

WHEN IS THE END? A NARRATIVE REVIEW ON THE TERMINATION OF THE SCHOOL TERM FOR MENTALLY DISABLED STUDENTS

*Claudia de Souza Rodrigues Elias¹; Leandro Andrade da Silva²;
Mirian Teresa de Sá Leitão Martins³; Neide Ana Pereira Ramos⁴;
Maria das Graças Gazel de Souza⁵; Rodrigo Leite Hipólito⁶*

The process of inclusion of disabled students is possibly one of the biggest dilemmas faced by professionals in the field of education today. It is necessary to create different educational or assistive devices, due to the termination of the school term, precisely so that future opportunities may be real, and not designed as an exclusionary practice. This article aims to present and understand the concept of specific terminality, allowing reflection on the education of disabled persons. This is a qualitative study, which used the technique of narrative review and methodological contributions. The results indicate the need of effective school termination, which enables social inclusion of disabled people.

Descriptors: Mental Retardation; Education; Review Literature as Topic.

¹ Specialist in Special Education - Mental Disability, Professor, Prefeitura Municipal de Rio Claro, RJ, Brazil. Professor, Prefeitura Municipal de Resende, RJ, Brazil. E-mail: rodrigues.elias@ig.com.br.

² RN, Occupational Therapist, Master's Student in Nursing, Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro, RJ, Brazil. Professor, Universidade Federal do Estado do Rio de Janeiro, RJ, Brazil. E-mail: leandrotrj@yahoo.com.br.

³ Psychologist, M.Sc. in Medical Sciences, Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro, RJ, Brazil. E-mail: mirianeresad@yahoo.com.br.

⁴ Educator, M.Sc. in Education, Professor, Universidade Federal do Estado do Rio de Janeiro, RJ, Brazil. E-mail: neideana2004@yahoo.com.br.

⁵ RN, Master's Student in Nursing, Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro, RJ, Brazil. E-mail: mariagazel@hotmail.com.

⁶ RN, M.Sc. in Nursing, Assistant Professor, Universidade Federal Fluminense, Rio das Ostras, RJ, Brazil. E-mail: professorrlh@uol.com.br.

Correspondence

Leandro Andrade da Silva
Rua Albertino da Silveira Júnior, nº 90, casa 01
CEP: 27460-000, Rio Claro, RJ, Brasil
E-mail: leandrotrj@yahoo.com.br

QUANDO CHEGA O FIM? UMA REVISÃO NARRATIVA SOBRE TERMINALIDADE DO PERÍODO ESCOLAR PARA ALUNOS DEFICIENTES MENTAIS

O processo de inclusão de alunos deficientes possivelmente é um dos maiores impasses enfrentados pelos profissionais da área da educação, na atualidade. Faz-se necessária a criação de diferentes dispositivos educativos ou assistenciais, em face da terminalidade do período escolar, justamente para que as oportunidades futuras possam ser reais, e não concebidas como prática excludente. Este artigo objetivou apresentar e compreender o conceito de terminalidade específica, possibilitando reflexão sobre o processo educativo de pessoas deficientes. Trata-se de um estudo qualitativo, o qual utilizou a técnica de revisão narrativa como aporte metodológico. Os resultados apontam a necessidade da efetivação da terminalidade escolar, que possibilita a inclusão social de pessoas deficientes.

Descritores: Retardo Mental; Educação; Literatura de Revisão como Assunto.

¿CUÁNDO LLEGA EL FIN? UNA REVISIÓN NARRATIVA SOBRE EL FIN DEL PERÍODO ESCOLAR PARA ALUMNOS DEFICIENTES MENTALES

El proceso de inclusión de alumnos deficientes posiblemente es uno de los mayores impases enfrentados por los profesionales del área de la educación, en la actualidad. Se hace necesaria la creación de diferentes dispositivos educativos o asistenciales, en faz del fin del período escolar, justamente para que las oportunidades futuras puedan ser reales, y no concebidas como práctica excluyente. Este artículo objetivó presentar y comprender el concepto de fin específico, posibilitando ponderación sobre el proceso educativo de personas deficientes. Se trata de un estudio cualitativo, lo cual utilizó la técnica de revisión narrativa como aporte metodológico. Los resultados apuntan la necesidad de la efectucción del fin escolar, que posibilita la inclusión social de personas deficientes.

Descriptores: Retraso Mental; Educación; Literatura de Revisión como Assunto.

Introduction

This article presents a reflection on the steps by which the mentally handicapped student goes through in the school context. We will discuss hereby the inclusion, through his applicability to the time of the specific termination. Emphasizing this last issue to understand the urgency of questioning its efficacy, which should be focused on some goals, for example, to enable the mentally disabled social inclusion through professional education, not just to fill up a vacancy in the educational system. This vacancy in occupied in an unplanned manner might not

envison prospects of a future in which the student can be a included worker.

In this study, we present the sequential steps in order to enable reflection on how the termination has been given specifically for the mentally disabled, once it is a right of the student to have his certification and be referred to future possibilities on the formal labor market inclusion, guaranteed by the National Council of Education ⁽¹⁾.

To better understand the concept of termination specifically for people with mental disabilities, one needs

to understand the scholar background of these students, beginning with attempts to inclusion in mainstream education. The specific termination should concern everyone involved in the educational process of the mentally disabled, understood by teachers, managers, teaching staff, family and other people concerned about the future of the student. Given the above, some questions arise, such as: is that student included / inserted? Or, once again, excluded without participation and recognition? What is expected of included students? What is expected of the school as responsible for the development of students while responsible for the certification of the mentally handicapped? How to solve these situations?

The object of this study is the specific termination of studies of mentally handicapped students. In order to develop it, we used the technique of narrative review, which enables the construction of articles in which authors can perform analysis and wider critical interpretations, enabling to understand the “state of the art” of a particular subject, from a point of a theoretical or contextual. The narrative reviews need not to be tied to sources of information used to inform the methodology for the search of the references, nor the criteria used in evaluation and selection of consulted works ⁽²⁾.

For ethical and methodological approaches, however, we chose to quote, in this work, the sources that were used for the study. Even this choice is justified to give more credibility to this type of review, little explored in the area of education.

Inclusion

The word “inclusion” is the great contemporary theme in the educational field, which in the past could be considered a “solved problem” for families, since it brought the possibility of egalitarian schooling for their children, understood as a palliative because the reality faced in schools meant that teachers often see inclusion as something impossible, even utopian. However, it is defended the idea that this is not utopia, since this student actually exists, with the peculiarities of each one being considered in all its manifestations, whether intellectual, social, cultural or physical ⁽³⁾.

The Federal Constitution ⁽⁴⁾ of 1988 states, in Chapter III, Section I, Article 206, Item I, equal conditions for access and retention in school. And Article 208, Section III, says the specialized educational services in favor of disabled persons shall be performed preferably in mainstream education.

The word “preferably”, mentioned above, can translate an idea not mandatory and may, thus, minimize the responsibility of the school in accepting or not the student, because of his difficulties, which for some would be considered impossible or limiting for school development.

Over the years ⁽⁵⁾, “the limitation before seen only as the difficulty of the person comes to be seen as a limitation of society to provide the enabling conditions for overcoming physical, social and economic limitations.”

It is emphasized that the main barriers to people with disabilities are the result of socially constructed prejudices and stereotypes.

Heeding Article 59 of the Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education ⁽⁶⁾ (LDBEN), it appears that is guaranteed to students with disabilities the right to curricula, methods, techniques, educational resources organized in a specific order to meet their needs. In Item II of that Act is ensured termination for those who, because of their disability, could not reach the level required for completion of primary education, and is assured that they are entitled to a certificate of studies.

During the period of stay in school, students with disabilities in accordance with the LDBEN will be entitled to adequate teachers with expertise in middle level or higher in order to offer a specialized care. However, the aforementioned law envisages the possibility of integration into regular education classes, which occurs in so-called inclusive schools.

The National Council of Education ⁽¹⁾, in its Article 8, provides for the flexibility and adaptations, which must consider the practical significance and instrumental of the basic content, methodologies, different resources and also on the evaluation process suited to the development of these students.

In the case of termination, it opens a possibility of effective integration and full citizenship by the disabled person, doing justice to the title of a worker, as proposed in LDBEN ⁽⁷⁾. This legislation states that special education must envision possibilities for inclusion in the labor market, making effective integration in society, creating conditions suitable of permanence through intersectional meetings.

The inclusive school requires the execution of appropriate curricula, whether adapted or modified, as well as flexible teaching practice, thus promoting the proper utilization and the so-called socio-educational adjustment⁽⁸⁾.

It is important that teachers are aware of the innovations that are necessary for quality education, including for their own teaching practice. Changes should be construed as positive by teachers and not discouraging. A good example would be changes in the required adaptations, to enable students to remain poor. The educator grounded in a comprehensive paradigm that is better prepared to offer quality education. Unlike the particular paradigm, which describes him as an expert in a particular disability ⁽³⁾.

Teaching marked in the inclusive perspective reframes the teacher’s role as an educator, whether at school, in education and teaching practices that are customary in the context of excluding various levels of education. It is noteworthy the argument - often used by teachers to resist some inclusive practices - that they are not or were not prepared to receive students with specific learning needs. There is a reaction by some teachers at the outset of their work activities, by claiming that they are not able to teach students with disabilities. They have a misconception to think that training is required in advance, enabling them

to apply for work schemes pedagogically pre-defined, as if that were the solution to the problems they assume to have found in the so-called inclusive schools ⁽³⁾.

A significant amount of professionals believe that it is necessary one or more extension courses or specialization, which would give these professionals the ability to be inclusive teachers ⁽³⁾. We cannot conceive the inclusion by the mere existence of a so-called inclusive class, expressed through one of the topics listed in the cast of a teaching project for school, but when one understands that inclusion requires, in addition to titles or certificates, a great deal of inner pre-willingness by teachers and other members of teaching staff.

The LDBEN ⁽⁸⁾, in Article 12, points to the possibility of autonomy by the school, to prepare their Pedagogical Political Project, called the PPP, to meet the existing socio-cultural diversity, as well as to assess their practice, and envision a great way to start adding, thinking and rethinking practices which envisage disabled people through projects, discussions and trainings.

However, it is critical to a political project aimed at teaching, just to clarify principals, teachers, coordinators, staff and parents about the clientele and the human and material resources which the school has, when it was hoped that such projects could be a tool not only pedagogical organization of the school, but they were reviewed and modified to enable the transformation processes in the school universe. It is the act of remaking that envisions a future commitment to training purposes, risks, and breaks promises, trusting in that these are not just mere words, while maintaining close liaisons with inclusion ⁽³⁾.

In a paper defended in 2006 ⁽⁵⁾, there are reports of the course of work carried out with 26 professionals from a public school in Sao Paulo as an object of study claims to inclusive education. It was even interesting results, which could serve as a basis for reflection about the inclusion of students with disabilities. It was found that 28.06% of participants stated the need for support / assistance in relation to the disabled student; 13.67% reported behavior problems / adaptation of the students, 12.59% justified lack of preparation by the teacher, expressed the feelings of anguish and helplessness. The study also cites other factors such as lack of material resources and courses / training more suited to the reality of teachers. Regarding the lack of support in the inclusion process, this turned out to be the main difficulty. The survey revealed that mental deficiency is the greatest concern to the teachers and more prevalent in educational settings, which probably requires the greatest number of adaptations, both curricular and attitude-wise.

Mental disability is not synonymous with learning disability. Maybe the child does not learn what the teacher expects, does not have the same rate of learning of most students, or learns the same way, but this in no way means that he is not capable of learning ⁽⁵⁾.

As seen above, the pace of learning for some students, it may be slower compared to others of the same age or class / series that do not have the same disability. If the

pace is slower, the student may remain for a longer period of years in school but often, it takes teachers to think that there should be an adaptation work and that is inserted in the educational project. One should be careful so that these students not only through school, that is, are only a legal requirement and no psycho-pedagogical reasons. Stay in school these students must be marked by exploiting the potential of each individual, and not merely based on an education rooted in its deficit. It is necessary to believe that the mentally retarded person has capacity and that, often, it is society that imposes limits. It is necessary to overcome the barriers and enhance the existing capacity in each one of them.

According to the research from the School Census 2004, the disability "has the highest enrollment in Special Schools / Regular Classes and Special Schools / Commons Classes in relation to other disabilities" ⁽⁵⁾. There is a need to rise and effective educational practices aimed at the mentally handicapped. The census revealed that 51.4% of enrollments are mentally disabled.

The data presented are the basis to reinforce the importance of studies directed to termination. Possibly, in everyday practice, a good way to carry out termination would be to refer the mentally disabled to vocational education or continue their studies through the Youth and Adult Education program.

Concern about the end of the school year for students with learning disabilities is not exclusive to managers and teachers who find themselves sometimes "lost", especially in regard to the pedagogical aspects (methodology, content, assessments, attitudes, etc.) but it is also a concern of the family who wants to see their child progress and advance.

The advance in the learning of students with learning disabilities, especially cognitive and motor development will be facilitated by the regular education curriculum adaptations. Through these changes, whether significant or not, large or small, thought together (teachers, teaching staff and managers) may be made possible the progress of student learning.

With adaptations, he may not come to learn all the contents, especially the more abstract, he might not learn all the math and all the rules of the Portuguese language, but he can, throughout his stay in school, he might have a continuity in the proposed objectives and be able to perform simple math operations and use the language to communicate. However, the discontinuity of the proposed curriculum changes for the mentally disabled may generate possible failure of inclusion, transforming the student mentally handicapped in just a number in the classroom, i.e., not included in the school's educational purpose.

Termination of studies

The termination considered in the educational context envisions possibilities, dreams and perspectives. It is an expected, desired and positive feeling, but this is not always the end for the certification, when received by students with learning disabilities. Unfortunately, this is an issue contrary to the ideologies proposed.

The terminal established by LDBEN⁽⁸⁾ in Chapter V, Section II of Article 59, which deals with special education, and in accordance with Resolution 02/01, the National Education Council, shall be granted to students who demonstrate not having appropriate skills and basic skills expected for the level of education appropriate to their age group.

In the National Guidelines for Special Education in Basic Education is explicit the need for prediction of a temporal character flexible during the school year, just to meet the special educational needs of students with learning disabilities, ensuring that they can complete in a period of longer time, the curriculum planned for the grade / scholar phase.

Before dispatching the documents showing the school certification, educational institutions should be guided towards necessary educational procedures, emphasizing that the length of school stay of the mentally handicapped student was higher than his peers.

The ideology concerning the termination, as well as the inclusion appears to be extremely important, having an unquestionable characteristic and intention for the development of the students. It would not be considered utopian by some professionals if there were a greater restructuring, comprised through training, investment, public policies, among others. Unfortunately, what we have observed is that in most cases, the student is mentally disabled for many years in school and sometimes without proper certification, which would guarantee him to continue his studies, whether in the Youth and Adult Education or vocational education. If that occurred, some students could be inserted in the labor market⁽⁶⁾.

In the individual report of students referred to termination, provided by Decree CENP / COGSP / CIS of July 6, 2009⁽⁹⁾, points to relevant data, which should be emphasized in the preparation of pedagogical proposals. It must contain the adaptations, access, content and functional and practical goals as well as the practice of autonomy and the evaluation criteria during the process of teaching and learning.

It stands out in Article 16 of Resolution 02/01⁽¹⁾, the obvious need for certification of students when learning opportunities have been exhausted. The certification envisions the essential conditions to be included in the proposals for teaching mentally disabled students. If schools are unable to contemplate the necessary prerogatives to the termination, expressed through the individual student report, they have played a role in the inclusion, creating future opportunities for the student. The mentally disabled person needs to be seen as a capable person. The school can play a critical role in the reduction of stereotypes and prejudices that sometimes cause some lay people to turn away, ignoring and segregating them⁽¹⁰⁾.

Final Considerations

Given the ideals of termination, it is expected that educational practices occur in order not to exclude the mentally disabled student from social life, but to enable

his integration into the labor market, embracing him as a citizen possessing equal rights in society.

Termination has to cease being a utopia and turn into reality, leading to concrete possibilities in the daily life of the mentally disabled person, not referring to a forced termination of education in which this could not have provided his perspectives and future aspirations.

It is important to give more credibility to the legislation focused on education, in particular to Article 16 of the National Education Council, which to basic education, i.e., that all possibilities of stay have been offered to these students in school. That they see them as students considered to be included, since they have been brought into direct contact with other students, understanding their difficulties, but without making of these, the limit for their development, to proceed.

Social inclusion is a prerequisite for life in society so that the student can be understood as a citizen. The disabled student shall not be understood only through numerical data, expressed by the school census. He shall have ensured his participation as an active asset in building his own future.

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