

## ONGOING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR TEACHERS ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF STUDENTS WITH ADHD

Flávia Silva de Almeida<sup>1</sup>

**SUMMARY:** The role of the school in relation to students with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) entails the development of new skills for the professionals involved, even if their undergraduate education predates the new demands that have emerged within the school environment. This is due to the fact that reality necessitates a shift in the educators' approach. Therefore, the available resources for teamwork underscore the importance of training for the teaching team, administrative trio, and broader school staff to better serve students requiring assistance in the Specialized Educational Assistance (SEA) classroom, both within the school environment and beyond, involving family members. While fulfilling their roles, the professionals overcome previously unknown knowledge gaps, evolving in response to the new reality. Addressing the described issue, pedagogical resources as well as insights from neuroscience emphasize the aim of the work, which is to present contemporary alternatives to mitigate the symptoms of hyperactivity (attention deficit) for improved behavior and cognition. This fosters autonomy, better interpersonal relationships, emotional stability, and self-management for an enhanced quality of life. In this perspective, it is crucial to justify that the educators' competencies rely more on their personal commitment than on waiting for commonplace classroom situations to deteriorate due to lack of skills in handling group dynamics.

391

**Keywords:** Education. Pedagogical Resources. School.

**RESUMO:** O papel da escola em relação aos alunos com Transtorno do Déficit de Atenção com Hiperatividade (TDAH) implica na construção de novas habilidades dos profissionais envolvidos mesmo que sua formação de graduação seja anterior as novas demandas que são propagadas no ambiente escolar, uma vez que a realidade corrobora na modificação da postura dos profissionais de educação. Assim, os recursos disponíveis para o trabalho em equipe revelam o estudo sobre a necessidade de formação da equipe docente, trio gestor, e envolvimento da equipe escolar para melhor atender os alunos que precisam do atendimento na sala de Atendimento Educacional Especializado (AEE), do acompanhamento fora da escola junto aos familiares e no ambiente interno da escola em si, enquanto desempenham suas funções os profissionais superam a falta de conhecimento antes desconhecida e hoje evoluindo por conta da nova realidade. A partir da problemática descrita, os recursos da pedagógicos, bem como da neurociência apontam o objetivo do trabalho que é oferecer alternativas da atualidade para minimizar os sintomas da hiperatividade (déficit de atenção para melhora do comportamento e pensamento, assim gerando autonomia para melhor convívio e estabilidade emocional para autogestão para uma vida melhor através da qualidade de vida). Nesta perspectiva é importante justificar que as habilidades dos profissionais de educação dependem mais deles mesmos do que aguardar se agravar situações corriqueiras da sala de aula por falta de habilidades quanto as questões da convivência do grupo.

**Palavras-chave:** Formação. Recursos pedagógicos. Escola.

<sup>1</sup>Formação acadêmica: Mestre em Ciências da Educação e doutoranda em Ciência da Educação pela Universidade Christian Business School.

## INTRODUCTION

Society encounters various teaching modalities, each validated by the competencies cultivated by educators who guide students, each with its own specificities. One of these modalities is linked to Special Education, which prominently addresses Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), affecting different generations that may experience its manifestations in early life or even adulthood. This is because society can now identify and manage the challenges presented by this disorder. According to Seno (2010), the involvement of education professionals marks a moment of inclusion, as advocated by scholars and academics, driven by the interest in preparing teachers to effectively accommodate students with diverse educational needs, thereby integrating them and minimizing conflicts or social exclusion.

The International Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems categorizes ADHD as hyperkinetic disorders, characterized by early onset within the first five years of life. As described by Piazzini Seno (2010), it exhibits traits such as lack of persistence in cognitive-demanding activities, impulsive behavior, skipping from one task to another without completion, disorganization, lack of coordination, and excessive demands. The teacher's role is to organize activities that address inattention, impulsivity, and any excessive tendencies that might jeopardize the future lives of these children, nurturing their self-care, consideration for others, and preventing severe accidents due to their own irregularities.

The mentioned author emphasizes the importance of an organized and quiet environment for conducting activities within the school setting. Short activities are shown to yield better results, and novel resources and guidance strategies for these students are suggested. Seating them away from windows and peers during tasks, closer to the teacher, helps in guiding them when they become restless or distracted. Amid the exposed challenges, it is noted that noises such as fans, swaying posters, or any movement or sound hinder the conducive classroom atmosphere.

Teachers express difficulties in finding effective solutions for successfully accommodating students with ADHD. Barbosa and Souza (2010) address these concerns and stress the significance of teacher training, which is pivotal for inclusion. Educators who possess knowledge and skills in managing students with ADHD

affirm the value of training and the contribution of self-directed study to the classroom reality.

Freitas underscores the need for public policies to value the teaching profession, necessitating ongoing quality education for special needs. Teachers should receive fair salaries, career plans, conducive work conditions, and most importantly, dignified retirement, given the current lack of salary integrity and parity as stipulated by federal law.

The quality of life significantly influences human well-being. Nevertheless, many teachers face depression due to lack of recognition, yet they must continually renew themselves, adapt to the challenges encountered in their professional journey, and even cope with financial difficulties and unfavorable teaching environments without receiving hazardous duty pay. The profession remains undervalued in Brazil, while the reality in developed countries questions the measures taken in the aforementioned aspects.

The context discussed earlier prompts reflections on how teachers are motivated to adapt to new responsibilities and the demands inherent in their routines. Teachers serve as mirrors for their students, and their success is intertwined with their beliefs. Vygotsky's concept of inclusion portrays teachers as experts in understanding the intricacies of these students, enabling them to stimulate and support them effectively, thus fostering inclusion and elevating the students' developmental levels. The paradox lies in knowing the diagnosis but struggling to develop it, leaving these students with the mere benefit of daily interaction, lacking prospects for their knowledge enhancement.

## **INCLUSION OF CONTINUED TRAINING FOR TEACHERS DEALING WITH SPECIAL STUDENTS**

Training, whether as an individual or collective process, is an inherent choice. It manifests when there is a vested interest in imparting knowledge to improve conditions for students with disabilities or disorders, aiming to break the stigma surrounding their ability to perform, learn, and succeed. This involves facilitating and visualizing learning. However, initial training, ongoing development, and self-directed learning are all essential processes to achieve the desired dynamism required to cater to the special needs of students.

The concerns that educators face in the realm of special education reflect various issues such as prejudice, insecurity, and a lack of social experience, all contributing to the barriers encountered. This underscores the necessity of incorporating training to establish diverse aspects of special education through socially, politically, and historically constructed moments.

According to Góes, the apprehensions experienced by educators in regard to special education students underscore that inclusion in schools and the education of special students must be interconnected in their training. This necessitates public policies that organize and provide support to schools. Training becomes a critical aspect of teaching practices, sparking reflection regarding exclusion, providing assistance to overcome obstacles, and emphasizing professional recognition.

In this context, the lack of preparation among educators, in general, becomes evident regarding their understanding of the specifics associated with particular types of disabilities/incapacities. This is a notable aspect of the situation, accentuated by the absence of a policy for continuous training capable of fostering the professional growth of teachers (FERREIRA & FERREIRA cited in GÓES & LAPLANE, 2004:37).

## THE TEACHER'S PERSPECTIVE TOWARDS STUDENTS WITH ADHD

When a teacher manages to address their own weaknesses, including biases, it fosters their thinking and reflection on their role as educators. It is not merely about being obliged to undergo continuous training but persevering and raising awareness among professionals regarding the inherent societal issues. Such issues require a differentiated and special perspective due to the historical beliefs that have shaped our society. The teacher's emotional connection with students with ADHD enables them to demonstrate a genuine interest in understanding the topic, thereby redefining their significance in the face of the challenges within their professional lives.

As per Piaget, when we experience situations, we can rationalize comprehension, which implies altruism. The development of empathy is crucial for teachers to contribute effectively to their students' learning. Students feel secure when the teacher exudes credibility and possesses the knowledge to stimulate activities among high-performing students. This approach results in more productive activities.

The teacher serves as a role model for the student. Thus, being a nurturing educator goes beyond merely delivering content. It involves presenting new activity alternatives that enhance learning. This is why didactic adaptation in response to the

specific needs of the student is vital. Such adaptation tends to enhance the student's interest in the subjects taught by the teacher.

Genuine involvement in the addressed issues translates into investing effort throughout the lessons, offering encouragement and responses in the learning process. In order for innovation to be a fundamental element in day-to-day achievements, activities like games, projects, group discussions, readings, theater performances, modeling, experiments, and interdisciplinary themes come into play.

Vygotsky (1997) emphasizes that the school is an environment where difficulties must be overcome through continuous teacher training and fostering positive teacher-student interactions. This enables students to gain more than superficial knowledge; it promotes critical understanding mediated by the teacher's guidance. Teachers collaborate with students, including those with disabilities, to develop their thinking, scientific concepts, and their understanding of the world around them.

Our intention is to create an image of the existing connection between the fundamental phenomena of life (nature, work, and society), to develop a scientific conception of the world within the mentally challenged child, and to cultivate a conscious attitude towards their future life within the school environment." (VYGOTSKY, 1997, p.150).

## UNDERSTANDING HYPERACTIVITY

Genetic and neurological factors are the primary causes of ADHD, according to Barkley (2008). Furthermore, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder is classified as a specific developmental term that occurs in children and adults, leading to deficits in behavioral inhibition, such as lack of attention and distractibility. Activities designed for students with ADHD need to be spaced out and brief to prevent the student from becoming impatient.

It is essential not to dissociate psychology from education, as together they wield a positive influence on complex relationships, promoting the most plausible option for working with involved parties such as students, school management, teachers, and others.

The family plays an extremely important role, particularly in understanding the concept of ADHD, its causes, diagnosis, and treatment. Treatment may vary based on symptoms, so it is important not to judge the child or adult based on their symptoms but to guide the caregiver to consult a specialist for proper treatment.

While patients diagnosed with ADHD share common traits, there's significant variability in the way individual children behave in various contexts. Many of these children face frequent and excessive criticism. They often end up being the "black sheep" of the family when compared to siblings, cousins, and other children of the same age (DESIDERIO; MIYAZAKI, 2003, p.165).

Couples are often unprepared to handle a child with ADHD, which affects the parents' emotions when they are not equipped to deal with the situation. Their relationship can be strained, and they may feel guilty and distressed. The pain can manifest in various ways. Benczik & Casella (2015) reveal that parents of children diagnosed with ADHD often experience conflicted relationships, marked by discord and disharmony, affecting the quality of life for all involved. Parents might experience feelings of depression, low self-esteem, and a sense of failure as parents. Psychological support is one way to strengthen both parents and children in terms of acceptance.

## SCHOOL'S PEDAGOGICAL RESOURCES

Schools can be prepared to accommodate students with attention deficits, and various resources can contribute to better concentration and learning. Games with current designs are particularly relevant because they are integrated into students' daily lives. Teachers can conduct experiments to determine which types of games are most effective for the intended audience, with games varying in complexity—ranging from low to medium to high. Factors such as colors, shapes, textures, and sizes of game pieces play a role.

Games with contemporary designs, those that are part of children's everyday experiences, were selected, which facilitated student interaction with the resources. Initially, games with low complexity were used, gradually increasing complexity over time. To assess game complexity, criteria such as the number of pieces, sizes, colors, shapes, and textures were employed to engage students in tasks.

The most suitable person to choose the resource is the student themselves. Through their experience, it quickly becomes evident which pedagogical resources best suit their task completion.

Various resources were made available to students so they could choose the one they found most appealing for task completion. During these moments, both

inattentive and hyperactive children were attentive when selecting and utilizing resources, as they possessed resources that pleased them most and had the option to exchange them if necessary.

Creativity should be encouraged by incorporating moments for interventions that involve building games and toys. This autonomy through concentration stimulates the child, elevating the stimulation through resources produced by them, attributing meaning to games and toys. Manzini (1999) asserts that pedagogical resources are real stimuli that can be manipulated and serve a pedagogical purpose. The child should participate in planned teaching interactions, as the selection of procedures and techniques contributes to success.

The development of students' thinking, and imagination is linked to the aid of pedagogical resources, which bridge the gap between the student's reality and contribute to their learning (SCHMITZ, 1998). Silva (2010) adds that the role of the mediating teacher is essential for the effective use of pedagogical resources.

## REFERENCES

BARKLEY, Russell A; MURPHY, Kevin R. Transtorno de Déficit de atenção/hiperatividade exercícios clínicos. 3. ed. Porto Alegre: Artmed, 2008.

BENCZIK, Edyleine Bellini Peroni; CASELLA, Erasmo Barbante. Compreendendo o impacto do TDAH na dinâmica familiar e as possibilidades de intervenção. Rev. psicopedag., São Paulo, v. 32, n. 97, p. 93-103, 2015. Disponível em [http://pepsic.bvsalud.org/scielo.php?script=sci\\_arttext&pid=So103-84862015000100010&lng=pt&nrm=iso](http://pepsic.bvsalud.org/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=So103-84862015000100010&lng=pt&nrm=iso). Acesso em 18 jul 2023.

GÓES, Maria Cecília R. de. Relações entre desenvolvimento humano, deficiência e educação: contribuições da abordagem histórico-cultural In Psicologia, educação e as temáticas da vida contemporânea. OLIVEIRA, M.K de, SOUZA, D.T.R. e REGO, T.C. (Orgs.). São Paulo, Moderna, 2002.

SENO, Marília Piazzzi. Transtorno do déficit de atenção e hiperatividade (TDAH): o que os educadores sabem?. Revista psicopedagogia, v. 27, n. 84, p. 334-343, 2010. Disponível em: [http://pepsic.bvsalud.org/scielo.php?script=sci\\_abstract&pid=So103-84862010000300003#:~:text=334%2D343,3%20a%205%25%20das%20crian%C3%A7as](http://pepsic.bvsalud.org/scielo.php?script=sci_abstract&pid=So103-84862010000300003#:~:text=334%2D343,3%20a%205%25%20das%20crian%C3%A7as). Acesso em: 17 jul.2023.

SCHMITZ, H. Responding to global competitive pressure: local co-operation and upgrading in the Sinos Valley, Brazil. Institute of Development Studies, working paper, 1998.

SILVA, M. O. Protocolo para prescrição ou adaptação de recursos pedagógicos para alunos com paralisia cerebral. 2010. Dissertação (Mestrado em Educação) - Faculdade de Filosofia e Ciências da Universidade Estadual Paulista, Marília, 2010.

VYGOTSKI, L.S. Fundamentos de defectologia. In: VYGOTSKI, L.S. (Org.). *Obras escogidas* (Tomo V). Moscú: Editorial Pedagógica, 1997.