

Formação docente: processos e práticas de in/exclusão de estudantes com deficiência

Teacher education: processes and practices of in/exclusion of students with disabilities

Formación docente: procesos y prácticas de in/exclusión de estudiantes con discapacidad

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RESUMO

This article problematizes the ways in which teacher education operates in the production of practices and discourses of in/exclusion of students with disabilities within the school context. A investigação operou por meio da análise de dados oriundos de um questionário on-line (Google Forms), articulada à revisão de literatura sobre o tema. A noção de in/exclusão, tal como discutida por Veiga-Neto e Lopes (2011), Lopes e Fabris (2017), e atravessada pelos aportes de Foucault (2008), sustentou a análise dos enunciados das respostas. O cruzamento entre os dados empíricos e os referenciais teóricos indica que a formação docente, embora central, mostra-se insuficiente quando não acompanhada por políticas de investimento em infraestrutura, reconfiguração do trabalho pedagógico, presença de equipes multiprofissionais e reorganização das condições materiais de ensino. Conclui-se que assumir a inclusão escolar como princípio político nos espaços escolares exige o engajamento em práticas coletivas, sustentadas por políticas públicas comprometidas com a transformação das condições que historicamente produziram a exclusão.

Palavras-chave: In/exclusão; Formação Docente; Políticas Educacionais.

ABSTRACT

This article problematizes the ways in which teacher education contributes to the

production of practices and discourses of in/exclusion of students with disabilities within the school context. The investigation was conducted through the analysis of data collected via an online questionnaire (Google Forms), combined with a literature review on the topic. The notion of in/exclusion, as discussed by Veiga-Neto and Lopes (2011), Lopes and Fabris (2017), and traversed by Foucault's (2008) contributions, supported the analysis of the respondents' statements. The intersection between empirical data and theoretical frameworks indicates that teacher education, although essential, proves insufficient when not accompanied by policies aimed at infrastructure investment, reconfiguration of pedagogical work, the presence of multiprofessional teams, and the reorganization of the material conditions of teaching. It is concluded that embracing school inclusion as a political principle within educational spaces requires engagement in collective practices, supported by public policies committed to transforming the conditions that have historically produced exclusion.

Keywords: In/exclusion; Teacher Education; Educational Policies.

RESUMEN

Este artículo problematiza las formas en que la formación docente actúa en la producción de prácticas y discursos de in/exclusión de estudiantes con discapacidad en el contexto escolar. La investigación se llevó a cabo mediante el análisis de datos provenientes de un cuestionario en línea (Google Forms), articulado con la revisión de la literatura sobre el tema. La noción de in/exclusión, tal como es discutida por Veiga-Neto y Lopes (2011), Lopes y Fabris (2017) y atravesada por los aportes de Foucault (2008), sustentó el análisis de los enunciados de las respuestas. El cruce entre los datos empíricos y los marcos teóricos indica que la formación docente, aunque central, resulta insuficiente cuando no está acompañada por políticas de inversión en infraestructura, una reconfiguración del trabajo pedagógico, la presencia de equipos multiprofesionales y la reorganización de las condiciones materiales de enseñanza. Se concluye que asumir la inclusión escolar como principio político en los espacios escolares exige el compromiso con prácticas colectivas, sustentadas por políticas públicas comprometidas con la transformación de las condiciones que históricamente produjeron la exclusión.

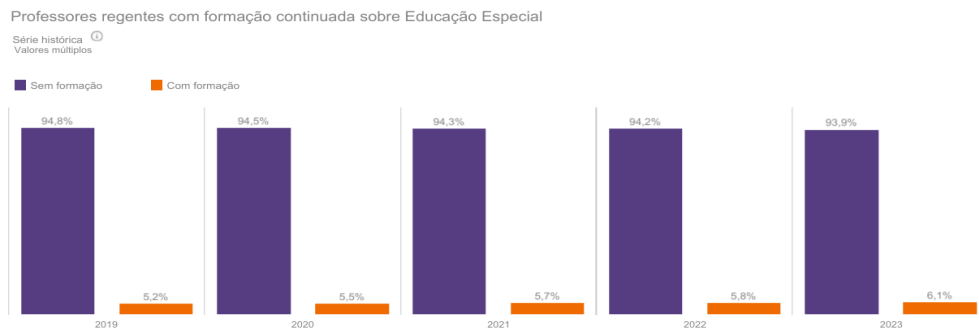
Palabras clave: In/exclusión; Formación Docente; Políticas Educativas.

Introduction

The implementation of the policy of school inclusion for people with disabilities constitutes a challenge for Brazilian educational institutions, especially with regard to teacher education. The consolidation of pedagogical practices from an inclusive perspective is closely linked, among other aspects, to the qualification of the teaching staff, in order to enable the development of individuals in their specificities.

Furthermore, according to Menezes and Turchiello (2020, p. 168), “it is in the wager on partnership among regular education teachers, Special Education teachers, and the other subjects who constitute schools that official discourses locate the best possibilities for the implementation of inclusive actions”.

Chart 1: Overview of the Training of Classroom Teachers for Special Education (2019-2023)



Source: Special Education Indicators Panel¹.

Graph description: Professores regentes com formação continuada sobre Educação Especial = Classroom teachers with continuing education in Special Education. Série histórica = Time series. Valores múltiplos = Multiple values. Sem formação = Without training. Com formação = With training

Data from the Special Education Indicators Panel, regarding teacher education from an inclusive perspective, indicate that only 6.1% of Basic Education classroom teachers have training in Special Education, while 93.9% work without this qualification. Regarding teachers who work in Specialized Educational Assistance (*Atendimento Educacional Especializado – AEE*), a slight decrease is observed in the proportion of professionals with specific training, from 42.3% in 2019 to 42.1% in 2023 (Instituto Rodrigo Mendes, 2024).

This scenario, which situates teacher education within the field of disputes over school inclusion, calls for the problematization of the ways in which subjects with disabilities are inserted into school spaces. Although formally present in schooling processes, these subjects remain displaced from pedagogical practices that could take into account their singularities of learning and development. These are the “excluded within”, whose presence, although legitimized within the legal apparatus, does not

¹ Available at: <https://diversa.org.br/indicadores/>. Accessed on: June 1, 2025.

ensure access to the knowledge developed in the school environment. Their exclusion does not present itself in an explicit or institutionalized form but is inscribed in the interstices of everyday school life — within the microdynamics of pedagogical relationships, in curricular silences, and in the normalizing expectations that sustain what is recognized as learning.

As Ferraro and Ross (2017) argue, it is necessary to put into tension the foundations that sustain the school as it is known, shifting it from a normative and exclusionary logic to one that is willing to operate pedagogical practices that contemplate the specificities of subjects with disabilities. This movement is not limited to punctual adjustments or to the adaptation of subjects to an already given structure; rather, it entails a structural transformation that calls for a review of the ways the school operates, its practices, its political-institutional structure, and the normative regimes of the curriculum that organize teaching action. In this sense, what is at stake is less the integration of the subject into the school and more the reinvention of the school as a space that allows itself to be affected by alterity.

In the state of Rio Grande do Sul, recent data from the Special Education Indicators Panel (Instituto Rodrigo Mendes, 2024) highlight a scenario that may be characterized as intermediate with regard to teacher education aimed at Inclusive Education. Approximately 6.1% of classroom teachers report having continuing education in Special Education, a percentage that remains within the national average. When analyzing the time series since 2019, a growth of 0.9 percentage points over five years is observed, a modest advance given the growing demand for inclusive pedagogical practices. This figure points to still partial efforts by state and municipal systems regarding the qualification of education professionals, with greater incidence in metropolitan regions such as Porto Alegre, where continuing education centers and higher education institutions are located.

However, as one moves geographically toward the non-metropolitan areas of the state, the lack of specific training becomes even more evident. In the regions of the Western Border and the Northwest of Rio Grande do Sul, a significant decrease is observed in the percentages of teachers with training in Special Education, which makes explicit the asymmetries that permeate continuing education policy in the state.

These data, as indicated by the Special Education Indicators Panel (Instituto Rodrigo Mendes, 2024), expose the concentration of training opportunities in large urban centers and reveal the persistence of an unequal distribution model of pedagogical knowledge. This regional disparity reflects historical inequalities in access to teacher qualification and reinforces the urgency of investments in decentralized training programs capable of reaching educators working in rural and low-density population contexts.

Based on these data, it can be inferred that the effective implementation of Inclusive Education necessarily requires the adoption of training policies that take into account regional specificities and ensure equitable access to teacher qualification throughout the national territory (Brazil, 2025). School inclusion results from historical demands constituted in the field of human rights and social justice, especially with regard to the schooling of people with disabilities.

Brazilian legislation, such as the Federal Constitution (*Constituição Federal*) (Brazil, 1988), the National Education Guidelines and Framework Law – Law No. 9,394/1996 (*Lei de Diretrizes e Bases da Educação Nacional – LDB*) (Brazil, 1996), the National Policy on Special Education from the Perspective of Inclusive Education (*Política Nacional de Educação Especial na Perspectiva da Educação Inclusiva*) (Brazil, 2008), and the Brazilian Inclusion Law – Law No. 13,146/2015 (*Lei Brasileira de Inclusão*) (Brazil, 2015), over the past three decades, have sought to ensure the right of all to education in common educational settings. However, the realization of this right continues to face significant barriers. Among the multiple factors pointed out by education professionals, one of the most recurrent is the lack of teacher education as an obstacle to the practice of inclusion.

Under these conditions, the present study problematizes the ways in which teacher education operates in the production of practices and discourses of in/exclusion of students with disabilities in the school context. Following the introductory questions that outline the problematization of this research, the methodological aspects of the study are presented. Subsequently, the analysis focuses on teacher education, highlighting that although there has been an increase in enrollments of Special Education students, a political-educational scenario capable

of ensuring attention to their multiple specificities has not yet been configured. Next, the challenges that permeate teacher education within school inclusion policies are analyzed. Although the data reveal recurrent participation of educators in training activities – with more than half of the respondents reporting, in the last two years, participation in at least one course, workshop, or training offered by education systems – only 14% declare that they actually feel prepared to work with students with disabilities. This mismatch between participation in training and the perception of preparedness reveals not only a possible gap in the effectiveness of training initiatives, but, above all, the limits of a logic that often reduces teacher education to technical and normative devices.

1 Methodological aspects

Based on a documentary survey of free courses aimed at teacher education in the field of Special Education, under the aegis of Inclusive Education, training opportunities offered by public higher education institutions in the state of Rio Grande do Sul were identified for the period from 2019 to 2024. These courses are offered in the modalities of extension, continuing education, and lato sensu graduate studies, constituting a set of institutional actions that invest in teacher education. The scope of the investigation is limited to the activities of public universities and includes exclusively free courses, offered both in face-to-face formats and through Distance Education (*Educação a Distância – EaD*).

Among the extension courses identified, the *Extension Course in Special Education from the Perspective of Inclusive Education* (EaD, 120h), offered in 2024 through a partnership among the Federal University of Santa Maria (*Universidade Federal de Santa Maria – UFSM*), the Federal University of Pelotas (*Universidade Federal de Pelotas – UFPel*), the Federal University of Pampa (*Universidade Federal do Pampa – Unipampa*), and the Federal University of Rio Grande (*Universidade Federal do Rio Grande – FURG*), within the framework of the Open University of Brazil Program (*Programa Universidade Aberta do Brasil – UAB*) (Unipampa, 2024), stands out. UFPel also offered, in 2022, the courses *Specialized Educational Assistance in the Context of Youth and Adult Education* (*Atendimento Educacional Especializado no*

Contexto da EJA (EaD, 90h) and *Pedagogical Practices for Specialized Educational Assistance* (*Práticas Pedagógicas para o AEE*) (EaD, 90h), in addition to the course *Inclusive Pedagogical Practices* (*Práticas Pedagógicas Inclusivas*) (EaD, 100h), offered in 2023, based on the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) approach (*Desenho Universal para a Aprendizagem – DUA*). In general, these courses were predominantly offered through distance education, with a focus on the qualification of educators and other Basic Education professionals, indicating a trend toward expanding access to training, especially across diverse geographic contexts.

Within the scope of continuing education, professional development initiatives promoted primarily by federal universities were identified. The Federal University of Pelotas, for example, offered several courses with a workload of 180 hours, focused on educational management and inclusive pedagogical practices. Among these, the *Advanced Training Course in the Management of Special Education from an Inclusive Perspective* (*Curso de Aperfeiçoamento em Gestão da Educação Especial na Perspectiva Inclusiva*) (EaD, 2022–2024) and the *Advanced Training Course in Inclusive Education for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder* (*Curso de Aperfeiçoamento em Educação Inclusiva para Alunos com Transtorno do Espectro Autista*) (EaD, 180h, 2023) stand out, both aimed at teachers, pedagogical coordinators, and administrators within the public education system.

At the lato sensu graduate level, offerings were identified in themes related to Special and Inclusive Education, with workloads ranging from 360 to 480 hours. One example is the *Specialization in Special and Inclusive Education* (*Especialização em Educação Especial e Inclusiva*) (EaD, 360h), offered by the Integrated Regional University of Upper Uruguay and the Missions (*Universidade Regional Integrada do Alto Uruguai e das Missões – URI*), Erechim campus, with a focus on training teachers in the public education system. Additionally, federal institutions offered specialization courses in Specialized Educational Assistance, predominantly in face-to-face or hybrid formats.

The Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul (*Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul – UFRGS*), in turn, has played a significant role in teacher education for school inclusion. In the field of extension, the course *Specialized Educational*

Assistance in Basic Education: curricular accessibility as a guideline for pedagogical action (Atendimento Educacional Especializado na Escola Básica: a acessibilidade curricular como diretriz da ação pedagógica) (EaD, 150h, 2025), featuring synchronous and asynchronous sessions, stands out. It was promoted by the School of Education at UFRGS in partnership with the National Teacher Education Network (*Rede Nacional de Formação de Professores – RENAFOR*) (Pereira, 2024). In collaboration with other federal institutions, UFRGS also offered the course *Training for Teaching and Management in Ethnic-Racial Relations Education and Quilombola School Education (Formação para Docência e Gestão para a Educação das Relações Étnico-Raciais e Educação Escolar Quilombola)* (EaD, 120h), aimed at Basic Education teachers (Unipampa, 2024). In the field of continuing education, the course *Inclusive Education: training of support professionals (Educação Inclusiva: formação de profissionais de apoio)* (in-person, 2024), aimed at school monitors, inclusion interns, and assistant educators (Educação..., 2024), as well as the extension course *Inclusive Education: weavings of pedagogical practice (Educação Inclusiva: tessituras do fazer pedagógico)*, offered in two editions in 2019 and 2022 (Faced..., 2023), are also noteworthy. Regarding lato sensu graduate studies, UFRGS launched, in 2024, two courses aimed at teachers from the public school system in the Metropolitan Region of Porto Alegre: the *Specialization in Special Education (Especialização em Educação Especial)* (EaD, 360h), with synchronous and in-person activities, and the *Specialization in Inclusive Education (Especialização em Educação Inclusiva)* (in-person, 360h) (Infoeducação, 2023; Infoeducação, 2024).

From these data, it is evident that, although there is a significant variety of free courses aimed at teacher education for Inclusive Education in the state of Rio Grande do Sul, and although the expansion of the EaD modality represents an advance in terms of geographic accessibility, it is essential to monitor the effectiveness and impact of these training initiatives on teaching practice, especially in more vulnerable regions of the state. The data also point to the existence of relevant public policies and training initiatives, ranging from in-person courses to distance education, encompassing different professional profiles.

However, these initiatives still prove insufficient to promote significant changes in the rates of teacher education for Inclusive Education. According to data from the 2024 School Census (*Censo Escolar da Educação Básica 2024*), teacher education in this field remains a challenge, as there are approximately 2.3 million classroom teachers and only 60,000 teachers working in AEE. Among classroom teachers, 93% do not have training in Inclusive Education. By contrast, the provision of AEE in schools has increased, with 92.6% of public Special Education students enrolled in regular classes in 2024, compared to 91.3% in 2023 (Fernandes, 2024).

Given this context of training initiatives in the state of Rio Grande do Sul, the present study developed a process of data production with the collaboration of teachers from different education systems, through the administration of an online questionnaire (Google Forms), with a view to analyzing investments in continuing education. To this end, the notion of in/exclusion, as discussed by Veiga-Neto and Lopes (2011), was employed.

Data production took place between May 25 and 27, 2025. A total of 43 teachers participated in the study, the majority of whom (88.4%) identified as female. The age range of respondents varied between 31 and 63 years. Regarding initial training, an even distribution was observed among teacher training at the upper secondary level (*magistério*) (34.9%), a degree in Pedagogy (32.6%), and other teaching degrees (32.6%). With respect to current educational attainment, lato sensu graduate degrees predominated, with 74.4% of participants having completed a specialization. The majority of respondents (97.7%) reported working in the public education system, in municipalities within the Metropolitan Region of Porto Alegre, with a predominance of professionals from the municipality of São Leopoldo/RS. Regarding the level or modality of teaching, two-thirds teach in Elementary Education. It is also noteworthy that 37.2% reported having more than 20 years of professional experience in the field of education.

All participants reported working with individuals with disabilities in their professional contexts. Regarding training for Inclusive Education, approximately half of the participants (48.8%) reported having taken at least one specific course on the topic during their initial training, although most considered the approach to have been

superficial or excessively theoretical. Only 7% stated that they had received more consistent training, with a significant workload and practical content. On the other hand, the data show that most respondents sought to expand their training through continuing education courses, with 53.5% completing more than 100 hours of training in the area.

In addition, a literature review on the topic was conducted using academic journal databases such as SciELO, CAPES Portal, and specialized education journals. Considering that the objective of this article is to problematize the ways in which teacher education operates in the production of practices and discourses of in/exclusion of students with disabilities in the school context, it is observed that, despite the significant increase in enrollments of Special Education students – which, according to data from the 2024 Census (Brazil, 2025), rose from 91.3% in 2023 to 92.6% in 2024 in the regular education system – the data and analyses indicate that a scenario has not yet been achieved in which all students are served according to their specificities.

Still within the methodological aspects, it is important to highlight that, in 2024, the Brazilian Society for Interdisciplinary Communication Studies (*Sociedade Brasileira de Estudos Interdisciplinares da Comunicação – Intercom*) published the document Guidelines for the Ethical and Responsible Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence: a practical guide for researchers (*Diretrizes para o uso ético e responsável da Inteligência Artificial Generativa: um guia prático para pesquisadores*) (Sampaio; Sabbatini; Limongi, 2024). In accordance with these guidelines, this study reports the use of Artificial Intelligence as support for linguistic revision, specifically in aspects related to textual cohesion and coherence, based on preliminary drafts prepared by the authors.

The relevance of this research lies in the gap identified in the academic literature regarding the correlation between teacher education and the production of processes of educational in/exclusion. The study thus seeks to contribute to this debate through the articulation between empirical data of a quantitative-qualitative nature and the adopted theoretical framework. The theoretical foundation is anchored in authors such as Lopes and Fabris (2017), Veiga-Neto and Lopes (2011), and Foucault (2008),

whose contributions make it possible to problematize educational practices and discourses on inclusion.

2 In/exclusion: processes and practices in the education of subjects with disabilities

The conception of school inclusion as a process in which the presence of the student with a disability would be sufficient to ensure their participation and learning has been widely questioned by researchers in the field of education. In this article, the notion of school in/exclusion, as proposed by Veiga-Neto and Lopes (2011), is adopted as an analytical lens in order to problematize the complexity and simultaneity of the processes that are inscribed in the pedagogical practices mobilized in everyday school life. From this perspective, inclusion can often mean exclusion by other means. According to Veiga-Neto and Lopes (2011, p. 123), “in the same way, it can be understood that very often one includes in order to exclude, that is, one carries out an excluding inclusion”.

Institutional and political discourses that advocate school inclusion frequently conceal subtle mechanisms of exclusion, which operate in a naturalized manner within school practices. In/exclusion lies in the understanding that inclusion and exclusion do not constitute opposing categories, but rather processes that coexist, intertwine, and mutually produce one another:

In view of such participation through gradients of inclusion, it becomes difficult to use, in our analyses, the characterization of included and excluded as separate categories, since any subject, within their 'level of participation', may at any moment be included or excluded from certain practices, actions, spaces, and policies (Lopes *et al.*, 2010, p. 6).²

Thus, a subject may be formally included in an educational space, attending a classroom in a mainstream school, and, at the same time, be excluded through homogenized pedagogical practices, stigmatizing discourses, asymmetrical

² Original: “Diante de tal participação por gradientes de inclusão, torna-se difícil utilizar, em nossas análises, a caracterização de incluído e excluído de forma separada, pois qualquer sujeito, dentro de seu ‘nível de participação’ poderá, a todo momento, estar incluído ou ser excluído de determinadas práticas, ações, espaços e políticas” (Lopes *et al.*, 2010, p. 6).

relationships, or by the way their difference is conceived and treated in the school context. This theoretical approach makes it possible to shift the focus from the mere physical insertion of the student with a disability to an analysis of the conditions of participation and learning, contributing to the denaturalization of restricted conceptions of inclusion and drawing attention to the tensions and contradictions present in institutional practices and policies.

Lopes and Fabris (2017) understand inclusion and exclusion processes as inseparable dimensions of the same phenomenon, especially when analyzed within the rationality that mobilizes contemporary society, that is, neoliberal logic. From this perspective, inclusion and exclusion are not opposing categories, but simultaneous and interrelated aspects of the same social machinery, which operates based on the normativity imposed by neoliberalism. As argued by Dardot and Laval (2016), neoliberalism constitutes a political and economic rationality that profoundly redefines the relationship between State, society, and individual. Such rationality transforms the subject into human capital, promoting the internalization of market values as criteria of conduct and parameters of social valuation, while simultaneously dissolving the notion of the collective and converting social rights into individual investments.

In the Brazilian context, it is observed that inclusion policy has been widely mobilized by a significant portion of the population living in conditions of economic and social vulnerability, while at the same time being affected by exclusionary social contracts, sustained by essentialist, fundamentalist, and normalizing views of the subject. In this scenario, Brazilian-style neoliberalism manifests itself through a paradoxical configuration: there is a constant interweaving between State and market, alongside the influx of global investments in nationally scoped programs. Added to this are the promotion of individualized expectations, State encouragement of consumption, the steering of education according to principles of competition and self-entrepreneurship, as well as the coexistence between the expansion of social assistance and the depletion of social security resources. All of this occurs in a context in which the terms “inclusion” and “exclusion” are frequently used in a binary, decontextualized, and critically emptied manner (Lopes; Lockmann; Hattge, 2013).

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Within this rationality, the school inclusion of subjects with disabilities becomes a constantly threatened promise. Consequently,

[...] the school ends up forming the subject-enterprise, who needs to constantly invest in themselves productively in order to enter and remain in the neoliberal game. These changes and experiences that reach the most intimate sphere of each subject-enterprise run counter to a creative and empowering school experience, which can be achieved through educational practices that suspend lived reality and make room for other possible ways of life (Chagas; Lockmann, 2021, p. 52).³

The notion of in/exclusion, in this sense, does not refer only to subjects in conditions of explicit social marginalization, but also encompasses those whose presence in social spaces is traversed by dynamics of negative discrimination, symbolic and material restrictions on belonging (Lopes; Fabris, 2017). In the case of the school, this means recognizing that being enrolled or physically present in an educational environment does not necessarily imply effective access to the conditions for learning, participation, and development (Brazil, 2008; Brazil, 2015).

Educational statistics and population diagnostics, produced from census and institutional research, function as instruments of management and social control, enabling the formulation of public policies that, in many cases, end up reinforcing mechanisms of exclusion under the appearance of inclusion. Lopes and Fabris (2017) name this process “practices of excluding inclusion”, in which the symbolic presence of subjects in official records and institutional spaces is not accompanied by conditions of permanence, learning, and development.

Within the school context, one of the main effects of these dynamics is what may be called “palliative inclusion”. This notion emerges from the articulation between the concept of in/exclusion (Veiga-Neto; Lopes, 2011) and the idea of a “palliative society”, proposed by Byung-Chul Han (2021). It refers to the observation that, in educational reality, students with disabilities are formally inserted into the education

³ Original: “[...] escola acaba por formar o sujeito-empresa, que necessita investir constantemente em si mesmo de forma produtiva para entrar e permanecer no jogo neoliberal. Essas mudanças e vivências que atingem o mais íntimo de cada sujeito-empresa vão na contramão de uma vivência escolar criativa e potencializadora, que pode ser alcançada por meio de práticas educativas que coloquem em suspensão a realidade vivida e deem espaço para outros modos de vida possíveis” (Chagas; Lockmann, 2021, p. 52).

system, but in contexts that do not guarantee the necessary conditions for learning, participation, and development. Despite the legal framework and public policies aimed at Inclusive Education, these legal instruments often do not materialize in pedagogical practices, nor are they supported by adequate human and structural resources to overcome the multiple existing barriers. Thus, the strategies adopted by the school, far from constituting pedagogical practices, are linked to procedures and techniques of another nature, belonging to other fields of knowledge. (Lockmann, 2014)

In this scenario, the quantitative growth in the enrollment of subjects with disabilities in the regular education system has served as a statistical indicator of the success of school inclusion policy. However, this increase does not necessarily correspond to improvements in the concrete conditions of learning, participation, and development. The rate of formal school exclusion is thus reduced, but inclusion is not effectively achieved. Hence the palliative character of inclusion: it is a superficial and insufficient response to the demands of diversity, incapable of mitigating, in the medium and long term, the effects of the historical and structural exclusion of subjects with disabilities.

This process must be understood based on the historical function of the school institution, conceived in Modernity as a disciplinary device, in the Foucauldian sense, aimed at producing subjects adapted to the demands of modern rationality and the industrial capitalist model of production. The modern school is forged as a space of normalization, regulating behaviors, schedules, bodies, and knowledge, with the objective of forming productive individuals aligned in their conduct with the needs of industrial society – today, compliant subjects capable of adjusting to dominant social, cognitive, and behavioral norms. This logic, although undergoing transformation, still persists in many school practices, hindering the realization of Inclusive Education grounded in the recognition of difference and the valorization of heterogeneity.

In this context, to be included, it is necessary to adhere to certain expectations of academic performance, conduct, and sociability. Difference, when tolerated within the space of the mainstream school, is so under the condition of being regulated or assimilated into the normative parameters that sustain the ideal of a universal student.

In other words, it is admitted only insofar as it allows itself to be captured by the apparatuses that produce sameness as a hegemonic value.

However, the demands imposed on the school by neoliberal rationality do not exactly correspond to those of modern rationality. If, in Modernity, the desired subject was disciplined, obedient, punctual, and productive, neoliberalism requires the constitution of a self-entrepreneurial subject, autonomous, competitive, and permanently responsive to market dynamics. In addressing neoliberal rationality, one enters the understanding formulated by Michel Foucault (2008) in his course *The Birth of Biopolitics*, in which the author understands neoliberalism as a political rationality, that is, a set of principles that guide the way individuals, institutions, and States themselves are governed and, simultaneously, govern themselves.

Thus, the contemporary school comes to be interpellated by a logic that transcends traditional disciplinary control. It is called upon to form adaptable, flexible, and self-managed subjects who incorporate the values of productivity, efficiency, and individual responsibility. This shift has direct repercussions on the ways of conceiving and operating school inclusion: it is no longer merely a matter of controlling difference, but of framing it within a logic that demands measurable results and holds the subject accountable for their own (in)capacity to adapt. Inclusion, within the neoliberal framework, may acquire even more subtle and sophisticated forms of exclusion, in which physical presence is guaranteed, but the institutional supports necessary for effective learning remain absent, shifting onto the subject the blame for their eventual failure. Thus, within “governmentality, it is not a matter of the disappearance of the notion of right, but perhaps of its privatization, centering on the subject the responsibility for their living conditions” (Lockmann, 2020, p. 72).

In contemporary society, the ideal subject is one who self-regulates, continuously reinvents themselves, overcomes their own limits, works in networks, and coexists harmoniously with difference. This is a subject constituted under the logic of the self-entrepreneur: autonomous, productive, and responsible for the choices they make and the paths they follow. Within this rationality, each success or failure is read as a direct consequence of individual merit, shifting onto the subject responsibility for their trajectory. Thus, the historical, social, and cultural conditions that shape each

individual's field of possibilities are ignored, and the marks of inequality are erased through discourses that naturalize success as the result of effort and failure as evidence of negligence or personal incapacity. Given this condition, the following section turns to the empirical research conducted, seeking to put into tension the constructed data, in view of how neoliberal rationality operates in the constitution of practices and subjects based on school inclusion policy.

3 Teacher education and school inclusion: challenges of the present

In light of this scenario, the research turned to problematizing the ways in which teacher education operates in the production of practices and discourses of in/exclusion of students with disabilities in the school context. A questionnaire was developed and made available through the Google Forms platform, directed at teachers working in different municipalities in the state of Rio Grande do Sul.

The data show a certain recurrence in teachers' participation in training activities, with more than half of the participants reporting having undertaken, in the past two years, at least one course, workshop, or training activity promoted by the school systems to which they are affiliated, while only 14% stated that they feel effectively prepared to work with students with disabilities. Another 55.8% reported feeling only partially prepared. This finding, rather than merely expressing a quantitative gap, points to the limits of continuing education policies in their capacity to produce shifts in everyday pedagogical practices.

Despite a training provision considered "reasonable", as discussed earlier, the effects of such training appear to be diluted in the face of prescriptive models, centered on the normalization of pedagogical practice to the detriment of formative processes committed to listening, critique, and the invention of practices that embrace difference as potential rather than as a deficit to be compensated. Only 4.7% of respondents stated that they had not undertaken any additional training in the area, nor expressed interest in doing so, which reinforces the existence of a significant demand for qualification. However, participating in courses and training activities has not been sufficient to ensure that teachers acquire the necessary confidence for the

development of inclusive pedagogical practices. The area identified as having the greatest training need is curriculum adaptation and the planning of inclusive lessons, mentioned by 61.9% of participants.

Another aspect highlighted by teachers concerns the insufficiency of institutional support for working with students with disabilities; that is, only 9.3% consider that the school in which they work offers adequate support for this group of students. These data indicate a mismatch between teachers' individual investment in their own training and the structural and institutional conditions offered by schools, contributing to the consolidation of pedagogical practices that, rather than enhancing inclusion, tend to reproduce models of normalization that operate through the adaptation of the subject to what is already established, thereby emptying the critical meaning of teacher education.

With regard to training needs, the responses highlight the centrality attributed to curriculum adaptation and the planning of inclusive lessons as priority areas. Beyond identifying these areas, participants also listed the continuing education strategies they consider most effective. Among them, short-term in-person courses (37.2%) and study and reflection groups conducted within the school environment itself (25.6%) stand out, followed by pedagogical support provided by specialists. These choices reveal a demand for more situated, collective, and contextually engaged formative processes, as opposed to distanced and prescriptive models that disregard the complexity of contexts. At the same time, they bring into focus the desire for training that not only provides content but also produces shifts in ways of thinking and enacting teaching in relation to difference. In this sense, the strategies mentioned can be understood as attempts to reinvent teacher education toward more collaborative and less normative practices.

These data suggest that, for most respondents, the most meaningful formative processes are those that foster the exchange of experiences and the sharing of practices, overcoming the logic of purely theoretical and decontextualized learning. This valorization of the practical and collective dimension of training is linked to the finding that nearly 80% of teachers reported being familiar with the National Policy on Special Education from the Perspective of Inclusive Education (*Política Nacional de*

Educação Especial na Perspectiva da Educação Inclusiva – PNEEPEI). However, only 27.9% declared that they attend to its principles in everyday school practice. This disparity between knowledge of the legislation and its practical implementation once again points to the existence of concrete barriers that weaken the translation of public policies into pedagogical practices.

The final question of the questionnaire was open-ended, offering participants the possibility to express their perceptions and understandings of Inclusive Education. Among the 43 respondents, 36 used this space, which signals significant engagement with the topic. The analysis of the statements indicates a certain consensus among teachers regarding the centrality of Inclusive Education as an inalienable right and as a vector for a just, ethical, and equitable society.

The accounts mobilize an expanded understanding of inclusion, which is not limited to physical access to the school space, but unfolds into pedagogical practices committed to welcoming, recognizing singularities, and respecting differences. This perspective displaces inclusion from its place as a norm in order to conceive it as a political, cultural, and institutional process of reinventing the school. The following excerpts from statements exemplify these understandings:

I understand that Inclusive Education is fundamental for us to have an *inclusive society*, with people who are able to perceive the need for adaptations so that others can *exercise their citizenship in a dignified and appropriate manner*. And that an environment/territory that is concerned with the inclusion of all people with some disability will be a pleasant environment for everyone (Participant 1).⁴

Inclusive Education and its concepts are about *seeing the potential* in each person and creating schools where everyone has a place. It is not only about including those with specific learning needs, but about *transforming the school into a space of welcoming and possibilities*, so that everyone and anyone can learn (Participant 5).⁵

⁴ Original: “Entendo que a Educação Inclusiva é fundamental para que tenhamos uma **sociedade inclusiva**, com pessoas que consigam perceber as necessidades de adaptação para que outras pessoas possam **exercer sua cidadania de forma digna e adequada**. E que um ambiente/território que se preocupa com a inclusão de todas as pessoas com alguma deficiência será um ambiente agradável para todas” (Participant 1).

⁵ Original: “A Educação Inclusiva e os seus conceitos é sobre **enxergar as potencialidades** em cada pessoa e criar escolas onde todos tenham lugar. Não é só incluir quem tem necessidades específicas de aprendizagem, mas **transformar a escola em um espaço de acolhimento e possibilidades**, para que todos e qualquer um consiga aprender” (Participant 5).

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From the analysis of the statements, it was possible to identify the recurrence of enunciations that were grouped into four categories: *teacher education, structural investments, insufficiency of support and human resources, and attitudinal barriers*. These categories do not emerge as fixed or discrete units, but as axes that intertwine in the participants' responses, revealing tensions that traverse the implementation of school inclusion policy.

Teacher education:

I am an advocate of Inclusive Education; I truly believe that it is possible to include everyone. However, due to *limitations in teacher training and structures*, this inclusion often does not occur (Participant 23).⁶

I believe that the *training of mainstream classroom teachers and subject-area teachers is fundamental* for serious and respectful inclusion. Today, with all the opportunities for training, there are no excuses for not wanting to learn (Participant 21).⁷

It is increasingly necessary that *we have Inclusive Education courses in teacher education programs*; legal documents demand more and more, and university curricula are always rigid, making the person with a disability invisible. Enough! (Participant 25).⁸

The responses reveal an ambivalence: while they recognize significant advances in the field of Inclusive Education, teachers also emphasize that there is still a long path to be traversed for an inclusive school to become a reality. Inclusion thus appears as a desired horizon, but not yet fully incorporated into everyday practices, constantly traversed by obstacles that manifest across multiple dimensions — structural, formative, institutional, and symbolic. It is also noteworthy that, although the discourse of inclusion is present in legal frameworks and public policies, its materialization is strained by practices that still operate under exclusionary logics. The barriers are not limited to the absence of resources, but are also attitudinal and

⁶ Original: “Sou uma defensora da Educação Inclusiva, realmente acredito que é possível incluir a todos. Porém, devido às **limitações de formações docentes e estruturas**, muitas vezes essa inclusão não acontece” (Participant 23).

⁷ Original: “Acredito que a **formação de professores de classe regular e de área é fundamental** para uma inclusão séria e respeitosa. Hoje, com todas as oportunidades de formação, não se tem desculpas de não querer aprender” (Participant 21).

⁸ Original: “Faz-se cada vez mais necessário que **tenhamos disciplinas de Educação Inclusiva nas licenciaturas**, os documentos legais exigem cada vez mais e os currículos das faculdades sempre engessados, fazendo que a pessoa deficiente seja invisível. Basta” (Participant 25).

discursive in nature, inscribing themselves in the ways difference is (or is not) recognized and legitimized within the school.

Recurrently, participants pointed to the insufficiency of specific continuing education, the precariousness of material conditions, and the scarcity of technical and human support as central obstacles to the constitution of inclusive pedagogical practices. The perception that mainstream schools do not have adequate resources, whether physical or human, to respond to the complex demands of Inclusive Education is widely shared. The accounts showed that teachers often deal with these demands in isolation, without guidance, systematic support, or institutional backing. Such conditions not only weaken practices but also operate in the individualization of responsibility, shifting the critique from structures to the performance of the subject.

Structural investments:

Education is a right of all; it is up to teachers to uphold this right, respecting the specificities of each student. In Brazil, we have one of the best pieces of legislation regulating Inclusive Education, and the Ministry of Education (*Ministério da Educação – MEC*), through the Open University of Brazil (*Universidade Aberta do Brasil – UAB*), offers the best training programs I have taken. Unfortunately, throughout my professional trajectory, I have observed that ensuring Inclusive Education does not depend only on legislation and professional training. It fundamentally depends on *adequate funding and on listening to teachers and educational managers*: it is not possible to implement inclusion with an excessive number of students in classrooms, without qualified support staff, without multiprofessional support teams in schools, without awareness and accountability from families, and without appropriate materials. To think that achieving quality inclusion is simply a matter of universalizing students' access to school and placing this responsibility on teachers' shoulders is perverse and has significantly contributed to teacher burnout and to a crisis in the teaching profession. Today, all students present special educational needs, given the widespread lack of support experienced by children and youth in contemporary society: emotional, behavioral, socialization, organizational, among other issues. Can the teacher alone handle all of this? After all, Education is the only policy that is mandatory for everyone in Brazil! (Participant 28).⁹

⁹ Original: “A educação é um direito de todos/as, cabe aos professores/as validar este direito, respeitando as especificidades de cada estudante. No Brasil temos uma das melhores legislações que normatizam a Educação Inclusiva e também o MEC oferece, através da UAB as melhores formações que já realizei. Infelizmente ao longo da minha trajetória profissional venho observando que garantir a Educação Inclusiva não depende só de legislação e formação dos profissionais. Depende fundamentalmente de **financiamento adequado e escuta dos professores e gestores educacionais**: não dá p/ fazer inclusão c/ número excessivo de estudantes nas turmas, s/ profissional qualificado de apoio, s/ equipe multiprofissional de apoio nas escolas, s/ conscientização e responsabilização das famílias e s/ materiais adequados. Pensar que fazer inclusão de qualidade é só universalizar o acesso dos estudantes à escola e colocar nas costas dos/as professores/as esta responsabilidade é perverso e tem contribuído fundamentalmente para o adoecimento docente e o apagão da docência. Hoje

The perceptions evidenced in the statements are consistent with the data presented by the *Special Education Indicators Panel* (Instituto Rodrigo Mendes, 2024), which reveal the low rate of specific training in Special Education among Basic Education professionals. This scenario exposes a disarticulation between the legal frameworks that regulate inclusion and the concrete conditions of its implementation, highlighting a gap between what is legally prescribed and the conditions for the effective realization of pedagogical practice.

Another recurring theme in the responses refers to the feeling of teacher overload and exhaustion, driven by the increase in demands associated with inclusion, without, in return, effective policies for professional valorization, continuing education, and qualified institutional support. Reports of teacher illness do not emerge as isolated complaints, but as symptoms of an educational model that operates through the logic of individual responsibility, shifting the effects of a structurally precarious system onto the sphere of professional performance.

References to the absence of multiprofessional teams, the inadequacy of school infrastructure, and the scarcity of accessible pedagogical materials compose a picture that reinforces the finding that inclusion, although discursively celebrated, remains a postponed promise, often translated in the everyday life of schools. In this direction, teacher suffering is progressively silenced and displaced from the political field to that of the individual management of pain. In contexts marked by the intensification of precarious working conditions, pressure for results, and continuous professional devaluation, teachers are interpellated to perform enthusiasm, emotional balance, and resilience, even when their experiences reveal physical and psychological exhaustion in the exercise of teaching.

Teacher illness, in this scenario, is frequently approached from an individualizing perspective, as a failure of emotional management to be resolved through self-care practices or well-being programs. As Han (2021) points out, one of

todos os/as estudantes apresentam NEE, pelo grande desamparo que vive a infância e juventude na contemporaneidade: questões emocionais, comportamentais, socialização, organização e outras. Somente o/a professor/a dará conta de tudo isso? Afinal, a Educação é a única política obrigatória para todos/as no Brasil!" (Participant 28).

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the most perverse manifestations of this palliative logic is what the author calls the “end of revolution”, that is, the impossibility of converting shared suffering into transformative political action. In the school space, this logic compromises not only inclusion processes, but the very potential of education as a political practice. The following excerpts from research participants corroborate this reading and make evident, in their own terms, the subjective and institutional effects of this scenario:

Insufficiency of support/human resources:

The same [inclusion] carried out with the public policies we have is making teachers ill! *Little support and many tasks* (Participant 13).¹⁰

It is a very great challenge, because education in general already has its challenges and its precariousness, and when we receive a student who requires specialized support, in addition to the difficulties in attending to them, since each individual has their own specificity, we face limitations such as *lack of human resources and the impossibility of putting more effective actions into practice due to limitations of space, human resources* (as already mentioned), and issues related to the school routine (Participant 26).¹¹

It [inclusion] is challenging and requires effective support from the health sector (Participant 31).¹²

It is also noteworthy the heterogeneity of participants’ understandings regarding the concept of school inclusion and the forms considered most appropriate for its implementation. A multiplicity of meanings attributed to inclusion can be observed, ranging from universalist conceptions centered on the permanence of all students in mainstream schools to positions that express doubts about the feasibility of this model, especially in light of demands considered “more complex”.

This diversity expresses tensions and ambivalences that traverse contemporary pedagogical discourses, in which school inclusion, far from constituting a consensus, is configured as a field of dispute, within which distinct pedagogical, epistemological, and political rationalities operate. The very idea of “complexity” attributed to certain

¹⁰ Original: “A mesma [inclusão] realizada com as políticas públicas que temos estão deixando os professores doentes! **Pouco apoio e muitas tarefas**” (Participant 13).

¹¹ Original: “É um desafio muito grande, pois a educação em geral já tem seus desafios, suas precariedades e quando recebemos um aluno que precisa de atendimento especializado, além das dificuldades em atendê-lo, pois cada indivíduo tem a sua especificidade, temos limitações como **falta de recursos humanos e impossibilidades de colocar em prática ações mais eficientes devido às limitações de espaço, recursos humanos** (como já citado), questões da rotina escolar” (Participant 26).

¹² Original: “É desafiadora [a inclusão] e necessita do apoio efetivo da área da saúde” (Participant 31).

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subjects functions as a marker of exception at times, legitimizing practices of segregation or exclusion, even under the guise of supposed adequacy.

Attitudinal barriers:

I believe it is still far below the ideal. For public policies for AEE to be truly implemented, school management needs to be aligned with these principles and encourage teachers to be as well. *It seems that there is still no interest from municipal administrations in this issue* (Participant 24).¹³

As a teacher, I feel that *students in inclusion* require much more time with the teacher for adequate monitoring of their activities. It would be necessary to have a teacher trained in each specific area of need for better support. However, *it is known that this is not the reality of public schools due to high costs* (Participant 29).¹⁴

I believe that Inclusive Education needs to be assessed on an individual basis, because *in some cases, in practice, it ends up being the opposite* of its objective (Participant 36).¹⁵

Such positions reveal the urgency of a more in-depth debate on the limits, possibilities, and different models of school inclusion, considering the singularity of each student and the concrete conditions of educational institutions. According to Menezes and Turchiello (2020, p. 166):

[...] it is important to analyze the production of the discursive network that has instituted truths about inclusion, producing it as a necessity in school practices, in an imperative character for all subjects, regardless of the pedagogical conditions existing for this purpose.¹⁶

¹³ Original: “Acredito estar bem aquém do ideal. Para que as políticas públicas para o AEE sejam realmente implementadas, a gestão escolar precisa estar consoante com esses princípios, e incentivar que seus docentes estejam também. **Parece que ainda não há interesse das gestões municipais para essa questão**” (Participant 24).

¹⁴ Original: “Como professor, sinto que os **alunos de inclusão** necessitam de muito mais tempo com o professor para um adequado acompanhamento de suas atividades. Seria necessário um professor formado na área de cada necessidade específica para seu melhor acompanhamento. Porém, **sabe-se que essa não é a realidade das escolas públicas em função dos gastos elevados**” (Participant 29).

¹⁵ Original: “Acredito que a Educação Inclusiva necessita ser avaliada individualmente, pois **em alguns casos na prática acaba sendo ao contrário** do seu objetivo” (Participant 36).

¹⁶ Original: “[...] se faz importante analisar a produção da trama discursiva que tem instituído verdades sobre a inclusão, produzindo-a como uma necessidade nas práticas escolares, em caráter imperativo para todos os sujeitos, independente das condições pedagógicas existentes para tal fim” (Menezes and Turchiello, 2020, p. 166).

Based on the analyses carried out, it becomes evident that teachers need to be supported and backed in their pedagogical practices not only through continuing education, but through institutional conditions that sustain inclusion as a political principle. Assuming inclusion as a political principle in school spaces requires engagement in collective practices, supported by public policies committed to transforming the conditions that have historically produced exclusion.

In this sense, students within the target population of Special Education play a crucial role in destabilizing traditional conceptions of normality that have historically sustained the Brazilian educational system. Their presence in mainstream schools makes explicit the limitations of physical, curricular, and pedagogical structures, revealing that these were historically conceived for an idealized, normative, and homogeneous subject. It is not their condition per se, but the system's resistance to accommodating such students, that exposes the contradictions between legal discourses of inclusion and exclusionary practices still in force within school institutions.

By demanding adaptations, flexibilizations, and the recognition of different ways of learning and participating, students in Special Education compel the educational field to confront its exclusionary legacies, based on meritocracy, medicalization, and the standardization of learning. Thus, rather than *a problem to be solved*, these students act as agents that provoke transformation, whose presence denaturalizes the school structure and calls on educators, managers, and policymakers to rethink the foundations upon which the right to education in the country is organized.

4 Final considerations

The present study began by problematizing the ways in which teacher education operates in the production of practices and discourses of in/exclusion of students with disabilities in the school context. Based on the articulation between empirical data, obtained through the online questionnaire, and the theoretical shifts produced by the literature review, the notion of in/exclusion, understood not as a dichotomy, but as an

effect of discursive games, guided the analysis of the statements, revealing the tensions, ambivalences, and contradictions that mark the field of inclusion.

Throughout the investigative process, an ethical disposition among teachers was identified to sustain practices that affirm inclusion as a political horizon. This disposition, however, does not exist outside the material conditions that make it possible or unfeasible. It is traversed by institutional limits that shape what can be done within the school. Even so, the accounts indicate teachers' investment in practices committed to the principles of equity and social justice, reinforcing the urgency of public policies that not only proclaim inclusion as a right, but also build formative processes that challenge the dichotomies between theory and practice, norm and invention.

When these perceptions are put into dialogue with the quantitative analysis, they reaffirm that teacher education constitutes an indispensable dimension for the affirmation of Inclusive Education. However, it becomes evident that this training, in isolation, is not capable of sustaining the necessary shifts. It must be understood as part of a broader and articulated set of actions involving continuous investment in school infrastructure, the expansion and qualification of multiprofessional support, and the strengthening of public funding as a condition of possibility for inclusive policy.

School inclusion cannot be reduced to the normative plan of laws, guidelines, and declarations. Although the legal framework holds symbolic and regulatory force, it is in the everyday fabric of pedagogical relationships, curricular disputes, and gestures of recognition that inclusion is produced. It should therefore be understood as a political principle that conceives difference not as a deficit to be compensated, but as a potential to be affirmed, requiring a commitment to inventing ways of doing school that are open to being affected by the complexity of singularities, reconfiguring regimes of truth that have historically excluded certain bodies and modes of existence from the school space.

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