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Support networks for special education students in Espírito Santo's municipal education system*

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Abstract

This study investigates the composition of support networks and its implications for special education students, adopting as reference four municipal public education systems located in Grande Vitória metropolitan region, Espírito Santo. Its theoretical background draws on authors whose work focus on the articulation of support networks in regular schools for curricular accessibility. A qualitative mapping study was conducted with data obtained from an information survey at the Anísio Teixeira National Institute and three focus groups conducted with education professionals, between September and October 2020. Results show that: a) the enrollment of students with disabilities, pervasive developmental disorders and giftedness in the analyzed education systems drives educational policies, including the creation of support networks; b) these networks are constituted in a plural manner by means of public calls, hiring of temporary teachers and relocation of regular school faculty; c) composition of a core special education team, some of which include health professionals; d) implementation of multifunctional resource rooms; e) provision of specialized educational services, even with different conceptions. As final considerations, this study unveils the need to question philanthropy and articulate support networks to strengthen the right to access, permanence and learning with socially referenced quality for special education students.

Keywords

Special education – Support networks – Espirito Santo education systems.

Introduction

Education of special education students in regular schools have been supported by a set of norms that recognize education as a public and subjective social right (Brasil, 1988, 1996), defended by the promotion of political-pedagogical conditions for these individuals to appropriate curricular knowledge, simultaneously recognizing the intrinsic relations of such appropriation with meeting the learning specificities that this group of students brings to school life (Brasil, 2008, 2009, 2011).

Brazilian educational regulations understand that the inclusion of these students calls upon education systems to create support networks to help regular education teachers in knowledge mediation. To provide guidance in composing these support networks, the Brazilian Ministry of Education issued documents and regulations, particularly the National Policy on Special Education based on school inclusion (Brasil, 2008), which recognizes the need for support networks in regular classrooms and in interventions more directed to learning specificities. According to Bendinelli, Andrade, and Prieto (2012) and Calheiros (2019), words such as intertwining, cooperation, collaboration, joint work refer to the concept of support networks, while involving different joint articulations between people and institutions in response to the specific needs of a given public, intended to implement support services for school inclusion.

Based on these understandings, hiring policies for education professionals aimed at curricular accessibility were strengthened, in compliance with the Law of Guidelines and Bases for National Education No. 9.394/96, when it prescribes "[...] teachers with adequate specialization at the secondary or higher level, for specialized care, as well as regular schoolteachers trained for integrating these students in regular classrooms" (Brasil, 1996, art.59, Item III). In addition to hiring these professionals, the education systems sought to ensure didactic resources and pedagogical strategies as to afford students the appropriate conditions for knowledge appropriation.

Other policies include the Multifunctional Resource Room Program, which aims to organize environments for specific pedagogical interventions in the after-school period to complement/supplement regular pedagogical work. This is a partnership between municipal and state education departments and the Ministry of Education (MEC) to offer specialized educational services (AEE), understood as pedagogical actions aimed at identifying, designing and organizing accessible resources to eliminate barriers and favor student participation, considering their specific learning needs.

Actions of the specialized educational service differ from those conducted in regular classrooms, and are no substitute for schooling, aiming for autonomy and independence in and out of school. Hence, it provides curriculum enrichment programs, the teaching of specific languages and codes of communication and signaling, technical aids and assistive technology, among others, remaining articulated with the pedagogical proposal of common education throughout the schooling process (Brasil, 2008).

Between 2005 and 2011, the Multifunctional Resource Room Program implemented 39,301 classrooms, mainly at the municipal level, problematizing how the right to schooling cannot be reduced to specialized spaces or to granting a desk in the regular

classroom. Hence the need to avoid associating multifunctional resource rooms with a place for accommodating differences that have little or no impact on the school. The challenge is to reframe the teaching units for teaching-learning processes, including for special education students (Mendes; Maturana, 2016).

Given these educational regulations favoring the creation of support networks for the schooling of special education students, we challenge ourselves to understand the constitution of this policy by public education systems in Espírito Santo. For this purpose, we conducted a mapping study with data obtained from the Anísio Teixeira National Institute website on the Censo Escolar/2022 (Brasil, 2022), to survey the number of enrollments and special education professionals, in addition to focus groups coordinated by university professors, graduate and undergraduate research students, involving basic education professionals linked to four municipal public education systems located in the Grande Vitória metropolitan region (identified here as Systems A, B, C, and D), aiming to understand the support networks and their configuration processes. These are subjects who work directly with the schooling of special education students, such as special education managers at education departments, school principals, pedagogical coordinators, special education teachers, as well as regular education teachers.

Given this configuration, this paper derives from a larger research project which intended to unveil the implications of the National Special Education Policy for inclusive education (Brasil, 2008) in Espírito Santo, discussing topics such as the support networks for the schooling of students with disabilities, global development disorders and giftedness in regular schools. As such, this paper investigates the composition of these networks and their implications for the schooling of special education students. To develop the discussions, we present in the following sections the theoretical framework, data production methodology, and the result analyses, followed by final considerations.

Theoretical framework

As Kassar and Rebelo (2013), Baptista (2011, 2013), Jesus *et al.* (2015) and Haas (2016) point out, recognizing education as a public and subjective social right (Brazil, 1988, 1996, 2008) called upon education systems and schools to assume special education from an educational perspective, setting up support networks to include students with disabilities, global development disorders and giftedness in regular schools.

Understanding education and special education thusly recalls theorizations by Boaventura de Sousa Santos (2007) and inspires us to defend the regular school as a space-time for all, focusing on dialogue between equality and difference, since we have the right to equality when our differences make us inferior, and the right to difference when our equality makes us unequal. "Hence the need for an equality that recognizes differences and a difference that neither produces, feeds nor reproduces inequalities" (Santos, B., 2007, p. 56).

Equality-difference assumptions in special education have favored the defense of curricular accessibility in regular classrooms and more specific interventions, for example in the after-school period, scenario that highlights the creation of support networks for the

schooling of special education students, giving rise to a critical reading of special educational services policy assumed as "[...] interaction networks in which the subject-student participates, putting [the teacher] their specific knowledge at the service of this network and acting more on the interactions than on the subject-student" (Baptista, 2013, p. 48).

The Aurélio dictionary (Ferreira, 1999) defines *atendimento*, translated here as 'services,' as the act of paying attention to a given person's specificities and needs, whereas *educacional* [educational] refers to the intentional planning of educational actions so that individuals can access, socialize and produce knowledge necessary for the humanization process, and *especializado* [specialized] describes a set of knowledge and experiences that can be improved and refined through study, reflection and practice, focusing on the possibilities of involving the subject in the educational act.

Together, these terms conceptualize specialized educational services as support networks capable of promoting pedagogical interventions that recognize students as subjects who have the right to be involved in knowledge production, which requires contextualized interventions that are attentive to the intellectual trajectories produced in order to appropriate a certain experience or knowledge.

Providing specialized educational services presupposes support networks to combine equality and difference, given that students at school have similar needs, but also singularities. Access to systematized knowledge is a common denominator that interconnects them and generates equality assumptions. Recognizing each individual subject highlights the principles of difference, as it recognizes the need to establish a set of strategies for conducting and practicing educational acts at school (Givigi, 2007; Buss, 2020).

Boaventura de Sousa Santos (2007) pushes us reflect on the importance of support networks for the schooling of special education students to avoid linking the existence of these services to segregation and the production of student incapacity, problematizing the assumptions of difference and equality, since in contemporary society "[...] it is not possible to think of differences as equality; differences are always unequal" (Santos, 2007, p. 30).

According to Silva (2005), difference must be understood not as a natural characteristic, but as a discursively produced situation, permeated by power relations and, therefore, rather than being tolerated or respected, it needs to be questioned and debated. Discussions about the assumptions of equality-difference call for defending the social right to education of special education students, combining efforts to advance enrollment in regular schools and to create conditions for permanence and learning with socially referenced quality by hiring specialized professionals, implementing multifunctional resource rooms and investing in school staff training, among other policies, as well as problematizing the studies by Vaz and Michels (2017), Buss (2020), and Buss and Caetano (2021).

As Vieira, Mariano, and Martins (2020) state, this right requires support networks because learning takes place between peers and is permeated by mediation processes. Consequently, permanence involves support networks for the educational act, which include the reorganization of school structure, the articulation of various services and the promotion of new or other thoughts on education as a right for all.

Methodology

This is a qualitative research study, which "[...] conceives of knowledge as a process socially constructed by subjects in their daily interactions, as they act in reality, transforming it and being transformed by it" (André, 2013, p. 97). In this type of research, "[...] the subjects' world, the meanings they attribute to their everyday experiences, their language, their cultural productions and their forms of social interaction are the central focus of researchers" (André, 2013, p. 97).

It is founded on the assumptions of cartography as it intends to create maps capable of characterizing the terrain under investigation and allowing the researcher to follow the transformations that have taken place in this environment, implicating the subject as an observer in the mapped world (Fonseca; Kirst, 2003). Boaventura de Sousa Santos (2007) characterizes the method as mappings produced from the articulation of data, composing "[...] a structured field of intentionalities, a lingua franca that allows the always unfinished conversation between the representation of what we are and the orientation we seek" (Santos, B., 2007, p. 224).

To produce such maps, the researcher resorts to interviews, focus groups, document analysis, observations, among others, using scales to help him understand the issues under investigation in the analyzed territory. Based on these assumptions, different scales are applied to the phenomena analyzed, focusing on data production processes and the constitution of policies and less on the results, since "[...] to be practical, the map cannot coincide point by point with reality" (Santos, M., 2008, p. 65).

As methodological procedures, we adopted: a) forwarding the project and electronic correspondence to the education networks for authorization, requesting signature of a letter of consent and designation of professionals for the research; b) gathering data from the Anísio Teixeira National Institute, Censo Escolar/2022 (Brasil, 2022), on the number of special education students enrolled in the education systems analyzed and specialized teachers working in this teaching modality; c) creating a focus groups (Gatti, 2005) with around eight participants from each school system, including special education managers, school principals, pedagogical coordinators, regular teachers and special education teachers, to discuss the support networks implemented to support the schooling of special education students in regular schools.

Gatti (2005, p. 7) characterizes focus groups as "[...] derived from the different ways of working with groups, widely developed in social psychology," favoring the selection of participants according to the research problem. Thus, care must be taken to ensure that they have qualifying characteristics for discussing the focus issue and interactivity.

Three focus groups were held between September and October 2020, each lasting two hours. All meetings were held virtually via the Google Meet platform due to the social isolation measures required by the COVID-19 pandemic and recorded on the system itself for later transcription and analysis. Data processing included: a) transcription of the focus groups; b) selective reading of the data to answer the research objective; c) survey of the narratives that highlighted the support networks implemented by the education systems analyzed; d) critical reflection of the data based on the theoretical framework adopted.

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The research was approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the Federal University of Espírito Santo. All the participants signed the Informed Consent Form.

Results and discussion

Data shows that all four education systems have special education students enrolled in regular schools, which has led to the creation of support networks during regular school hours and specific interventions offered after school. Table 1 shows the number of enrolled students according to data obtained from the Anísio Teixeira National Institute website, Censo Escolar/2022 (Brasil, 2022).

Table 1- Enrollment of special education students in the analyzed education systems

Identification of the Education Network	Enrollment
Education System A*	1,287
Education System B	102
Education System C	2,443
Education System D	3,083

* Education System A consists of a central body that decentralizes educational policy into 11 divisions. Only one of these divisions was involved (in the research), so the data refer to this territory.

Source: Censo Escolar/2022 (Brasil, 2022).

Policies have been implemented to build support networks. A common point between the education systems is the incorporation of special education teachers into schools, albeit with different hiring modalities. Such incorporation follows the process of special education policies, showing that each system, at its own time and way, has worked towards including this professional as a support network in regular schools.

Table 2- Number of teachers working as special education faculty in the analyzed education systems

Identification of the education network	Number of special education teachers
Education System A*	208
Education System B	14
Education System C	367
Education System D	490

* This education system employs no tenured teachers. All are hired on a temporary assignment basis.

Source: Own elaboration with data from the Municipal Education Departments.

Some statements highlighted movements towards creating the position and, consequently, holding a public call despite the existence of temporary teachers, as reported by a focus group participant:

> [...] we have the position of special education teacher. With this, we can hold public calls. We have teachers for all areas: intellectual disability, deafness, visual impairment and giftedness. (Education System D).

We also come across narratives that show other movements when analyzing the hiring of teachers for this teaching modality. Some contexts lack a special education teacher position and try to *mitigate* this by reassigning regular trained teachers, as well as resorting to temporary appointments, using vacancies from regular schools.

> Another issue are the professionals working in special education. We have a lot of rotation, and no public call to find these professionals for continued work at school. Their contract sometimes lasts for one to two years. In short, this rotation led to discontinuity of the special education teacher's work at the school. (Education System A).

> We were unable to hold a public call in the specific area, but trained teachers who have the profile to work with these students and who are already part of the network were invited to work in the resource room [...], because one key problem was the rotation of professionals. One teacher would start in February, another in April, another in June—it was difficult to keep a teacher from one year to the next. We have put an end to this constant teacher rotation with this reassignment. In the municipality, we have expert teachers in the resource room and expert teachers for collaborative work in the classroom with students. (Education System B).

Other statements refer to this strategy, but under guidance from the City Attorney's Office, work was done to create the position of special education teacher and, consequently, hold a public call, as reported by a focus group participant:

> [...] this year the position of special education teacher was approved. It's something recent. Since the last administration, the city attorney had warned us about the hiring modality's illegality. Now we just have to wait for the public call. (Education System C).

When special education teachers are incorporated as part of the support networks, statements also point to the employment of undergraduates and caregivers as support for the inclusion processes of the special education students.

> [...] trainees help in the pedagogical part. We don't have legislation, but we do have a guiding document, the PAC, a Conduct Adjustment Agreement with the Public Prosecutor's Office, establishing which special education students will be accompanied by trainees: students with severe disabilities who need closer support. As the special education teacher is not with this student all the time, the trainee is part of this process. (Education System D).

Trainee hiring is employed by most education systems analyzed and, why not say it, by many in Espírito Santo, raising questions to be considered when analyzing the right to schooling in regular schools. Givigi (2007) and Buss (2020) point out that trainees are not responsible for the student; what we see is the transfer of students' care and learning to this future teacher.

This accountability towards the trainee is a recurring practice in Espírito Santo, which points to the need for investment in hiring special education teachers and training these professionals. In agreement with Vaz and Michels (2017) and Buss (2020), we understand that in-service teacher training cannot be analyzed outside of the political proposals for public schools.

Previous studies conducted at the Federal University of Espírito Santo[2] point to teachers' dependence in regular classrooms on hiring trainees as pedagogical support, and these hirings are often conditions imposed by schools for students to remain in the classroom (Jesus *et al.*, 2015).

Despite efforts to hire special education teachers, most Espírito Santo municipalities have more trainees than teachers. In many schools, one or two special education teachers are assigned to support several classes and deal with students in the after-school hours. In this scenario, the trainee becomes a condition for students to remain at school, since in some cases they *accompany* several students, depending on the student's situation.

Employment of caregivers was also pointed out during the focus groups. According to the National Policy on Special Education from the perspective of inclusive education (Brasil, 2008), this professional provides assistance to students who require support in walking, feeding and hygiene. This orientation is not always taken up in everyday school life, when these subjects become part of pedagogical support networks, as one teacher states: "[...] we have caregivers who accompany the students during pedagogical work in the regular class" (Education System A).

We also see *dependence* on the work of caregivers. They are in demand and are tied to the student staying at school. The percentage of caregivers is also higher than that of teachers. Vieira, Mariano, and Martins (2020) discuss the ways in which caregivers are incorporated into pedagogical support networks, weakening student assistance, the role of the special education teacher, continuing education and knowledge access. According to the authors, the employment of caregivers by schools has created a vicious circle: families are satisfied because there is someone looking after their child; teachers are relieved because they have delegated the task of caring for/controlling the deviant student to someone else; caregivers are valued because they love the children and feel they have a mission and/or vocation to support them; while education system management understands that in times of spending cuts, the caregiver policy is profitable because although teachers are poorly paid, up to three caregivers are paid the salary of one expert teacher (Vieira; Mariano; Martins, 2020).

Both trainees and caregivers point out the difficult task of taking responsibility for the students' schooling due to the lack of pedagogical knowledge required. If for trainees taking on such a task poses great complexity, what to say about caregivers who lack pedagogical training, are not undergoing initial teacher education and much less need it to perform the duties for which they were hired, that is, to provide support at times of

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2- Políticas de Educação, Inclusão Escolar e Diversidade pelo olhar daqueles que as praticam: por diferentes trilhas (2008-2010); Formação Continuada para Gestores Públicos em Educação Especial (2010-2012); Observatório Nacional de Educação Especial: um estudo em rede sobre o funcionamento das salas de recursos multifuncionais (2012-2015).

feeding, walking and hygiene for students with such demands. For these professionals, a high school education is required, plus a training course as a caregiver.

The statements also point to other professionals who make up the support networks, such as Brazilian Sign Language interpreters and teachers who teach written Brazilian Portuguese to the deaf. Here we have another issue to analyze. On the one hand, the participants point out the challenges of hiring such people, stating that "[...] there is a shortage of professionals with training and knowledge in deafness. There are many requests from schools. We compete for these professionals, because there are so few of them and demand is great" (Education System B). On the other, they have doubts about the place of deaf education after the updating of LDB No. 9,394/96, by *Law No. 14,191/2021* (Brasil, 2021), now as a teaching modality separate from special education.

New other routes were proposed by national educational legislation, but these guidelines were not incorporated into local policies, and deaf students were seen as part of special education policies. Schools in Espírito Santo are organized from a more conventional curricular perspective, and there are no bilingual schools that adopt the Brazilian Sign Language for deaf and hearing students, as advocated by the updated LDB 9.394/96 (Brasil, 2021). Additionally, education systems lack guidance on how to address deaf students who have other specificities (such as intellectual disability, blindness and autism), questioning which teaching modalities they are linked to and how support networks will be articulated for curricular accessibility in regular schools.

Still regarding support network professionals, some school systems are bringing into the Central Special Education Team those with training in the clinical and social fields to provide support and advice to the schools and people responsible for students in the diagnostic assessment for referral to specialized services, as well as clinical-therapeutic care, when possible.

> We have speech therapists, psychologists, social workers and, since the law is extremely new, we are waiting for occupational therapists to provide all this support for students focusing on special education and those with learning difficulties. (Education System B).

> We once had a speech therapist on staff. She was more focused on supporting the inclusion of deaf students. She asked to be reassigned to the health area. Now we only have a psychology professional. (Education System D).

Both for the education systems that incorporate other professionals and those made up of only education staff, the intersectoral actions between education, health and social assistance pose challenges. Bureaucratic issues for scheduling appointments and the lack of clinical specialties challenge students' families. By requiring clinical diagnoses, education systems and schools lead families to queue at public health services for appointments and access to medical reports.

Specialized literature on special education (Jesus *et al.*, 2015; Martins, 2019; Will; Caetano, 2022) problematizes the need for intersectoral actions to strengthen pedagogical work, deviating from clinical approaches that associate the condition of special education student as a subject unsuitable for the regular classroom/school. These studies point

to the tensions brought about by specialized education, historically offered by private philanthropic institutions, which reaffirm the dependence of schools on diagnoses and the care of students by specialized technical professionals, relieving regular schools and teachers of their commitment to schooling as a right for all, and the State of implementing actions and policies, including continuing teacher education.

Jesus *et al.* (2015) show that, in the absence of a clinical diagnosis, the schools constitute an evaluation cycle to identify students with suspected disabilities. This cycle begins with the regular classroom teacher, who primarily takes learning difficulties, failure to master reading and writing and behavior as diagnosis parameters. From this first assessment, the pedagogical coordinator is called in, as well as special education professionals, to confirm the emerging suspicions and then call the families to refer the student to the health services.

Martins (2019) and Will and Caetano (2022), when discussing the relation between schools and medical reports, note the difficulties faced by those responsible for the students in obtaining them, not least because it takes families a year or a year and a half to get an appointment and, consequently, their child's report. As a result, the teacher continues to demand this diagnosis, even if the school promotes the diagnostic assessment to refer students to specialized educational services.

Creation of spaces-times is also a policy adopted by education systems, especially the implementation of multifunctional resource rooms (MRRs), some of which are characterized as Type 1 and others as Type 2[3]. Some of these spaces-times were implemented by partnership between Education Departments and MEC, and others exclusively with resources from the Espírito Santo education systems. Table 3 shows the number of MRRs reported by the education systems analyzed.

Table 3- Number of multifunctional resource rooms implemented by the analyzed education systems.

Identification of the Education Network	Total number of schools in education systems	Number of MRR
Education System A	65	64
Education System B	13	5
Education System C	103	98
Education System D	148	54

Source: Own elaboration with data produced by research participants

Implementation of multifunctional resource rooms reveals the need not to simplify the specialized educational services conducted by pedagogical work. Studies on special education (Baptista, 2011, 2013; Vieira, 2015; Haas, 2016; Buss, Caetano, 2021) seek to understand these environments as one of the spaces-times for performing the services portrayed here.

3- Type 1 classrooms provide teaching materials for special education students in a broader sense, whereas Type 2 classrooms add resources for visually impaired students. They are designed to provide specialized educational services during the regular school day.

Hence, specialized educational services should not be an action to correct a deviant subject, but rather to support the teaching-learning processes of students who have the right to learn. As a result, this policy has come to be seen as a pedagogical action in special education, supporting school activities aimed at the schooling of students with disabilities, global development disorders and giftedness, both during and after school hours (Baptista, 2011, 2013).

Linking the work conducted in these classrooms with the curricula mediation in regular classes is essential, not least because education systems struggle to understand what complementary/supplementary actions are when the National Policy on Special Education from the perspective of inclusive education (Brasil, 2008) states that activities developed in specialized educational services "[...] differ from those conducted in the regular classroom and are not a substitute for schooling. This service complements and/or supplements students' education aiming at their autonomy and independence in and outside school" (Brasil, 2008, p. 16).

As such, it is important to promote a balance between support for the regular course and after-school activities. Education systems have different conceptions of specialized educational services. For some, these services are limited to activities in the multifunctional resource rooms, and consequently they try to name the other supports to differentiate them, treating those in the regular classroom as collaborative work. As a result, two types of special education teachers are hired: AEE teachers and collaborative teachers.

The former works in after-school interventions intended to complement/supplement the curriculum, while the latter collaborates with regular teaching to provide pedagogical work accessibility. Such a scenario brings up questions: does the AEE teacher, when attending students in the multifunctional resource rooms, fail to collaborate with regular classroom work? Do collaborative teachers not complement/supplement the curricula?

These questions recall Baptista (2011), who states the need to balance pedagogical practices centered on direct student assistance with the sharing of support for regular teachers, hence his defense of specialized educational services with activities conducted during and after school hours, aimed at creating pedagogical strategies for students to access the regular curriculum without neglecting their learning specificities.

Still on the subject of specialized educational services, other education systems try to adopt it as support activities during and after-school hours, but dividing the workload of special education teachers. This, however, is often not accompanied by an increase in the number of teachers, leading to the dependence on trainees/caregivers besides other issues already mentioned.

The teachers' statements show that the education networks recognize that including students with disabilities, global development disorders and giftedness entails the right to enrollment in regular schools, as well as conditions for permanence and learning. Boaventura de Sousa Santos (2007) reminds us that the defense of inclusive schools requires creating public policies and pedagogical actions capable of viewing the regular classroom as a space-time for all and support networks as devices committed to curricular accessibility.

For this, as Boaventura de Sousa Santos (2007) points out, we need to approach rebellious subjectivities to think of alternatives for making curricular knowledge accessible to people, and special education, as a field of knowledge, can articulate support networks so that teachers create other teaching logics, different alternatives for exploring the school environment and articulating know-how from the regular classroom and other environments dedicated to supporting student schooling processes.

Final considerations

By problematizing the composition of support networks in special education in Espírito Santo for the schooling of students with disabilities, global developmental disorders and giftedness in regular schools, this study brings about a set of reflections. It reveals that the enrollment of these individuals has required support networks, with some systems holding public calls to hire professionals, others hiring temporary staff and some reassigning teachers from regular schools with training in special education.

Often, but disjointedly, education systems take steps to hire professionals, which does little to help special education students to acquire the knowledge they need. Collaboration between education professionals is an action that, if fulfilled, can help these individuals find better conditions for mediating knowledge in regular schools, within the equality-difference relation.

Results also reveal that the creation of support networks intends to enable regular teachers to find better conditions for involving students in curricular proposals, as well as for meeting specific learning needs. Other support, such as trainees and caregivers, is also hired which requires a critical-reflective look at how to incorporate them into support networks without cheapening special education policies. In addition to these support networks, the creation of spaces-times such as multifunctional resource rooms is also a feature of education systems, posing the challenge of not confusing these environments with the embracement of those unsuitable for regular classrooms.

In this scenario, the multifunctional resource rooms implemented function as another support network, revealing the importance of conceptualizing specialized educational services as a pedagogical action to support knowledge appropriation, a core task of the school. Different concepts of specialized educational services coexist, prevailing those synonymous with specific after-school interventions. Consequently, the support networks of the regular classroom are now called *collaborative work*, leading us to question whether the after-school program does not collaborate with the regular classroom and whether the support provided in this space-time does not complement/supplement the curricula. Our data points to the need to question the philanthropy and assistance actions conducted by specialized institutions that require funding for special education, calling on caretakers to enroll these students on the specialized educational services offered there, adopting clinical-therapeutic care which is often still incipient in the public health service as a bargaining chip.

Dialogue with the movements produced by the public education systems in Espírito Santo agrees with Boaventura de Sousa Santos (2007), when he warns about the need to

recognize the assumptions of equality and difference. The right to learn is presented as a political-pedagogical action common to all students, recognizing that some of these subjects may need support networks to appropriate knowledge and get involved in the pedagogical work mediated in the regular school. For this reason, Boaventura also warns about the importance of balancing these two assumptions so as not to turn difference into inequality and the latter into the invisibility of subjects and unique learning paths.

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