



## SCHOOL INCLUSION OF STUDENTS WITH DOWN SYNDROME IN THE REGULAR SCHOOL AND ITS NEEDS: A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

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### ABSTRACT

Children feel good when they realize they are performing well. It increases your self-esteem and encourages further attempts. This is also true for children with Down syndrome. In this aspect, school inclusion has been much debated, and this study had as central question to understand the needs of children with Down syndrome in school, aiming to identify these needs and clarify the role of parents in this context. The study was developed through a review of the literature, with the research carried out in reference books and published articles, which were searched in the databases SciELO and CAPES/MEC. This study concluded that these children need individual stimuli and attention and professionals who are alert to identify their difficulty and be empowered to help them overcome them. If there is no real investment in this, truly inclusive school will be an illusion.

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### INTRODUCTION

The process of social exclusion of people who have some disability or special need is as old as the socialization of man. According to Maciel (2000), the structure of societies, since its origins, has always marginalized the disabled. These people, without respect, without care, without rights, have always been the targets of prejudiced attitudes and ruthless actions. However, isolated actions of educators and parents have promoted and implemented the school inclusion of people with some kind of disability or special need, aiming to rescue human respect and dignity, in order to enable full development and access to all resources of society by these individuals. According to Duarte (2001), in order for a disabled person to maintain a positive emotional balance, a constant process of adaptation of the problem-solving capacity is necessary, meeting the demands demanded by everyday life, a fact that can contribute to the construction of a positive self-image.

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This process is fundamental to not generate anxiety, fear or other feelings too much and, with that, do not de-structure your self-concept. In this sense, Pueschel (1993) explains that children feel good when they perceive that they are performing well in school. It is a factor that encourages them, increases their self-esteem, and encourages further attempts. Often, the right incentive corresponds to the amount of effort expended to perform a task. A smile, a gesture of approval, a few words of praise are usually enough to make a child work a little harder because the child is encouraged by the adult's approval. If the person working with the child is already approaching positively, acceptable to the child, effective guidance and learning will follow. However, if children do not feel accepted or perceive that the person does not want to work with them, a barrier will be erected between teacher and student, impairing the child's motivation and interfering in the learning process (Pueschel, 1993). Among the intellectual deficiencies presented by children, Down syndrome is the most frequent syndrome of multiple congenital defects associated with mental retardation. Its incidence is one to two affected by one thousand live-born children, and more than one-tenth of the

cases of mental retardation enrolled in institutions scattered around the world refer to this syndrome (Otto, Otto, 2004). In this scenario, educators need to know the challenges and problems these children face, and how to best respond to such challenges. For this reason, assessing the needs of children with Down syndrome in regular schools can help educators to understand the challenges and problems they face in order to find the appropriate means to respond better to these challenges. While there is a need for basic academic content for children with Down syndrome, an ideal educational program should prepare them for autonomous and social life activities. Knowing how to accomplish a task at the time it should be done, relating well to others, and knowing where to find an answer may be more important skills than being able to read, write and do. For this, it is very important that these children are placed in situations in which they achieve a good school performance. With this motivation, this research sought to know and understand the needs of children with Down syndrome in regular school. The research on the needs of this student is justified in the fact that the regular school does not have special care provided for these children, nor does it develop a work in which the family can accompany the student systematically in individual, collective meetings or in other situations that are made needed. On the other hand, incorporating the child with Down syndrome into the dynamics of regular education is part of the inclusion proposal. For this to be feasible, school institutions need to be clear about the needs of these students so they can provide the appropriate conditions. From these ideas came the central question that led to the choice of the theme of this research: What needs the child with Down syndrome in school? With this guiding question, this study aimed to identify these needs and what the role of parents in this context. The study was developed through a review of the literature, with the research being done in reference books and published articles, which were searched in the Scientific Electronic Library Online (SciELO) databases and the Coordination of Improvement of Higher Education Personnel of the Ministry of Education (CAPES / MEC).

### What is down syndrome?

Down Syndrome is the most common of the mentioned syndromes, being an anomaly that causes intellectual deficiency by a biological accident. It is part of the group of non-progressive encephalopathies, which are diseases located in the brain and constitute a set of clinical pictures with varied pathological mental and motor symptoms (Kaplan and Sadok, 1990). This syndrome is the main genetic cause of mental deficiency, being caused by the trisomy of chromosome 21, denominated in this way because the cells of the affected individual have three chromosomes 21, instead of only two. This genetic defect usually occurs during the production of gametes (eggs or spermatozoa), when one of the chromosomes of pair 21 ceases to separate correctly in meiosis. In this situation, the egg-cell or zygote receives two chromosomes 21 from the gametes, forming a trisomic zygote (MOREIRA, 2004). The child with Down syndrome has typical signs, especially because they are associated. The presence of microcephaly is common, and usually accompanies the flat face and occipital. The latter is a postural deformity, due to the fact that these children are usually very hypotonic in the first months of life, so they are permanently in the dorsal position, without much mobility. Among other physical alterations, they have a short and broad neck, have short stature, with short

hands and fingers, and the fifth finger almost always curved laterally (clinodactyly) (Otto, Otto, 2004). Schwartzman (2009) says that patients with the syndrome, although presenting some difficulties, can have a normal life and perform daily activities in the same way as any other person. Its carriers have some limitations, and may even require special conditions for learning, but through proper stimulation can develop. They usually have a calm, affectionate temperament and are humorous. They usually have some cognitive impairment, but there are very different variations. Likewise, your personality can vary widely among individuals, including some behavioral disorders. But a child's attitude to the syndrome goes beyond its genetic potential, depending heavily on the cultural characteristics of the environment in which it coexists. It is clear that the inclusion of these children implies a change of educational paradigm, since it requires a reorganization of school practices, such as planning, curriculum, evaluation and management of the evaluation process. But these children lack and deserve an educational action appropriate to meet their special needs. In this context, equal opportunities and equity are the most significant challenges to the promotion of genuine inclusion. But, like public policies, schooling must offer the same training opportunities for all, that is, it must be able to adapt to the differences, to the specific characteristics of its students, especially to those with disabilities, to respect differences and become more just (Azevedo Damke, 2017).

**Importance of inclusion a form children with down syndrome:** The integration of people with disabilities is undoubtedly a relevant issue that applies to society as a whole. This integration is justified not only for moral reasons, in view of the elimination of prejudices about persons with disabilities, but also for rational reasons, which refers to the implementation, in school and society, of the conditions that favor the autonomy of these people in the community (Boneti, 1996). Boneti (1996) says that integration is understood as a real participation of people as active and productive elements in society. The participation of people with disabilities in events and situations artificially created for them reflects a false integration, since true integration implies a real participation in school, in leisure and at work. From this perspective, it is necessary to re-elaborate the concept of people with disabilities. One must be aware that they have potential and that they can develop this potential in favor of greater social autonomy, and this autonomy is closely related to the subject's ability to interact in social circles. For this reason, the term inclusion was adopted, because it refers to something more egalitarian. The term integration is based on the search for a "normalization", treating all as equal but denying the question of difference. Already the term inclusion is unconditional, includes all, accepting the differences, therefore thinking about how to overcome them. Thus, Duarte and Manzolli (2010) explain that the dissemination of the Inclusive Education model, in search of inclusion of students with special educational needs in the regular school, brought new challenges to schools, since this inclusion implies changes in the school environment, in order to provide equal opportunities for all students: formal and social education. In this case, school inclusion provides these children with the conviviality in regular class environments, where they will interact with other students, no longer remaining isolated, but in a group. In addition, as Esteves, Cruz and Bertelli (2013) put it, inclusion also favors regular children, in that it allows them to develop skills to deal with diversity.

The universe of children with special needs is very diverse, especially when compared to the general population, and it is not possible to generalize to all children what their educational progress will be. Their progress and abilities can vary immensely depending on their age, and it is interesting that regular children naturally perceive and view the presence of a natural proportion of students with disabilities. Nowadays it is common to speak of inclusion, but for it to truly occur, there must be more than empty words. In the first place, it is fundamental that a change of thought of the society in relation to these debates takes place. And the school community needs to be empowered so that inclusion ceases to exist only in discourse and actually translates into actions. To promote the education of the child with Down syndrome, it is essential to work on cognitive processes, such as: perception, attention, memory and the organization of mental itineraries. This is because intelligence is not defined, it is constructed. In these cases, genetics represents only one possibility, while cognitive skills are acquired throughout the development process, from the received stimuli (Azevedo, 2017). According to Azevedo and Damke (2017: 113) "due to the lack of a pedagogical proposal, what prevents the public schools, so far, is a school component, and is not a much-awaited basis." Still according to the authors, when speaking about partitioning, what is a task is a pedagogical pedagogy that is able to meet the specificities and a trajectory of learning of each student. Not as nice as people with special needs. What is needed is a school initiative available to a whole structure adapted to serve these children. This includes: trained teachers; for pedagogical support, and differentiated physical and pedagogical structures, so that understanding is their social role. The main database for decision making and pedagogical measures is the management team of the school system and the school. In this case, "the challenge is to learn and learn to cope with difficulties and levels of learning in order to make inclusive education provide students with progress without their personal and educational development" (Azevedo, Damke, p. 113).

So far, education for students of segregated training, classes and special schools, under the responsibility of specialized teachers. But according to studies in the educational field, in developed countries, over the years, education has undergone changes, transforming, evolving, causing a school to assume its employment status in the formal education of children, young people and adults. Today, through pedagogical practice, the school begins as an organizer and transmitter of knowledge in the trajectory of people's lives, inserting conditions of insertion in the social environment. In partnership with public editions, as schools have the right of access for all students, for the formation of an inclusive society has become fundamental for the development of democracy; Manzoli, 2010). Machado (2015, p.29) affirms that "an effective Public Policy, with committed gestures and with the necessary skills on a Down syndrome". The author does not have enough blank and in which the compliance of students, being necessary that it resigns, it invests and it covers the Municipal Public Power (executive, legislative and judicial), to obtain the necessary resources and to assure fact, that all people are served. " Still according to Machado (2015, p.29), a "collage is more than a child playing with clay to model or paint drawings". It is linked to the adaptation, acceptance and conditions of being open to change, receiving the child and being part of the classroom in their educational and social life. " Oliveira and Silva (2010) warned that children with Down syndrome

enrolled in regular schools, although they did not achieve school success due to lack of pedagogical accessibility. That an inclusive education may have the possibility of developing a humanitarian and democratic school that is conceivable for the construction of the intellectual, social and environmental enterprise of a medium and of a pedagogical program is not what has been happening. Abstract: Paraporous paradigms, inclusive of man's vision, and adopt the images of the human development by Vigotski. In Vygotsky's view (2003) development laws are the same for all children, independent of having a disability. All rights reserved to develop plans having multiple plans genetic: a history of kind; brain plasticity; sociogenesis (cultural history and extension of potentialities); (history of each individual) and a microgenesis (particularities of the history of each individual). Inside this thought, people came out to form different forms. Therefore, as minorities, they are minorities, but collective, which bring their interior as individual differences of opportunity, flexibility, adaptations and respect to the limitations, as well as the difficulties and special needs of the other. From perspective, the special needs of the other may be missing the primary (historic organically) and deficiency lecturer (stricted media) with the means of sociocultural. Dara Desenvolvededematour human development, Vigotski defense, that, children, deficiency primary and secondary, and have intermenting social tied mediated (OLIVEIRA; SILVA, 2010).

**Identifying the needs of children with down syndrome in school:** Moreira (2004) assures that the educative process is articulated on four elements: The intelligence and the capacities that will use; the psychic (emotional and affective) basis; the child's adult interlocutors; the environment in its entirety. Thus, children with disabilities need a space where they can place themselves as a desirable, corporal and cognitive subject, and for this it is necessary for professionals, psychologists and pedagogues to reflect on this condition. Thus, for an inclusive school to be able to achieve its goal, it is necessary to produce changes in the educational program so that children with disabilities can learn and develop. Therefore, in relation to the school inclusion of these children, it is still difficult to achieve this personalized way of teaching, since Brazilian schools face overcrowded rooms and teachers with little training and qualification for this inclusion, making it difficult to achieve this goal quickly. After all, it is not enough for the school to accept the enrollment of these students, it is necessary to guarantee an adequate infrastructure and a planning that offers alternatives so that these children can progress in the learning and not only in the socialization (Duarte, 2010). In the formation and development of a child with Down syndrome, one of the crucial aspects of his educational process lies in the development of language. This is because language is responsible for mediating social, academic and learning activities, which depend on the receptive and expressive linguistic processes, as well as on the psycholinguistic abilities that provide the integration of knowledge and the possibility of social interaction. The way the child integrates into the social environment, building his language through his interlocutors, has important reflexes for his overall development and learning. Thus, it is of the utmost importance that educators establish and stimulate these interactions in the child with the syndrome, which has as its greatest alliance its inclusion in the regular school system (Lamônica *et al.*, 2015). In an inclusive school, the intervention of the educator should not be a moment of imposition of techniques. The child in question must produce

his knowledge, elaborate his affective-emotional processes and his conflicts, whether from verbal corporal language or any other.

Some educators focus their work on the limitations of the individual, seeing the difficulty as an isolated condition of a body or a head that does not work well. It is necessary for the individual to be aware of his / her problems so that there is a reformulation of the system, but it is not for the professional to cause a bombardment of conflicting situations, since this can lead to a standstill in the child's constructive process (Moreira, 2004). It should be borne in mind that children with this syndrome have a chronological age different from the functional age, so an identical response to the response of the so-called "normal" children should not be expected as they do not present learning changes (Schwartzman, 2009). When thinking about an ideal inclusive school model that aims to provide satisfactory learning and the overall growth of all its students, it is necessary that more educated professionals be made available through educational policies to work together with the teachers of these schools. Only then will it be possible to offer a more individualized and mediated education to these students (Duarte, 2010). In this scenario of inclusion in school, one can understand physical education as an area with the responsibility of developing the human being through physical activity, with a relevant educational contribution to all individuals, being related to motor development and physical fitness for well-being and health. In addition, it can help to develop collective awareness, creativity, criticality, the meaning of cooperation, and the sense of citizenship (Krug, 2002). For example, the child with down syndrome, in addition to intellectual disability, usually presents muscle hypotonia and ligament laxity, which favors joint problems, but this does not prevent them from performing certain types of movements, on the contrary. In fact, performing motor activities may strengthen muscle tone, and provide students with confidence, socialization, cognitive and affective-social development (Ornelas, 2001).

Thus, in the specific case of school physical education, adapted or not, it can be a way to give the student an opportunity to realize and learn new movements, leisure and recreation, learning new games and games and an opportunity for competition and integration with other students, serving educational objectives related to their independence and social contacts (Krug, 2002). Therefore, it is observed that there is a need for essential stimulation work to promote the movement and reasoning of these children, and stimulation is any activity that strengthens and enriches the physical, mental and social development of the child. In this way, Physical Education can and should work with the essential stimulation, allowing students to learn much more than some knowledge or the best performance of their movements. They should be explored and enriched with content that is useful in their daily lives and in relationships with others (Ornelas, 2001). Psychomotor development is the basis of learning. Therefore, the development of intelligence does not depend exclusively on chromosomal changes or changes in the nervous system, but is also influenced by stimuli from the environment. Based on this, the objectives formulated by a special education policy should: promote social interaction; develop physical education practices, physical and social activities; promote the right of choice; develop language skills; encourage autonomy and enable the social, cultural, artistic and professional development of special children. And in order to guarantee a

specialized education some measures must be taken, such as: increasing the offer of special education services with equipment, qualified staff, specialized didactic material and physical space adapted to the special needs of the intellectual handicapped, as well as creating programs of preparation for work, stimulation of informal learning and family orientation (Cantarelli, 2013). Thus, it is critical that the people who deal with the child know the main stages of child development in order to be able to effectively stimulate the full potential of the child, since the essential stimulation exercises are based on theories of child development. kid. This stimulation is characterized by interdisciplinarity, that is, the contribution of knowledge in several areas, such as: Physical Therapy, Psychology, Speech Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Physical Education and Pedagogy, organized in an integrated way to support and facilitate the development of children with special needs. In this sense, the results of the study by Luiz, et al. (2012) have shown that the teachers evaluated are not prepared for inclusion, but even so, this process of inclusion has been shown to be beneficial in early childhood education. Researchers say the need for articulation between the education and health sectors and a paradigm shift in the educational model has been evident. Similarly, the study by Oliveira-Menegotto, Martini and Lipp (2010), who interviewed some teachers about their experience with the inclusion of students with Down syndrome, revealed that many of them feel helpless, helpless and incompetent, especially as a consequence the lack of spaces for discussion and training on the subject, suggesting a possibility of intervention with psychology.

**The role of parents in school inclusion:** Tamashiro and Dias (2012) believe that educational inclusion is a process that depends on multiple factors, such as: public policies, school administrators, family members and society in general. Inclusion is an action that should value and prioritize the development of the child's potential, respecting the student for what it differs. Parents or caregivers of disabled people, in turn, also become people with special needs, as they need guidance, and access to support groups is important. In fact, it is they who will mediate the integration or inclusion of their children in the community. Each deficiency ends up entailing a type of behavior and giving rise to different forms of reactions, prejudices and restlessness. Lack of knowledge of society, in general, causes the disability to be considered a chronic disease, a burden or a problem. The stigma of disability is something serious, turning people with intellectual disabilities into incapable, helpless, royaltyless, always left to second place. Much effort is needed to overcome this stigma (Maciel, 2000). Parents of children with Down syndrome face several dilemmas when their children reach school age, and wonder whether or not to put them in a regular school. Doubts arise about the appropriate conditions for their permanence and learning in these schools. It is normal for parents to worry about the educational aspects of their children. In addition, they face difficulties for their children to be accepted in regular schools and can be "worked" appropriately, attending to their educational needs (Azevedo; Damke, 2017). Ornelas and Souza (2001) commented on the importance of parental participation in working with the child, since these and other relatives are involved in the education of these children with special needs. According to the researchers, well-educated parents and family members may be the best teachers of the students, as they are the most constant people in children's lives and because they are the main sources of motivation,

especially in the early years of life. Therefore, this fact indicates that they should be part of the planning, implementation, application and development of teaching.

As a suggestion, Duarte and Manzoli (2010) say that regular schools could associate themselves with special education in order to obtain the necessary support to understand how to make it possible for students with disabilities to learn the content that the regular education curriculum demands. In this way, an interesting way to build an inclusive school that guarantees the learning of the contents to all the students, is to promote a partnership work between teacher, the family and other education professionals. Luiz and Nascimento (2012), conducted a study to explore the experiences of families in the process of inclusion of children with Down syndrome in the regular network of education. Their results demonstrated the need for family follow-up, before, during and after the inclusion of children in school, with the purpose of supporting families in the search and choice of school, adaptation of the child to the new environment and transition of care offered by the specialized institution to other sectors. According to Pueschel (1993), during the first days of school, both parents and teachers have a responsibility to help the child adapt and adapt to the school environment. The situations of learning in the school must lend to the child with Down syndrome the sensation of personal identity, self-respect and pleasure. When the school provides an opportunity for children to engage in relationships with others, it will prepare them to contribute to society in a productive way.

**Final considerations:** It is the role of inclusive schools to provide the means and incentives for all children to learn together, despite their differences. That all the same opportunities of access, of permanence and of school use are presented. But for this to be effective, children with Down syndrome should receive the support necessary for their full development. These children need individual attention and encouragement from professionals who are alert to identify their difficulties, and are empowered to help them overcome them. The ideal of an inclusive school is still far from being reached, and needs more investments from the public sphere, through policies of school inclusion that promote suitable spaces and professionals able to achieve this goal. Likewise, programs aimed at family care are necessary to guide and enable the parents of these children to form a partnership with the schools for the development of their children. All this depends on investment, from a government that truly cares to promote inclusive education, which sees the benefits to society as a whole of this paradigm shift in education, transforming it into an instrument of social and human enhancement.

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