

Inclusive Education Policies in the Mozambican Context

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Abstract:- This scientific research with the title “Inclusive Educational policies in the Mozambican context”. With this research we aim to analyse inclusive education policies in the Mozambican Context. The materialization of inclusive education policies in Mozambique is a challenge because there are special schools that operate within a specific scope, different from regular schools, nevertheless, furthermore, most regular schools do not meet requirements to accommodate students with special education needs. In addition to the initial and ongoing training of the teachers staff and other school employees. To carry out this scientific research, we used a Bibliographical analysis supported by the principles of discursive textual analysis of some authors. One aspect of inclusive education theories in the Mozambican contexts according to law 18/ 2028 of NSE and the Strategic education plan 2020 -2029, points to inclusion, equity and opportunities in access to education as a right of all Mozambicans, but does not include a specific recommendation for schools in the handling of materials linked to special education needs in the teaching and learning process, does not guarantee the acquisition of materials in accordance with special education needs. Nevertheless, infrastructures, teaching resources, initial teacher training and the globalization of the class teaching model constitute challenges for the materialization of inclusive education policies.

Keywords:- Politics, Inclusive Education, Regular Schools.

I. INTRODUCTION

The public inclusive education policies are mostly guidelines for the pedagogical measurement of students with and without special education needs and are relevant, as they effectively contribute to an education that makes a difference.

According to Reginaldo (2018) inclusion policies are based on principles of equality, human rights and social justice and aims to ensure that all children and young people

including those with special education needs are educated in regular schools.

In the Mozambican context inclusion policies begin to be implemented with the creation of Resource Centers and inclusive education, (RCIE), seen as an advance in inclusive education. These Resource Centers (RCIE), serve students with and without special educational needs.

Silva, Rêgo & Benício (2017), make reference to the fact that one of the ways to reduce the social and negative weight of the inclusion policy is the implementation of special education, which has been a reason for study and reflection seeking to pay attention to the social meaning of exclusion.

In this approach to teaching, he highlights the importance of inclusion. The alternative of being in the same physical space is one of the starting points of the discussion about the relationship between normal and abnormal students. In this context, several issues begin to be discussed, including the physical structure of schools, teachers ability to deal with differences and school managements.

In this aspect, the special classes cease to exist as a privileged space for the target audience of special education because the introduction of the special class within the regular school creates division in the school's educational practice, separating common education with special educational needs and learning delays. In addition to this, the special class establishes isolated pedagogical practices between students with and without special educational needs.

The public special education policies from the perspective of inclusive education include strategies that promote interaction and diversity among students with and without special educational needs.

However, public school inclusion policies for people with special educational needs require a broader consideration of groups that have been excluded from normal discussions on social exclusion.

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Talking about inclusive education, and political perspectives, refers to the elimination of any type of discrimination, and talking about equality, physical diversity, intellectual diversity, ethnicity, culture, religion, human rights and duties for the equality and normalization if the students at school.

The educational policies refer to the school inclusion of students with and without special educational needs and are regulated by law 18/2028 of the NES Strategic Plan for Education 2020 – 2029 and the Government's five year plan (2020-2024). These instruments make reference to inclusive education policies taking into account the full ordeal participation, equality and empowerment of people with disabilities and ensuring the principle of equal rights and opportunities for this social group.

To carry out this scientific research, we used qualitative and Bibliographical research supported by the principles of documents analysis from some authors who addresses this topic, as it explores and connects different areas of knowledge and offers ways to define and solve problems (Marconi e Lakatos, 2003). We also consult some manuals that portray information about the topic and with the accordance of law 18/2028 of NES, the Strategic Education plan of 2020 to 2029 and the Governmental's five years plan of 20200 to 2024. Nevertheless, we described some normative documents that regulate the practice of inclusive education.

II. EDUCATION IN MOZAMBIQUE

Education in Mozambique before colonialism era was transmitted from generation to generation through oral translation. In the colonial era, education was only reserved for the colonialists and their children, and was divided into two subsystems: official education reserved for the colonialists children and rudimentary education which was normally reserved for indigenous people.

This type of education was taught in the missions of the catholic church, an institution that played a paramount role in the education of the country. (Mazula, 1995).

The colonial education system was reformed based on historical, economic circumstances and the international political situation. The indigenous origin and the creation of the legal and political figure of the assimilated people had as a need for qualified labour power for greater capitalist exploration

In the post-independence period, the Mozambican government, through decree nr 12/75 (Mozambique 1975) nationalized education system making education a right and duty of all citizens. From this perspective, education was supported by three legal instruments, such as: the law 4/83, of March 23rd, the Law 6/92, of May 6th and the Law 18/2018 of December 28th. These instruments allow the Mozambican government to build a National Education System (NSE) capable of facing the challenges of transformation. Law 4/83 synthesized the general lines of the national education system into the ideological policies foundation, principles, and

purposes, general and pedagogical objectives of education. It was approved on 23rd March 1983.

In 1990 the new constitution of the Republic was approved which enshrined the right and duty to education and the responsibility to promote access and equality. To adjust to the Constitution of the Republic of 1990s, law nr 4/83 of March 23 was revised in 1992. The Strategic Education Plan was launched in 1997 and was used from 1997 until 2005.

The national education policy was approved in 2005. It aims to improve access and equity in education, improve the quality of teaching and the relevance of education, strengthen institutional capacities and extend basic education. Currently the education sector is regulated by the law nr 18/2018 of December 28 which establishes the National Education System (NES)

➤ *Inclusive Education Policy from the Mozambican Perspective*

Bueno (2005), states that after the promulgation of the Salamanca Declaration, Inclusive education is today a political proposal for hegemonic education in practically the entire world. In this perspective, the Ministry of Education and Culture of Mozambique promotes the inclusion of children and young people in all education subsystems under the theme: "Fighting Exclusion, Renewing the Schools, with the aim s of increasing access to basic education, improving the quality of teaching and strengthening institutional capacities.

According to Nhapuala and Almeida 2016, in Mozambique, inclusive education is relatively recent. The Global Conference on Special Education Needs that produced the Salamanca Declaration, an important steering document in the area of special educational needs and inclusive education.

In 1998, the country made inclusive education official with the aim of ensuring that all children and young people, including those with special educational needs, have access to regular education (MINED, 1997). By formalizing inclusive education in Mozambique, the government demonstrated its strong commitment on creating school that does not exclude anyone and is capable of meeting the educational needs of all students regardless of their status in regular education

In this context, in 1998 the "Inclusive Schools" project was implemented, which had the fundamental objective of school development through initial and ongoing training of teachers to respond t special needs in the regular education classroom, in order to achieve these purposes, the set of materials from the UNESCO project, Teachers training, Special Needs in the classroom, which had already been implemented in more than 50 countries, was also adopted as working instrument.

From this perspective, Mozambique adopted a process of developing a regular school, as a whole aimed at the educational reception of all children, young people and adults, taking into account their physical, mental, social, linguistic, racial and religious diversity among other particularities (EEIDCD, 2020-2029)..

However, the country adopted current inclusive educational policies which provide that all children lacking more specialized education, including children with disabilities must be enrolled in regular schools in order to improve their school integration (Michaque, 2013, p.35).

Due to the shortage of special educational professionals and teachers, the question arises, whether current practice limits inclusion or integration? Or a different perspective on the concept of inclusion because it depends on the semantic perspective that the two concepts gives us an idea that in various circles, what is promoted with inclusion is in fact an integration of children with disabilities.

The action plan of the Ministry of Education and Culture defines the objectives of transforming existing special school into a resource and support center for basic education in the area of special educational needs in the classroom for the medium and long terms.

This means the creation of three resource centers in the North region, Center region and South region of Mozambique. These centers will have institutional resources for education, training, pre-vocational, vocational, professional and rehabilitation guidance for people with disabilities and institutional resources for teacher training.

The trajectory of inclusive education in Mozambique has presented changes that aims to be in line with international guidelines. However, there are signs that challenges remain, such as: the effective training of teachers in matters of inclusive education, the lack of support professionals in schools, as well as resource centers for inclusive education. These centers represent promise in the dynamics of inclusion, but they must be revitalized in order to adequately respond to the responsibilities of this area of teaching, learning and teaching training.

Moreover, in order to combat discrimination and as a way of guaranteeing fundamental rights, the inclusive policy proposes the inclusion of everyone in regular schools, seeking to redefine the identity of special education students from education policies from the perspective of inclusive education practice have not presented a consensus on what is best for people with disabilities in our society, producing responses and echoes of voices that come to be seen as the origin of discriminatory practices. As an effect of these dialogical relationships meanings are produced and reproduced between documents that make certain social voices silenced or heard

Mozambique faces many challenges in implementing inclusive education policies due to the fact that it is a developing country, it faces a lack of adequate conditions for comprehensive and effective special education and a programme for the creation in each school of resources rooms and effective promotion resource centers and special schools. The lack of conditions limits the availability of resources that allow the teaching and learning process in an inclusive context.

➤ *Instruments that Regulate the Practice of Inclusive Education in the Mozambican Context*

When dealing with inclusive education policies, we have an understanding of which public policies are in force in legal instruments that the government has made public and which are fundamental on identifying the advances and setbacks present in the educational system. Public educational practices are a condition for understanding their meaning, meaning breadth and necessary mediations for the realization of the right to education.

In Mozambique the process of developing public policies is directly related to the political regime established for the state. The practice of inclusive education in the Mozambican context is regulated by the following instruments: law 18 /2028 of the National system of education NSE, the strategic plan for Education 2020-2029, the Government's five years plan (2020 – 2024), and the National action plan for the Disability II - PNAD II.

The law on the National education system (law 18/2018 of December 28th) announces that the objective of special education is proportional in children, young people and adults in training in all educational subsystems and professional training that allow their integration into the society (nr 2 of article 18) and determines that:

- Teaching children, young people and adults with special educational needs takes place in schools and special education schools (nr3 of article 18); and
- Children, young people and adults with multiple special educational needs or mental retardation must receive education adapted to their abilities in appropriate school (nr4 of article 10);

The Government's five years plan -GFP (2020 – 2024), prioritizes developing human capital and social justice. In this context, the following strategic objectives are outlined:

- Promote an educational and inclusive efficient and effective system that responds to the needs of human development (.....);
- Promote a quality, inclusive, efficient and effective educational system that responds to the needs of human development through the following actions:
 - ✓ Ensure equal access and participation for all children, until the end of primary education PE with a focus on integrating children with special educational needs and reducing social and gender disparities.
 - ✓ Ensure equitable and inclusive access, giving special attention to girls, children, young people with special educational needs until the end of secondary education prioritizing 1st cycle secondary education as part of mandatory schooling
 - ✓ Ensure a quality learning environment and conditions in the primary school for the acquisition of reading, writing and circle skills (decree nr 15/2020)

In this context, the strategic education plan (2020-2029) establishes its principles to promote the full participation, equality and empowerment of people with disabilities and ensure the principle of equality of rights and opportunities for this social group. The strategic education plan establishes the following principles:

- Main priority actions of the strategic education plan, implement measures for inclusion and equity, focusing on the participation and retention of girls, children with special educational needs and reducing dropout in primary education, secondary education and adult education. And
- Strategic objectives of the Strategic Education Plan (SEP). Ensure inclusion and equity in Access, participation and retention (resolution nr 40.2020)

Still from the perspective of inclusive education policies, there is the national action plan for the area of disability (2012) which is an instrument for managing the activities that different social actors such as: government institutions, associations for people with disabilities, organizations national, non-governmental organizations, united nations agencies and international partners, organizations, develop on behalf of people with disabilities (Caetano & Nhaueleque, 2023).

The national action plan for disabilities II 2012-2019 (PNAD II), published by the government of Mozambique, makes reference to inclusive education as a strategy for the education of people with apparent disabilities at all levels, small levels and education system both to children, young people and adults. PNAD II is a consequence of the extension of the African Decade for people with apparent disability by the African Union until 2019 and the ratification of the international convention on the rights of people with apparent disabilities, the recommendations of the evaluation, report on the implementation of PNAD I (2006-2010) and other national planning instruments. The same document lists national and international legislation relating to the area of disability and related areas

According to Caetano & Nhaueleque (2023) the national action plan for areas of deficiency II has several objectives

- Provide technical, material and financial support for the implementation of actions in favour of the development and promotion of people with disabilities,
- Provide moral, technical material and financial support, in the formulation and implementation of policies and action strategies in favour of people with disabilities;
- Collaborate with government institutions in the formulation and implementation of policies and action strategies in order to guarantee the participation and development of people with disabilities.
- Define and approve legislation, strategic policies that promote the participation and development of people with disabilities, as well as coordinates their implementation;
- Monitor and harmonize all programmes and activities implemented in favour of people with disabilities, in particular by civil society organization and institutions;

- Ensure the principal of equal rights and opportunities for people with disabilities,
- Promote the full participation, equality and empowerment of people with disabilities.

The policies discussed above have their limitations in terms of the materialization or implementation of inclusive education in regular schools, given that barrier to access to education and essential social services and the conditions in which children, young people and adults with special educational needs prevail.

The law 18/2028 of the National system of Education (NSE) the strategic plan for education 2020-2029 and PNAD II, make reference to some assumptions of education and inclusive schools, such as equity and equal opportunity in access to education as a right of all Mozambicans. In turn, the Strategic Education Plan (SEP) establishes measures for inclusion and equity, focusing on the participation and retention of girls and children with special education needs and reducing dropouts in primary education, secondary education and adult education. This profile of thought is also referenced by the government's five-years plan 2020-2024 which outlines the priority of developing human capital and social justice, and is composed of the following objectives: i) promote an inclusive, efficient and effective educational system that responds to the needs of human development, ii) promote a quality, inclusive, efficient and effective educational system that responds to the needs of human development.

However, the law 18/2028 does not guarantee the acquisition of material in accordance with the educational needs of students and PEE and PNAD II do not include a specific recommendation for school in the handling of materials linked to the special educational needs of students in the teaching and learning process. Therefore, we are called to order to guarantee inclusive education at school. Given these assumption, we note that the theories are well outlined but their implementation has not been accompanied by changes in their curriculum and in their teaching and learning strategies. We understand that the school inclusion model adopted by Mozambique was designed for contexts in which the regular school has favourable conditions for students with special educational needs.

In our view, when we refer to education and school, we even refer to education for all, that is a school attended by all students, there is no distinction between students and they are not labeled. School inclusion is not restricted to simply placing the student in school, but it is necessary to create favourable conditions that can receive students with special educational needs. The school must identify, with the assumptions of inclusion in which it must strive to overcome social and educational barriers that prevent access to learning and participation in the school or community.

An inclusive school and a school that mobilizes itself to provide adequate responses to the complexity and diversity of students educational needs and that accepts everyone and the school promotes equality of opportunity for all

From this perspective, inclusive education constitutes a new educational paradigm based on the conception of human rights, which combines equality and difference as inseparable formal values, when contextualizing the historical circumstances of the production of exclusion inside and outside the school.

In Mozambican practice, we notice a difference when we refer to the practice of inclusive education at school because it breaks some assumptions in that it creates special schools in a specific and exclusive environment different from the common school, when the infrastructures of common schools are not considered capable of receiving students with physical diversity when the homogenization of the environment in the common school is not created we note in this aspect that we are far from the practice of inclusive education at school and in many cases we can say that the practice of inclusive education is utopia.

In the context of public policies for inclusive education, Carneiro (2008) states that the implementation of public policies aimed at inclusive education requires the sensibilization and awareness of society and the school community itself in relation to human diversity, developing partnerships between regular schools and specialized institutions, recognizing the lack of financial investment for training at all levels and finally permanent support for teachers. Furthermore, specialized educational support must be part of the school educational project, including the participation of families respond to the specific needs of these students and be related to their public policies.

➤ *Education Special Practices from the Perspective of Inclusive Education*

When dealing with the practice of special education from the perspective of inclusion, we have an understanding of which practices in legal documents are fundamental on identifying the successes and failures present in the educational system. Special education is one of the relevant topic of today, with it, the challenge of meeting the needs and expectations of a changing society, through the implementation of educational policies that aim at inclusive education.

Special education from the perspective of inclusive education makes reference to a school focused on diversity, education for all, with the aim of enabling the integration and interaction of students in the school context. Furthermore, special education from the perspective of inclusive education problematizes educational practices and starts to use concepts related to difference as a possibility with others in the constitution of the subject's identity and subjectivity. This conception promotes understanding and the coexistence with differences as a catalyst for overcoming labelled and classificatory learning practices and historically concluded prejudices in relation to the target audience of special education from the perspective of inclusive education.

Special education is aimed at serving individuals with a disability. Especially in regular or specialized environmental education institutions.

According to Mazzota (1982) special education is [...] based on the need to provide equal opportunities through diversification of educational services in order to meet the individual differences of students, however pronounced they may be (p.10) But, Lima (2006) states that inclusive education should not be confused with special education, although it includes it special education arises from a proposal of education for everyone, regardless of each person's social origin. And the inclusive school, as an inclusive society, was reflected in international meetings, though groups that demand their social rights. However, special education is responsible for the accreditation and recognition or numerous deficiencies of students, accepting all differences in an inclusive way, ensuring quality education for all, adjusting the curriculum, organizational changes, teaching strategies, resources and partnership with communities, families and schools must act together promoting the inclusion that special education students deserve.

Therefore, special education in the Mozambican context began with the implementation of inclusive schools. The state begins to create conditions so that people with special educational needs have access to education. One response to support students with disabilities has been the opening of education centers and inclusive resources that welcome students with and with special educational needs. The Ministerial diploma 191/2011, attribute, attributes such as pedagogical skills, diagnostic training, guidance for children and young people with special educational needs, teacher training in educational strategies, production of educational materials and counselling. Mozambique (2011)

The initiative proposed by the government diverges from the thinking of Mantoan (2006) in which he states that inclusive education eliminates the division of school systems into special education and regular education, where schools start to serve students together, without discriminatory differences, without working separately, with some or without special classes, but catering to everyone to adapt to educational specificities and the needs of each student as a whole, Thus it reaches all students who fail classes.

The creation and strategic location of resource centers and inclusive education could give it a privileged position for the development of inclusive education if its activities due to the lack of professionals to serve the students with disabilities and special educational needs, to provide help and assistance and support to teachers working in these schools. (Silva (2021).

The creation of these centers shows a significant progress towards improving inclusive education in the country despite of the existence of challenges related to the revitalization of these centers, in order to boost the activities carried out in these institutions and the exponential growth of students with special educational needs.

Nhapuala and Almeita (2016) explains that exponential increase in the number of students with special educational needs in regular schools in Mozambique presents great challenges for schools, and teachers to respond to the needs

arising from inclusions, especially in a context where teacher training has shown that does not meet your daily needs for classes.

The practice of special education from the perspective of inclusive education is seen as one of the assumptions for the inclusion of students with apparent disabilities. Special education comes from a proposal from education for all, regardless of each person's social origin.

Reflecting on the practice of social education from the perspective of inclusive education goes beyond just thinking about student with physical limitations or global developmental disorder. It is necessary to involve the entire community around it, promoting a healthy and welcoming coexistence, so that it feels integrated and capable of fulfilling itself in a positive way in the society in which it is inserted.

III. CONCLUSIONS E SUGGESTIONS

➤ Conclusion

The normative documents referring to the practice of inclusive education in the Mozambican context make reference to the construction of a fairer and more egalitarian society based on respect for diversity and guaranteeing the right to social participation for everyone regardless of gender, ethnicity, socio economic, psychological and social status, religious.

Despite the normative documents addressing the issue of school inclusion, we note that the practical actions and implementation strategies of inclusive policies have not yet highlighted or demonstrated their materialization, which demonstrates a discrepancy between what is postulated as a practice of inclusion and its materialization in everyday life.

The current scenario of special schools (with the exception of the national institute for the visually impaired in Beira and others) and regular schools covered by the practice and policy of school inclusion are devoid of qualified human resources ,material and financial resources, capable of effectively promoting an inclusive education, diverging from what is postulated in normative documents.

The lack of adequate infrastructure constitutes a challenge to meet the demand of students with social educational needs since the school inclusion model adopted by Mozambique was designed for a context in which the regular school has favourable conditions for students with special educational needs.'

Another challenge for the materialization of inclusive education is the pedagogical practice in classroom in regular education because the teaching model is centralized or globalist and teaching manuals are prepared taking into account the normal student, excluding students with special educational needs.

➤ Suggestions

After verifying the irregularities in the current normative documents, regarding the practice of inclusive education, we

brought some non-complete suggestions for overcoming the challenges that the school inclusion policy faces.

- In the context of current inclusive education practices, we suggests to the Mozambican government that policies might be adapted to the country's socio-economic reality.
- It's essential to restructure regular education infrastructures in order to guarantee accessibility for students with special educational needs.
- Acquisition of teaching material that adequate to the reality of students with special educational needs.
- The initial and continuing training of teachers and education professionals in order to effectively guarantee inclusive education.

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