

# Inclusion of students with disabilities in a particular university of Curitiba

## Inclusão de alunos com deficiência em uma Universidade particular de Curitiba

## Inclusión de estudiantes con discapacidad en una universidad privada de Curitiba

*Ana Paula Berberian\**  
*Simone Infingardi Krüger\**  
*Bruna Aparecida Miranda\**  
*Ana Cristina Guarinello\**  
*Leonardo de Vito Costa\**  
*Daniel Vieira da Silva\*\**  
*Priscila Soares Vidal Festa\**

### **Abstract**

Discussions on the democratization of higher education have occupied an important place in the Brazilian educational debates, both to ensure that an increasing number of people enter this level of education, as well as regarding its quality. Objective: to analyze the guidelines of the Programa Incluir as well as the work of the Inclusive Education Commission (IEC) of a university thereby analyzing the vision of a group of such students on their academic experience in terms of infrastructure, interpersonal relations and pedagogical aspects relevant to their training. Method: case study of the qualitative type. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the president of the Commission and 5 graduates who call themselves disabled. Data analysis was based on content analysis. The statements produced by the participants were analyzed from the following thematic axes: Inclusive Education Committee; interpersonal relationships and

\*Universidade Tuiuti do Paraná, Curitiba, PR, Brazil.

\*\*Universidade Estadual do Centro Oeste, Guarapuava, PR, Brazil.

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APB: guided search and wrote the text of the article.

SIK: grammar and textual structure and formatting of the article and responsible for the submission.

BAM: undergraduate who did the research.

ACG: co-guiding the research and wrote article text.

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DVS: contribution in the writing of the text and revision.

PSVF: participated in the research, data collection with the student.

**Correspondence address:** Simone Infingardi Kruger - [simonekrueger@hotmail.com](mailto:simonekrueger@hotmail.com)

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pedagogical experiences, and students' view of necessary changes. Results: Although the students have a positive view on the activities developed by the commission, it is evidenced that it has a restricted action regarding the relational and pedagogical aspects of student's academic experience. Conclusion: With regard to the University's Inclusive Commission and the Include Program, both have work-focused objectives for functional accessibility issues. As for the pedagogical and relational aspects, its scope is fragile. It is suggested the implementation of studies that analyze the unique aspects of people with disabilities and the social and historical determinants that permeate the Brazilian educational system.

**Keywords:** Inclusion in higher education; Accessibility; Inclusion committee.

### Resumo

Discussões e questionamentos comprometidos com a democratização do ensino superior têm ocupado importante espaço nos debates educacionais, tanto para garantir o ingresso de pessoas em tal nível de ensino, quanto à melhoria da qualidade do mesmo. Objetivo: descrever e analisar as diretrizes e ações que direcionam o Programa Incluir e a Comissão de Educação Inclusiva de uma universidade privada de Curitiba, bem como a visão de alunos com deficiência acerca de sua experiência acadêmica, no tocante à infraestrutura, às relações interpessoais e aos aspectos pedagógicos pertinentes à sua formação. Método: estudo de caso do tipo qualitativo. Foram realizadas entrevistas semiestruturadas com a presidente da Comissão e 5 graduandos que se autodenominam deficientes. A análise dos dados baseou-se na análise de conteúdo. Os enunciados produzidos pelos participantes foram analisados a partir dos seguintes eixos temáticos: comissão de Educação Inclusiva; relações interpessoais e experiências pedagógicas e a visão dos alunos sobre mudanças necessárias. Resultado: Embora os estudantes possuam uma visão positiva sobre as atividades desenvolvidas pela comissão, fica evidenciado que a mesma tem uma ação restrita no que tange aos aspectos relacionais e pedagógicos da vivência acadêmica dos alunos. Conclusão: No que se refere à Comissão Inclusiva da universidade e ao Programa Incluir, ambos possuem objetivos focados no trabalho para questões funcionais de acessibilidade. Quanto aos aspectos pedagógicos e relacionais, seu alcance apresenta-se frágil. Sugere-se o implemento de estudos que analisem os aspectos singulares das pessoas com deficiência e os determinantes sociais e históricos que perpassam o sistema educacional brasileiro.

**Palavras-chave:** Inclusão no ensino superior; Acessibilidade; Comissão de inclusão.

### Resumen

Las discusiones y cuestionamientos comprometidos con la democratización de la enseñanza superior han ocupado un importante espacio en los debates educativos brasileños, tanto para garantizar el ingreso de un número cada vez mayor de personas en dicho nivel de enseñanza, en cuanto a la mejora de la calidad del mismo. Objetivo: analizar las directrices que orientan el Programa Incluir, así como el funcionamiento de la Comisión de Educación Inclusiva (CEI) de una universidad privada de Curitiba y analizar la visión de un grupo de estudiantes acerca de su experiencia académica, en lo que se refiere a la infraestructura, Las relaciones interpersonales y los aspectos pedagógicos pertinentes a su formación. Método: estudio de caso del tipo cualitativo. Se realizaron entrevistas semiestruturadas con la presidenta de la Comisión y 5 graduados que se autodenominan discapacitados. El análisis de los datos se basó en el análisis de contenido. Los enunciados producidos por los participantes fueron analizados a partir de los siguientes ejes temáticos: comisión de Educación Inclusiva; relaciones interpersonales y experiencias pedagógicas y la visión de los alumnos sobre cambios necesarios. Resultado: Aunque los estudiantes tienen una visión positiva sobre las actividades desarrolladas por la comisión, queda evidenciado que la misma tiene una acción restringida en lo que se refiere a los aspectos relacionales y pedagógicos de la vivencia académica de los alumnos. Conclusión: En lo que se refiere a la Comisión Inclusiva de la Universidad y al Programa Incluir, ambos tienen objetivos enfocados en el trabajo para cuestiones funcionales de accesibilidad. En cuanto a los aspectos pedagógicos y relacionales, su alcance se presenta frágil. Se sugiere el implemento de estudios que analizan los aspectos singulares de las personas con discapacidad y los determinantes sociales e históricos que atraviesan el sistema educativo brasileño.

**Palabras clave:** Inclusión en la enseñanza superior; Accesibilidad; Comisión de inclusión.

## Introduction

In the past twenty years, it is undeniable that large changing processes have occurred in Higher Education. Such processes have been linked with economic, cultural and political changes, which have driven the need to expand Brazilian educational system in its different levels<sup>1</sup>.

By analyzing such changes, Cunha<sup>2</sup> reports how policies and actions have been implemented to enable people from different social groups and classes to get into Higher Education (HE) since the mid-1990s, and therefore, consolidate its expansion to strata of the population historically excluded from this process.

According to data from the Census of Higher Education, released by the Institute of Educational Studies and Research Anísio Teixeira (Inep, in Portuguese), and the Ministry of Education in 2013, the total of students attending Brazilian Higher Education reached 7.3 million, almost 300,000 enrolments more than the ones recorded the year before. Thus, considering the period from 2003 to 2013, the number of new students in graduation courses went up 76.4%<sup>3</sup>.

Apart from the factors mentioned above, according to Pereira<sup>4</sup>, affirmative policies, such as the “quota system”, and the “scholarship system”, have also been decisive for the access of significant share of the Brazilian population to Higher Education.

Regarding the quota system, it is claimed that scholarships are provided to black, mulatto or indigenous students or the disabled ones<sup>5</sup>. In addition, we also point out that Bill n. 11.096/05, through the “Programa Universidade para Todos” (“University for All Program”), grants Brazilian students without a Graduation Certificate, partial (50%) and full scholarships in private institutions of Higher Education, Graduation and Associate Degrees of Specific Education<sup>6</sup>.

It can also be pointed out the Decree n.6.094/2007, which proposes to establish, among the guidelines of the *Compromisso Todos pela Educação* (Commitment to All for Education), assured access and permanence in the regular school, and meeting the special educational needs of students<sup>7</sup>.

In face of the quantitative expansion addressed above, it is evident the need for Higher Education institutions to effect changes in order for quality learning to be the right for all, according to article 205 of the Federal Constitution of 1988<sup>8</sup>. Such

changes must act upon structural, functional, pedagogical and relational aspects involved in the academic experience in order to enable effective participation and permanence of students’ groups formerly excluded from that process, for example, those students with some kind of disabilities<sup>9</sup>.

It is worth pointing that the assumption on the inclusion of disabled students are present in the Salamanca Statement<sup>10</sup>, which advocates that teaching institutions “should serve all children disregarding their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or any other conditions”. Therefore, from that perspective, teaching institutions need to adopt inclusive orientation, as the disabled have the right to express themselves about their educational goals, according to the document.

Guidelines and public policies were created, developing projects and centers oriented to people with some specific needs, in order to enable quality Higher Education within private and public institutions.

In this sense, it can also be found the Programa de Acessibilidade na Educação Superior – Incluir (Program of Accessibility to Higher Education), in federal institutions of Higher Education (IFES, in Portuguese), developed since 2005, which carries out projects for the creation and consolidation of Accessibility Centers objectifying to eliminate physical, pedagogical, communicative and informative hurdles in their environments, facilities, equipment and didactic material<sup>11</sup>.

Since 2011, aiming at expanding and strengthening the already existing Accessibility Centers, the Ministry of Education (MEC) has set up the “Plano Nacional dos Direitos das Pessoas com Deficiência – Viver sem Limites” (National Plan for the Rights of the Disabled – Living without Limits)<sup>12</sup>. From the actions addressed in the aforementioned plan, we find architectural and furniture adequacy for the accessibility in IFES facilities, as well as the acquisition of resources of the assistive technology and didactic/pedagogical material to promote pedagogical, communicative and informative accessibility. Such centers are sponsored by MEC, according to the identified demands<sup>11</sup>, in order to put those actions in practice.

Regarding the normative framework, which guides educational accessibility, it can be pointed out Bill n.13.146/2015, which institutes the *Lei Brasileira de Inclusão da Pessoa com Deficiência* (Brazil’s Inclusion of People with Disabilities

Act), also known as the Estatuto da Pessoa com Deficiência (Statute on People with Disabilities). In its Chapter IV, article 27, the referred law states that people with disabilities have granted their right to education, in a way that inclusive educational system is granted in all levels, aiming at reaching the best “possible development of their talents and physical, sensory, intellectual and social skills, according to their traits, interests, and learning needs”<sup>13</sup>.

Studies on the initiatives, movements and national public policies, which have been designed in order to expand the access to Higher Education, point to significant changes and advances<sup>4</sup>.

However, in spite of the legal support, and consequently, the increase in the number of students in Higher Education, studies also point to contradicting consequences and interests involved in this process<sup>1,14</sup>.

In relation to those contradictions, Patto<sup>15</sup> warns that those bills were structured to defend disabled students’ right to access Higher Education, although they are not enough to assure quality education. In conformity with that position, Mendes<sup>6</sup> advocates that if guidelines promoting education democratization are contemplated in national laws, they are not translated into policies, thus not reaching the daily routine of schools. The author still argues that there has not been the possibility of building an inclusive school due to the economic and cultural inequalities featured by Brazilian reality.

Therefore, among the obstacles to be overcome for education to become the right for all, it can be found the ways of organization of a structured society driven by an individualist, productive and competitive logicism, making natural the division of that society whether by social classes or by physical, gender, racial patterns, among other aspects<sup>15</sup>.

Regarding such problematics, studies claim that in an egalitarian society, which accepts diversity, it would not be necessary to label students with special needs as “disabled”, “inclusive students”, “inclusion class”, or even carry out actions related to such thematics<sup>17</sup>.

It should be pointed out that public programs and policies oriented to the inclusion of the disabled in Brazilian educational system, when critically analyzed, have been sometimes proved limited. Studies analyzing relations established between

theories, laws and practices related to an inclusive school, have pointed to the need of developing approaches which articulate aspects profiling students with disabilities and social determinants involved in the teaching-learning conditions of all Brazilian population<sup>18,19</sup>.

Thus, this study objectifies to describe and analyze guidelines and actions which guide the Incluir Program<sup>5</sup> and the Inclusive Education Commission (CEI, in Portuguese) of a private university in the city of Curitiba, as well as disabled students’ view on their academic experience regarding infrastructure, interpersonal relationships and pedagogical aspects in their education.

## Method

This undergraduate research integrated a Project called “Accessibility to Higher Education”, sponsored by the Programa Observatório da Educação<sup>20</sup> (Monitoring Program of Education), and complies with the essential ethical demands from the resolution 196/96 of the Conselho Nacional de Saúde (National Health Council), according to the items addressing ethical implications under Project Opinion number 0782/2013, approved on 08/21/2013.

It is a qualitative, exploratory research study, and Bardin’s content analysis was adopted for data analysis<sup>21</sup>.

The selection of the study sampling was held by means of consultation to a private university database located in Curitiba, Brazil. Initially, it was necessary to contact one of the members of the CEI from the institution to access the self-called disabled students attending the graduation courses. From that information, the researcher e-mailed 20 disabled undergraduates, 5 of them agreed to participate in the research.

Among the participants’ profile, it can be pointed out: S1, 18 years old, Psychology undergraduate, physically disabled; S2, 21 years old, History undergraduate, hearing-impaired; S3, 29 years old, Law undergraduate, physically disabled; S4, 36 years old, and S5, 41 years old, both feature intellectual disability and are Pedagogy undergraduates. Only S3 is male.

In addition to the referred students, research subjects, the president of the aforementioned committee also participated in this study, referred here

as C1. The students, research participants, signed the free informed consent form.

A semi-structured interview was used as the instrument for data collection, applied by the researcher to the students, and another to the president of the CEI. It is worth highlighting that the interviews were orally and individually carried out in the university facilities, recorded and further transcribed.

For data analysis, the enunciated by the participants were used, regarding the following thematic axes: 1) Inclusive Education Commission; 2) Interpersonal Relations and Pedagogical Experiences, and 3) Students' Views on Necessary Changes.

## Results and discussion

### *AXIS 1: INCLUSIVE EDUCATION COMMISSION - CEI*

There is a CEI, set up since 2002, in the institution where the current research was carried out, which, according to C1, is responsible for the inclusion, guidance and follow-up of students and employees, self-reported with some disabilities.

In relation to the objectives of the CEI, according to the documents of the mentioned university, it can be pointed out:

- I – To prepare the community for the Inclusion;
- II – To guide teachers in their didactic-pedagogic job;
- III – To provide professional guidance to the applicant/undergraduate;
- IV – To develop and disseminate studies on the needs, opportunities and potentialities to the internal and external community;
- V – To carry out exchange of technical information and resources with Institutions of Higher Education (IES, in Portuguese);
- VI – To promote updating courses on Inclusive Education;
- VII – To ensure the accessibility;
- VIII – To promote everyone's awareness on the need to educate for diversity<sup>22</sup>.

Regarding the work and actions developed by the CEI, object of our analysis, according to C1's report, actions start at the moment students enroll for the entrance exams to the university.

They fill out a registration card and identify themselves as people with some sort of disability, then, they are referred to the commission and we check

what kind of resources they need to take the entrance exams, the scheduled and the traditional ones. Being approved, they will be followed up along their university course. Thus, we help them from the access through graduation. (C1)

It should be pointed out that such follow-up will only take place if the students themselves contact the CEI, by e-mail or telephone, or if a teacher communicates any difficulties of students with special needs to the commission. Therefore, the commission does not have autonomy to act upon the students without such contacts.

It should also be pointed out that CEI has the role to identify demands for special care of students and employees, to suggest changes, to guide and forward information and memo files to the city hall of the IES in the exercise of their attributions. Thus, the commission is not a deliberative body.

As for the actions towards the teachers, who work directly with those students, C1 reported:

There are courses on the inclusion theme, they get information via Internet and some guidance on teaching actions, especially for those who have some students with special needs in their classroom. In that case, we call the teacher for a talk in order to pass on some information. It is difficult to have spontaneous interest on the theme, and there isn't significant search for that.

The account above evidences the interest and strategies of the CEI to work with the pedagogical aspects involving teachers and students' academic experience, trying to achieve one of its goals as formerly mentioned. However, it should be argued about the coverage of the actions pointed by C1, to the extent that the complexity of the inclusion process in Higher Education, as well as the diversity of its related demands. Thus, we consider that "Internet information and some guidance for teaching actions", end up getting limited to prompt actions of guidance on students' disabilities.

Among other actions, mentioned by C1 and also reported by the research subjects, are the referral of students to the existing clinical-therapeutic treatment in the mentioned university, for example, Speech-Language Therapy, Physical Therapy and Psychology. The access to such treatments are facilitated as the clinics are located in the university that students attend, but it is worth mentioning that the access does not assume straight and intentional



articulation with classroom teaching-learning processes, or with student/teacher relationship.

Regarding CEI follow-up, from all research participants, only S4 reported not having had contact with it.

As for the other subjects, all of them mentioned a positive view from CEI services when they needed some support:

“I had no support in the other university I used to study; now I also have access to physical therapy and speech-language therapy, so I have no complaints about”. (S3)

“I was seen to when I needed it, with an interpreter”. (S2)

“I was very well treated when I had problems with some classmates, and I am also helped by psychological therapy”. (S5)

Considering that, we point out that the CEI from the involved university as well as Programa Incluir are not deliberative organs. However, we can observe that the Program focuses on architectural and technological aspects of accessibility, and CEI differs from that due to its actions of referring undergraduates to the mentioned university clinics.

By considering the similarities and differences of the objectives and guidelines from the aforementioned Programs, the need for both to prioritize measures, which contribute to enhance teaching-learning and relational conditions involved in the referred students' education, stands out as essential so that the access and quality education effectively take place.

## *Axis 2: INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS AND LEARNING EXPERIENCES*

From the answers provided by the research participants, it was possible to analyze their views regarding their academic experience on: academic performance and interactions established with classmates and teachers.

As for their academic performance, we highlight that S3 reported that studies were easy for him, even in the other graduation course already concluded.

S1, S4 and S5 claim to have satisfactory academic performance, but they stated that they had difficulties in some disciplines.

“My performance is like all the others, and as it used to be at school, because my disability does not hinder learning.” (S1)

“I did well the former year, I even got surprised. I was approved in a subject that I wasn't during the Physical Education course, which is Scientific Methodology.” (S5)

It can be observed that those answers specifically refer to students' performance in specific disciplines and exams, rather than their learning during classes.

In addition, regarding academic performance, S2 reported:

“I read lips. I do well in some subjects rather than others because there are many theories to get interpreted.” (S2)

For S2, the appropriation and interpretation of theoretical knowledge related to the disciplines are pointed as part of her difficulties.

“Classes should be different for the hearing-impaired and the hearing students due to the theories. Sometimes, I don't know some words or the interpreter doesn't know how to explain a certain concept that doesn't exist in LIBRAS. It's hard for the interpreter to explain the theories, and he has to understand before explaining them.” (S2)

From the answers above, it can be observed that S2 considers that hearing-impaired people have difficulties in understanding certain subjects. She associates her theoretical-academic difficulties with her own limitations.

S2 also points to the fact that it is not enough to have an interpreter/translator in class if he does not have previous contact with the subject being taught by the teacher, with its specific vocabulary, which does not often exist in LIBRAS. The participant highlights the lack of previous contact between teachers responsible for the disciplines and the LIBRAS interpreters.

Lacerda<sup>23</sup> advocates that the interpreter should not substitute the teacher in class, but it is important to point out that such professionals should have different practice due to their job in educational settings, “as the objective in this setting is not only translating, but also favors learning for the hearing-impaired students.”

As for the relation that should be established between the teacher and the interpreter, studies point that if the interpreter does not master the content that he/she is going to interpret, it may bring about addition or mixed-up information<sup>24</sup>. In this sense:

To the extent that the special linguistic condition of the deaf is respected, their chances to develop and build up new, satisfactory knowledge enhance, unlike the school inclusion without any special care<sup>23</sup>.

It is worth mentioning that one of the goals of the CEI, object of our analysis, is to orient teachers in their didactic-pedagogical job, thus, it is responsible, among other actions, for mediating teachers and LIBRAS translators/interpreters' relationship.

In relation to the way that academic evaluations are carried out, specially the exams, only S2 and S3 referred to differing treatment for that.

Such procedure means the presence of an interpreter to assist S2, and the use of a computer or an oral exam for S3.

Regarding that question, C1 added:

"It doesn't mean to facilitate things for them, but provide them with conditions for them to get the best possible performance."

In that context, according to the law, exams must be flexible, according to the need of the student with a specific disability, as proposed, for example, in the Ordinance n. 1679 of 12/02/1999<sup>25</sup>.

If actions towards the entrance and evaluation activities experienced by students with special needs are necessary and assured by public policies, isolatedly, they do not warrant disabled students' autonomy during their academic life, and later in their professional exercise. If such actions may favor their entrance and attendance, it should be pointed out that the university role is to educate discerning subjects, able to posit themselves in a responsible and responsive way, and not dependent subjects on facilitating and protective solutions<sup>15,16</sup>.

As for the answers regarding participants and other classmates' relationship, S1 and S3 claimed to have a "normal" relationship with them.

"It's peaceful, one of the fears I had, that there could be some sort of trouble, but everything was normal. I could make friends quickly, everybody is very friendly, and they also help me if I have any

kind of difficulties." (S1)

"I'm a closed person, and not everybody likes to talk to me, but currently our relationship is normal" (S3).

Regarding the relations established with the classmates, it should be pointed the remarks of S2:

"Before I was ashamed, afraid, later I tried to approach, to talk. They had to get used to me, but currently they even try Libras for us to communicate" (S2).

From the answer of S2, it is possible to identify a linguistic barrier which hinders hearing-impaired and hearing students' relationships, once they do not have a shared language. Studies point out that the participation of a LIBRAS translator and interpreter in the classroom may reduce such difficulties<sup>23-4</sup>.

Addressing the relationship with other students, S3 and S4 report exclusion feelings, according to what is described below:

"My relationship is good with them, but it is a little disturbing with a minority, rather bad. I was victim of bullying by a girl who is the leader of the group, and she used something I told her to make fun of me in front of the others" (S5).

"It's always been like that, I studied at a private school, and it has always been that thing of being the last one to be picked out, people could not understand what exactly was my disability, I was bullied, and I ended up hitting my classmates because they teased me" S4.

As formerly discussed, the mentioned exclusion can be understood as a structuring principle of a society organized into divisions and hierarchy of social classes and groups. It should be mentioned that not only disabled students, but black individuals, the poor, or anybody with traits considered out of the standards and/or inferior, are included in a system, which offers differing and unequal conditions of access to education<sup>26</sup>.

It is important to consider that under Bill n.13.146/2015, article 28, subsection II, it is responsibility of the public authorities to assure the refinement of the educational systems "aiming at securing conditions of access, attendance, participation and learning by means of services and resources of accessibility, which eliminate hurdles and promote full inclusion." However, as it has already been discussed, there are contradictions

between the “full inclusion” principle proposed by the current legislation and the inequalities brought about by an exclusion-generated system<sup>13</sup>.

In that sense, among the goals guiding the performance of the IES in order to promote inclusion and education of disabled students, it is pointed out their work with the academic community for an interaction without prejudice, as they produce and reproduce the contradictions that pervade Brazilian educational system<sup>27</sup>.

It was possible to observe what the research participants answered when questioned about their relationship with their teachers:

“My relationship with the teachers is peaceful, but I also demand a good performance on their part, I don’t have problems to express my doubts or opinions during classes” (S3).

“Some teachers are supportive, in my class, there are two teachers, the General History and Technology ones, who assign the task, and if it isn’t correct, they tell us what is wrong and let us try again, which is very good, and those are the subjects that I do best” (S5).

In spite of the answers pointing to positive relationships with the teachers, when asked about the improvements that could be held in the university, some participants ultimately referred to teachers’ qualification in the pedagogical scope:

“The teachers have to explain slowly, clearly so that I can understand them. There are hard subjects, with many different words, and very often they don’t give many explanations, they need to understand that I need support to be able to learn” (S2).

“The teachers need to improve their approach with me, and on how to encourage us in a clear way. They should be better qualified to teach us” (S5).

“Some try hard, but others don’t know how to deal with me or what to do” (S4).

The contradiction in the answers, evidenced by the fact that some participants reported good relationship with their teachers, but concomitantly, the lack of qualification of some teachers, enables to analyze that the participants assessed their relationship with their teachers considering affective bonds and not the quality of their classes.

Regarding teachers’ qualification in face of disabled students’ needs, to Vitalino<sup>28</sup>, in spite of some teachers are interested in expanding their possibilities of performance towards those students, they do not have theoretical or practical resources for doing that. Thus, the author points to the need of providing teachers, in their initial qualification, to have access to knowledge and discussions, which effectively enable them to address students’ diversity.

### *Axis 3- STUDENTS’ VIEW ON NEEDED IMPROVEMENTS*

Considering the difficulties experienced by the research participants in the aforementioned university, they were requested to cite the improvements that needed to be implemented.

Among the aspects mentioned, S3 refers to the University Internet support, and S2, S4 and S5 mentioned aspects related to distance learning:

“I think the university could offer more Internet support. That would help me a lot to keep track of the subjects” (S3).

“I need subtitles in the Distance Learning classes, otherwise I can’t understand what they say, I have lots of difficulties” (S2).

“I have to focus more on Distance Learning, I have difficulties in interpreting what they say, and many people in my class also have” (S4).

“My greatest difficulty during the course has been the distance-learning classes” (S5).

In several courses of Higher Education, distance-learning subjects are provided, via Internet in virtual platforms, exclusively online or partially in-classroom, but part of the course schedule is developed in classroom<sup>14</sup>.

According to Rabello and Peixoto<sup>29</sup>, distance-learning classes may facilitate the access to certain subjects, however, that kind of education demands, on the part of students, autonomy, self-guidance and management of their studies, being a challenge to many of them.

Considering the conditions of the participants in this study for carrying out distance-learning classes, it calls the attention to the fact that they did not point to the need of interpreters and subtitles during the video-classes, or the supportive pres-



ence of a teacher to mediate the presentation and appropriation of the contents being taught.

It is interesting to analyze that the research participants did not refer to students and teachers' relationships, the aspects regarding teaching activities and processes or the actions of the CEI when questioned about the improvements to be made in the university.

## Conclusion

By addressing aspects related to the insertion and inclusion of special-needs people in Higher Education, this study is committed to the analysis of current problematics in Brazilian educational settings. Since the 1990s, a gradual increase in the number of disabled students in Higher Education has been evidenced, which on one hand, points to the reduction of the access hurdle to that educational level. On the other hand, it points to the need of developing studies which analyze the attendance and quality of academic education experienced by those students.

In spite of the advances in public policies, such as the creation of programs bringing about centers and commissions in the IES - having as one of their objectives the reduction of the accessibility hurdle - it should be paid attention to issues related to the quality of the education.

Regarding this University Inclusive Commission and the Programa Incluir, both are focused on working at the functional accessibility issues. However, in relation to the pedagogical and relational aspects, their coverage has been fragile, which can be evidenced in the study participants' answers.

In this sense, it is suggested the implementation of studies committed to analyses which articulate singular/particular aspects of the disabled and the social, historic determinants involved in the advances and limitations, which pervade Brazilian educational system as a whole, especially Higher Education.

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