Institute of the Deaf and the Dumb, respectively, opened in Rio de Janeiro, RJ. Both institutions made Brazil become the first Latin-american country to offer learning spaces for people with disabilities. Private and philanthropic institutions, such as the Pestalozzi Society (1926), the Association of Assistance to Disabled Children (AACD) (1950), the Association of Disabled People's Parents and Friends (APAE) (1954) and the Brazilian Association of Rehabilitation (ABBR) (1954), emerged in the 20th century to assist people with special disabilities. In the 1960's and the 1970's, two Laws of Educational Guidelines and Bases (no. 4,024 issued on December 20th, 1961 and no. 5,692 issued on August 11th, 1971) established that students with disabilities should be taught in the regular teaching system. In these decades, two documents were also approved: one was

issued by the Federal Council of Education and the other was a letter written by the national president of the APAE asking for inclusion of “impaired students” (the term used at that time) in educational policies (Schabbach; Rosa, 2021).

Success was achieved when SE was included in the Statute of the Child and the Adolescent (law no. 8,069 issued on July 13th, 1990) and in the Law of Guidelines and Bases (LDB) (law no. 9,394 issued on December 20th, 1996) related to Brazilian Education. SE started to be a category in school which was offered by the regular teaching system to students with disabilities, pervasive developmental disorders and high cognitive skills or intellectual giftedness (law no. 9,394 issued on December 20th, 1996, article 58). The LDB presupposed the need for specialized assistance to students with special needs and offers curricula which are adequate to needs, methods, educational resources and specific didactic-pedagogical organization (Schabbach; Rosa, 2021).

In Brazil, all are equal before the law and are entitled, without any discrimination, to equal protection of the law. The Brazilian and foreigners who live in the country have the right to life, freedom, equality, safety and property. The 1998 Federal Constitution ensures that Education is for everybody regardless of any disability. Education is based on respect and acceptance of differences and on individuals’ dignity in their biopsicosocial environment. Therefore, SE emerged as the fundamental right that all children have to quality Education and appropriate learning environment. SE acknowledges and values differences among students and gives sense to every human being’s particularities (Brandão; Ribeiro; Ruas, 2021).

Advancing historically and chronologically, Decree no. 7,611/2011 established the implementation of the Núcleo de Apoio a Pessoas com Necessidades Educacionais Específicas (NAPNE), which is a Brazilian institution that supports people who have special educational needs. It emerged to account for a set of policies that comprises the National Policy on Special Education (PNEE) which showed the need to implement accessibility centers in federal teaching institutions. Data issued by the Census of Basic Education carried out by the Inep (2019) showed that just 73,9% of federal schools have some accessibility resources for people with disabilities in

Brazil (adapted facilities; accessible rooms; sound, tactile and visual signs), but state and city schools exhibit 45,7% and 46,7% of accessibility, respectively; thus, there is a long way to go in the inclusion process (Cavalcante; Silva; Lemos, 2021).

Nowadays, structuring of NAPNEs depends much on local management in every Federal Institute and inclusive Education has its own way in every teaching institution. Management teams in every institution have reported difficulties in hiring professionals to carry out specialized educational assistance and in assisting students with special needs continuously (Silva, 2022a).

The NAPNE is a deliberative sector in an institution which conducts the implantation and implementation of the TECNEP Program (Education, Technology and Professionalization of People with Special Educational Needs). Internally, it aims at articulating several sectors of the institution regarding activities of inclusion of people with special educational needs and at defining priorities and all didactic-pedagogical material to be used with them. Externally, it aims at developing partnerships with institutions and organizations that teach professional courses to people with special educational needs, public organizations and others. Its main objectives are to develop, in the institution, the culture of Education for living with and accepting diversity and to break architectural, educational and attitudinal barriers (Dalmonech et al., 2023).

Therefore, this brief review aimed at compiling information on educational activities carried out by NAPNEs and at showing how they play their roles in the society as essential sectors for inclusive Education in Brazil.

## Methodological Procedures

The methodological procedure of this study was a brief review of the NAPNE based on data found in papers – published by Brazilian journals – which objectively described its everyday activities in Brazilian teaching institutions. Data were collected in Google Scholar and Scientific Electronic Library Online (SciELO). Descriptors were NAPNE, SE and NAPNE in Integrated High School. The criterion of inclusion in the sample was the fact that the paper should address implementation and functionality of

NAPNEs in the period under investigation. Papers that did not address the importance and contributions of the NAPNE to SE were excluded. To produce data, a qualitative and descriptive analysis was carried out to report and discuss them in the light of relevant contributions given by experts in this educational field (Rodrigues; Oliveira; Santos, 2021).

## **Inclusive Education in Brazil**

The word inclusion implies the idea of exclusion, since one may only include what was previously excluded, i. e., the inclusion process is given credibility by the logics of inclusion-exclusion. Thus, when one addresses the issue of inclusion of students with disabilities in regular schools, one shows the exclusion process that these people were historically subject to. For some reason, they were “classified” into different from the standard that was accepted as desirable by the society. To think about inclusive Education is to think about something which is being constructed since when schools include students with disabilities in regular classes, they need to guide their pedagogical actions to practices that effectively assist the students and are adequate to their potentialities and needs (Trevisan; Romanelli, 2021).

Inclusive Education, a recent achievement within historical milestones in Education, results from a process of battles and legal conquests in the Brazilian society. The PNEE, from the perspective of inclusive Education: the global movement towards inclusion is a political, cultural, social and pedagogical action triggered to defend the right all students have to be together, learning and participating, with no discrimination. In 2011, Decree no. 7,651 contributed to ensure and establish duties the State has, i. e., to offer an inclusive educational system at all levels, with no discrimination and based on equal opportunities. This new conception led to the need for several changes in the management of inclusive Education, new pedagogical strategies, structure and professional qualification; in sum, a large educational restructuring (Trevisan; Romanelli, 2021).

The trajectory of inclusive Education is not linear. There are advances and setbacks. The former result from several battles which were not always successful. Inclusive Education has become a challenge in educational sectors – public and private ones – and has required changes so that the right to Education actually comes true in schools. However, to enable changes to happen, the whole society must get involved to ensure effective inclusion of students with disabilities in regular schools (Reis et al., 2023).

Interest in this study may be explained because there are few papers that report studies of this theme – inclusion of students with disabilities in federal schools – and because access to Federal Institutes tends to increase after Laws no. 12,711 and no. 13,409. Another remarkable effort made by this study is supported by the relevance it represents in the national scenario to outline a way of constructing an inclusive policy in Federal Institutes. In 2008, due to the re-structuring of federal institutions, NAPNeS were actually instituted as a way of broadening the policy on inclusive Education by interfering with assistance and support to develop pedagogical strategies and by ensuring assistance to students with disabilities who attend the institution. Nowadays, all federal institutions, in their campi, must have the NAPNE to promote the development of inclusive Education and to support the development of pedagogical strategies (Dias; Mascarenhas, 2020).

In Brazil, public laws and policies launched in the last decades, in agreement with international treaties, have aimed at ensuring students with special needs to have access to common schools. Therefore, Specialized Educational Assistance (SEA) is offered as a complement to students' development. SEA offers resources, services and orientation to mitigate difficulties and to overcome obstacles in the processes of teaching and learning. Regarding theory and methodology, inclusive Education has four different perceptions of the concepts of inclusion: I) to include students with special needs in common schools; II) to provide specific support to students with special needs; III) to provide specific support to all students; and IV) to construct communities with specific characteristics (Françozo; Belderrain, 2019).



## Special Education in Brazil

History of Humankind shows that persecution, abandonment, marginalization, discrimination and exclusion determine treatments given to people with disabilities. Some practices include punishment while others include charity. Advances in Medicine and capitalist interests led to the emergence of special schools concerned with socialization and Education of people with disabilities. SE aims at people with disabilities in schools which have infrastructure and staff to host and teach them appropriately.

According to Dupin and Silva (2020), the milestones in the History of SE in Brazil were the opening of the Institute of Blind Boys and the Institute of the Deaf and the Dumb in Rio de Janeiro, RJ, in 1854 and 1857, respectively, by the Imperial government. It should be highlighted that, firstly, attention was given to specific disabilities, such as visual and auditory ones, and few people were assisted in these institutes by comparison with the number of people with disabilities in the country. Even so, they were valuable moments, since this medical-pedagogical and psychopedagogical trend influenced educational changes in the light of the Ideology of the New School in the 1920's and 1930's.

After the Second World War, the economic model in the country underwent changes and Elementary School became more popular in an attempt to decrease illiteracy. In 1932, educators who advocated a non-traditional educational movement publicized a document that proposed the reconstruction of the educational system, criticized the fragmented traditional model and suggested that the school should be a means of social ascension for less favored individuals. Dupin and Silva (2020) stated that the Ideology of the New School triggered many changes in Education in 1920 and that Elementary and High Schools were expanded and the University of São Paulo was founded between 1930 and 1940. There was an increase in the number of public centers of special teaching in regular schools from 1950 to 1959. The Association of Disabled People's Parents and Friends (APAE) was created in 1954. The Brazilian Government offered educational assistance to people with disabilities in the



“Campaign of Education of the Deaf in Brazil” in 1957. The “National Campaign of Education and Rehabilitation of the Visual Impaired” was launched in 1958 while the “National Campaign of Education and Rehabilitation of the Mentally Impaired” was launched in 1960.

According to Drago and Gabriel (2023), the number of centers of special teaching for mentally impaired increased 4-fold from 1960 to 1969. The National Center of Special Education (CENESP) was created in Brazil in 1973. It became SESP (Department of Special Education) in 1986 but, four years later, it was extinguished and its tasks were transferred to the SENEb (National Department of Basic Education). In 1992, the Department of Special Education (SEESP) was created again. There were many changes in federal institutions of SE in Brazil in a short period of time. The number of movements in favor of rights of people with disabilities was remarkable from 1976 to 1981. The “International Year of People with Disabilities” was 1981.

What should be said about the laws? The 1988 Brazilian Constitution, also known as the Supreme Law, regulates legal activities, from simple ones to complex ones. Article 208 states that “the State has the duty to ensure specialized educational assistance to people with disabilities, preferably in regular schools”. Since a disability is a person’s existential condition, old inappropriate terms were abandoned and the term person with disability was defined by the United Nations Convention on Rights of People with Disabilities. It was approved by the UN General Assembly on December 13th, 2006. In Brazil, equivalent to a constitutional amendment, this term was ratified by Legislative Decree no. 186/2008 and promulgated by Decree no. 6,949/2009 (Santos; Nozu, 2021).

The term used for referring to people with disabilities has undergone changes but the application of the essential right that people with disabilities have to get specialized educational assistance has not changed. It has been regulated by the Supreme Law for decades, but reality has been different in practice. There were many achievements in relation to Education of people with disabilities up to the 1990’s. There was advance in assistance and policies on social integration. Two global events played a key role in promoting problematizing issues concerning Education for all: “Global

Conference on Education for All” in Jomtiem, Thailand in 1990 and “World Conference on Special Needs Education” in Salamanca, Spain in 1994 (Reis et al., 2023).

Reis and collaborators (2023) reported that discussions about the new model of school assistance called school inclusion started in Brazil in the mid 1990's. The term SE does not mean inclusive Education since the latter aims at acknowledging and valuing diversity. The educational process of inclusion is a social process that encompasses all individuals, i. e., the ones with disabilities and/or the ones with learning difficulties. Inclusion ensures students' access to teaching institutions and aims at eliminating obstacles that limit learning. This teaching mode has been disseminated more often and recurrently in the last years. A document entitled “National Policy on Special Education from the Perspective of Inclusive Education” (2008) aims at ensuring that people with disabilities, development disorders, intellectual giftedness and high cognitive skills may access the so-called regular schools. Inclusive Education treats people with equity and considers their special needs (Reis et al., 2023).

To enable it to happen, all people who are involved in the process, such as teachers, students, school managers, families, the society and the State, must commit. It should be highlighted that teachers need to learn about students' rights, institutions' duties and the role of the State. Health professionals, such as psychologists and psychopedagogues, must contribute to re-structure diversified and flexible curriculum proposals. Families must be involved in the process; thus, students, teachers, managers in teaching institutions, specialized professionals and family members must work together. Need for inclusion is real; it is evident and urgent, but how to include has been a major concern for people who are involved in the process. To enable inclusion, short training courses, remote post-graduate programs and in-service programs are not enough. A process of structural transformations in the educational system and in families is fundamental. The challenge, i. e., empowering people to transform them requires changes in people's minds, which means transforming the society. It is hard and continuous work, rather than being specific and periodic.

## **NAPNE: humanized welcome and sensitivity to perceive personal and educational needs**

In an interdisciplinary context, the NAPNE aims at addressing, suggesting and transforming the academic ways in which students with educational needs face their processes of learning and teaching. Humanized assistance goes beyond students with some disabilities, autism, intellectual giftedness and high cognitive skills because it also encompasses students with functional disorders, limitations in learning, stroke and others (Silva; Silva, 2021).

Since the NAPNE is an interdisciplinary agency, it must disregard prepotent, unidirectional and permissive academic positions and focus on less pretentious, insensitive and arrogant pedagogical practices. The new synthesis of knowledge moves towards the effort of approximating, breaking barriers, relate and integrate knowledge. It aims at developing and guiding the processes of teaching and learning with adequate and overlapping curriculum adaptations and flexibility to enable teachers to carry out cohesive work, search for new methods to plan their actions, solve concrete problems and take appropriate decisions (Santos; Fonseca; Souza, 2021).

A major problem faced by the NAPNE all over Brazil is working with teachers who are not prepared to work in the field, since they do not have enough knowledge of SE and harm specialized assistance, making it incipient. Unprepared teachers did not attend – neither looked for – Education programs that teach how to deal with this demand (Santos; Vilaronga; Mendes, 2023).

Regarding interdisciplinarity, students' legal rights to get other types of assistance by a multiprofessional team cannot be denied. Besides, when professionals are available in institutions, there should be specialized educational help, sign language translators, audio description experts, readers, learning support teachers and others. It agrees with the NAPNE, which is an important agency to students' and workers' academic lives. However, interdisciplinarity must be broadened to enable better comprehension and integration of knowledge so that students with educational

needs may experience appropriate adaptations to their learning and teaching processes (Silva, 2022b).

The NAPNE must be a strategic, specialized and humanized sector in teaching institutions, with skilled and dedicated workers who focus on this sector and get specific orientation. It should also be pointed out that resources must be allocated not only to acquire and develop support technology but also to offer all dimensions of accessibility. It may be added that the NAPNE is a space that manages mediating knowledge, i. e., interconnected knowledge towards practices that may provide adequate conditions to learn when very specific situations emerge. The NAPNE is based on knowledge connected to communication, mutual understanding, the world of life, institutional routine and procedures that contribute to identify limits. In short, NAPNEs aim at proposing ways of advancing to students when the limits express the need for specific, interdisciplinary practices, rather than standardized ones.

### **Challenges faced by the NAPNE in its mission to “teach how to live together”**

There is a new challenge in Brazilian Education which requires several changes in institutions. Changes mean awareness raising and mobilization which enable to carry out actions that value diversity as an element to enrich learning. Solidification of an inclusive and democratic space in schools, at any level, goes beyond a standardized action. Inclusion must be based on acknowledgement of differences and experiences. Inclusion must be based on acknowledgment of differences and experiences. Reflection on educational practices must establish inclusive didactics that respects every individual's needs and promotes his/her development. Thus, students must learn how to overcome challenges offered by the educational system autonomously. There is still a long way to go towards full inclusive Education.

The idea of inclusion must be seen as respect and acceptance of others. Students have to show their potentialities and prove themselves to be able to live normally in society. The importance that academic spaces represent socially, mainly as centers which produce, mediate and disseminate knowledge, is the promotion of

democratic and collective learning spaces. It is important to discuss “inclusion” to create opportunities “to problematize several social, cultural, political and pedagogical issues” (Haas; Bezerra, 2023).

Multiprofessional teams have lately been composed of teachers from different areas and administration staff (pedagogues, social workers, psychologists, assistants and sign language interpreters) who, collaboratively, aim at promoting and encouraging Education which focuses on living with others and inclusion. In coordinators’ perception, the main challenges faced by inclusion are: shortage of structure, lack of specific skills and scarcity of human and technical resources. In general, teachers have ceaselessly insisted that there is no specialized educational assistance (Wingler, 2021; Vilaronga, 2021).

Much criticism has been made of the lack of a cohesive team; for instance, an NAPNE team (composed of workers from several sectors) who works specific hours. In this respect, the fact that the NAPNE team does not dedicate specific hours to its actions ends up overloading the coordinator. Another issue refers to the fact that very few temporary professionals have been hired to provide specific assistance to students, since this process has to follow the government’s bureaucratic rules, which delayed hiring of carers/readers, sign language interpreters and others. Participants also pointed out structural and architectural issues. Besides, teachers’ lack of skills and other intrinsic topics related to their educational processes have been highlighted (Santos; Mori, 2024). Three issues reveal recurrent problems that hinder full development of NAPNE’s actions:

- a) Teachers’ resistance against needed adaptation/adequacy to develop the processes of teaching and learning without excluding the ones who need attention;
- b) Teachers’ development and willingness to carry out inclusive actions;
- c) Specific development and pedagogical awareness of the academic community.

To identify students who have special needs precociously is a challenge. After they are identified and their skills and needs are known, the best way to ensure

successful learning must be planned. We advocate the need for continuing Education and reinforcement of actions that promote the culture of inclusion and respect for diversity.

Current schools have already verified that there has been a larger number of disorders related to neurodevelopment, such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Other disorders have been observed in intellectual, visual and auditory areas. The high number of students with depression and generalized anxiety disorder should be pointed out, along with data on students with high skills and intellectual giftedness.

Many laypersons wonder how this public ends up in traditional schools. The first students with special needs that are identified as such are the ones that get vacancies offered to students with disabilities, in agreement with Law no. 13.409 from 2016 which deals with vacancies in High School technical courses and undergraduate programs in federal institutions. School coordinators analyze their enrollment processes and include them in the group of students assisted by the NAPNE. Besides, students whose parents present medical reports and/or medical, psychological or psychopedagogical evaluations to the institutions are added to the group. Another way of identifying these students results from teachers' observation. It is called "teacher's recommendation". In this case, coordinators highlight the subjective perception of the whole school community and forward the request to the NAPNE, after having talked to students' parents (Dias; Silva, 2020).

From an inclusive perspective, SE has not been successful in federal institutions yet; it is a theme that has to advance much. It is not the sole responsibility of the institution that welcomes students; national policies must favor investments in teachers' educational processes, construction of schools with inclusive architecture and professionals that may assist and care for students and their needs. Regarding the multiprofessional team, even though it is found in every school, the fact that there is only one professional from every area to account for the pedagogical and administrative dynamics of the institution and to participate in several councils and

centers is very restrictive. Thus, NAPNE's members may not have adequate conditions to care for SE students and many actions may not be carried out.

Despite the challenges, the NAPNE is extremely important in the context of federal educational institutions not only because it gathers much knowledge and promotes assistance but also because it is an agency that develops research, teaching and extension, thus, it enables students to live in an equal and fair society. The center fights for the maintenance of the service; therefore, since every state or unit that represents Federal Institutions has its own regulation, further in-depth studies are fundamental to understand the NAPNE. Other terms have been used, such as accessibility center, to differentiate the roles that the NAPNE has to play. Despite historical advances, much has to be done to effectively include students with disabilities in professional Education and, consequently, in the world of work.

Through this reflection, this study aims not only at meeting immediate needs of youngsters with disabilities but also at contributing to construct a fairer and more inclusive society. It means changes in public policies and a cultural transformation that acknowledges and values diversity as a resource, rather than a limitation.

In sum, results of this study showed that policies on Education which aim at students with special needs have advanced in terms of research and legislation. However, it should be highlighted that there are many obstacles, such as insufficient pre-service and in-service teacher Education programs and the poor culture of Education based on respect for differences.

## Final remarks

In Education, subjects with disabilities are "special students" whose specific needs require resources, equipment and specialization levels which depend on their physical, sensory or mental conditions. In the dimensions of health, they are treated as "patients", subject to late interventions with a healing character, while, in the field of social assistance, they are "beneficiaries" who do not have resources that are essential for their lives and are subject to the concession of temporary benefits or restrictive



permanent ones. In these sectors, we have observed isolated and symbolic actions together with incipient laws, projects and initiatives which are not articulated among all public spheres. In all cases, we may notice the conception of a fragmented, incomplete subject with no incorporation of the multiple dimensions of human life.

Findings in the literature show that NAPNEs should constitute a space where humanity and resistance are able to face not only social stigmas and stereotypes but also all forms of discrimination. Their attributions and characteristics of intervention and help to people with special needs go beyond mere guidance and practice since they constitute a space to break paradigms and attitudinal barriers, thus, enabling students with special needs to learn better. In this regard, inclusion goes beyond the obligation of enrollment and enables students to keep studying at high levels of artistic creation, scientific production and technology. Students' peculiarities, i. e., their differences, must be acknowledged. They must be shown and people must be aware of them, rather than discriminate and disregard them. Hence, the urgency of democratic and emancipatory Education as an alternative to overcome differences. Obstacles must be removed day by day to ensure access and permanence of students with disabilities in school.

This brief review of published papers showed that "to be different is to be normal"! The fundamental right to be different arises with the right to equality. Acknowledging differences implies acknowledging the human diversity as a value. Schools have been told to reflect on the society they are part of. They are expected to develop strategies to remove obstacles that hinder learning and inclusion and promote dialogues among rulers, managers, educators, experts in SE, students, parents and guardians. This paper aims at encouraging other authors to dedicate themselves to the SE interface, mainly the social evolution of the NAPNE, so that their research on the theme reaches public policies based on a broad and rich dialogue resulting from debates and participation in social movements led by school managers, teachers and other members of the society. Based on academic studies, we highlight the consolidation of schools that meet specific demands of their students' learning totally and democratically.

It is relevant to reinforce that Resolution CNE/CEB 4/2009 (4th article) considers that the target public of the NAPNE is:

I – Students with disabilities: the ones who have long-term physical, intellectual, mental or sensory impairment.

II – Students with global developmental disorders: the ones who have delay in neuropsychomotor development, social skills and communication and the ones with stereotypic movement disorders. Students with classic autism, Asperger's syndrome, Rett syndrome, childhood disintegrative disorder (psychoses) and invasive disorders with no other specification are also included.

III – Students with high abilities/giftedness: the ones who have high potential and much involvement in areas of human knowledge (isolated or combined ones): intellectual, leadership, psychomotor, Arts and creativity.

The NAPNE joins several forms of knowledge and promotes assistance but it is also an agency which carries out research, teaching and extension to enable healthy experiences in an equal and fair society. Therefore, school inclusion constitutes a politically correct proposal that represents important symbolic values which agree with equality of rights and educational opportunities for everyone in a pleasant educational environment. This study showed that the field of theoretical and practical research on the reality faced by Brazilian students with special needs and their relations with the NAPNE is extremely broad and further studies are needed. Finally, any positive and successful action must be acknowledged and disseminated all over the world which has been individualistic and insensitive regarding human needs.

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