

Special education policy in Santa Catarina and the care of students with high skills/giftedness

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Abstract

The aim of this article is to analyze, based on the conditions established by the Special Education policy in Santa Catarina, the coverage of care for students with high abilities/superabilities (HA/SA). The methodological procedures included bibliographical and documentary research, as well as consultation of official statistical sources, in order to examine the care policy and, in its context, the coverage it provides. The results show that the policy in the state has been characterized by an inclusive education, with convergence between the references established in the state and national documents for the care of students with HA/SA students. They also point out that, despite the increase in the number of enrollments of this public in the state between 2009 and 2022, the numbers are far from the estimate of HA/SA students indicators pointed out by the World Health Organization (WHO). We conclude that the care, from the inclusive education perspective, has been partly promoted by the Special Education policy in the state.

Keywords: State education policy. Special education. Specialized care. Students with high abilities.

Política de educação especial em Santa Catarina e o atendimento a estudantes com altas habilidades/superdotação

Resumo

O artigo tem por objetivo analisar, a partir das condições estabelecidas pela política de Educação Especial em Santa Catarina, a cobertura do atendimento aos estudantes com altas habilidades/superdotação (AH/SD). Os procedimentos metodológicos compreenderam pesquisa bibliográfica e documental, além de consulta a fontes estatísticas oficiais, a fim de examinar a

política de atendimento e, no seu contexto, a cobertura que proporciona. Os resultados evidenciam que a política no estado foi sendo caracterizada pela educação inclusiva, havendo convergência entre os referenciais estabelecidos nos documentos estaduais e nacionais para o atendimento aos estudantes com AH/SD. Também evidenciam que, embora, em números absolutos, tenha havido aumento de matrículas desse público no estado entre 2009 e 2022, os quantitativos distam da estimativa de estudantes com indicadores de AH/SD apontada pela Organização Mundial da Saúde (OMS). Concluímos que o atendimento, na perspectiva da educação inclusiva, vem sendo parcialmente promovido pela política de Educação Especial no estado.

Palavras-chave: Política estadual de educação. Educação especial. Atendimento especializado. Estudante com altas habilidades.

La política de educación especial en Santa Catarina y el atención a estudiantes con altas habilidades/superdotación

Resumen

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El artículo tiene por objetivo analizar, a partir de las condiciones establecidas por la política de Educación Especial en Santa Catarina, la cobertura de la atención a los estudiantes con altas habilidades/superdotación (AH/SD). Los procedimientos metodológicos incluyeron la investigación bibliográfica y documental, además la consulta a fuentes estadísticas oficiales, con la finalidad de examinar la política de atención y, en su contexto, la cobertura que proporciona. Los resultados muestran que la política en el estado fue caracterizada por la educación inclusiva, con convergencia entre lo referenciales establecidos en los documentos estaduais y nacionales para la atención a los estudiantes con AH/SD. También evidencian que, aunque que en números absolutos, ha habido un aumento de matrículas de este público en el estado entre 2009 y 2022, los números están lejos de la estimación de estudiantes con indicadores de AH/SD señalados por la Organización Mundial de la Salud (OMS). Concluimos que la atención, en la perspectiva de la educación inclusiva, ha sido parcialmente promovida por la política de Educación Especial en el estado.

Palabras clave: Política estadual de educación. Educación especial. Atención especializada. Estudiante con altas habilidades.

Introdução

In a context of educational reforms driven by the influence of international organizations and the effervescence of movements for the democratization of Brazil, in the 1990s, policies were adopted to include the special education public in regular education. The consolidation of these policies would occur only from the years 2000 (Michels, 2017), under the *National Policy on Special Education from the Perspective of Inclusive Education* (PNEEPEI, the acronym in Portuguese)¹ (Brasil, 2008).

In Santa Catarina, the state instituted, in 2009, the *Special Education Policy* (2009a), formulated by the Department of Education (SED) and the Santa Catarina Foundation for Special Education (FCEE, the acronym in Portuguese), based on citizenship and the dignity of the human person. Through this political-legal instrument, inclusive education was highlighted, guaranteeing people with disabilities or typical educational services provided in regular schools.

In 2016, standards for special education were established at the state level, through the expression “Specialized Educational Attendance” (AEE, the acronym in Portuguese), in reference to the service rooms for the target audience of special education in the regular education network. Regarding the audience of high abilities/giftedness (AH/SD) – which comprises those students who “demonstrate high potential in any of the following areas, isolated or combined: intellectual, academic, leadership, psychomotricity and arts”, as well as “[...] high creativity, great involvement in learning and performing tasks in areas of their interest [...]” (Brasil, 2008, p. 15) – complementing or supplementing the learning process was also proposed. It is worth remembering that, in order to offer a reference space for the service to this public, in 2005, The Center for High Abilities/Giftedness Activities (NAAHS, the acronym in Portuguese) was created,² distributed in all states and in the Federal District, in order to guide families and promote the continuing education of teachers (Brasil, 2006).

To complement the guidelines on actions and services for students, the government of Santa Catarina established, in 2018, guidelines for specialized educational care for students with high abilities/giftedness. These guidelines are in tune with the perspective of inclusive education in force in the country,

which is evident both by the theoretical foundation adopted and by the objectives, by the structuring, by the implementation and by the functioning of the Specialized Educational Attendance for high abilities/giftedness.

Given the above and the challenge of effectively including these students in regular education, this article aims to analyze, based on the conditions established by the special education policy in Santa Catarina, the coverage of the care offered to these students.

Methodology

The research from which this work results assumed a critical perspective of investigation in educational policy, which considers the research activity imbued with the purpose of social justice (Ozga, 2000). Based on assumptions of qualitative research (Chizzotti, 2017), the methodological procedures included bibliographic and documentary research, as well as consultation with official statistical sources.

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In order to contextualize the special education policy in Santa Catarina from the 1990s and to indicate specificities regarding the care of students with high abilities/giftedness, we use documents issued by government agencies. In tune with educational standards and guidelines of national scope, part of these documents deals with the regulation or guidance of actions with a view to attendance.

Regarding the consultation of official statistical sources, data were accessed regarding the care of students with high abilities/giftedness indicators between 2009 and 2022, at the level of Brazil and Santa Catarina. The consultations took place on the website of the National Institute of Educational Studies and Research Anísio Teixeira (Inep, the acronym in Portuguese), and were complemented by consultation with the bases of the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE). To this end, we take as an age reference the population with high abilities/giftedness from six to 17 years old, corresponding to elementary and high school students. Therefore, the analyzes consider the policy for attendance erected in the state and, in its context, the coverage that occurred in the mentioned period.

Results and discussion

First, we turn to elements of the special education policy of the state of Santa Catarina in its correlation with the policy on a national scale, in order to signal specificities in terms and conditions for the educational attendance of students with high abilities/giftedness. Next, we deal with the coverage in terms of educational attendance to the public with high abilities/giftedness in the state, considering this to be a fundamental dimension for the active inclusion of the aforementioned public in regular education. To this end, official data from 2009 to 2022 are examined.

Policy for the attendance of students with high abilities/giftedness in Santa Catarina

In Santa Catarina, the Center of High Abilities/Giftedness Activities is part of the services provided by the Santa Catarina Foundation for Special Education, with actions guided by philosophical principles that support inclusive education, aiming to define and coordinate the policy of care for students with high abilities/giftedness in the state. Since 2006, the Center carries out training for teachers and promotes the attendance of children and young people with high abilities/giftedness (Santa Catarina, 2011), so that its units constitute spaces that function as reference centers for the Specialized Educational Attendance of elementary and high school students enrolled in the public or private school system. The Center also provides guidance to families and training to teachers in the area of giftedness.

Thus, special education in Santa Catarina has been materialized through the implementation of services headed by the state Foundation for Special Education, which are in tune with what is provided for in national regulations. Basically, there are two state documents guiding the attendance, namely: the *Special Education Policy of the State of Santa Catarina*, approved in 2006 by the Santa Catarina Foundation for Special Education deliberative council, updated in 2009, which has as reference the National Policy on Special Education from the Perspective of Inclusive Education (Brasil, 2008); and the *Pedagogical Program* (Santa Catarina, 2009b).

The *Special Education Policy of the State of Santa Catarina* is based on citizenship and the dignity of the human person (Santa Catarina, 2009a), seeking to ensure specialized attendance for people with disabilities, typical behaviors, and high abilities/giftedness. Although the name *typical conduct* is not included in the *National Policy on Special Education from the Perspective of Inclusive Education* (Brazil 2008) – it was included in the National Special Education Policy of 1994 –, it was maintained in the document that provides for the Santa Catarina policy to identify students “[...] who present the following conditions: Hyperkinetic Disorders or Attention Deficit Disorders with Hyperactivity/Impulsivity; Global Development Disorders” (Santa Catarina, 2009a, p. 26)³.

In the state document, it is also ensured “[...] people with disabilities, typical behaviors and high abilities educational attendance through which they can develop their potential so that they are perceived by the other and by themselves as individuals of rights” (Santa Catarina, 2009a, p. 21). With regard to education for the gifted, the document makes only a few brief mentions.

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Based on the *National Policy on Special Education from the Perspective of Inclusive Education* (Brasil, 2008) and the *Special Education Policy of the State of Santa Catarina* (2009a), the Foundation for Special Education implemented programs to assist people with disabilities (PwD), Global Developmental Disorders (GDD) and high abilities/giftedness, in accordance with the provisions of Resolution CEE/SC (Santa Catarina State Council of Education) No. 112/2006, which established standards for special education in the state education system. Thus, through the normative route, the state sought to guarantee PwD, typical behaviors and high abilities/giftedness complementary and supplementary⁴ support for learning. This is because, according to the resolution, the state takes on inclusive education, defining special education

[...] as an interdisciplinary process aimed at the prevention, teaching, and rehabilitation of people with disabilities, typical behaviors, and high abilities, aiming at their inclusion through the use of specific pedagogical and technological resources. In the educational sphere, as a modality that permeates all levels, stages, and modalities, organized to support, complement, and supplement the learning of students (Santa Catarina, 2009a, p. 22).

The *Pedagogical Program* (Santa Catarina, 2009b, p. 15) aims to outline the guidelines of special education services and is directed “[...] to the qualification of the teaching-learning process of students with disabilities, typical behaviors and high abilities, enrolled in regular schools”. Another highlight was the implementation of the Specialized Educational Attendance (Saede, the acronym in Portuguese), considering that

The Pedagogical Program, endorsed by the State Policy, transformed or renamed the so-called resource rooms into Specialized Educational Attendance Services, designated by their area of intervention, with a complementary or supplementary character, implemented in the regular education network or in specialized attendance centers maintained by the Association of Parents and Friends of the Exceptional (Santa Catarina, 2009b, p. 6).

The state established several types of the Specialized Educational Care Attendance in the area of hearing impairment, mental disability, visual impairment and Global Developmental Disorders, in addition to high abilities. It is “[...] an activity of a pedagogical nature, provided by a Special Education professional, aimed at meeting the specificities of students with disabilities, typical behaviors or with high abilities” (Santa Catarina, 2009b, p. 24). The Specialized Educational Attendance has the objective of “[...] complementing, supporting and supplementing the teaching and learning process, not configuring private teaching or school enhancement” (Santa Catarina, 2009b, p. 24). If there is not, in the same school, a minimum number of students with the same disability, typical behaviors or high abilities, it is foreseen the possibility of implementing a mixed Specialized Educational Attendance, whose service is developed by the same professional, with attendance by separate areas (Santa Catarina, 2009b).

Regarding the organizational aspect, Michels (2004) comments that the functions of supporting, complementing, supplementing, and replacing,

[...] although they represent changes in the organization of this educational modality [...] they corroborate its maintenance in the historical condition of a subsystem, since they reaffirm the rupture between Regular Education and Special Education (Michels, 2004, p. 2).

It should be noted that, based on National Policy on Special Education from the Perspective of Inclusive Education (Brasil, 2008), the National Council of Education (CNE) approved Opinion CNE/CEB No. 13 (Brasil, 2009a) and Resolution CNE/CEB No. 4 (Brasil, 2009b), providing for the Operational Guidelines for Specialized Educational Attendance in Basic Education, in the special education modality. These are documents that deal with the operation of the Specialized Educational Attendance, specifying the function, who should offer and where the service should be provided, in addition to describing the target audience more clearly. Article 3rd of the Resolution establishes the target audience of the Specialized Educational Attendance:

I – Students with disabilities: those who have long-term physical, intellectual, mental, or sensory impairments.

II – Students with Global Developmental Delay: those who present with changes in neuropsychomotor development, impairment in social relations, communication, or motor stereotypes. This definition includes students with classic autism, Asperger’s syndrome, Rett syndrome, childhood disintegrative disorder (psychoses) and invasive disorders not otherwise specified.

III – Students with high abilities/giftedness: those who present a high potential and great involvement with the areas of human knowledge, isolated or combined: intellectual, leadership, psychomotor, arts and creativity (Brasil, 2009b).

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In addition, regarding the organization, development, articulation, and evaluation of pedagogical proposals of all education networks in the country, these aspects are included in the *National Curriculum Guidelines for Basic Education (DCNE)*, established in 2010, and amended in 2013 (Brasil, 2013). With the changes, special education was defined as “a modality of education transversal to all stages and other modalities, as an integral part of regular education, and should be provided for in the political-pedagogical project of the school unit” (Brasil, 2013, p. 42). The National Education Plan 2014-2024 – Law No. 13,005, of June 25, 2014 – also includes special education in goal, referring to it as a policy that involves federal, state, and municipal governments⁵. It also ensures that specific needs in the field of special education are met with a view to an inclusive educational system at all levels, stages, and modalities of education.

In 2016, there was a review of the Special Education Policy and the Pedagogical Program of Santa Catarina. In this sense, State Council of Education approved, in replacement of Resolution No. 112/2006, Resolution CEE/SC No. 100/2016, which establishes standards for special education in the State Education System of Santa Catarina. Article 2nd of the document establishes that “the maintainers of basic education schools of the State System must provide Specialized Services in Special Education, when necessary”, and must include: class attendance; a Brazilian Sign Language (Libras) interpreter; a bilingual teacher; a second-class teacher; a Libras instructor; a support professional; and Specialized Educational Attendance.

Continued training for teachers of specialized educational services and other education professionals who work in state public schools is also provided for in the new Resolution, and it is up to Santa Catarina Foundation for Special Education and Department of Education to carry it out, including in articulation with other institutions.

Resolution CEE/SC No. 100/2016 formalizes the term “Specialized Educational Attendance”, referring to the attendance rooms. In paragraph 2nd of article 3rd, the document ensures progress in courses or years “whenever high abilities or personal fulfillment of learning expectations are found, corresponding to all subjects or areas of knowledge offered in the year or course in which the student is enrolled”⁶.

In another update of the *Special Education Policy*, it was established that “[...] the Specialized Educational Attendance will be made available in the regular education network, after school, in order to complement or supplement the students’ learning process” (Santa Catarina, 2018c, p. 41). The *Policy* points out the objectives of the attendance and the competencies of the teacher and the advisor of the Specialized Educational Attendance in the care of students with high abilities/giftedness, which is now offered in specific rooms, now called Specialized Educational Attendance for high abilities/giftedness. As Delpretto (2010) points out, the Specialized Educational Attendance:

It favors the articulation of services performed at school, in the community, in higher education institutions and in the centers of activities for students with High Abilities/Giftedness, allowing them to participate in a process of multidimensional identification, stimulation

and deepening activities and, thus, achieve the objectives of specialized educational attendance (Delpretto, 2010, p. 24).

As a whole, the political-legal artifacts mentioned here bear marks of struggles in the field of special education in the state, having therefore been crossed by voices and movements, as well as by the defense of interests. On the part of the movement in defense of an inclusive education, there are social individuals, such as technicians in the area, scholars, and specialists, among others, imbued with the purpose of making inclusion not only a right, but that has concrete repercussions on the educational and social development of PwD, as is the case of the public with high abilities/giftedness.

The student with high abilities/giftedness as the individual of the policy

10 In Santa Catarina, the Center of High Abilities/Giftedness Activities guides the use of the *Three-Ring Conception*, by the American psychologist and researcher Joseph Renzulli in the provision of services, as well as the *Multiple Intelligences Theory*, by the American Howard Gardner (Santa Catarina, 2018a). These are referential theories for the identification of students with high abilities/giftedness.

Renzulli's work, in partnership with researcher Sally Morgan Reis, called The Schoolwide Enrichment Model (SEM) (Renzulli, 2004), served as a theoretical contribution to the creation of the Center of High Abilities/Giftedness Activities implemented by Ministry of Education in 2005. It was used as its methodological basis to identify, evaluate and assist gifted students. The study of the *Three-Ring Concept* was developed by Renzulli in the 1970s and, through it, students with high abilities/giftedness are divided into three specific characteristics: "[...] above-average ability in some area of knowledge; involvement with the task and creativity" (Virgolim, 2007, p. 36).

Although the *Multiple Intelligences Theory* does not deal specifically with high abilities/giftedness, it considers the manifestation of the various intelligences of a individual, his ability to solve problems and to elaborate other products, thus moving away from the idea of a unique and general intelligence (Santa Catarina, 2016).

Chart 1 presents elements present in national and state documents dated from 2005 to 2018 that characterize students with high abilities/giftedness, considering the key-words *potential*, *development*, and *performance*.

QuaChart 1 – Definitions of high abilities/giftedness, according to potential keys, development, and performance, according to national and Santa Catarina documents (2005 a 2018)

BraZil	Santa Catarina
<p>Art. 4th</p> <p>III – Students with high abilities/giftedness: those who present a high potential and great involvement with the areas of human knowledge, isolated or combined: intellectual, leadership, psychomotor, arts and creativity (Brasil, 2009b).</p>	<p>Art. 1st</p> <p>§ 5th Students with high abilities/ giftedness demonstrate high potential in any of the following areas, isolated or combined: intellectual, academic, leadership, psychomotricity, and arts, in addition to presenting great creativity, involvement in learning and performing tasks in areas of their interest (Santa Catarina, 2016).</p>
<p>Students with high abilities/giftedness show high potential in any of the following areas, singly or in combination: intellectual, academic, leadership, psychomotricity, and the arts. They also present high creativity, great involvement in learning and performing tasks in areas of their interest (Brasil, 2008, p. 15).</p>	<p>Students with high abilities/giftedness are defined as those who: [...] demonstrate high potential in any of the following areas, isolated or combined: intellectual, academic, leadership, psychomotricity, and arts. They also present high creativity, great involvement in learning and performing tasks in areas of their interest (Santa Catarina, 2018a, p. 3).</p> <p>[...] students with high abilities/giftedness – demonstrate high potential in any of the following areas, isolated or combined: intellectual, academic, leadership, psychomotricity, and arts, in addition to presenting great creativity, involvement in learning and performing tasks in areas of their interest (Santa Catarina, 2018b, p. 38).</p>
<p>High abilities/giftedness: Remarkable performance and high potential in any of the following aspects, isolated or combined: • General intellectual capacity; • Specific academic aptitude; • Creative or productive thinking; • Leadership capacity; • Special talent for arts; • Psychomotor capacity (Brasil, 2005, p. 15).</p> <p>[...] gifted and talented children who present remarkable performance and high potential in any of the following aspects, isolated or combined: general intellectual capacity, specific academic aptitude, creative or productive thinking, leadership capacity, special talent for the arts and psychomotor capacity (Brasil, 2006, p. 25).</p>	<p>Students with high abilities are those who present [...] remarkable performance and high potential in any of the following aspects, isolated or combined: general intellectual capacity; specific academic aptitude; creative or productive thinking; leadership capacity; special talent for arts and psychomotor capacity (Santa Catarina, 2009b, p. 27).</p>

Source: prepared by the authors based on the documents examined.

According to the description of the legislation in table 1, *potential* and *development* can be understood as similar concepts in the definition of students with high abilities/giftedness indicators. That is, they combine with each other and are indicative that these individuals must present abilities and/or talents in the activities of their interest, associated with their potential. Therefore, it is the “[...] understanding that high abilities are related both to the performance demonstrated and to the potential to demonstrate remarkable performance” (Virgolim, 2007, p. 28).

Authors such as Guenther (2000) state that people with high abilities/giftedness are those with above-average intelligence, in one or more areas, valued in their culture. Therefore, “it is not a question of being or not being” (Guenther, 2000, p. 88), but of recognizing that the development of the endowment leaves clues and that it needs to be worked on both in the physical environment and in social interactions. Ourofino and Guimarães (2007, p. 43), in turn, define high abilities as “[...] above-average abilities in one or more domains: intellectual, affective and social relationships, creative, sports and psychomotor productions”. Other sources that can provide indications of high abilities/giftedness are games, championships, Olympiads, interactive and dynamic exercises involving psychomotricity.

For Alencar (2007, p. 22), high abilities/giftedness comprise a set of “[...] three characteristics that do not need to manifest with the same intensity or be present at the same time, the most important is that they interact to some degree, so that a high level of creative productivity can emerge”. Such characteristics are the traits defined by Renzulli and that form the so-called *Three-Ring Concept*: above-average ability, involvement with the task and creativity (Renzulli; Reis, 1997), whose manifestations are influenced by environmental and personality factors.

Also, according to Renzulli (1998; 2002; 2004), it is possible to find two types of giftedness in school: educational and creative-productive. The first type is identified and assessed by intelligence quotient (IQ) tests or specific identification protocols, which aim to measure abilities related to learning situations that occur in school. The second type concerns gifted and talented individuals, who, due to their evident abilities, are capable of high performance and “[...] have the capacity and potential to develop this set of traits

and use them in any potentially valuable area of human achievement, in any social group” (Brasil, 1995, p. 13).

Although the terminologies still motivate discussions about the best definition of giftedness, it is important to highlight that the authors, as in the documents, defend the stimulation of abilities/talents and enrichment activities as the best way to serve people with high abilities/giftedness. In addition, some authors argue that the inclusion of students with high abilities/giftedness in regular school allows the acceleration of studies, which is an important tool to attendance⁷ in the academic area (Delou, 2005). The acceleration and/or school advancement of these students for the completion of the school program in a shorter time is provided for in state legislation.

Coverage of high abilities/giftedness public attendance in Santa Catarina

Understood as a school modality that addresses children, adolescents and young people who need special education processes because they have their own characteristics, different from the majority of the population (Bueno, 1993), special education in Brazil, over the last few years, has experienced different configurations in terms of field of action, modes of operation and public, currently composed of students with disabilities, Global Developmental Delay and high abilities/giftedness (Brasil, 2008). The coverage of the latter group, although targeted by public policies, is still a challenge, including in Santa Catarina.

Table 1 summarizes data from the School Census from 2009 to 2022, referring to the enrollment of elementary and high school students in Brazil and Santa Catarina, among which are those of students with high abilities/giftedness.

Table 1 – Total enrollment of students in elementary and high school – Brazil and Santa Catarina (2009 to 2022)

Year	Brazil			Santa Catarina		
	Registrations	HA/G	%	Enrollments	HA/G	%
2009	40.206.594	5.205	0,0129	1.142.812	36	0,0032
2010	39.506.854	9.000	0,0228	1.128.800	104	0,0092
2011	38.892.305	10.763	0,0277	1.116.562	150	0,0134
2012	38.204.569	10.902	0,0285	1.106.100	155	0,0140
2013	37.501.650	12.149	0,0324	1.090.678	168	0,0154
2014	36.872.892	13.089	0,0355	1.083.724	217	0,0200
2015	36.007.360	14.166	0,0393	1.080.029	314	0,0291
2016	35.824.518	15.751	0,0440	1.073.467	488	0,0455
2017	35.278.464	19.451	0,0551	1.065.264	804	0,0755
2018	34.893.899	22.161	0,0635	1.094.527	1.019	0,0931
2019	34.389.621	48.133	0,1400	1.108.138	1.139	0,1028
2020	34.269.583	24.132	0,0704	1.131.062	1.387	0,1226
2021	34.286.158	23.506	0,0686	1.166.777	1.524	0,1306
2022	34.318.923	26.589	0,0774	1.187.588	1.909	0,1607

Source: Basic Education Statistics Synopsis, National Institute of Educational Studies, and Research Anísio Teixeira/Ministry of Education (2009 to 2022).

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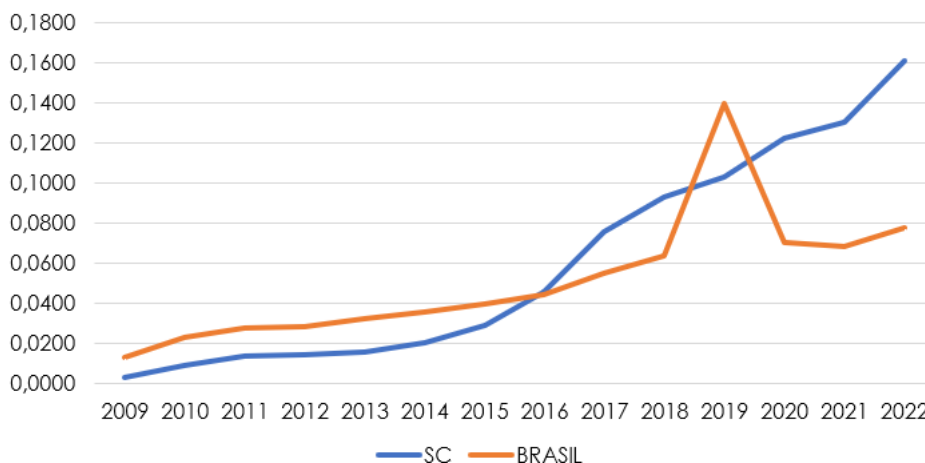
The data in table 1 show an increase in the enrollment of students with high abilities/giftedness supported by special education in the regular education system, although in a context of falling enrollment at the national level. However, if we take as a reference the estimate of the World Health Organization (WHO) that, worldwide, between 3% and 5% of the population has indicators of high abilities/giftedness (Freitas; Pérez, 2012), the conclusion is that this estimate, although it focuses on the general population and not specifically the school-age population, contrasts with the effective attendance demonstrated by the data table.

This contrast is corroborated by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics data related to the population of Santa Catarina, according to which the state had, in 2022, 486,600 people aged six to 10 years, 370,600 aged 11 to 14 years and 285,300 aged 15 to 17 years (BRAZIL, 2023).

Applying the percentages indicated by the WHO, it is possible to conclude that the attendance data indicated in table 1 are far below the estimates.

In absolute numbers, there was an increase in enrollment between 2009 and 2019 in Brazil, given the growth from 5.2 thousand to more than 48 thousand students, followed by a significant drop in the following two years and a small boost in 2022. In the state of Santa Catarina, in the same period, there was a modest growth in the percentage of attendance, without acute fluctuations, as shown in graph 1.

Graph 1 – Percentage of enrollment of students in elementary and high school with high abilities/giftedness – Brazil and in Santa Catarina (2009 to 2022)



Source: Basic Education Statistics Synopsis, National Institute of Educational Studies, and Research Anísio Teixeira/Ministry of Education (2009 to 2022).

Graph 1 shows that, although there has been a growth in attendance, the comparison of the percentages for the country and the state of Santa Catarina shows that the data differ, more significantly, in three phases of the analyzed period. Santa Catarina remains below between 2009 and 2015 and in 2019, but exceeds the national percentage between 2016 and 2022. It is also possible to check the growth trend in national and state attendance rates since 2009, which was changed at the national level after the abrupt growth in 2019 followed by fluctuations in the following years.

The year 2016, as shown in graph 1, constitutes a dividing mark in the state. It is the year of publication of Resolution CEE/SC No. 100/2016, which formalized the specialized educational service. Thus, if on the one hand, the implementation of the Center of High Abilities/Giftedness Activities (Santa Catarina), in 2006, made it possible to develop more powerful actions for the identification and attendance of students with high abilities/giftedness, on the other hand, it was from 2016, with the decentralized implementation of specialized educational attendance poles in the state network, in several municipalities of the state, that the service made it possible to reach a greater number of students with high abilities/giftedness. The poles have the purpose of identifying, evaluating, and assisting students with high abilities/giftedness indicators in their locality, being under the responsibility of the student's school of origin to register it in the school census.

Data from 2023 indicate the existence of 32 regional service poles, in addition to that of the Santa Catarina Foundation for Special Education itself, in the city of São José, region of Greater Florianópolis. The poles of the Specialized Educational Attendance for high abilities/giftedness are installed in basic education schools of the state education network or in specialized institutions, such as the Patrick Associative Center for Psychophysical Activities, in the municipality of Chapecó, in the West Santa Catarina region. The data indicate that, in 2022, 314 education professionals were trained by the Center of High Abilities/Giftedness Activities and Santa Catarina Foundation for Special Education team in the area of high abilities/giftedness (Santa Catarina, 2023).

The establishment of the *Guidelines for the implementation of Specialized Educational Attendance for students with High Abilities/Giftedness* (Santa Catarina, 2018a, p. 4) reinforced the expansion of attendance, with the objective of "promoting the identification and attendance to students with high abilities/giftedness who attend elementary and high schools, primarily from the state public network". Through the Santa Catarina Foundation for Special Education, the state government has partnership programs with institutions specialized in special education, aiming at maintaining activities for specialized educational attendance.

Final considerations

When inquiring about the effective inclusion of students with high abilities/giftedness in regular education, the study focused on the objective of analyzing, based on the conditions established by the special education policy in Santa Catarina, the coverage of the attendance of these students. Regarding the conditions and organization formally established by the current educational policy, the study made it possible to show that the state and national documents analyzed converge in terms of references for the attendance of students with high abilities/giftedness, with the offer of attendance services present in different regions and locations of the state. The attendance includes the offer of special education, preferably in the regular education network, supplementary programs, school acceleration, grouping by interests, school enrichment to enhance the different areas of talents and abilities, among other aspects.

However, regarding coverage in attendance, the results of the research, obtained from a comparative look at the number of students with high abilities/giftedness attended in elementary and high school and the estimated population with high abilities/giftedness indicate the existence of a gap. It means that, although the decentralization and organicity of care attendances in the state, according to the current policy, is an important advance to ensure the educational right of this public, and there has been an increase in the number of students with indicative of high abilities/giftedness identified and attended throughout the sampled period, the number of these students remains modest in view of the possible contingent of cases, which strains the effective materialization of this right.

It is to say, therefore, that the specialized attendance to these students, from the perspective of inclusive education, has been partially promoted by the special education policy in force in Santa Catarina. Considering that the collected data, unlike being isolated pieces, occur in a context of relationships and manifest themselves in a complexity of oppositions (Chizzotti, 2017), we understand that there are fronts that continue to require the attention of the government, so that a greater correspondence between the attendance and its real realization as a social right is possible. Among these fronts, we can

mention the challenge of identifying cases of students with high abilities/giftedness, the continuity in the expansion of the number of attendance units and the formation of teachers, with a view to a differentiated vision in relation to the learning of these students (Silva; Luz; Negrini; 2023).

The guarantee of this right is not to be confused with a “results policy,” based on a cost/benefit ratio (Garcia; Michels, 2011), or with one that generalizes and massifies students in the way they propose and perform services (Garcia, 2013), but is consistent with a perspective of inclusion that contributes to an effective and adequate schooling of students with high abilities/giftedness.

Notes

1. The previous formulation of the National Special Education Policy, which occurred in 1994, consisted of a document guiding the institutional integration process, which implied the attendance with division between common and special spaces.
2. The Ministry of Education proposes that all Centers of High Abilities/Giftedness Activities offer three attendance units: the Student Attendance Unit, the Teacher Attendance Unit, and the Family Support Unit (Brasil, 2006).
3. From the perspective of inclusive education, the target audience of special education is students with disabilities, global developmental disorders, and high abilities/giftedness.
4. To this end, agreements were provided with institutions, transfer, and training of professionals to develop actions with a view to attendance of special education public in regular education.
5. To universalize, for the population with disabilities, global developmental delay and high abilities or giftedness aged 4 to 17 years, access to basic education and specialized educational attendance, preferably in the regular education system, with the guarantee of an inclusive educational system, multifunctional resource rooms, classes, schools or specialized, public, or contracted services.
6. Resolution CEE/SC No. 26/2019, which amends Resolution CEE/SC No. 100/2016.
7. Law no. 9.394/1996, in its article 47, paragraph 2nd, establishes: “Students who have extraordinary performance in their studies, demonstrated by means of tests and other specific assessment instruments, applied by a special examining board, may have the duration of their courses shortened, in accordance with the rules of the education systems.”

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