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Teachers' views on the Inclusion of Children with “Problemas Mentais” (Mental Problems) in the Educational System of the Autonomous Region of Madeira

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Teachers' views on the Inclusion of Children with “Problemas Mentais” (Mental Problems) in the Educational System of the Autonomous Region of Madeira

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ABSTRACT

In Madeira Island the Educational System has endured significant changes. The concept of education has changed in the past years as well as the need to help parents understand the new changes. This new concept of school brought a new universe into the classrooms. Teachers, students and the community in general must learn to deal with the diversity of students who now share their educational journey in the same school environment. This new challenge obliges parents, teachers, headmasters and the school community to accept, respect and provide the needed conditions for an effective education for all students.

This research has explored whether inclusion of students with mental problems is working effectively, from the perspective of the teachers, in the high schools located in Madeira. The study was developed to identify the gaps in the teaching/learning process for students with mental problems studying in regular high schools.

A survey method was adopted for this study in which a questionnaire was developed to explore teachers' attitudes and beliefs around the education of students with mental problems studying in regular high schools. Three illustrative scenarios were selected to show different realities that may occur among these students. Teachers read the three case scenarios and related them to their own experiences as educators. Teachers' reflections upon the problems gave the researcher the opportunity to analyze how these problems are solved or ignored by educators. The questionnaire was validated and ethical permission gained from the University.

Five hundred questionnaires were distributed to teachers working in different high schools in Madeira, 300 questionnaires were returned at the end of the field work. Analysis of the responses identified a significant view that teachers were concerned about inclusion, but did not engage actively to implement government policy in this area. In particular teachers with more than 10 years experience were significantly less prepared and willing to engage with this inclusive approach. The majority of teachers reported a lack of resources, inappropriate curriculum and insufficient specialist staff as excuses for not engaging in inclusive education.

The guidelines laid out in the educational policy have been put to the test. This study showed that, according to the opinions of teachers, none of the requirements have been met by the 35 schools surveyed in this study. The distance between theory and practice has always been long and in the case of inclusive education, giant steps need to be taken to narrow the gap between the theory in policy and reality in the school.

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Declaration

I declare that the work contained in this thesis has not been submitted for any other award and that it is all my own work.

Name:

Signature:

Date:

1 Chapter 1 – Introduction

The need for a new approach that guarantees the inclusion of students with mental problems in regular high schools of the Autonomous Region of Madeira (ARM, see Annex I) is acknowledged by a number of people who are directly and indirectly related to the Madeiran educational system, both at the academic and at the political level. For example, Rodrigues has claimed, “The educational system of Madeira has not been able to cope with the needs of students with special education needs” (Rodrigues, 2001, p.37). His opinion is shared by writers such as Chaves, who has noted, “The student with special needs is still viewed by many in the educational system as a complex problem for which there are no clear solutions” (Chaves, 2001, p.59), and Solnado, who has observed “The needs of the students with special education requirements have not been treated as a priority by the educational system of Madeira” (Solnado, 2000, p.14).

More recently, the issue of the inclusion of students with mental problems in the regular high schools of the ARM also has been addressed by some of the political leaders of Madeira, who have frequently depicted it as a “key task for the present and future governments” (Góis, 2006, p.6). Mr. Rui Anacleto, Regional Director of Education, has been said to be “seriously concerned with the capacity of regional schools to include with effectiveness students with special needs in regular learning environments” (Filipe, 2004, p.9). He also has recognised that many of the efforts that have been promoted on the archipelago with the goal of including students with mental problems in the regular high schools of Madeira have “failed to produce the results intended” and that the issue of special needs education “still represents a very serious challenge” to the people and leadership of the ARM (André, 2007, p.19). His opinion is largely shared by Mr. Francisco Fernandes, Regional Secretary of Education, who has admitted “some problems” in the inclusion of students with mental problems in the regular schools of Madeira and stated that a “joint effort from the part of students, teachers, school directors and public leaders is necessary in order for significant and positive changes to come into effect” (Filipe, 2004, p.7). In addition, he has regretted some of the stereotypes that have been associated with students with mental problems,

as they “do not contribute for the creation of a more balanced and inclusive school environment” (Filipe, 2004, p.7).

Over the past three years, the annual reports of the Regional Board of Education and Culture of the ARM are also indicative of an increased interest in the inclusion of students with mental problems in regular high schools, revealing advances in their perception of the human, logistic and infrastructural conditions that are available in high schools to help students, teachers and staff answer the requirements of students with mental problems. These particular publications, which make a general overview of the conditions and progress made in the field of education in the ARM, reflect, to a great extent, the capacity of both regional schools and political leaders to analyse the state of affairs of the educational system of Madeira. Therefore, their analyses and inferences are of great importance to the students and agents of education on the archipelago. In 2006, the annual report made no specific mention of the students with special education needs who were attending the regular high schools of the ARM. In 2007, however, the report included a summarised account of the number of students with special education needs enrolled in the Madeira educational system (Secretaria Regional da Educação e Cultura, 2007, p.137). A year later, in 2008, the annual report referenced some of the initiatives that were in place in some of the regional high schools to address the particular wants of students with special education needs (Secretaria regional da Educação e Cultura, 2008, p.149). Finally, in 2009, the annual report depicted the inclusion of students with mental problems as a topic which warrants “the careful consideration and genuine commitment of students, teachers, directors and all other entities, both public and private, that are in some way related to the learning centres that make up the educational system of the ARM” (Secretaria regional da Educação e Cultura 2009, p.117).

Given the established and largely recognised importance of the inclusion of students with mental problems in the regular high schools of the ARM, the purpose of this research is to analyse the quality and effectiveness of the efforts that have been and/or are being developed by the regular high schools of Madeira to include students with mental problems in regular classroom settings. In doing so, this study will take into consideration the perception of teachers that deal with students with mental problems on a regular basis in addition to the strategies and programmes that have been and/or are being adopted by the regular high schools of the ARM to meet the specific needs of

students with mental problems in order to assure their inclusion in regular educational settings.

In order to address this issue, this study first needs to discuss the two concepts that are central to this research, namely “inclusion” and “mental health”. Only after a clear understanding of these two notions has been developed can a more accurate and comprehensive assessment of the quality and effectiveness of the process of inclusion of students with mental problems in the regular high schools of the ARM be made.

1.1 Inclusion

“The fundamental principle of the inclusive school is that all children should learn together, wherever possible, regardless of any difficulties or differences they may have. Inclusive schools must recognize and respond to the diverse needs of their students, accommodating both different styles and rates of learning and ensuring quality education to all through appropriate curricula, organizational arrangements, teaching strategies, resource use and partnerships with their communities. There should be a continuum of support and services to match the continuum of special needs encountered in every school”. (Salamanca framework for Action, 1994).

“Inclusion” is a fundamentally controversial concept for which there are no easy answers. Different authors have approached the issue from varying perspectives. For example, Bowe views inclusion as a process according to which students classified as disabled remain in general classrooms all the time while related services are provided via ‘push in’, meaning that professionals enter the classroom and deliver assistance without removing the student from the classroom setting (Bowe, 2005, p.57). Unlike Bowe, Stainback & Stainback promote a more ethics-based understanding of “inclusion”, claiming not only that the placement of students with mental problems in general classrooms is a civil right, but also that even partial non-inclusion is “morally unacceptable” as it makes people with disabilities less visible in society (Stainback & Stainback, 1995, p.84). The authors also defend that schools should be restructured so that inclusion can be provided for all students with mental problems, including those with severe disabilities (Stainback & Stainback, p.88). Other writers, such as Ben (2007), Florian, Rouse & Black (2006), Jones (2005) and Sage (2007), have also

contributed their views on inclusion, advocating that students with mental problems should spend a significant time in separate classes with specialised facilities reserved for disabled students or be totally segregated from nondisabled students.

1.1.1 Factors

In spite of large number of authors who have written about inclusion of students with mental problems, the challenges inherent to the study of the topic extend beyond the plurality of meanings that have been attached to the term over the years. In fact, there are at least seven other factors that make the analysis of inclusion of students with mental problems in the specific educational context of the ARM a complex undertaking, namely:

1. The lack of previous research addressing the issue of inclusion of students with mental problems in the regular schools of the ARM.
2. The myths and stereotypes that, over the years, have been attached to students with mental problems and their supposed influence on the intellectual development of other students. Parents of nondisabled students of the ARM believe that students with mental problems have an insidious influence on the development of other children and oppose inclusion on the grounds that it will hinder the progress of their own children. This will be analyzed in chapter 2.
3. Inclusion policies are perceived by many in the Portuguese political leadership and civil society as an educational strategy that is “innately predestined to fail”, hence depriving the national and regional budgets of important sums that could otherwise be invested in furthering the development of other areas (Pacheco, 2000, p.126).
4. Educational inclusiveness, not only of children with different mental problems, but also of students with different cultural, racial, ethnic and religious backgrounds, is associated with social values and individual sense of worth. Even in a nation such as Portugal, with a History that always has been linked to the notions of internationalism and multiculturalism, this association inevitably results in a high degree of social discomfort and suspicion (Nascimento, 1999 and Pereira, 1998).

5. The continued persistence of confusion as to the role that ought to be played by parents, teachers, peers and school staff in an inclusive educational model, as well as lack of knowledge as to the type of coordination that should be forged between these different groups in order to answer in a more effective way the special education needs of students with mental problems (Abrantes, 1999, pp.97-103).
6. The lack of studies and/or data comparing the academic performance of Portuguese and Madeiran students with mental problems in inclusive settings vis-à-vis their achievements in non-inclusive contexts.
7. In small social contexts such as the ARM, fundamental change in the educational system is especially difficult to implement. Therefore, it is difficult to foresee the level of receptivity that a study of this nature would be given even if it successfully demonstrates the major flaws and shortcomings of the type of treatment that is given to students with mental problems by the regular high schools of the ARM (Andrade, 1999, p.34). Moreover, as pointed out by some authors, it must not be forgotten that, even if the research reveals that inclusive educational programmes are more beneficial to the academic development of students with mental problems than segregated ones, to force all students with mental problems into inclusive classrooms on the basis of their own interest is just as coercive and discriminatory as forcing them into segregated special education programmes or even residential schooling (Nogueira, 1992, and Reis, 1995).

1.1.2 Definition and Models of Inclusion

Despite the complex nature of inclusion, it is possible to grasp the general notion of “**inclusion**” based on Rogers (1993), who defines inclusion **as a term that expresses commitment to educate each child, to the optimum extent appropriate, in the school or classroom that he or she would otherwise attend, regardless of whether or not that child suffers from a mental problem.** However, the extent to which a child with mental problems ought to be integrated in a regular education setting still remains a point of contention. While some authors defend the use of **mainstreaming**, a process by which students with mental problems are selectively placed in one or more regular education classes according to their demonstrated ability

to keep up with the work assigned by regular classroom teachers (Biklem, 1985, Hasazi, Rice & York, 2003, and Paul & Turnbull, 2006), others favour **full inclusion**. Full inclusion is a notion by which students with mental problems do not have to earn their opportunity to be integrated into regular educational settings. Instead, these students are placed in regular programmes full-time regardless of the conditions or severity of their special needs. “Proponents of full inclusion tend to emphasise the psychological benefits to the child with mental problems of being in a regular school setting, rather than his or her ability to keep up with the regular students”. (Becksteand, 1992, Kauffman & Hallahan, 2005).

1.1.3 The application of the Models of Inclusion to the ARM

It is the purpose of this study to explore which model of inclusion best fits the characteristics of the educational system of the ARM and best addresses the needs of students with mental problems in regular high schools of the region according to the teachers’ points of view.

Such inference only can be achieved after careful analysis of the educational context of the ARM, the effectiveness of the efforts that have been promoted by the local leadership to integrate students with mental problems in regular educational settings, and the data that has been collected by this study and other studies that have been carried out on this topic. Nonetheless, this situation does not prevent acknowledgment of the benefits of inclusion to the intellectual development of students with mental problems.

Some authors have advocated that inclusion may have moderate beneficial effects on both the academic and the social performance of children with special needs (Baker, Wang & Wallberg, 1994, and Carlberg & Kavale, 1980). In addition, the “Success for All Program”, an initiative developed in 1987 on the issue of reading instruction (Ross, Smith & Cassey, 1997, Slave & Madden, 2000), revealed that early and continued intervention in children who have fallen behind in the school system or present some mental problems can be effective in helping those children achieve success not only in reading but also in other areas of school activity and intellectual development (Ross, Smith & Cassey, 1997, Slavin & Madden, 2000).

A number of more recent studies have also identified other important benefits to both regular and students with mental problems brought by integrating students with special educational requirements in regular educational settings, such as reduced fear of human difference accompanied by increased comfort and awareness (Mitchell, 2006, Peck, 1994), improvements in self-concept and self-esteem (see, for example, Jones, 2005), growth in social cognition (Booth, Ainscow & Greenhill, 2002, Murray-Seegert, 1989), and the development of caring friendships and of the ability to assume advocacy roles toward peers and friends with mental problems (Bogdan & Taylor, 1989, Riddel, Tinklin & Wilson, 2005). Moreover, a comparative study conducted in the beginning of the decade in twenty-two countries has shown that the vast majority of students with a specific learning disability (mental problem) that are included in regular classrooms can achieve good academic standing and play a vital role in the surrounding community (Holland, 2002). Therefore, given the recognised effectiveness of inclusion in stimulating the intellectual and personal development of many children with, mental problem, a study exploring the teachers' point of view on the issues regarding the educational requirements of students with mental problems in the high schools of the ARM is of vital importance.

1.2 The concept of “mental health”

The concept of “mental health” is also a fundamentally contested one for two main reasons. On the one hand, “mental health” is tied to cultural factors, religious characteristics, ethnic differences and historical attributes, all of which play a determining role when evaluating what is mentally healthy, its nature and causes and what interventions are appropriate for its maintenance or rectification, hence making it difficult to articulate a universally accepted definition of the concept. On the other hand, “mental health” is also sensitive to a number of competing theoretical interpretations, which, in turn, affect how it is understood both within and outside the realm of academics. For example, Powell defines the expression “mental health” as one that encompasses a “continuum of experiences and situations that range from mental well-being through to a severe and enduring mental illness”, and claims that we all experience changes in our mental health state, influenced by social, personal, financial and other factors (Powell, 2000, p.47). Heller, on the other hand, characterises mental

health as a “balance between all aspects of life, including social, physical, spiritual and emotional”, that impacts on how we manage our surroundings and make choices in our lives (Heller, 2000, p.31). In the Portuguese academic context, there is also a difference in opinion regarding the meaning of “mental health”. While Teixeira understands it as a “state of emotional well-being in which an individual is able to use his or her cognitive capabilities, function in society and meet the ordinary demands of everyday life” (Teixeira, 1999, p.53), Rocha categorises mental health as “an absence of mental illness that has to do with many aspects of our lives including how we feel about ourselves, how we feel about others and how we are able to meet the numerous demands of life” (Rocha, 1999, p.19).

While there is still no official definition of “mental health”, a particularly useful explanation of the term is that offered by the World Health Organisation, which classifies it as a general state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully and is able to make a positive contribution to his or her community (World Health Organisation, 2005). As such, maintaining mental health involves a number of precautions, including attention to lifestyle (that is, maintain a balance between work, study and leisure pursuits), social contact (that is, interact socially with others whose company we enjoy), review one’s life from time to time (that is, considering what our aims and goals in life are and what we are doing to pursue them), awareness of how body and mind interact and having people in life that we trust and can share our worries with (Jara, 2006, pp.139-151). By implication, “mental illness” can be understood as any of various conditions characterised by impairment of an individual’s normal cognitive, emotional or behavioural functioning caused by social, psychological, biochemical, genetic or other factors, such as infection or head trauma (Moreira & Melo, 2005, p.42).

1.3 Problemas Mentais (Mental Problems) the epistemology of terminology in Portuguese and the equivalent concepts in English

Epistemology refers to the way in which we understand or perceive reality. Hence in an epistemology of *mental problems* this term needs to be considered first for its meaning to the research participants for whom it formed the subject of the

questionnaire; and secondly for the reader who needs to see how this is interpreted into the range of more specific mental health and behavioral conditions that the term encompasses.

Within this study the term Problemas Mentais (Mental problems) was used to focus the teachers (respondents to the questionnaire) on the issues of inclusive education in ARM. This term is commonly understood by teachers and encompasses a range of behavioural and mental health issues which may challenge classroom practice and school management in the regular schools of the ARM.

In spite of the significant challenges created by linguistic differences in effectively communicating health information some difficulties are still a serious problem to overcome when translating concepts from one language to another. The meaning of a variety of words and expressions used in one language may change when they are translated to another language causing ambiguity in the meaning of the concepts.

It is important to clearly understand the meaning of the word “Mental Problem” in Portuguese and its implications in the range of illnesses that may be incorporated in this concept.

In Portuguese, the word “Problemas Mentais” (Mental Problems) describes a range of mental health and behavioural issues, for example: dislexia (dyslexia), autismo (autism), Síndrome de Down (Down’s Syndrome), demência senil (Senile dementia), depressão (depression), distúrbios psicológicos (psychological disturbance) and distúrbios comportamentais (behavioral disturbance), ansiedade (anxiety) and stress (stress) and others that are directly related to social issues and life in society.

In Madeira Island there is a lot of prejudice in relation to mental problems. Many born with any of the above mentioned mental problems are often locked in a room, isolated from relatives and from the world. The parents usually make a huge effort to keep neighbours and friends far away from the child because these mental problems cause social embarrassment. This behavioral conduct is more common in the north of the Island than in the south. Whilst this social behavior has been changing over the years, it is a slow process. One of the most difficult things, especially on an Island is to change the peoples’ attitudes. In addition closed-minded people are less receptive to challenge and progress which makes the change process difficult and painful.

Mental problems in Portuguese encompass two different concepts: the first is the definition of each illness and the diagnosis. According to the diagnosis the child may or may not be included in a regular high school. If the psychiatrist gives the assurance that the child is not alienated from reality and that it is possible to reach the child and communicate with her/him the inclusive process may begin with the consent of the parents and acceptance of the regular high school. Children who are more severely affected are segregated into special schools or excluded from schooling completely. The second concept is the culture: in Madeira Island it is still shameful to have a Mental Problem. People tend to hide it from the others and often children are not provided with an appropriate education because they are hidden in the house and their existence is a social shadow.

The common mental problems that affect the Madeiran youth are:

Adjustment Disorder “Adjustment disorder occurs when a person experiences emotional and behavioral symptoms of depression and/or anxiety that is clearly in response to an identifiable stressor or stressors.” (MentalHelp.net).

Addiction: “Common addictions are to cigarettes and other tobacco products, drugs (street/recreational drugs as well as ones prescribed by your doctor), alcohol, gambling, pornography and (some say) to the Internet itself.” (MentalHelp.net).

Cerebral Atrophy: Cerebral Atrophy means that the Cortex of the brain has shrunk in size. Cerebral Atrophy occurs in a variety of illnesses and addictions. (MentalHelp.net).

Clinical Depression: Depression occurs across a spectrum from mild to severe. Symptoms of depression usually consist of feelings of sadness, guilt, or unworthiness; crying spells; disturbance in appetite and weight changes; and disturbance in sleep. (MentalHelp.net).

Autism: The Autism Society of America define Autism as: "a severely incapacitating lifelong developmental disability that typically appears during the first three years of life." (MentalHelp.net). The condition exists as a range of disorders from mild behavioural change to severe conditions in which the child is locked in to their own world and isolated from reality.

Schizoaffective Disorder: “Schizoaffective Disorder is diagnosed when symptoms of schizophrenia (hallucinations, delusions, catatonia, disorganized speech, flattening of facial affect, etc.) co-occur with symptoms of a manic, depressive or mixed episode sufficient for the diagnosis of Bipolar or Major Depression. “(MentalHelp.net).

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD): “PTSD is an anxiety disorder that occurs in the aftermath of a traumatic event. A traumatic event is usually (conservatively) defined as exposure to death or a near death event. Examples are combat, rape, motor vehicle accidents.” (MentalHelp.net).

Psychosis: “Psychosis refers to a state of being completely out of touch with reality.” (MentalHelp.net).

In Portuguese the use of the words: Mental disorder, mental disability, learning disabilities, learning problems, mental illnesses, special needs in mental health, emotional disturbance, post traumatic stress disorder are all included in just one concept: Mental Problems. Psychiatrists and psychologists have the responsibility to diagnose and provide specific and personalized support to the patients. Aside from these professionals there are two other groups of professionals: The teachers and the social workers who have an important role in the students’ outcome when included in regular high schools in ARM.

This research employed questionnaires as an instrument to gather information in the survey method. It is critical to clarify that throughout the questionnaire “Mental Problems” in Portuguese are all enclosed in the same major concept. It is worth understanding that whilst in English the following ideas form the foundations of the cases: “anti-social behavior” (case 1), “depressive behavior” (case 2) and “adjustment behavior” (case 3), these would all be recognized as mental problems by the respondents.

It is not the purpose of this research to analyze specific mental illnesses or behavioural problems of the students. When students with mental problems are included in regular high schools a report about their mental condition is available in the school they are attending. It is the purpose of this research to analyze teachers’ points of view with respect to the inclusive process for these students. It is fundamental to know how

regular teachers feel about the inclusion of students with mental problems in their classes. Also how they deal with these students and the variety of problems they raise whilst at the same time providing a profitable learning/teaching environment for all the students in their class.

The language and terminology used in the questionnaire does not cause bias in the understanding of the content of the questions. It is clear in Portuguese what is meant by mental problems. The respondents are aware of the concept of “mental problem” and they know that it includes a range of mental health and behavioural. Therefore it is not a linguistic or a conceptual problem the different expressions in the questionnaire in the Portuguese language.

1.4 Inclusion in the ARM

In general, this study makes seven assumptions about what is required in order to guarantee the effective inclusion of students with mental problems in regular academic environments, in general, and in the regular high schools of the ARM, in particular, namely:

1. Adequate infrastructures capable of offering students with mental problems with the tools they need to relate to the physical context in which they are inserted, (Decreto-Lei nº 319/91, de 23 de Agosto).
2. Well-designed education programmes complemented with the adequate schooling material capable of offering students with mental problems the opportunity to assimilate the academic concepts necessary for a more comprehensive and genuine understanding of the different areas of schooling (Decreto-Lei nº 319/91, de 23 de Agosto).
3. Professional development for all teachers involved in the education of students with mental problems, such as workshops and short courses on subjects such as cooperative learning, peer tutoring, adaptive curriculum and other themes considered necessary for a broader understanding of the challenges and demands of special education (Decreto-Lei nº 319/91, de 23 de Agosto).
4. Time for teachers to plan, create strategies and evaluate students with mental problems collaboratively (Decreto-Lei nº 319/91, de 23 de Agosto).

5. Reduced class size based on the severity of the needs of the student or students with mental problems, (Decreto-Lei nº 319/91, de 23 de Agosto).
6. Collaboration between students, teachers, staff, administrators and parents, to ensure the consistent and stable implementation of the methods and programmes designed to promote the inclusion of students with mental problems in regular academic contexts and their future inclusion in the larger society (Decreto-Lei nº 319/91, de 23 de Agosto).
7. Sufficient and adequate funding to ensure that regular high schools are able to develop programmes for students with mental problems based on student requirements rather than availability of funding (Carrol, 2006, Nogueira, 2005, and Simon, 2000).

These assumptions are the foundation of a study that aims to show that the educational system in Madeira is failing to provide adequate support and equal opportunities to students with mental problems when included in regular high schools. The system does not fail with respect to Inclusion. It fails with respect to developing an appropriate inclusion which takes into consideration the needs of the students that require specific handling, treatment, and attention in the teaching/learning process. It is not enough to simply include these students to prove that the system works. It is crucial to provide teachers with the necessary tools and knowledge to help them deal with the difficulties and specificities of these students.

Assuming that the above mentioned is a reality in Madeira Island, Inclusion can be successfully implemented in the local high schools. Furthermore, being professionals in the field of education, teachers should be adequately prepared to offer the best education to students with mental problems without disregarding the needs of regular students in the classroom. It is also essential that the Educational system assures that certain requirements are guaranteed to promote the success of all students in addition to excellence with respect to teachers' performance at all levels in the classroom. In addition, the educational system must provide teachers with the tools required to teach all students equally, providing each and every student with a suitable education that meets their needs. Adequate materials and equipment are essential in all high schools where Inclusion occurs to assist teachers and students in the learning process. This is a daunting task, one which can be achieved by the commitment dedication of the teachers, parental involvement, community acceptance, and a functional educational system that is indeed efficient in the field. It is possible and achievable to reach the level where

once included, all students can enjoy the same right to a fair education that meets their special needs.

“Inclusion should not be viewed as an add-on to a conventional school. It must be viewed as intrinsic to the mission, philosophy, values, practices and activities of the school....Full inclusion must be embedded deeply in the very foundation of the school, in its missions, its belief system, and its daily activities, rather than an appendage that is added on to a conventional school” (Henry M. Levin ,1997).

Inclusion is a dynamic process of participation of people within a net of relationships. This process legitimizes people’s interactions within social groups. Inclusion implies reciprocity. Thus, the perspective regarding mental problems is changing into a more democratic one; one that implies that mental problems is to be particularly of regular and universal public education. (Secretary for Special Needs Education, Brazil Ministry of Education).

Demand issues arguably provide the major challenges to the schools and to the teachers. To meet the demand for SNE, access, retention, and drop-out rates have plagued efforts in this area. Access issues are affected by factors at all levels of inputs: student, school, family/community and national, the most influential of which are socio-economic and cultural factors within the family: family economic survival needs (e.g., mothers’ choices between sending children to school or having children work to generate income needed for family survival), traditional societal attitudes towards disability that may involve shame, guilt, under-expectations, and sheltering/patronization.

These factors often combine with distance to school, mobility, school-building accessibility, discrimination, shortage of trained teachers and resource supports to address teachers’ working conditions, and shortage of school places. Typical responses to access issues have been modifying buildings, knowledge dissemination and awareness campaigns, teacher and parent training on mental problems is crucial to assure the same rights to all the students in an inclusive school in ARM.

1.4.1 A framework for Inclusive Education

The framework depicted in the Table 1.1 below is proposed as a conceptual guide to thinking about the network of relationships and factors inherent in Madeira Island. This table was based on a framework proposed by Susan J. Peters in INCLUSIVE EDUCATION: AN EFA STRATEGY FOR ALL CHILDREN.

This table intends to present a measurement instrument that could be taken into consideration when students with mental problems are included in regular high schools. In the specific case of Madeira, issues other than the education itself must be taken into consideration to assure the inclusion of students with mental problems. Cultural factors as well as social integration are two important aspects that influence the success of Inclusion in Madeira Island.

This table intends to show “a conceptual map for educational planning and evaluation and contains value-added factors and insights from the literature” (Susan J. Peters).

Table 1.1 A conceptual guide to thinking about the network of relationships and factors inherent in Madeira Island.

School Curriculum content Learning material Teacher training qualifications Community support Parental support Evaluation plan		Students Characteristics Diverse characteristics valued and supported disabilities
School Climate High expectations Positive teacher attitude Safe and supportive environment Adapted Curriculum Collaborative support teams	Family/Community Parental attitudes Training for the parents Economic conditions Cultural factors Multi-sector coordination and collaboration	
Achievement Good citizenship Personal development Positive attitude towards learning Self determination Self-esteem Social and Independent Living Skills		Attainment Qualification Preparation for adult life
Standards Official learning objectives School-level objectives Impact on family and Community Supportive Governmental Policy		Teaching/Learning Sufficient learning time Efficient teaching methods Appropriate class size Integrated systems for assessment and feedbacks Clear roles Clear responsibilities
Contextual Factors Political stability Economic policies National goals and standards for inclusive education Educational system management Parental and Community Participation Community sensitization and awareness		

The proposed framework includes four domains of inputs, processes, outcomes, and contextual factors in an open-system. An open-system not only accounts for external factors influencing policy and legislation, cultural and socio-economic conditions but considers these ‘external’ factors as integral components for the development of an inclusive school as a whole in Madeira Island. This open-system may function as a strength in the inclusive process in the Island once it takes in consideration not only the school as an Institution that is empowered to make decisions related to Inclusion but also considers other aspects which are fundamental for Inclusion according to the teachers’ perspective.

This framework provides a context for the four research questions that are the foundation of this research thesis. These questions will be answered by the teachers in the field work and conducted by the researcher in order to obtain accurate information based on the literature and on teachers’ perspectives of an inclusive education in Madeira Island.

1.5 Research Questions

Based on the concepts and assumptions identified above, this research addressed the quality and effectiveness of the efforts that have been and/or are being developed by the regular high schools of Madeira to include students with mental problems in regular classroom settings. In doing so, it focused on one central question, specifically, **“How do the regular high schools of the ARM meet the educational needs of students with mental problems?”** Nonetheless, as the analysis of this question evolved, three more specific research questions whose importance to understanding the central theme of this project cannot be underestimated. The central question and the three complementary questions are listed below:

1. What are the beliefs and attitudes of teachers regarding the existing educational infrastructure that have been adopted by regular high schools in the ARM for inclusive educational programs?
2. How do the regular high schools of the ARM meet the educational needs of students with mental problems?

3. Is the educational infrastructure of regular high schools of the ARM effective in preparing and supporting its teachers with regard to inclusion in the high schools of the ARM?
4. What fundamental questions need to be addressed in the near and far future in order to improve the quality of inclusive education in the regular high schools of the ARM?

Jointly, the central question, and the four research questions drove the research and its related search for information pertaining the educational system of the ARM and from which inferences could be drawn regarding the quality and effectiveness of the efforts to include students with mental problems in the regular high schools of Madeira.

“Education is the fundamental method of social progress and reform. All reforms which rest simply upon the law, good will, changes on a superficial level or made to avoid the threat of certain penalties are not only transitory and futile, but also unable to promote the type of society that will rise to meet the numerous and demanding challenges of this new century. Through education, however, society can formulate its own purposes, organise its own means and resources and thus shape itself with definiteness and economy in the direction in which it wishes to move. When thus conceived, education becomes the most perfect and intimate union of science and art that is conceivable in human experience” (Dewey, 2005).

The outcome of this process is presented in the pages that follow

1.6 Research Structure

This study is divided into six chapters. Each section seeks to make a relevant contribution to a more inclusive understanding of the central theme of this project. Chapters six and seven are presented as one chapter since both are inter-related and the combination results in a fluent piece of information that aims to indicate to the reader the main conclusions and suggestions for further research or issues to be addressed in future studies.

In Chapter One the researcher introduces the theme of the project by contextualising the reader with the issues that are going to be developed on the

following chapters. It is aimed to clearly introduce the topic of the project taking into consideration the concepts of Inclusion, of Models of Inclusion, Mental Health and a framework that may be functional in ARM provided the necessary conditions are met. It is a study based on teachers' concepts, opinions and experiences related to Inclusive schools.

This study was specifically designed for Madeira Island and it was based exclusively on teachers' opinions concerning the inclusion of students with mental problems in regular high schools.

In Chapter Two, the researcher discusses the contextual factors that define the inclusion of students with mental problems in both Portugal and in the ARM. This is done by considering the political, legal, social and psychological parameters that, over the years, have defined the inclusion of students with mental problems in regular high schools, influencing, in both direct and indirect ways, their capacity to develop their intellectual skills and contribute to society as a whole.

In Chapter Three, the researcher discusses the method adopted by the study, justifying its selection and identifying the advantages that it offered to the conduct of the study in comparison to other methods that are currently used in the fields of education and psychology. Additionally, the researcher also explains how she handled the data collected, the ethical challenges that the study had to confront and the techniques employed in order to overcome them and assure both the trustworthiness of the data collected and the integrity of the methods through which it was obtained.

In Chapter Four, the researcher presents the data collected in the field through the method adopted, summarising it in tables, charts and graphs in order to facilitate its assimilation by the readers. In this section, the information gathered appears in a statistical form, so that the reader can gain a better insight of teachers' perception of the quality and effectiveness of efforts that are or have been developed concerning the inclusion of students with mental problems in the regular high schools of the ARM.

In Chapter Five, the researcher analyses the meaning of the results obtained by establishing a correlation between the questions posed at the beginning of the study and the information collected. This is done in order to explain how the latter can help gain a more accurate and inclusive understanding of the issues raised by the former. Furthermore, the boundaries of the study, the Educational Policy, teachers'

preparedness, specialized materials, mental care professionals, teaching experience and attitudes towards inclusion, gender and teachers' attitudes are also aspects that are developed in this chapter.

In Chapter Six the researcher concludes on the unique Teachers' Perspective of their feelings and knowledge about Inclusion in regular high schools and the support mechanisms provided by the Educational System of the ARM to the teachers to guarantee the successful inclusion of students with mental problems in the regular school environment.

The general purposes of these suggestions intend to help regular high schools in the ARM to provide better institutional responses to the teachers of regular high schools to deal with students with mental problems, and to assist regular high schools of the ARM in becoming more effective institutions in the long, demanding and fundamental process of creating a fairer society where all individuals have the chance to contribute to the growth and development of its members regardless of their innate level of intellectual capacity. Additionally, the researcher proposes some themes for future research that are fundamental in order to gain a more complete understanding of the inclusion of students with mental problems in Madeira high schools as well as to improve the quality of the inclusive education of students with mental problems.

2 Chapter 2 – Background and Context

2.1 Context: Portugal and the ARM

This study starts by considering context-related factors that influence the inclusion of students with mental problems in both Portugal and in the ARM. The political, legal and social parameters will be summarised that, over the years, have defined the inclusion of students with mental problems in regular high schools, influencing, in both direct and indirect ways, their capacity to develop their intellectual skills and contribute to the general society.

Schools are institutions, and, as such, they are bound by legislation that is intended to maximize their effectiveness, while, at the same time, guaranteeing the rights and responsibilities of all individual and collective agents that are related to the educational system. Despite the fact that they are not directly related to the academic programmes taught in schools, they still play an important role in defining the intellectual and emotional development of students (Lopes, 1995, p.49). The interaction between the legal and the cultural principles that schools observe gives rise to the general guidelines that inform school government and management.

In the specific case of Portugal, until the early 1990s, special education, in general, and the inclusion of children with mental problems in regular schools, in particular, were not regarded a priority by the national government. Even though there were some studies conducted on these topics (Entrudo, 1966, and Hélio, 1969), they were not given special notice and the legislation itself did not address the specific challenges underlying the education of special students. As Fonseca points out, “It was not until the last decade of the 20th century that the issue of special education began to be looked at by politicians and school leaders with seriousness and awareness” (Fonseca 1980).

Moreover, Moreno argued that public action in the field of special education in Portugal “suffered a severe delay” caused partly by the “lack of sensitivity on the part of the general population as to the wants, requirements and aspirations of students with special needs and their families” (Moreno, 1982, p.33).

For the most part, the lack of commitment revealed by the Portuguese educational system related to students with mental problems was a consequence of

Portugal governed by an autocratic regime until 1974. After an army lead coup in 1933 against the democratic First Republic, the Second Republic was a national dictatorship. Dubbed 'New State' by its creator and leader, Antonio de Oliveira Salazar. It was an authoritarian regime that differed from traditional fascist regimes by its lack of expansionism, party structure and more moderate use of state violence when compared to the governing systems that were in place at the same time in countries such as Germany, Italy and the Soviet Union. Unlike Hitler, Mussolini and Stalin, Salazar was a Catholic traditionalist who believed in the necessity to control the forces of social modernisation so as to defend the religious and rural values of the country, which he perceived as being threatened.

At the educational level, when the New State came into power, the illiteracy rate in Portugal covered approximately seventy percent of the population. This situation continued until the early 1960s, when the governing regime made public education available for all children between ages six and twelve and invested significantly in both secondary and university education, establishing universities in Lisbon, Minho, (Évora and Aveiro-Caetano, 1973, and Enders, 1994).

Despite these changes, the profound economic pressures that the large majority of Portuguese families found themselves under led most of them to regard education as an unnecessary privilege and encourage their offspring to seek employment, even at a young age, so as to contribute to the upkeep of their homes (Ferreira, 1995, and Fryer & Pinheiro, 1962). In this context, children with mental problems, especially those with advanced mental conditions, faced two separate problems: on the one hand, schools were not equipped to include them in regular educational settings or even answer their particular educational teaching requirements; on the other hand, their employment possibilities were grim, particularly outside the home, as people nurtured a number of prejudices and stereotypes about the said incapacity of individuals with mental problems to contribute to the development of Portuguese society (Dias, 1986).

Despite the momentous changes that the April 1974 coup generated in the Portuguese political system, their impact on the national education system, especially in what concern the inclusion of students with mental problems in regular schools, was not as significant as it would be desirable. Having been governed by an autocratic regime for over four decades, the Portuguese people and their leaders were gradually becoming acquainted with the benefits and demands of democratic politics, and, as a result, felt

that they had little time to devote to subjects other than the stabilisation of their socio-political structure. As it pointed out by Mrs. Maria de Lurdes Rodrigues, Portuguese Minister of Education, in a recent interview on one of the major television channels in the country, “The pressures placed upon the civilian leadership by the dawn of a new democratic order prevented national leaders from adequately considering the needs of special students and the type of schooling that should be granted to them in public and private institutions so as to assure their inclusion both in the academic context and in the broader society” (Rodrigues, 2008). In the same interview, she added, “during the stabilisation period, special education was not considered a political or social priority. Therefore, the efforts to include students with special education needs in regular academic contexts began later than in other countries” (Rodrigues, 2008).

2.2 Fundamental Principles of Special Education

Delayed by the socially-crippling effects of conservative dictatorship, the first attempt at special education legislation only took place in August 1991, when the Portuguese Legislative Assembly approved the Legislative Decree 319/91 (see Annex III), which laid out some basic guidelines for the inclusion of students with mental problems in regular schools. In essence, the 1991 legislation established six fundamental principles in the area of special education:

1. Called on schools to invest in the acquisition of pedagogic equipment for students with mental problems, such as Braille typewriters and books, acoustic aids and wheelchairs.
2. Encouraged schools to make architectural changes to their infrastructures so that these could accommodate the mobility needs of students with mental problems.
3. Stimulated schools to review their academic curriculums so as to make it easier for students with mental problems to assimilate the concepts taught in regular classrooms.
4. Called on schools to provide students with mental problems with a flexible school schedule so as to facilitate their class attendance.
5. Limited to a maximum number of twenty students in classes with learners with mental problems.

6. Encouraged schools to foster a close and open relationship with the parents of students with mental problems that allowed them to monitor in greater detail the academic performance of their children.

Despite these efforts, the Decree 319/91 left unattended a number of issues that were regarded fundamental in order to assure the stable and effective inclusion of students with mental problems in regular schools. As Frade explains, “The 1991 legislation failed to cover some aspects relevant for a truly inclusive system of special education. As a result, the role and place of students with special needs in regular schools remained, to an extent, undefined and unclear” (Frade, 1996, p.74). Among the topics that were overlooked by Decree 319/91 were, for example, the training and selection process of teachers with students with mental problems, the exact evaluation criteria applicable to students with students with mental problems, the level and means of coordination between the school institution and the surrounding community on the specific issue of special education (mental problems) in addition to the level and type of state assistance to schools and families with children with mental problems (Lopes, 1995). As a result of these shortcomings and of the little political attention that, at the time, was being given to the issue of mental problems, at the turn of the century, Portuguese schools, in general, and high schools, in particular, were not prepared to include students with mental problems in regular classrooms in a truly balanced and effective way. As it is argued by authors such as Rafael, Portuguese schools were “poorly equipped to deal with the challenges inherent to being a student with special needs in the area of mental health in a post-modern society” (Rafael 1999, p.167). In fact, as the author explains, there was a “real need” of legislative tools capable of empowering the schools, in the sense of providing them with the logistic and human resources tools they need to promote the inclusion of special students in regular teaching, fostering the active participation involvement of communities and parents in the educational process of students with mental problems and making the country more sensitive to the moral and ethical duty to reflect on the educational needs of special children and providing them with an equal opportunity to develop their mental skills and flourish academically in regular schools (Rafael, 1999, p.169).

Between June 7 and June 10 of 1994, more than three-hundred people, representing ninety-two governments and twenty-five international organisations, met in

Salamanca, Spain, to discuss special education, especially the fundamental policy shifts that needed to be promoted in order to further the approach of inclusive education, namely enabling schools to serve all children, including those with mental problems. The conference adopted the Salamanca Statement on Principles, Policy and Practice in Special Needs Education and a Framework for Action (see Annex IV). These documents are well-versed the principle of inclusion, as well as by the recognition of the need to work towards “schools for all”, that is, institutions that include everybody, celebrate differences, support learning and respond to individual needs. According to the conference, governments played an essential part in this process and should guide their conduct according to seven principles:

1. Give the highest policy and budgetary priority to improve their education systems to enable them to include all children regardless of the individual difficulties or differences.
2. Adopt as a matter of law or policy the principle of inclusive education, enrolling all children in regular schools, unless there are compelling reasons for doing otherwise.
3. Develop demonstration projects and encourage exchanges with countries that have experience with special schools.
4. Establish decentralised and participatory mechanisms for planning, monitoring and evaluating educational provision for children and adults with mental problems.
5. Encourage and facilitate the participation of parents, communities and organisation of persons with disabilities in the planning and decision making processes concerning provision for special educational needs.
6. Invest greater effort in early identification and intervention strategies, as well as in vocational aspects of inclusive education.
7. Ensure that, in the context of systemic change, teacher education programmes, both pre-service and in-service, address the provision of special needs education in inclusive schools (Salamanca Statement on Principles, pp. ix-x, 15-20).

Notwithstanding the undeniable symbolism associated with the Salamanca Statement and the fact that it represented a worldwide consensus on the future direction for the education of students with mental problems, fashioned by values, thoughts and

actions conducive to a truly egalitarian educational system, its impact on the Portuguese legal system, especially in what pertained to special education, was very limited. As it is noted by writers such as Correia, despite claiming to agree with the Statement and to recognise the importance of an inclusive system of education, Portuguese leaders failed to convert their words into actions. As a result, the Decree 319/91 remained the legislation of reference in the area of special education and Portuguese schools kept on “suffering from the same difficulties that they had up to that time in the area of special education” (Correia, 1999, p.117).

The lack of progress in the field of mental problems in Portugal is also reflected in the lack of literature produced by national authors on this topic in the period that followed the Salamanca Statement. In fact, between the Salamanca Statement and the approval in January of 2008 of the Legislative Decree 3/2008 (see Annex V), the document that regulates special education in Portugal at the present time, only eight significant studies were published, all of which acknowledge the lack of legal instruments to help schools face the numerous and profound challenges of special education (Chaves, 2001, Correia, 1999, Fernandes, 2002, Frade, 1996, Lopes, 1995, and Rafael, 1999). For example, for Chaves, “There are still important issues that need to be addressed before we can say that, in principle and in fact, the regular schools of our country are prepared to welcome students with special needs and effectively answer the challenges inherent to their educational development” (Chaves, 2001, p.137). Likewise, Fernandes observed, “The road for effective inclusion of students with special needs in regular Portuguese schools is still very long” (Fernandes, 2003. p.97).

In January 2008, the Portuguese Legislative Assembly approved the Decree 3/2008, which not only builds on the legal framework established by the Decree 319/91, but also seeks to stimulate a complete overhaul of the special education system in Portugal. In essence, the 2008 legislation recognized ten essential notions in the area of mental problems:

1. The educational system, in general, and the special education system, in particular, should be based on the principles of social justice and equality (Decree 3/2008).
2. Parents ought to be included in the educational process of children with mental problems by maintaining a close relation with the school. Should the parents surrender their participatory rights, schools were totally empowered

to pursue charges against their unresponsiveness and disinterest with the education boards of their region (Decree 3/2008).

3. Children with mental problems are entitled to receive personalised special counselling from school professionals specifically designed to address their physical and/or intellectual needs (Decree 3/2008).
4. Schools that do not abide by the principles of social justice and equality, but, instead, adopt discriminatory practices towards students with special needs are subjected to a range of penalties, including limiting their access to public funds (Decree 3/2008).
5. Schools ought to make use of technology and technological resources to make up for the learning disabilities of special children and reduce their academic disadvantages vis-à-vis normal children (Decree 3/2008).
6. Schools should include in their teams of professionals speech therapists, sign language experts, psychologists and other professionals specially qualified to deal with students with mental problems in order to provide teachers with a reliable support system to help them face the complex challenges of teaching students with mental problems (Decree 3/2008).
7. Schools ought to expand the curriculum applicable to students with special needs in order to include training in areas that, although may not be directly related to their intellectual development, are nonetheless necessary in order to assure their success in social settings (Decree 3/2008).
8. Schools should seek to adapt the teaching of curriculums to the special needs of students with disabilities, including the teaching of foreign languages, which should be closely accompanied by language and speech therapists.
9. The evaluation process of students with mental problems to be designed on an individual basis and in accordance with an assessment report produced previously by an expert in the area of special education (Decree 3/2008).
10. Schools that run special education programmes for children with mental problems are eligible to receive and to apply to funding by private institutions (Decree 3/2008).

As mentioned above, the Legislative Decree 3/2008 is the judicial guideline that regulates special education in Portugal at the present time. In the chapters that follow,

this study will comment on the extent to which the legal tools put forth by the Decree have or not resulted in a more effective special education system capable of guaranteeing the stable and effective inclusion of students with mental problems in regular classrooms.

Politically, on July 1, 1976, following the democratic coup of 1974, the Portuguese government granted political autonomy to Madeira, which assumed the designation of the Autonomous Region of Madeira (ARM). The region now has its own government, presided by Alberto João Jardim, legislative assembly and political-administrative statute. The establishment of an autonomous government has allowed the people of Madeira to affirm their own distinct regional identity and cultural traits, as well as develop a number of areas previously mistreated by the national leadership (Henriques, 1998, Jardim, 1995, and Nepomuceno, 1994).

As part of that effort, over the past three decades, the educational system in the ARM has changed immensely. Having been identified by regional leaders as an area of crucial importance, the Madeiran system of education has undergone a number of very significant transformations, especially at the infrastructural level, which have also benefited from the availability of funds from the European Union. As a result, however, in the 1960s, there were only a small number of schools, all of which were located in the capital city of the region, and, for the most part, privately owned by the Church. Currently, there are forty schools and one university operating in Madeira, catering to the social and intellectual development of over twenty-five thousand students. As a result of such a significant investment, the illiteracy rate on the region has dropped dramatically from over sixty percent, in the late 1960s, to less than three percent, registered in a survey conducted by the Regional Board of Education in 2008 (Secretaria Regional da Educação e Cultura, 2009). The relevance of this progress cannot be underestimated as they are testament to the seriousness with which regional leaders have addressed the topic of public education over the past three decades.

Despite these developments, it would be unrealistic to assume that the educational advance of the ARM has been perfect. On the contrary, the profound investment that has been made at the infrastructural level has not been matched by improvements in the collective mentality and civic spirit of the population. This is particularly true in the area of mental problems, which, until approximately the mid-1990s, was profoundly dominated by a number of social attitudes that not only hindered

the capacity of children with mental problems to integrate regular schools, but also completely excluded children and adults with mental problems from living a normal and dignified life in the general social context. In summary, a person with mental problems was considered, by the population at large, as a serious problem, in their person, as well as an encumbrance to the physical comfort, emotional well-being and social development of those around him or her. In no small way, the lack of adequate legislation capable of identifying the logistic and human resources necessary to assure the schooling of children with mental problems and guarantee their inclusion in regular schools has contributed to the perpetuation of these myths and the consequent further relegation of children and adults with mental problems to a status of social inferiority (Chaves, 2001, pp.74-76). Although, these situations went unreported by the official channels of communication and information, there were various occasions when the parents of regular children specifically petitioned the Regional Board of Education and the administrative board of a number of regional schools not to integrate students with mental problems in regular classroom out of concern that mental disabilities of those children delayed the academic and intellectual growth of their children. (Jacinto, 2005).

The enactment of Decree 319/91 failed to introduce any significant changes either in the way people with mental problems were regarded by the general public or in the way children with mental problems were treated by the educational system. On the contrary, many of the myths that had limited the possibilities for special children and adults to succeed in Madeiran society in previous times continued unabated, consigning them to a position of weakness and inadequacy (Filipe, 2004, p.7). Also, the teaching of children with mental problems went out without a legislation of reference, capable of guiding and coordinating the action of teachers, staff, peers and the society in general towards the goal effective inclusion. For the most part, children with mental problems were viewed as helpless cases of the educational system, incapable of justifying the time and effort that might be invested in them by the school community. (Jacinto, 2005).

The Salamanca Conference in June 1994 and the subsequent adoption by the representatives there of the Salamanca Statement on Principles, Policy and Practice in Special Needs Education and a Framework for Action had a profound impact on the international perception of special education and of the important role of inclusion in helping children with mental problems develop their social and intellectual potential, and, therefore integrate their respective communities in a truly balanced and effective

way. Issued at a time when the Madeiran society was becoming more open to ideas from other countries, the Salamanca Statement became the first document of reference to schools and institutions in their relation with children and adults with mental problems. (Salamanca Conference, 1994).

As mentioned previously, because it was, in essence, an agreement on principles, fashioned by values, thoughts and actions that aimed at an idealistically egalitarian educational system, rather than a directive for policymaking, the Salamanca Statement did not result in momentous changes in special education legislation or in the effectual inclusion of children with mental problems in regular schools. In fact, the ARM continues to exhibit undeniable legislative lacuna in the chapter of special education. Nonetheless, because it presented a general idea of what a society and school system that was inclusive of children and adults with mental problems in regular schools could be, it made the general public as well as the political leadership of the ARM more aware of the need for change. (Pereira, 2001, p.18).

The growing sense of awareness towards the rights and needs of students with mental problems in regular schools that was instilled in Madeiran society by the Salamanca Statement. This statement inspired many schools to change their position towards students with mental problems and their families, integrating them in their regular classrooms and making an effort to complement the regular teaching and evaluation methods with other pedagogic tools that are more suitable to the specific demands of teaching children with mental problems (Pereira, 2001, p.21). In spite of the good will that motivated some of these changes, they also revealed the legal and institutional disorder that defined the regional approach to special education, exposing, among other factors, the lack of a system for special education that was commonly recognised by all schools in Madeira, and, therefore, capable of uniformly meeting the educational needs of students with mental problems. Overall, the response of the educational system to the specific needs of students with mental problems remained insufficient and the capacity of schools to integrate them in regular schools remained, at best, ineffective. (Vieira, 2000, p.25).

As referred to earlier, in January 2008, the Portugal Legislative Assembly approved the Decree 3/2008, which not only builds on the legal framework established by the Decree 319/91 but also seeks to foment a complete overhaul of the special education system in Portugal. Given the special political status of the ARM, an

autonomous territory within the Portuguese nation with the authority to legislate on areas such as education, which are considered subject to the idiosyncrasies of the Madeiran people and, therefore, worthy of specifically regional legislation, the Decree has been submitted for consideration by the Legislative Assembly of Madeira, which will decide on whether or not to apply it to the educational system of the ARM. This process of consideration has been going on for the better part of a year. However, up to the present time, no final decision on that issue had been made. Moreover, no indications had been advanced on whether or not Decree 3/2008 ever will be applied to the Madeira context and no deadline had been set for a final decision. (Trindade, 2008, p.10).

And so, in summary, at the present time, the system of special education, in general, and the teaching of children with mental problems, in particular, is guided, in theory, by two different documents, namely the Salamanca Statement and Decree 3/2008. Yet, this situation leads to two problems of considerable complexity. On the one hand, the Salamanca Statement lacks the objectiveness to operate as a commanding guide for policymaking or as a vehicle for legislative change. On the other hand, despite having been approved by the Portuguese Legislative Assembly, Decree 3/2008 has not yet received the official agreement of the Legislative Assembly of Madeira. This impasse, denies its *de facto* application to the ARM, hampering the positive impact that it could potentially bring to the regional system of special education. Therefore, it would be no overstatement to claim that the education of children with special education needs in the area of mental health is a chaotic affair that has received neither the attention it needs nor the commitment from either the general public or the political leadership. There are at least seven different challenges that have to be met in that area in the foreseeable future if the ARM is to become a fairer and more inclusive society: (Soleira, 2007).

1. People's mentality, especially the misconception that children mental problems are second class citizens whose inclusion in regular schools will jeopardise the academic development of regular students. (Soleira, 2007).
2. The lack of legislation capable of establishing valid, legitimate and mandatory principles for the inclusion of children with mental problems in regular classrooms, as well as providing school communities with the logistic and

human resource tools needed to meet the specific educational challenges posed by students with mental problems. (Soleira, 2007).

3. The absence of communication between schools and the surrounding community and of community participation in the educational system, in general, and in the social and intellectual development of students with mental problems, in particular. (Soleira, 2007).
4. The non-existence of a system of special education that is not only commonly recognised and adopted by schools in Madeira, but that is also capable of providing schools with effective practices for the inclusion of students with mental problems in regular classrooms. (Soleira, 2007).
5. The lack of professionals with expert training in the area of special education that are capable of assisting teachers, in particular, and schools, in general, in devising teaching strategies and assessment tools that are adequate to the intellectual characteristics of students with mental problems. (Soleira 2007).
6. The lack of pedagogic equipment which is, on the one hand, capable of helping teachers improve their classroom performance towards students with mental problems, and, on the other hand, helping special students in the area of mental health maximise their level of assimilation of the material presented in the classroom, hence facilitating their inclusion in the school environment (Soleira, 2007).
7. The architectural characteristics of Madeiran schools, which, in most cases, is neither sensitive to the special attributes of students with special education needs in the area of mental health nor conducive to their balanced and efficient inclusion in the educational system (Soleira, 2007).

Having discussed the legislative guidelines that characterise the educational settings both in Portugal and in the ARM, there is a better understanding of the numerous problems inherent to the inclusion of students with mental problems in the regular high schools of the ARM as well as the profound challenges that will limit any initiative for regional change. Jointly, the seven different factors identified above have compromised the intellectual development of students with mental problems in the educational system of the ARM and the quality of their contribution to the Madeiran society. Although these are not, by any means, unsurpassable situations, their resolution

requires serious action by both the general public and the regional political leadership. (Filipe, 2005).

2.3 Contextualize Inclusion in ARM

The Portuguese Basic Law of Educational System of 1986 established its current organizational chart. The first level of educational system is the Preschool Education from ages 3 to 6, and it is not compulsory. The basic compulsory education is composed of three grades, and children must attend between the ages of 6 and 15. The weight and program of each curricular area is nationally defined but every school has its own curriculum management. (Barreto 2000).

The 1st Grade of Basic Compulsory Education lasts 4 years in a regimen of a single teacher. 2nd Grade lasts 2 years, in a regimen of multiple teachers, however keeping some aggregation of the learning scientific areas. The conclusion of the three years of the 3rd Grade corresponds to the fulfillment of the nine years of schooling compulsory education and represents the first moment of exit from the educational system and entrance into the work market. (Barreto 2000) Secondary education lasts three years and completes the K-12 schooling; providing students with the option to follow 3 different paths for a higher education. Regular and Technological Courses co-exist in the same schools, the first are oriented for general preparation and the second give general preparation and professional training, both giving access to higher education. Professional Schools guarantee training for specific areas and result in partnerships between local and national educational agents (generally local governments, industrial or commercial associations. (Barreto 2000).

Pupils with mental problems can be placed in regular education, with the support of teams comprising specialized teachers and psychologists. These teams must produce an individual plan of evaluation for each child. (Filipe, 2005).

The Basic Law of Educational System made reference to the need for a permanent educational action oriented to the global development of the personality, social progress and democracy. The implantation of the Personal and Social Formation in the Portuguese Educational System was characterized by difficulties during the experimental period between 1991 and 1994. The document "Education, Integration,

Citizenship" (1998) expresses as an essential political guide the importance of Education for Citizenship as a basic element to achieve the goals of Basic Education.

Schools as cultural vehicles reflected the oppression lived by the Portuguese people. The schools were then oppressive institutions representative of a chaotic country where freedom of speech did not exist. Acts of violence among students due to political views was one of the main causes of bullying. (Barreto 2000).

After 1974 the government changed: democratization took place and with it a new concept of school was born. Nevertheless, the problem of peer bullying and inclusion of students with mental problems did not disappear with the old political system. The reasons which gave rise to peer bullying changed, but the outcome was still the same: a high percentage of victimized students in high schools (Barreto, 2000).

The search for solutions is conceived within a political-pedagogical frame, with the ultimate goal of achieving the democratization of school success (understanding it not only as cognitive learning but also as social and cultural). Measures of an organizational and a pedagogical kind can be identified. The first set of measures is composed of legislation about decentralized school management. The second includes reforms such as the flexible management of curriculum (particularly its local adaptation); the possibility to provide an alternative curriculum for underachieving students or students with mental problems; the change of the evaluation process of pupils, trying to reduce premature exclusion; the supported study, which tries to promote individual skills and habits of study in students; and national guides for school's regulations of student's rights and duties, giving guidance for the promotion of pro-social behaviours (Barreto 2000).

Quality of schooling and educational attainment is among the primary concerns of educational policies and school reforms in Europe, (Delors 1996) .However, to what extent does the relational atmosphere and the ethos of each school contributes to the quality of life experience and to the social and personal development of young students? How effectively can schools fulfill socio-emotional and socialization needs and achievement outcomes of children and adolescents? The relation between schools and development are not a trendy issue. As a matter of fact, the social function of school assumes prominence due to the wide variety of problematic behaviors and dysfunctional disorders, which have their early manifestations in the school years, and some, can be exacerbated in the school setting. (Barreto 2000).

2.4 Inclusion

A dominant problem in the mental problem field is the lack of access to education for both children and adults with mental problems. As education is a fundamental right for all, enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and protected through various International conventions, this is a very serious problem. In a majority of countries, there is a dramatic difference in the educational opportunities provided for children with mental problems and those provided for non-disabled children. It will simply not be possible to realize the goal of Education for All if complete reform is not achieved “Even where awareness-raising efforts were conducted, campaigns remained limited to attitudes and behaviour towards persons with mental problems without addressing the rights, potentials and contributions inherent in the concept of equalization.” (Bengt Lindqvist, Monitoring of the implementation of the standard rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities, item 28, Report of the Special Rapporteur on Disability on the Commission for Social Development (E/CN.5/2007.4).

Inclusion is a term which expresses commitment to educate each child, to the maximum extent appropriate, in the school and classroom he or she would otherwise attend. It involves bringing the support services to the child (rather than moving the child to the services) and requires only that the child will benefit from being in the class (rather than having to keep up with the other students). Proponents of inclusion generally favour newer forms of education service delivery (Barreto 2000).

Inclusion is the new wave not only of Special Education (mental problems) but in Education as a whole, and while so much has been written about Inclusion at the Elementary level, why it should be implemented, how it should be implemented, and the social benefits of the Inclusive classroom for all students the educators and people discussing Inclusion have almost over looked Inclusion at the High School Level. It is important to discuss Inclusion at the High School Level in detail and as clearly as possible given that there is no one set way to implement Inclusion. First, it is essential to discuss what Inclusion is at this level, and how it differs from mainstreaming. Second, some problems related to a Full Inclusion Model; third, the place of

Mainstreaming in any Inclusive Model; lastly, the use of a Particle Inclusion Model at the High School level (Barreto 2000).

Before discussing the Full Inclusion Model it is necessary to look at the base idea of education, which is, all students are entitled to an education in that meets their individual needs and provides an appropriate environment to all the students. The Full Inclusion Model addresses the above with the follows points: (Barreto, 2000).

1. There is a natural proportion of students with mental problems at a school and assigned to general education classrooms.
2. The general education classroom should be age-appropriate for the students.
3. No Special Education classroom should exist, except as a place for integrated activities.
4. Students with mental problems should receive support from Special Education staff.

Around the mid 1970's through 1989 there was only one option for students with mental problems and their parents. A student with a mental problem was placed in the least restrictive environment and an Individual Education Program was created. The ultimate goal of such a program at the time was for some students to build skills that enabled them to meet the essential elements of their grade level in a general education classroom or in the mainstream with Special Education support for those who need it outside of the general education classroom. And that support period was in the place of a study hall. Therefore, Mainstreaming does not allow for a Special Education teacher to offer support in the home classroom, and students with mental problems in such programs must meet the essential elements of their grade level. On the other hand, Inclusion allows a Special Education teacher to offer support in the home classroom, and in the inclusion setting students with mental problems must meet only the Individual Educational Program goals which may or may not include the essentials of their grade level (Barreto 2000).

If inclusion is not effective for all students with mental problems and there is a need for a Special Education classroom for those students. There should be a place for students with mental problems who can meet the essential elements of their grade level

beyond the Inclusive classroom. That is, the abovementioned students should be mainstreamed, for it does not allow for a Special Educations teacher to offer support in the home classroom, and students with mental problems in such programs must meet the essential elements of their grade level. Mainstreaming by definition calls for the students to adapt to the General Education classroom, and to express and explain their needs to the General Education teacher. As stated above, support from Special Education teacher, if needed, would be given in the place of a study hall (Barreto 2000).

Some would say that the Inclusive classroom meets the above mentioned students' needs and that these students simply do not require the support of a Special Education teacher. While students do indeed meet the essential elements of their grade level, there is the question of learning to express and explain their needs to others. Students with mental problems who no longer need the support of the Special Education teacher in the Inclusive classroom may not learn to express and explain their needs to others, for they expect the Special Education teacher to meet their needs for them. Learning to express and explain their needs to others is something all students with mental problems must do, for when they leave school and go on to a job, the military, or college there will be no support unless they can express and explain their needs to others. Mainstreaming the above students gives them ability to adapt and the skills to ask for help when they need it (Barreto, 2000).

Many High Schools use a Partial Inclusion, for it meets the needs of all students. The Partial Inclusion Model addresses the following points: (Barreto, 2000).

1. There is a balanced proportion of students with mental problems at a school and assigned to general education classrooms.
2. The General Education classroom should be age-appropriate for the students.
3. There is Special Education classroom for those students who have problems with the inclusive classroom.
4. Students with mental, and/or physical problems should receive support from Special Education staff.
5. Mainstreaming should be the place for students who can meet the essential elements of their grade level beyond the inclusive classroom.

When discussing Inclusion in high schools it is essential to keep in mind several hypotheses. Be aware that there are some problems with a Full Inclusion Model taking into consideration a place for Mainstreaming and the use of a Partial Inclusion Model at the High School Level. All the above styles have their strong and weak points; thus it is the job of educators to find a balance among the three styles. Only then will they meet the needs of all students. Therefore, it is important to find out which model is more appropriate to fulfil the needs of the students who have mental problems in Madeira Island (Barreto,2000). Inclusion remains a controversial concept in education because it relates to educational and social values, as well as to our sense of individual worth. For some people Inclusion is seen as a policy driven by an unrealistic expectation that money will be saved. Furthermore to force all students into the inclusion pattern is just as coercive and discriminatory as trying to force all students into the pattern of a special education class or residential institution (Barreto 2000).

On the other hand, there are those who believe that all students belong in the regular education classroom, and that "good" teachers are those who can meet the needs of all the students, regardless of what those needs may be (Barreto, 2000).

Between the two extremes are large groups of educators and parents who are confused by the concept itself. They wonder whether inclusion is legally required and wonder what is best for children. They also question what it is that schools and school personnel must do to meet the needs of children with disabilities (Barreto, 2000)

While recognizing that there are no simple answers, this paper attempts to give an overview of the concept of inclusion and offers a set of recommendations that can help to ensure that we meet the needs of all students (Barreto, 2000).

2.5 Mainstreaming

”Generally, mainstreaming has been used to refer to the selective placement of special education students in one or more "regular" education classes. Proponents of mainstreaming generally assume that a student must "earn" his or her opportunity to be placed in regular classes by demonstrating an ability to "keep up" with the work assigned by the regular classroom teacher. This concept is closely linked to traditional forms of special education service delivery.” (Barreto, 2000).

2.6 Full Inclusion

Full inclusion means that all students, regardless of any disabling condition, no matter how extreme, be placed in a regular classroom/program full time. All services must be provided to the child in that setting. In addition to problems related to definition, it should also be understood that there is often a philosophical or conceptual distinction made between mainstreaming and inclusion. Those who support the idea of mainstreaming believe that a child with disabilities first belongs in the special education environment and that the child must earn his/her way into the regular education environment (Barreto, 2000).

In contrast, those who support inclusion believe that the child should always begin in the regular environment and be removed only when appropriate services cannot be provided in the regular classroom. There is no comparative data available on students' with mental problems academic gains, graduation rates, preparation for post-secondary schooling, work, or involvement in community living based on their placement in inclusive versus non-inclusive settings. Therefore, an accurate comparison between separate programming and inclusive programming cannot be made (Barreto, 2000).

There are also those who are in favour of better teaching and more inclusive opportunities and facilities for the disabled. When parents compare and contrast learning experiences via parent network, they discover that the cognitively disabled are "sheltered" from the mainstream, an Island onto themselves. There they pick up inappropriate behaviours and habits from other students with mental problems, and develop a sense of normalcy different from that of a non disabled student. The less the students with mental problems interact with the regular students, the more skewed their sense of normalcy becomes, so they remain childlike, when they do interact with non disabled students, neither group knows what to expect from the other (Barreto, 2000).

Does this have to be the case? Should it be? The answer is a resounding "no." It is time to take a more realistic look at this segment of the student population and formulate an action plan to move them into a more equal setting with their non disabled

peers. Personal experience, the experiences of others, and firsthand observation of actual school settings as teachers and parents have taught us many leadership skills and strategies for effectively including cognitively disabled students (Barreto,2000).

Everyone has strengths and weaknesses. All students feel uncomfortable facing new situations. If not accustomed to being around or working with "normal" students, a student with a mental problem feels intimidated at initial exposure. Both non disabled students and teachers should be trained to understand the new behaviour and how to respond to it so as to deal with or change it to acceptable behaviour, work/assignments, etc. Through observation and role modeling, the student with a mental problem learns to adapt. An inclusion planning strategy must be applied (Barreto, 2000).

Planning strategy is not simple. It will take many active ingredients to make it work, but students with mental problems deserve just that. To no one's surprise, the main ingredient is the school principal. The principal must believe in the value and importance of inclusion, and recognize potential abilities of cognitively disabled students that may have been long dormant because of lack of challenges or support and encouragement from those previously working with them (Barreto, 2000).

Attitudes constitute a critical challenge in terms of inputs to Special Education. Traditional approaches focus on teacher attitudes in classrooms. However, successful special education programs are finding that one of the “root problems” in terms of access is lack of political will based on attitudes of government officials. Training programs are beginning to target these groups prior to implementing programs. For example, a study funded by Economic and Social Commission of Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) trained disabled people to organize national training workshops for government officials in Malaysia. The impetus for the training arose from the realization that even though legislation on accessibility and building codes/standards existed, they were not being implemented. These experiences in Malaysia led to a recommendation for specific disability training targeted at “people who make and implement decisions, people in local government, and particularly technical personnel with the responsibility of designing the built environment for school.” (ESCAP (2001).

In terms of attitudes within local communities, Avoke suggests that “community elders and churches can play a vital role in the drive towards radical change in attitudes” and that they must participate in policy development as well as practical implementation. (Avoke, 2002).

In the next chapter we address the methodology used in this research, that is, the way in which this study seeks to show that according to teachers’ points of view, inclusive high schools in the ARM do not meet the requirements of students with mental problems in any effective way.

3 Chapter 3 – Methodology and Methods

“There is nothing more unequal than the equal treatment of unequals”

Thomas Jefferson

3.1 Methodological and Ethical Considerations

Inclusion of students with mental problems is a challenge. Being aware of this reality, foreign authors have extensively discussed and addressed this issue and relate it to the social science research. (Adams et al. 2007, Bryman 2008, Frankfort-Nachmias 2007, Robson 2002), this study sought to employ a method: the survey method that would allow to achieve two purposes, one of which more general and the other of which more specific. The first, more general purpose is to gather information – evidence – on the inclusion of students with mental problems in the educational system of the ARM. Without evidence, any statement that this research might make on that topic will not overcome the level of simple generalisation, which, in turn, will severely limit its potential contribution to the understanding of the problematic of the inclusion of students with mental problems in the ARM. The second, more specific purpose is to make conclusions on the degree to which the regular high schools of the ARM have been able to effectively include students with mental problems in the area of mental health in regular classrooms according to the teachers’ perspective.

This body of research employed the questionnaire and an examination of three different cases (hypothetical scenarios) that could occur in a classroom. The purpose is to determine if the teachers (who do not have specific qualification to teach students with mental problems) are able to teach and support students with mental problems included in regular high schools. In analysing the three different scenarios teachers have the opportunity to know if they are prepared or not to provide to these students the needed tools for them to engage in the teaching/learning process being equipped with the same skills to develop their capacities and aptitudes as human beings and future professionals.

The questionnaire used in the survey method is explained and its contributions to this study is discussed in the sections that ensue, demonstrating its particular usefulness in such research so as to avoid bias and collect evidence relating to the issues facing special students in the area of mental health and their educators and carers in the ARM.

This research addresses four particular questions that are identified below and that, in our perspective, are fundamental to a more comprehensive understanding of both the quality and effectiveness of inclusion of students with mental problems in regular high schools in ARM. These are:

1. What are the beliefs and attitudes of teachers regarding the existing educational infrastructure that have been adopted by regular high schools in the ARM for inclusive education programs?
2. Do regular high schools of the ARM adequately prepare and support its teachers with regard to inclusion in the high schools of ARM?
3. How do the regular high schools of the ARM meet the educational needs of students with mental problems?
4. What fundamental questions need to be addressed in the near future in order to improve the quality of inclusive education in the high schools of the ARM?

By adopting the questionnaire as an effective research method, this study sought to draw on some of the advantages it offers in comparison to other methods. Two specific aspects warrant special discussion. On the one hand, the survey method is more expansive and encompassing than most methods of investigation, hence making it possible to collect substantial information on the level of success of the inclusion of students with mental problems in regular schools of the ARM. On the other hand, data gathered by means of a survey is very helpful in allowing the researcher as well as the readers to understand grasp the social, cultural and legal dynamics that characterise the inclusion of students with mental problems in the ARM, as well as the numerous academic and non-academic factors that have made it difficult for the educational system of the ARM to respond to the requirements of students with mental problems and successfully prepare them for life in society. These aspects of the survey method, discussed at length by a number of Portuguese authors who have written about special needs education (Ladeira 2005, Talude 2003), have provided this body of research with

the means and flexibility necessary to address a topic as complex and multifaceted as the inclusion of students with mental problems in the regular high schools of the ARM.

However, despite the advantages that the survey method has in the area of special education (mental problems), there are aspects that merit cautious employment of the method, namely: the large volume of information that can be gathered due to the survey method's emphasis on detailed contextual analysis and the need to inspire a certain level of confidence in the information collected.

In order to overcome these two challenges, this study employed a questionnaire in an effort to amass information and evidence. As writers such as Foddy, Munn and Drever explain, this method is particularly valuable in data collection as it allow the researchers to collect data from large numbers of people without compromising the main focus of the study. In addition, questionnaires are useful if one wants to analyse behaviours, opinions, beliefs and attitudes of groups or large numbers of people, as was the case with this research. In addition, questionnaires also are a convenient way of collecting background data in studies of all kinds and of examining the effect of some interventions or handling of the general state of affairs by the participants (Foddy 2008, Munn & Drever 2004).

The purpose of a questionnaire is to collect data from respondents as accurately as possible. One of the most widely discussed weaknesses of questionnaires is that of bias. There are three ways that bias can filter through: the way in which a questionnaire is designed as a whole, the wording used in the specific questions addressed to the participants (wording must not be ambiguous in any way and questions must not be leading), and the method used in administering the questionnaire (using an interviewer can lead to interviewer bias which includes the way the interviewer's tone of voice can affect the response of the participant). The researcher took all the aforementioned factors into serious consideration and chose not to interview any of the respondents. The questionnaires were delivered in the high schools by the researcher and were distributed to the schools by the senior teachers and head masters.

There was a potential for bias in this research in that the teachers who distributed the questionnaire may have chosen teachers who were either in favour of Inclusion or against it. However, this aspect was not relevant when analysing the data. Response bias is greater with self-completed, postal questionnaires.

Knowing who your non-respondents are is vital if any decision about possible bias is made. Ideally your response rate should not be lower than 66%. Reminders and a follow-up questionnaire will increase the response rate.

The use of questionnaires determined that this study took into careful consideration the general principles that it should observe. On this matter, the study sought to respect four guidelines that are suggested in some of the literature devoted to this theme (Brace 2008, Patten 2000):

1. Begin the questionnaire with a statement asking participants for their informed consent and confirming that they understood the nature of the research project and the fact that their role in that research is purely voluntary. The statement also informed participants that their participation is anonymous, that all information provided will remain confidential and that they were free to contact the researcher at any point for any possible questions concerning their rights as participants in research.
2. Keep the questionnaire as short as possible. As a researcher, I am aware of the fact that people who agree to take part in studies involving questionnaires will seek to find any excuse for not completing the questionnaire, thus invalidating their potential contribution. For this particular reason, I tried to design a questionnaire that was both easy to understand and simple to complete.
3. Write the questionnaire in a language which was both appropriate and intelligible to the respondents.
4. Make sure that the response options for each of the questions are appropriate for the question posed and enable the study to access the information it intends.

Apart from considering the general principles on how to conduct a questionnaire, the study also had to decide on the type of questions to use; that is, whether to use open-ended or closed questions. On this point, it is important to note that, while open-ended queries often generate more detailed information than closed questions, they can dramatically increase the information density in questionnaires and the time needed to complete them. The latter two may discourage participation and compromise data-selection. Moreover, many participants will not complete open-ended questions at all in order to complete the questionnaire as expeditiously as possible, hence resulting in inconsistent data (Oppenheim 1992, Rothstein & Gooding 2008).

By contrast, closed questions enable the researcher to collect information that is easy to analyse and quantify, and, therefore, can be treated as being more reliable. Despite requiring very careful wording and thought about the appropriate type of response options, closed questions also make questionnaires easy and quick to complete for the participants, while, at the same time, providing a reliable way of addressing the issues the study is interested in by avoiding the danger of open-ended questions. An example of one such danger would be the respondents offering much more information than is needed.

For these reasons, this research project developed a questionnaire composed primarily of closed questions. However, some open-ended questions were included for two different reasons:

1. to give the respondent a chance to provide richer and more detailed data than is possible when using closed questions alone,
2. to expand the possible responses, especially in questions with a more complex nature.

A major critique of questionnaires employing closed questions is that they greatly limit possible responses (Langdridge, 2004, p.69). By including some open-ended enquiries in the questionnaires, this project sought to overcome that line of criticism without compromising the reliability of the data collected.

Cross-sectional studies include the survey method. “In this design, the focus is on relationships between and among variables in a single group. The simple version, in which all measures are taken at the same time commonly referred to as the cross-sectional study...is often employed in conjunction with the survey method of data collection, itself the most commonly used method...the variables to be included in the study are those needed to provide answers to your research questions. These questions will, as ever, be governed by the purposes of your study and by the theory you have developed” (Colin Robson, 2002, p157).

The use of questionnaires as a tool to compensate for some of the shortcomings of the descriptive method also demanded that this study consider the issue of sampling, namely how to assure good sampling for the study of the inclusion of students with mental problems in the regular high schools of the ARM. As it is observed by authors

such as Henry, Fowler, and Rea and Parker, appropriate sampling is critical in the execution of good quality research. Nonetheless, there is no universally established method of sampling. Instead, there are at least five different types of sampling methods that can be used depending on the overall purpose of the research and on its population of interest, namely: snowball sampling, stratified sampling, convenience sampling, random sampling, and cluster sampling (Henry 1990, Fowler 2008, Rea & Parker 1997). The method used in this study was survey sampling.

Survey sampling refers to the sampling of entire groups of people rather than individuals for its research. One common example of this, which largely applies to the nature of this research project itself, is when the researcher carries out research in educational settings, especially schools. In these contexts and for practical reasons, it is often most appropriate to sample entire groups of teachers. Such sampling of natural groups rather than individuals is used in the survey method. Like the methods of sampling discussed above, the survey method calls for a particular procedure so as to make sure the sample is representative of the population as well as a precaution against generalising from the results obtained from one respondent and apply these findings to another respondent. However, it is a very useful method when the aim of the researcher is to analyse or measure behaviour, opinions or feelings exclusively belonging to a certain group. Given that the purpose of this research is to analyse the inclusion of students with mental problems in regular high schools, the purposive sample covers a range of teachers' views from all over the island about inclusion of students with mental problems. The geographical location of the school and the rich and poor areas were taken into consideration when choosing the schools. The teachers were not randomly chosen. The researcher considered it essential to have teachers' opinions from the north, south, east and west schools.

3.2 The Sample

This study asked 300 teachers (male and female) from 35 high schools located throughout the ARM to complete the questionnaire. There are 63 high schools in the Island, 35 of which were selected to participate in the field work of this project. The selection of the schools was made based on their size and location. The researcher

intended to prove if geographical location and size were variables that could influence the acceptance or refusal of students with mental problems. The questionnaire was administered with provision made for the ethical considerations listed and explained in this chapter. Among the participants in the study, 75 were male and 216 were female.

(nine respondents did not identify their gender). Their age varied between 21 and 61 years of age. The age group with greatest representation was that of teachers aged between 26 and 45 years (73.7% of the total number of participants). Regarding teaching experience, the participants are very heterogeneous, as their years of experience varied from one to 36. Their academic area of teaching is diverse.

From our perspective, a survey study approach provides this body of research with the methodological capacity and flexibility necessary to analyse four issues fundamental to the assessment of the capacity of regular high schools in the ARM to include students with mental problems, namely:

1. the responsibilities that are placed on students by the inclusive education programs that have been adopted by the regular high schools of the ARM,
2. the ways in which the teachers who are responsible for the education of special students with mental problems are recruited, hired, trained, and supported in the fulfilment of their professional responsibilities,
3. the mechanisms of support that are provided by the educational system of the ARM to both regular teachers and students with mental problems in the area of mental health, and
4. the issues that need to be addressed in future research on the topic of inclusion in order to improve the quality of inclusive education in the ARM.

By allowing this study to make a careful consideration of these four issues and the complex dynamics underlying them, the survey study method provided a very useful approach to the study of the Inclusion of students with mental problems in regular academic settings. Nonetheless, the need to manage the information collected and provide the inferences drawn from that information with a considerable level of consistency led us to complement the use of description with that of questionnaires. This demanded reflection on a number of issues, particularly the general principles of questionnaire construction, the type of questions to pose and the sampling strategy to adopt. After considering the purposes of the research, a combination of open-ended and

closed questions was used with a group of teachers selected according to the survey method.

3.3 Advantages and disadvantages of questionnaire-based surveys

Disadvantages:

- 1- “Data are affected by the characteristics of the respondents (e.g. their memory; knowledge; experience; motivation; and personality).” (Robson, 2002, p 233).
- 2- “Respondents won’t necessarily report their beliefs, attitudes, etc, accurately (e.g. there is likely to be a social desirability response bias – people responding in a way that shows them in a good light).” (Robson, 2002, p233).

Postal and other self-administered surveys

- 1- “Typically have a low response rate. As don’t usually know the characteristics of non-respondents, you don’t know whether the sample is representative.” (Robson, 2002, p 233).
- 2- “Ambiguities in, and misunderstandings of, the survey questions may not be detected.” (Robson, 2002, p 233).
- 2- “Respondents may not treat the exercise seriously, and you may not be able to detect this.” (Robson, 2002, p 233).

Advantages:

- 1 – “They provide a relatively simple and straightforward approach to the study of attitudes, values, beliefs and motives.” (Robson, 2002, p233).
- 3- “They may be adapted to collect generalizable information from almost any human population”. (Robson, 2002, p 234).
- 4- “High amounts of data standardization”. (Robson, 2002, p 234).

Having discussed the methodological aspects of this study, it is important to now consider the ethical challenges this research had to address. The consideration and subsequent resolution of these challenges was essential in order to assure the integrity of

the information provided by the study's participants as well as the reliability of its conclusions.

Before discussing the specific ethical challenges that this study had to confront and the techniques employed in order to overcome them, it is important to briefly address the notion of "ethics" and some of the theoretical debates that underlie its position in contemporary social sciences. We believe that this is relevant in order to more accurately understand the importance of observing ethical guidelines in this and other research projects.

As explained by Singer, philosophers tend to use the notions of "ethics" and "morality" interchangeably, understanding the former as a system of moral principles that emerge from moral positions that individuals take on issues, as opposed to those emerging from independent and unfounded beliefs that people hold about human actions and their consequences (Singer 1993). The ethical principles currently subscribed to by researchers, and which this research sought to follow did not emerge sporadically. Instead, they are the culmination of a number of works developed in the field of ethics. Still, it would be imprudent to assume that there is an established list of guidelines that should be blindly followed by those interested in engaging in social science research. Like the terms "inclusion" and "mental health", discussed at the beginning of this chapter, "ethics" is also a fundamentally contested notion. In fact, there are at least four different schools of thought in the field of ethics, namely: consequentialism, deontology, intuitionism (Huemer 2007; Stratton-Lake 2002; Zamulinski 2007), and Kantianism (Holzhey & Mudroch 2005; Ward 1997). However, for philosophical ethics, consequentialism and deontology are two of the most widely discussed and most important.

While it is not the purpose of this research to try to reconcile the different theoretical approaches that have been made over time to the notion of "ethics", awareness of their existence reinforces the idea that there is no checklist of principles that this or any other research must follow. Instead, the overall goal of this research, and any research project for that matter, must always be to assure the trustworthiness of the data collected as well as the honesty of the methods through which it was obtained. In the specific case of this research, five different principles were observed in order to guarantee integrity of the participants, the consistency of the analysis process and the reliability of the conclusions advanced, namely:

1. *Confidentiality and anonymity*

Participants in this research process were informed that all information obtained from them would be treated confidentially and not revealed to another person other than the research supervisors. They were also notified that, if the research results were to be published, the information provided would not be identifiable as theirs.

2. *Deception*

Participants in this research were in no way deliberately misled. Rather, they were clearly informed that no information provided would be withheld against their personal will.

3. *Discomfort and harm*

All efforts were made in an attempt to minimise the risk of physical and mental harm to which the participants may have been exposed during this research process. Moreover, participants were specifically asked about any factors, such as pre-existing medical conditions and/or psychological conditions that might be triggered and/or aggravated by participation in the research study.

4. *Consent*

All participants in this research project were informed of the nature of the research study and its purpose. They were also asked to sign a written informed consent form (Annex V), where it was clearly stated that their participation was voluntary and anonymous, that all information provided remained confidential and that they could contact the researcher should they have reservations about their participation.

5. *Non-participation and withdrawal*

At the start of this investigation, the participants were informed that they had the right to withdraw from the study at any time. Furthermore, they were also told that they did not need to provide any explanation for their withdrawal and would not be coerced into doing so in any way or form.

This study is based on the policy context that inclusion in regular high schools in the ARM is an effective means of addressing the intellectual requirements of students

with mental problems in high schools of the ARM. To this end, the study analyses the degree to which high schools of the ARM address the needs of students with mental problems and the effectiveness with which they have included them in regular school settings according to teachers' perspective.

Having taken the above into account, the following method of investigation was employed to illustrate that practices of inclusion currently used by regular high schools in the ARM do not effectively meet the intellectual requirements of students with mental problems according to teachers' point of view.

Since the researcher assumed that effective support to students with mental problems require the joint effort and action of peers, parents, school structures, academic processes and the surrounding community across all levels of a school system, from the level of human resources (including teachers, special education teachers, student peers, and general school staff) to the level of infrastructures (including general school environment, appropriate schooling materials and adequate structural adaptations), the questionnaire distributed to the teachers incorporated these 'agents'. Therefore, they could provide their opinion on these variables.

The aforementioned is vital in light of this investigation's goal of understanding the context-related factors influencing the inclusion of students with mental problems in ARM. Furthermore, it is important to consider that schools are also social organisations that both reflect and are shaped by the culture as well as the moral, spiritual, ethical, and civic values of the country in which they operate. (Ladeira 2005, Talude 2003).

Madeira Island and Porto Santo Island are the only inhabited regions of the archipelago, with a population of approximately 250,000. There are sixty three high schools and one public university operating in Madeira catering to the social and intellectual development of over 25.000 students. As a result of such a significant investment, the illiteracy rates in the region have fallen dramatically from over 60 percent in the late 1960s, to less than three percent, according to a 2008 survey conducted by the Regional Board of Education. (Secretaria Regional da Educação).

The area of special education, which until approximately the mid-1990s was profoundly dominated by a number of social attitudes, not only hindered the capacity of children with mental problems to integrate in regular schools, but also completely barred the possibility of both children and adults with mental problems from living a

normal and dignified life in the general social context. In summary, a person with mental problems was considered, by the population at large, as a serious problem, from the perspective of the student with mental problems, as well as an encumbrance to the physical comfort, emotional well-being and social development of those around him or her. (Ladeira 2005, Talude, 2003).

3.4 Data collection and handling

3.4.1 Questionnaire

The survey instrument was developed by the researcher. It consisted of a questionnaire with open-ended questions, close questions and three scenarios giving to the respondents the possibility to clearly state their position towards three separate, hypothetical mental/emotional conditions of the adolescents. The questionnaire includes twenty six questions and three scenarios. The questions formulated intended to collect data to answer the research questions of this dissertation. The use of open-ended and closed questions was a way to obtain variety in the teachers' responses and allow the respondents a range of possibilities to state their thoughts in the open-ended questions and be accurate in the close questions. In addition, the scenarios provide to the respondents the chance to show their degree of knowledge, their interest or lack of commitment, their attitudes and thoughts towards the students with mental problems included in regular high schools.

The questionnaires were delivered to the high schools. As it will be explained in chapter five the researcher chose two different ways to distribute the questionnaires taking into consideration the size of the schools and their geographical location. The procedure followed included telephone calls to the various high schools so as to secure a date when the questionnaires could be administered. (Chapter 5 sub heading 5.3)

3.4.2 Data Analysis

The use of the questionnaires was the tool used by the research to analyse a wide range number of teachers' perspective of inclusion of students with mental problems in

high schools in Madeira Island covering the four main geographic points of the Island: north, south, east and west.

The analyses of the respondents answers asserted in Chi-Squared Tests used to test situations where there were two opposite responses. The random position of 50% - 50% responses (null hypotheses) was incorporated. It was also used for different responses based on gender or when teachers' level of experience was tested.

Descriptive statistics in the form of percentages and frequencies of responses to the survey items were calculated to explore the research questions. The results of the analysis presented in chapter four include a written text, tables, figures and quotations from the respondents which support the data obtained by the researcher in the field work.

3.5 Critical reflection on the method and sampling approach used.

A sample is *representative* when it is an accurate proportional representation of the population under study. Whilst in this study schools were purposively selected to represent the range of location and size in the ARM, the extent of representation achieved through this process could be argued as a fair description of the reality of teachers' opinions in ARM. Three hundred teachers responded to this questionnaire. The researcher aimed to have a sample of five hundred teachers but two hundred questionnaires were not returned to the researcher. However, a good response rate of 60% was achieved. Due to the anonymity of respondents no follow up reminder or analysis of non respondents was possible.

The choice of questionnaires over interviews gave the advantage of being able to achieve a greater coverage of the population of teachers in the ARM. It also had the disadvantages that no additional information could be sought to explain or expand on the respondents comments. This was particularly an issue with the case studies, where responses tend to be brief and it would have been valuable to prompt the participants into giving fuller answers. However useful, albeit brief, information was gained from these questions.

The researcher felt that the interviews would not be the best way to gather information on this topic and thoughtfully designed another instrument to collect information: a questionnaire. One of the major concerns of the researcher when designing the questionnaire was related to language. The use of the word “Mental Problem” is clear to all the respondents in relation to its meaning. Mental problems include severe and not severe mental illnesses and the respondents are aware of how wide this concept can be in the Portuguese language. Furthermore, the consistent use of language did not lead to any bias in the respondents understanding of the questionnaire or the expression of their answers.

4 Chapter 4 - FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

The findings represented in this chapter relate to the four main research questions posed at the commencement of the study. The central question focused of whether regular high schools of the ARM meet the educational needs of special students in the area of mental health, was developed into four specific research questions. The data was both qualitative and quantitative, based on a survey of teachers. The context of the survey was with close reference to the issues of inclusion into education of students with mental problems in ARM. More specifically, the study focused on the efficiency and preparedness on the part of the teachers and the educational infrastructure to accommodate the needs of these students in the environment of secondary education. The questionnaire was comprised of 18 closed questions, 8 open-ended questions, and one question which invited comment on 3 scenarios.

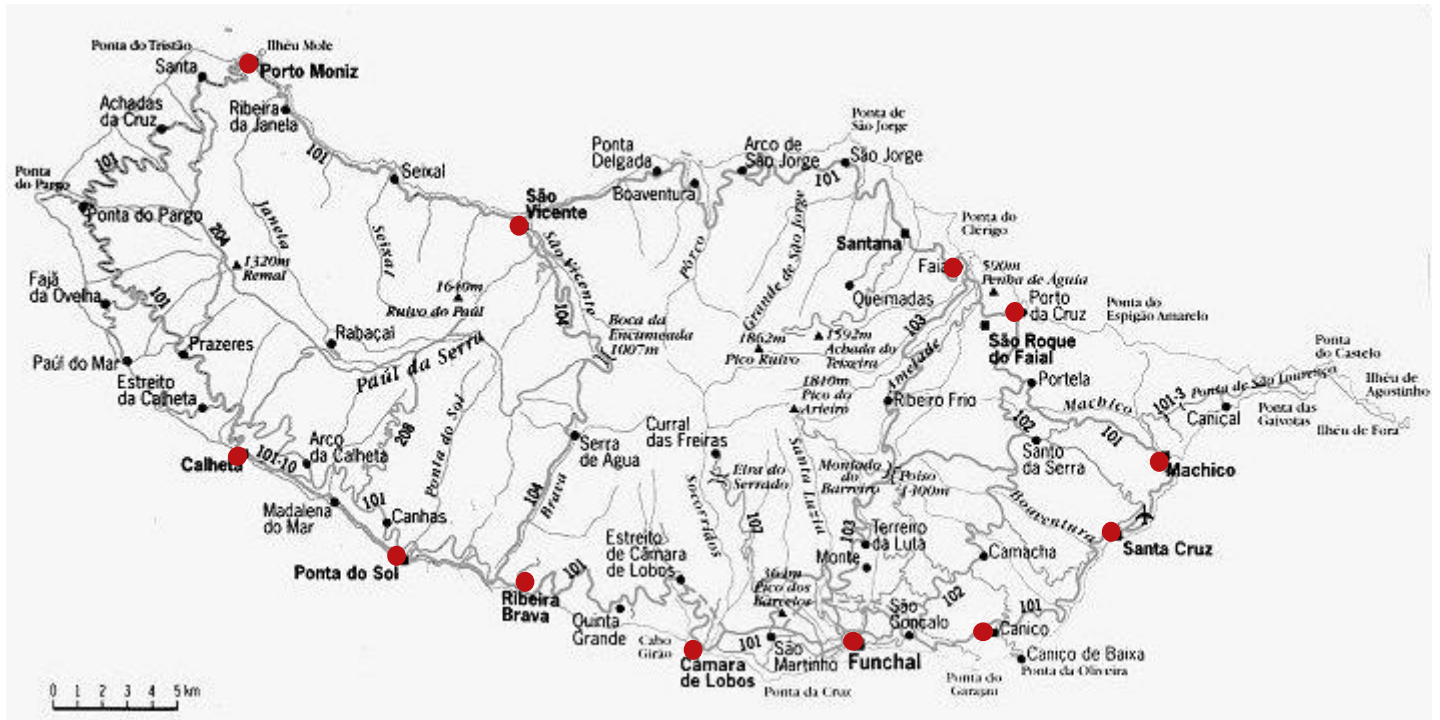
Four central themes were generated by the findings. What follows is an analysis of the main themes generated by the responses provided in the questionnaire, the findings of which were identified from the perspectives of 300 teachers from the regular schools of the ARM. The variables which will be included in the analysis are *gender* and *years of experience*. Twenty seven percent of the participants were male and 73% were female. In addition, the emergent themes will be analyzed in the context of the four research questions. The four research questions are:

1. What are the beliefs and attitudes of teachers regarding the existing educational infrastructure that have been adopted by regular high schools in the ARM for inclusive education programs?
2. Do regular high schools of the ARM adequately prepare and support its teachers with regard to inclusion in the high schools of the ARM?
3. How do the regular high schools of the ARM meet the educational needs of students with mental problems?
4. What fundamental questions need to be addressed in the near future in order to improve the quality of inclusive education in the high schools of the ARM?

The sample used for the questionnaire included 300 teachers, representative of the total number of teachers working in the ARM, from 35 high schools located throughout the ARM. The participants were asked to provide their gender and years of experience. As mentioned above, among the 300 participants in the study, 75 were male and 216 were female (9 did not specify their gender). The ages ranged from 21 to 61 years of age. The age group with the greatest representation was that of teachers aged between 26 and 45 years comprising 73.7% of the total number of participants. In terms of teaching experience, the participants comprised of a heterogeneous group, as their years of experience varied from 1 year to 36 years in teaching. The interviewees were presented with a range of topics from which the attitudes, opinions, and experiences of teachers form the basis of the analysis of the emergent themes. Furthermore, this sample is broadly representative of the teachers working around the Island. The questionnaire was distributed to different areas across the island (see Figure 4.1). The sample included schools from the north, south, east and west. The size of the schools was also taken into consideration as these variables could influence the teachers' perspective on Inclusion.

Figure 4.1- Shows distribution of schools in ARM - Map of Madeira Island (ARM)

(The locations of the schools are shown on the map with red dots, some locations have more than one school.)



4.2 Confusion and dissatisfaction regarding the Educational Infrastructure

This theme derives from the first research question and pertains to the confusion and dissatisfaction on the part of the teachers regarding the current educational infrastructure in the regular high schools of Madeira in the context of inclusion. The data was drawn based on the beliefs and attitudes of the teachers. The respondents were asked to express their opinions regarding feelings of security, concern, anxiety, challenge, inadequacy, and confidence, in addition to reflecting upon the quality of the educational infrastructure of regular schools.

Teachers are key informants of this work and therefore have an impact on whether or not schools provide a solid environment which is conducive to the

effective inclusion of students with special needs in the area of mental health. It could be expected that the teachers satisfaction concerning inclusion within their school would be related both to teachers' personal abilities and attitudes as well as the environment that the school provides. Being clear on what is expected of them as teachers instead of being 'left to fend for themselves' is a sensitive subject when considering the children with mental problems who present with certain challenges.

There is evidence in the data strongly suggesting that teachers are dissatisfied with the educational infrastructure. Also reflected in the data is the confusion felt by teachers regarding what they are expected to do with respect to inclusive learning. One teacher reported feeling at a loss when asked to teach students with mental problems. The response follows:

Respondent number 16: *"I have never taught students with mental problems. I do not know anything about that reality."*

The very first issue which was addressed in the study was that of teachers' major concerns regarding their students. Teachers were asked the following open-ended question, which allowed them the freedom to respond openly on the subject:

"What are your major concerns regarding your students?"

The findings showed that from the responses given in this open-ended question, the majority of the answers comprised concerns which were related to students. Student-related concerns included insufficient materials, inadequate facilities, and insecurity regarding effective inclusion of students who have mental problems. The aforementioned concerns are reflected in the following responses with respect to the inadequacies concerning the infrastructure:

Respondent 19: *"I do not have the qualifications to teach students mental problems."*

Respondent 51: *"The school does not have adequate facilities."*

Respondent 50: *"As a teacher I'm worried about the materials that I use in the classroom"*.

Respondent 85: *“I am concerned about their inclusion.”*

Respondent number 207: *“I am worried with their inclusive process in the school.”*

Teachers were also concerned about their teaching ability as evident in the following responses made by teachers when asked to state the difficulties they face when teaching students with mental problems:

Respondent number 2: *“I do not have any specific academic knowledge to teach students with mental problems.”*

Respondent number 22: *“My academic skills do not allow me to teach students with mental problems”.*

Respondent number 31: *“I am not qualified to teach students with mental problems”.*

Teachers expressed concern regarding the inadequacy of schools to cater to the needs of students with mental problems. As one teacher reports:

Respondent number 94: *“Students with mental problems will have a lot of problems in regular high schools and the teachers are not qualified to teach them. I do not want to teach students with mental problems.”*

Catering to the special needs of these students is an important component to teaching. Not being able to cope with the demands of such a responsibility also results in teachers’ lack of motivation and enthusiasm. The needs of students as clearly stated by the following respondent’s own words:

Respondent number 118: *“To provide to them the best quality of materials to improve their knowledge.”*

Teachers’ feelings regarding the prospect of having a student with mental problems join one of their classes generated negative feelings on the part of the

teachers, mainly feelings of *insecurity, concern, anxiety, and lack of support*. When asked to narrow down their concerns as teachers, most of the respondents stated that their concerns were student-related as opposed to other issues confronted by teachers, namely issues relating to teachers, teachers and students, the curriculum, and school and community related issues. Concerning the ability of teachers to meet the needs of students with mental problems, the findings indicated that the majority of teachers felt incapable of meeting the needs of these students (see Fig 4.2) This difference was statistically significant for the whole group (chi-squared $p=0.000$). However more teachers with less than 10 years experience felt capable of coping when compared to those with more than 10 years experience (chi-squared $p=0.000$). No significant difference was found between male and female respondents (chi-squared $p=0.197$).

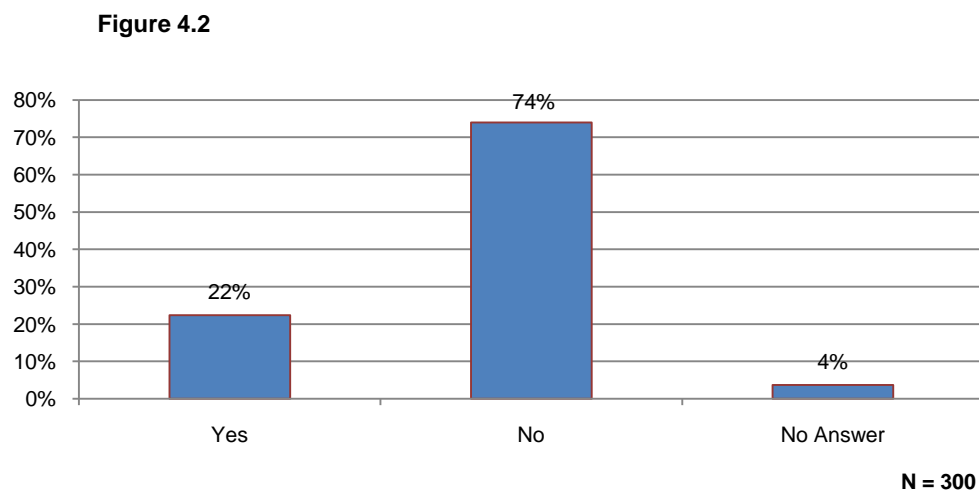


Figure 4.2 Response to question three about teachers feeling capable of coping with students' specific needs.

With reference to whether schools are equipped with the necessary materials to teach students with mental problems, most of the responses indicated that schools lack the necessary materials required.

In light of the strong evidence that suggests that teachers are in favor of inclusion in secondary schools and in conjunction with the general consensus among the teachers interviewed that there is an absence of an environment conducive to the

inclusion of students with mental problems, it was observed that teachers are dissatisfied with the current educational infrastructure.

The data used to support the arguments introduced in the preceding paragraph, was generated from four questions. Respondents were invited to choose among one or more of the following possible responses: *safe* or *unsafe*, *concerned* or *indifferent*, *angry*, *anxious*, *satisfied* or *dissatisfied*, *capable* or *incapable* and *supported* or *unsupported*. The question follows:

*How do you feel when you learn that in one of your classes
you have students with mental problems?*

The data indicates that feeling *insecure*, *concerned*, *anxious* and *unsupported* were the feelings chosen with a much higher frequency than *indifferent*, *revolted*, *satisfied* or *unsatisfied*. The response which generated the highest percentage of the three aforementioned responses was provided by male and female interviewees (86%) who stated that they felt *concerned* at the prospect of a student with mental problems joining their regular classroom. Those slightly more concerned were the teachers who had less than five years experience. With respect to gender regarding the participants who felt secure or insecure, table 4.1 shows that there was no variation shown between male and female participants (chi-squared $p=0.785$). This finding draws attention to the fact that being male or female did not have any bearing on teachers' level of insecurity.

Gender	Secure	Insecure	Total
Male	5 (15.6%)	27 (84.4%)	32 (100%)
Female	13 (13.7%)	82 (86.3%)	95 (100%)
	Total = 18 (14.2%)	Total = 109 (85.8%)	Sum total = 127 (100%)

Table 4.1- Represents the feelings of the male and female teachers regarding having a student with mental problems in one of their classes.

Both male and female teachers feel insecure when it comes to teaching students with mental problems. The following statement made by a teacher accurately describes this insecurity:

Respondent number 99: *“I am concerned about their ability to learn. I am scared of not being capable of helping them to overcome their difficulties and problems.”*

Equally noteworthy is the observation that teaching experience was also a contributing factor, as evident in figure 4.3. In spite of the high level of non respondents, teachers with more than 10 years experience who responded, expressed greater insecurity than their more junior colleagues (chi-squared $p=0.008$).

Figure 4.3

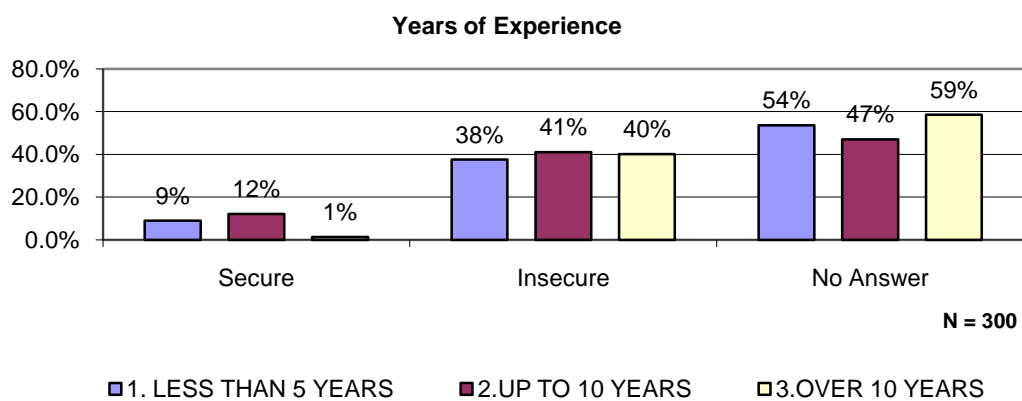


Figure 4.3- Responses to question two. Teachers’ feelings towards inclusion of a student with mental problems in one of their classes.

The question regarding whether or not teachers felt supported or unsupported, from a general viewpoint showed that overall they were unsupported (chi-squared $p=0.000$); whilst a slightly larger number of males felt unsupported than did females, as shown in figure 4.4 below, this was not a significant difference (chi-squared $p=0.365$).

Figure 4.4

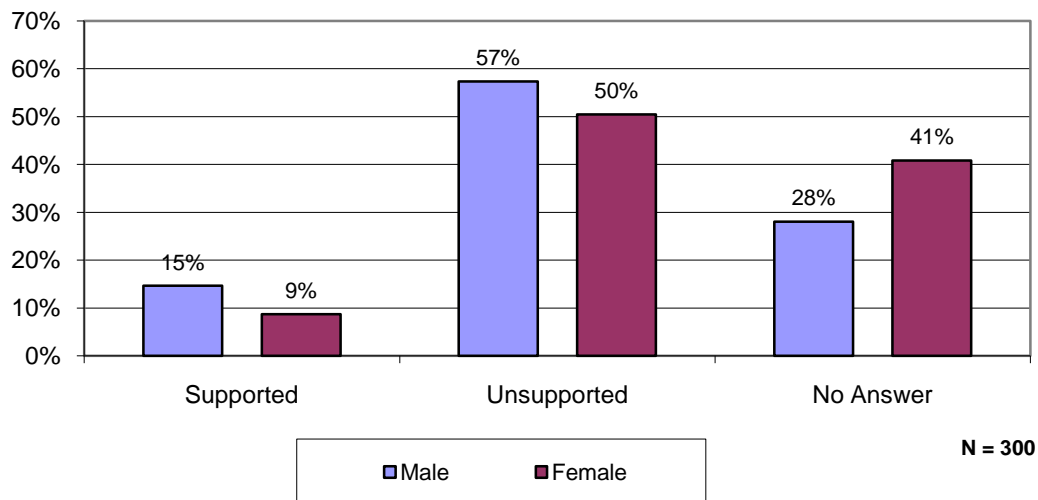


Figure 4.4 Responses to question two. Whether teachers' feel supported or unsupported towards having a student with mental problems in their classes. The answers were analyzed taking into consideration teachers' gender.

Those who felt most unsupported were the teachers with over ten years of teaching experience, this is illustrated in figure 4.5, however, this difference was not statistically significant (chi-squared $p=0.089$). As opposed to the high percentage of respondents with less than five years of experience who reported feeling *concerned* (79% compared to 65% for those with more than 10 years experience) this difference was not statistically significant (chi-squared $p=0.144$).

Figure 4.5

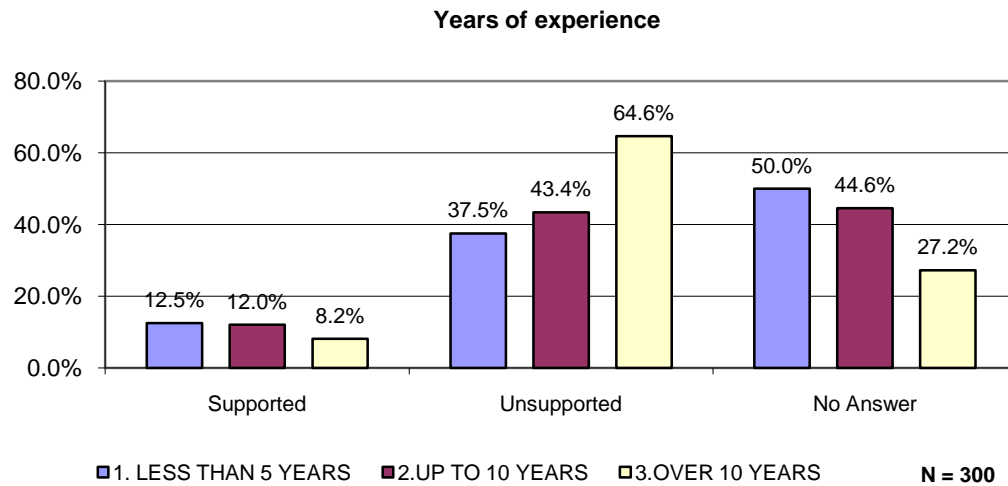


Figure 4.5 Responses to question two. It is representative of teachers' feeling supported or unsupported towards having a student with mental problems in their classes taking into consideration the years of experience.

Following the analysis of the findings, it can be inferred that feelings of dissatisfaction are felt by teachers regardless of gender. With reference to years of experience as a variable in exploring this theme, the greater the experience of the teachers, the less supported and capable teachers feel with regard to teaching students with special needs in their schools. This data can be associated with the findings generated from the following question.

The next question which relates to this theme concerns the degree to which teachers feel able to meet the needs of students with mental problems. Teachers also felt a lack of confidence in their abilities as teachers. This is evident from the findings which show that the majority of the respondents (74%) reported a significant lack of confidence in their ability to meet their students' needs as shown in Figure 4.6 (chi-squared $p=0.000$).

Figure 4.6

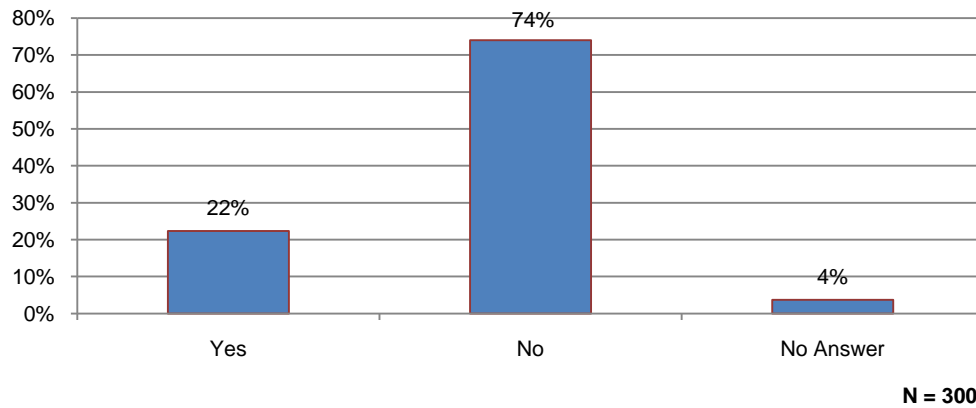


Figure 4.6 Responses to question three which refers to teachers' awareness of being able to meet the needs of their students with mental problems.

There was no difference in opinion between male and female teachers (chi-squared $p=0.197$), and as mentioned above, as far as years of experience is concerned, the greater the experience, the less confident teachers feel in their abilities to cope with the inclusion of students with mental problems in their classes (chi-squared $p=0.000$).

A specialized curriculum is fundamental to the effectiveness of inclusion. In the open-ended question addressed to the teachers regarding their concerns, specific references were made with respect to an inadequate curriculum. In support of this argument, three teachers said the following:

Respondent number 1: *"My major concern is that my students do not obtain good results according to the curriculum"*.

Respondent number 20: *"To change the curriculum"*.

Respondent number 183: *"To adapt the curriculum."*

In another open-ended question, teachers were asked the following question:

Question: “What should be done to improve the performance of students with mental problems?”

One teacher suggested the following measures be taken:

“Specific training for the teachers, more information about mental health and more professionals in Special education working in regular high schools.”

Based on teachers’ opinions regarding the appropriateness of the curriculum used, the data leaves no room for doubt. Teachers were asked to specifically comment on the suitability of the curriculum currently in use. Eighty two percent of female teachers and 79% of male teachers consider the curriculum to be inappropriate (overall chi-squared $p=0.000$). Although no significant difference was found between male and female respondents (chi-squared $p=0.425$). Hence in their view a specialized curriculum is fundamental to the effectiveness of inclusion. Figure 14 shows the percentages:

Figure 4.7

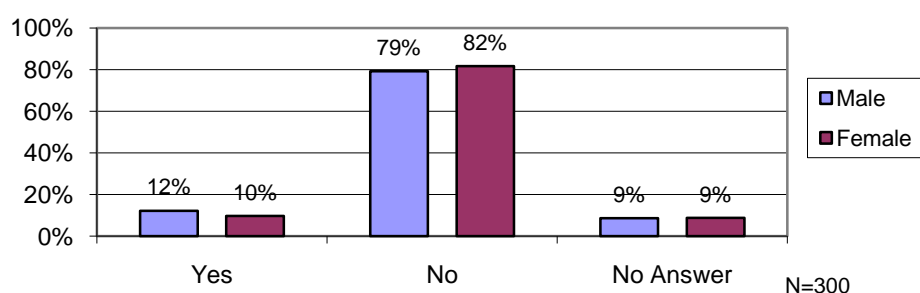


Figure 4.7 Responses to question fourteen on teachers’ opinions about the appropriateness of the curriculum.

In terms of experience, 84% of the teachers who reported the curriculum as inappropriate used in their schools had over ten years of experience. Though this

difference was not statistically significant when compared to their more junior colleagues (chi-squared $p=0.217$). Figure 4.8 shows this result:

Figure 4.8

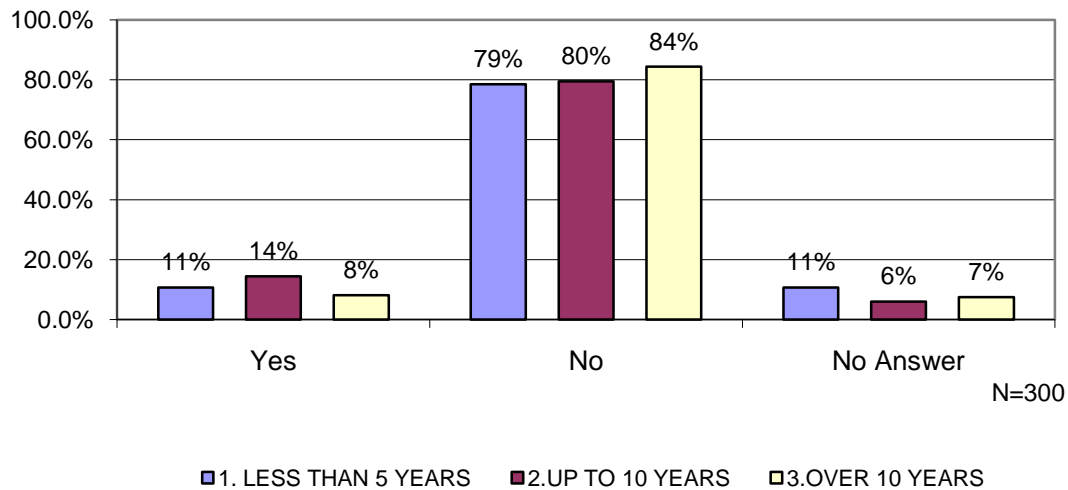


Figure 4.8 Responses of the teachers who found the curriculum not appropriate for students with mental problems taking into consideration the teaching years of experience.

It is noteworthy to mention two points which came to light in this study. The first point is with reference to teachers' belief that students with mental problems should be included in regular high schools (chi-squared $p=0.001$). No significant difference was found between male and female respondents (chi-squared $p=0.149$). This is illustrated in the following graph (Figure 4.9):

Figure 4.9

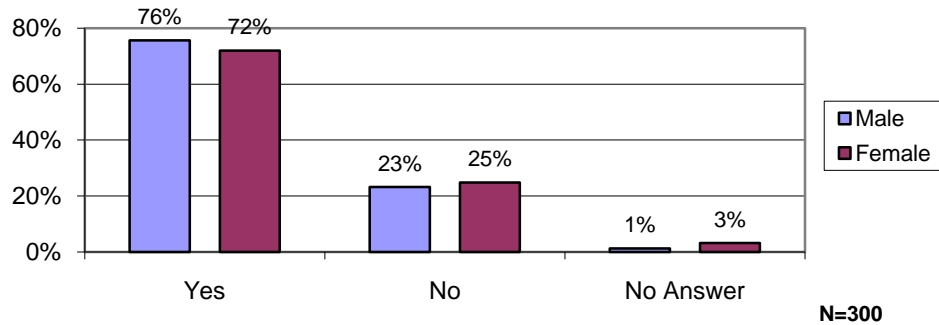


Figure 4.9 Responses to question nineteen referring to teachers' opinion about Inclusion in regular high schools in Madeira Island.

There was a much stronger response from both male and female teachers with respect to how receptive schools are to the inclusion of students with mental problems. Ninety percent of male teachers and 89% of females respectively reported that their schools are receptive to integration (chi-squared $p=0.000$). Figure 4.10 illustrates this finding. This finding is consistent among all the teachers: male and female respondents (chi-squared $p=0.687$) and years experience (chi-squared $p=0.070$).

Figure 4.10

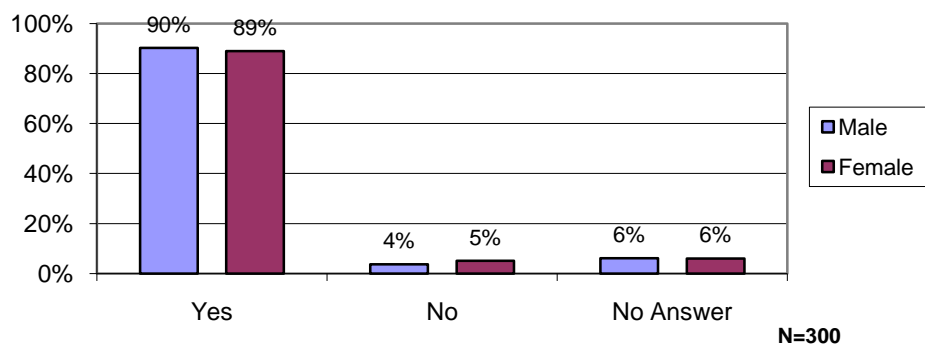


Figure 4.10 Responses to question eighteen about teachers' opinion about the school where they work and its receptiveness towards inclusion.

The observation that both male and female teachers are in favor of inclusion is noteworthy when considering the findings regarding male teachers' reports of feeling unsupported. Feeling a lack of support from schools has no bearing on their positive perceptions of inclusion. What can be inferred by this evidence is that teachers are somewhat confused as to the inclusion related issues. Figure 4.11 illustrates both male and female teachers' feelings of being unsupported (chi-squared $p=0.000$), as mentioned in an earlier section of this chapter. However, there was no significant difference between male and female respondents (chi-squared $p=0.365$) or with years experience (chi-squared $p=0.089$).

Figure 4.11

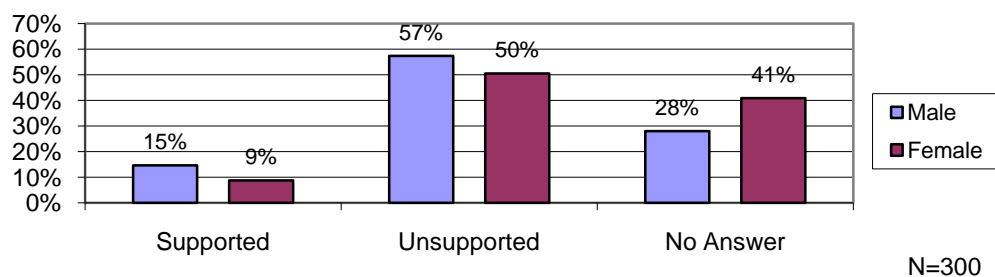


Figure 4.11 Refers to question two regarding whether teachers' feel supported or unsupported when a student with mental problems is included in one of their classes.

With reference to the role that teachers play in inclusive education, Garfoor & Asaraf (2009) state: "Inclusion is found to fail partly due to the inability of teachers to meet the demands of the modified system". Though this is accurate in the context of an all inclusive system, this study has shown that there is no organized modified system for inclusion. This may be attributable to the lack of awareness on the part of the teachers with regard to what is expected of them, hence their anxiety, concern, feelings of inability and inadequacy and so on and so forth. This will be discussed in the following chapter.

The second point is that despite the positive attitude of schools and teachers regarding the inclusion of students with mental problems, teachers feel inadequately prepared to meet the needs of their students (chi-squared $p=0.000$) as shown in figure 4.12 below:

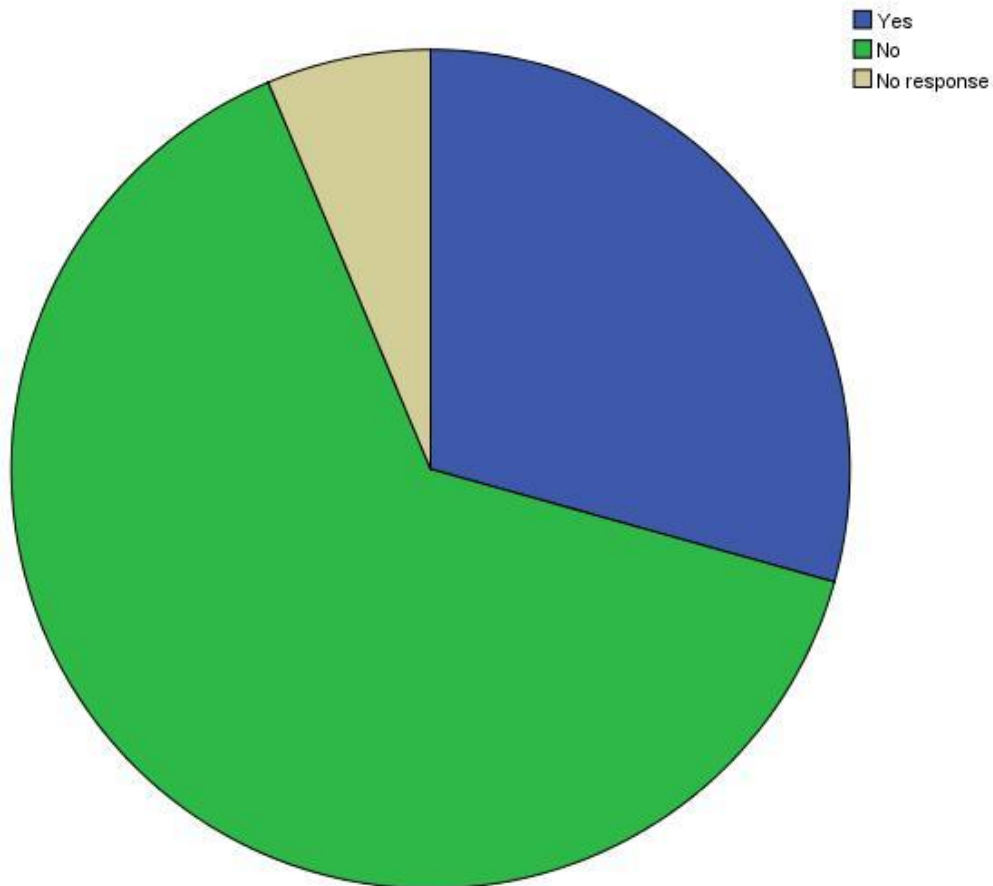


Figure 4.12 Responses to question ten regarding whether or not schools are equipped with the necessary materials and resources to welcome students with mental problems.

Though 57% of the male teachers reported feeling unsupported (Figure 4.11 above), 72% of males (and 75% of female teachers respectively) consider their schools were not equipped to meet the needs of students with mental problems (figure 4.13), most male and female teachers believed that their schools were *not* equipped to

welcome these students into their classrooms and there was no difference between men and womens' views (chi-squared $p=0.367$).

Figure 4.13

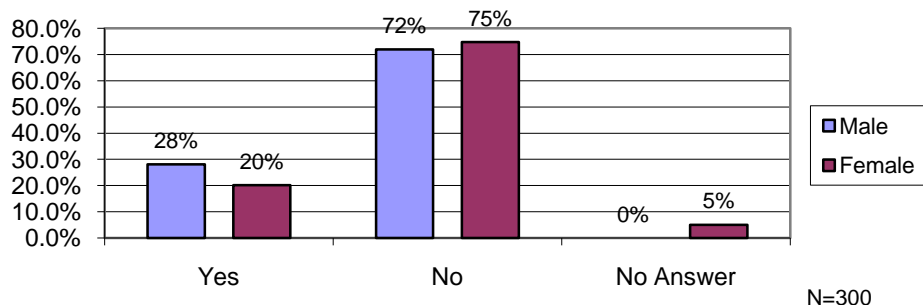


Figure 4.13 Responses to question ten which refers to teachers' opinion regarding whether or not their schools are adequately equiped to receive students with mental problems. The gender was taken into consideration for this analysis.

Male and female teachers considered that their schools are not equipped for inclusion (chi-squared $p=0.000$). Figure 4.14 (below) shows the slightly but non-significant higher percentage of male teachers (70%) than their female counterparts (62%) who believe that schools lack the specific materials necessary for the accomodation of students with mental problems (chi-squared $p=0.075$).

Figure 4.14

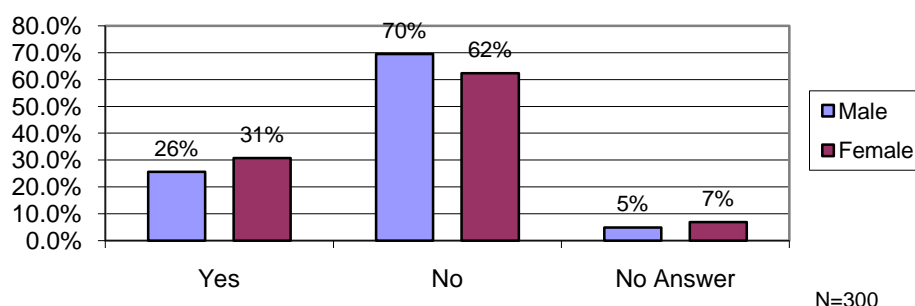


Figure 4.14 Responses to question twenty one referring to the adequate equipment of schools to receive students with mental problems.

The aim of this study was to answer the research questions put forth prior to the commencement of the study. Participants were asked to contribute beliefs and attitudes with reference to the following research question:

What are the beliefs and attitudes of teachers regarding the existing educational infrastructure that have been adopted by regular high schools in the ARM for inclusive education programs?

Findings from the theme analysed in this section provided useful insight and subsequently provided useful answers with respect to this research question. Though receptive to the idea of inclusion, schools are not meeting the standards required to welcome and subsequently accommodate students with special education needs.

4.3 Teachers lack adequate training and support regarding the preparation and improvement of students with mental problems

This theme pertains to the lack of adequate teacher training and much needed support in the context of the preparation and improvement of students with mental problems. On this issue, Runswick-Cole states the following:

“With the right training, strategies and support, nearly all children with special educational needs can be successfully included in mainstream education”
(Runswick-Cole, 2008).

The need for specialized training has been supported throughout the literature on inclusion of students with special needs into regular schools. In this study we found that teachers lacked adequate training. Moreover, teachers voiced their concerns regarding their lack of training with respect to inclusion, which, according to one teacher, is not effective.

Respondent number 85: *“I am not qualified to teach students with mental problems. The Inclusive process is not effective yet.”*

One respondent provides useful insight into the inadequacy that teachers face with respect to their lack of specific training and how this can have a negative impact on students with mental problems.

Question:

“What types of challenges do you face when teaching students with mental problems?”

Respondent number 41:

“How to deal with their needs? How do I approach them? What do I tell them? How to teach them? It is not fair for

them to have a teacher who cannot reach them and teach them as they deserve. How can we assure an equal education to all the students if we are not qualified to teach students with mental problems?”

The respondents were asked to state the challenges they face in the area of special education. The question was open-ended thus allowing the respondents to respond free of interviewer bias. Despite the large number of teachers who did not answer the question (a little over a third of the participants), 61% of the teachers reported *lack of training* as a major challenge they face. In further support of this evidence, teachers were presented with the following open-ended question:

What measures should the Regional Board of Education adopt in order to improve the classroom performance of teachers with students with mental problems?

Though 38% of the teachers did not provide any answer, 44% proposed that the Regional Board of Education promote workshops. Therefore, 71% of the teacher who did respond to the question proposed that schools train teachers by providing them with workshops .

With reference to the support provided by the school with overcoming the major challenges these teachers face, the study showed that close to 70% of the teachers felt that the school did not help them overcome the challenges which come with teaching students with mental problems. The failure of schools to provide teachers with adequate training and support is also reflective of the dissatisfaction felt by teachers regarding the educational infrastructure mentioned in the previous theme. Lack of training was reported as a major challenge by one of the teachers:

Respondent number 34 states the following:

“I need workshops and academic training to teach students with mental problems.”

These challenges notwithstanding, teachers clearly need to find ways to overcome such hurdles which led to the question:

*What measures do you take to improve your performance
in a class with students with mental problems?*

The question was structured in such a way that allowed the respondents to choose from a list of multiple answers. The possible options were created in the context of self-learning as a coping strategy (attending workshops, sharing challenges with colleagues, buying their own materials, etc) in addition to incorporating strategies into the classroom (tailoring their teaching methods to the needs of students with mental problems, adapting the curriculum or rhythm of teaching, etc).

With less than half of the respondents claiming to have attended mandatory workshops, a significant number of teachers are not being exposed to any training. Most of the teachers indicated that they share challenges with fellow teachers, especially female respondents. Similar percentages were reported implementing innovative methods. The general tendency indicated in the data, reflected an effort on the part of the teachers to turn to each other for support in these matters or to use creative and innovative ways to overcome the challenges that come with having mentally challenged students in their classrooms.

Female teachers were evidently more likely than male teachers to provide extra attention to students with mental problems (chi-squared $p=0.014$). Male teachers reported applying the same teaching methods to regular and mentally challenged students. In addition, male teachers stated that they did not slow down their teaching pace to accommodate the needs of students with mental problems. Female teachers, however, demonstrated more flexibility at slowing down the pace (chi-squared $p=0.008$). The evidence suggests a correlation between little teaching experience and taking the extra initiative to accommodate the needs of the students with mental problems. Specifically, the data indicates that the more experienced the teachers are, especially male teachers, the less likely they are to make the extra effort to accommodate these students (chi-squared $p=0.002$). These findings are illustrated in the following figure:

Figure 4.15

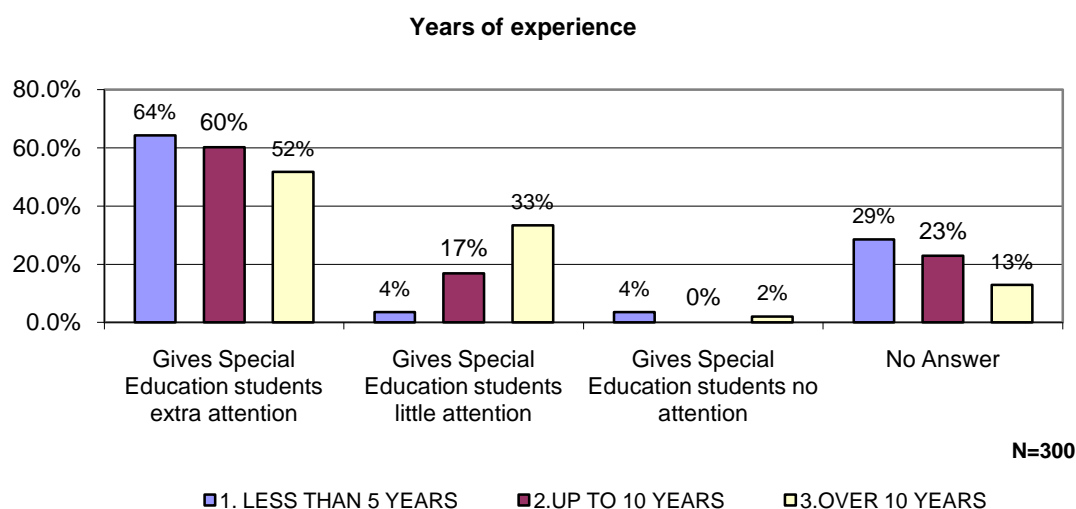


Figure 4.15- Responses to question eight taking into consideration the level of attention that teachers provide to the students with mental problems. Years of experience was a variable taken into consideration.

Lastly, the following question was presented to the participants:

What should be done in order to improve the performance of students with mental problems?

This question was presented to provide more insight into what teachers believe should be done to improve the performance of students with mental problems, though the majority of the teachers provided no answer, the highest percentage of those who provided an answer was to recommend that special education professionals be hired.

In summary, the data strongly suggests that due to teachers' lack of training and a clear absence of support from the school and in light of the fact that both male and female teachers are strongly in favor of inclusion, teachers feel inadequate. The need for specific training is clearly evident according to the opinions of the majority of the teachers, as is the need for schools to play a more active role. Teachers need to be better prepared in order to face the challenges that inclusion brings. This brings to light the next theme which will be analyzed in section 4.4.

Do regular high schools of the ARM adequately prepare and support their teachers with regard to inclusion in the high schools of the ARM?

Evidence from the study suggests that regular high schools do not provide adequate preparation or support to their teachers. Apart from a lack of teacher training, there is evidence to suggest that there is a lack of teacher awareness regarding what needs to be done in terms of preparing students with mental problems for their entrance into a regular class. This evidence is also indicated in the first theme with respect to the confusion and anxiety that was demonstrated by teachers at the prospect of having a student with mental problems enter their regular classroom setting.

4.4 Lack of materials, a specialized curriculum, and trained personnel

Extensive literature has shown that in order for the inclusion of special needs students into mainstream education to be successful, it is imperative that there be the required materials, a special curriculum, and a mental health professional on staff (Singh, 2006). The questions posed to the teachers in this context set out to determine the degree to which schools meet the needs of students with mental problems by providing them with the materials and support necessary for their effective inclusion. Upon careful analysis of the data, it was concluded that there was a lack of required materials, a specialized curriculum, and a mental health professional. This theme will be supported in this section of the chapter.

Schools' failure to provide teachers with the specific materials required for the schooling of students with mental problems is expressed in the following statement made by one teacher:

Respondent number 40: *"There is lack of specific materials for students with mental problems and I am not qualified to teach them. I do not know how to teach students with mental problems."*

Other teachers provided the following responses with respect to lack of materials:

Respondent number 22: “Acquisition of appropriate materials”.

Respondent number 31: “To provide adequate materials”.

Respondent number 26: “Lack of materials”.

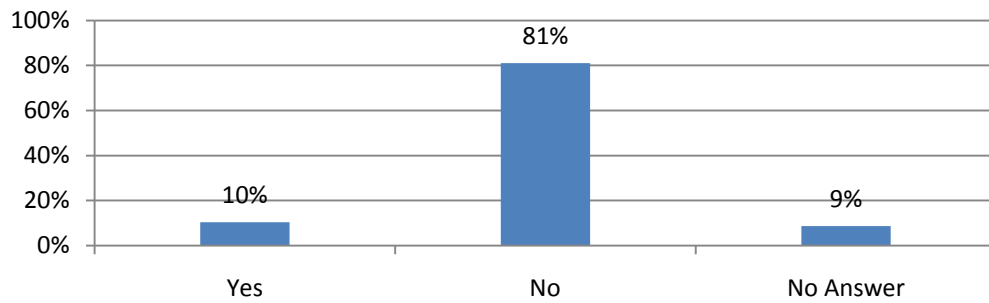
Respondent number 36: “Adequate materials”.

Teachers were addressed with a closed question regarding the school curriculum so as to leave no room for any doubt. The respondents were asked to express their opinion on the following question:

In your opinion, is the curriculum currently in use appropriate to students with mental problems?

Both male and female respondents expressed the same opinion on the matter. Most teachers (81%) reported finding the curriculum in use to be inappropriate to the needs of these students (chi-squared $p=0.000$) which was statistically significant. The following figure shows the majority of the teachers:

Figure 4.16



N = 300

Figure 4.16 Responses to question fourteen which reports the inadequacy of the current curriculum for students with mental problems according to the teachers.

In terms of experience, the more experienced the teacher, the more likely they were to acknowledge the inappropriateness of the curriculum (chi-squared $p=0.217$). This difference was not statistically significant.

Figure 4.17

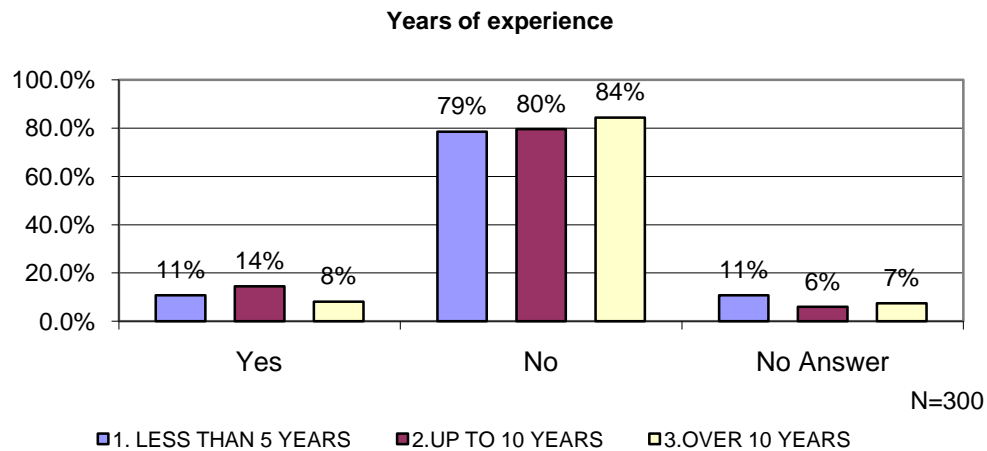


Figure 4.17 Responses to question fourteen which reports the inadequacy of the current curriculum for students with mental problems with respect to the teachers' years of experience.

In the absence of a specialized curriculum, the question of what changes need to be made to accommodate students with special education needs was fundamental. Teachers, especially those with over ten years of experience, strongly believe that changes need to be made. This is indicated by the 85% of the respondents who were in favor of accommodating the needs of these students through change.

In response to the question regarding what changes needed to be made to ensure that these students are sufficiently prepared, though more than half the teachers did not recommend any changes be made, the majority of the teachers who responded did so by recommending that the current curriculum be adapted in such a way so as to accommodate the needs students of the students with mental problems.

Teachers also reported that schools should be equipped with the necessary materials, strongly supporting the argument that there is a lack of materials for students with mental health challenges. Schools are not efficient when it comes to ordering materials for students with mental problems in a timely fashion.

Data clearly showed that teachers are strongly in favor of having a psychologist on staff. When asked to make suggestions on how to improve the educational system of students who need individual support in class, one teacher suggested the following:

Respondent number 187: *“A full time psychologist in the high school.”*

The need for a psychologist was evident in the data which indicated that teachers are strongly in favor of having a psychologist on staff (chi-squared $p=0.000$).

Figure 4.18

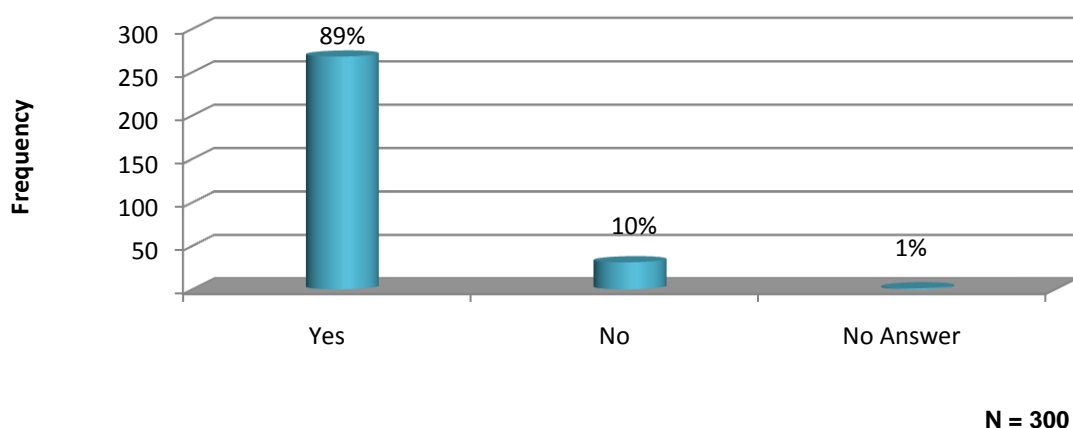


Figure 4.18 Responses to question twenty refers to the need of having a psychologist to provide guidance to the students with mental problems included in regular high schools.

Whilst the majority of male and female teachers were in favour of the presence of a psychologist in their schools; female teachers were only slightly more supportive of schools hiring a psychologist than were male teachers (Chi-squared $p=0.088$) (figure 4.19).

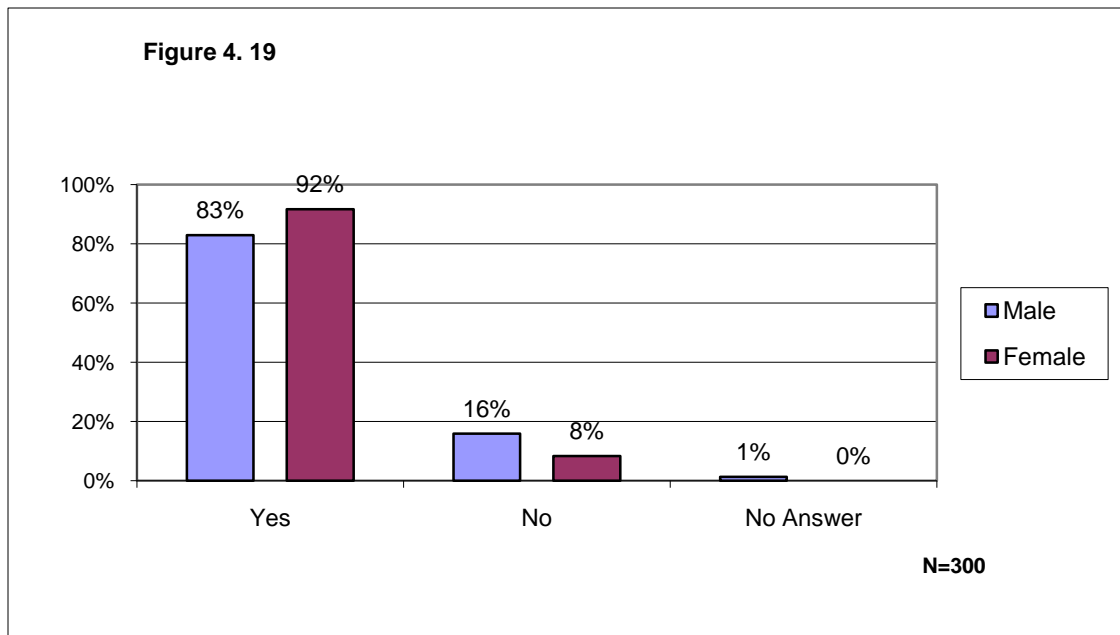


Figure 4.19 Responses to question twenty refers to teachers' opinions regarding the need for schools to hire a psychologist who will provide guidance to the students with mental problems included in regular high schools. The gender variable was taken into consideration.

The data shows that a higher percentage of teachers with less than five years of experience agreed that there should be a psychologist to provide guidance to students with mental problems. The more experience teachers gain over the years, the more they learn to deal with the guidance issues with respect to the special needs of students with mental problems. However, the variation of percentages in term of years of experience is not that pronounced. The figure below shows the slightly higher percentagerates of teachers with less than five years experience, however this was not significant (chi-squared $p=0.070$).

Figure 4.20

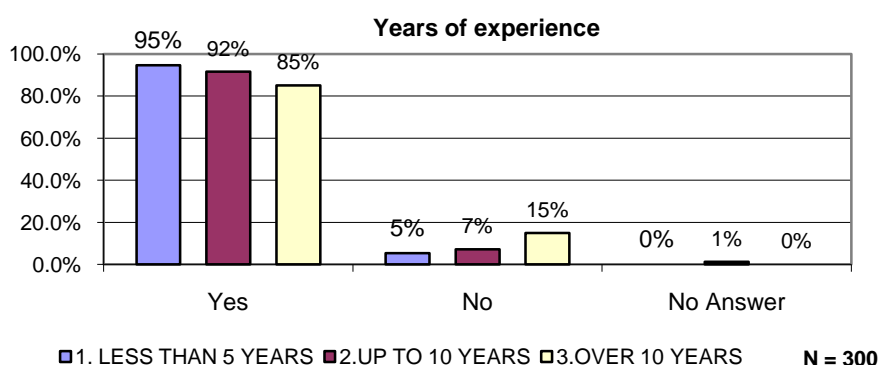


Figure 4.20 Responses to question twenty refers to teachers’ opinion about the need of having a psychologist to provide guidance to the students with mental problems included in regular high schools. Teachers’ years of teaching were taking into consideration.

Teachers felt that students with mental problems had the greatest need for guidance in mental health. The significance of the role of a mental health professional is viewed as paramount.

Teachers are evidently concerned about the well being of students with mental problems as reflected in the following responses:

Respondent number 147: *“To control deviant behaviours.”*

Respondent number 152: *“Inappropriate behaviours.”*

Respondent number 196: *“I am worried about their behaviour”.*

In this study it was suggested that the mental health and social well being of students with mental problems are the responsibility of a trained psychologist. With regard to more serious psychological issues, the responsibility rests on a specialized psychotherapist. The family was also considered to be responsible for addressing any mental problem issues that may arise. Teachers felt they were the least responsible for addressing these issues. Despite the lack of materials and absence of mental health professionals, an interesting finding which was brought to light was the large response

regarding the overall respect schools and regular students have for students with special education needs. Interestingly, students with mental problems are welcomed and respected by the school community.

One of the most challenging hurdles a teacher faces in the classroom is that of the behavioural issues of students with mental problems. For the purposes of this study, the behaviours presented were limited to three: *Adjustment behaviour*, *Depressive behaviour*, and *Anti-social behaviour*. The three scenarios were inserted in the questionnaire and reflect three different types of mental and behavioural problems. They were then asked to make a suggestion for each.

Anti-social behaviour is expressed in two ways: Firstly, internally, which reflects discontentment, unhappiness and a lack of concern for oneself, and secondly, externally, affecting the anti-social personality interacts with. Misbehaviour is a conscious behaviour that creates social problems at an individual level. Any social setting can be conducive for bad behavior: at home, at school or in any other environment in which the adolescent can show his/her lack of respect for the social rules.

Depressive behaviour is characterized by an all encompassing low mood accompanied by low self-esteem and by loss of pleasure and motivation for normal day to day activities, altering the person's behaviour. Depression in adolescence is very dangerous because it may drive the adolescent to drugs abuse alcohol abuse, or even suicide. Depression is a clinical condition and a serious mental condition which needs to be addressed by the school, the community, the parents, the teachers, and most importantly by trained mental health care professionals. The role of teachers is an important one as teachers are usually the first to see the early signs of depression. However, only a trained psychologist or psychiatrist, in close cooperation with the parents, can provide an adolescent suffering from clinical depression with the help that she deserves.

Adjustment disorder with disturbance of conduct is characterized by an overreaction to a difficult situation at an emotional and behavioural level. For example, when an adolescent has to change to another high school or parents get divorced and they have to move to learn to live in two different homes or any other situation that may place the adolescent under extreme pressure to adjust to the environment. While in most

cases adolescents manage to adjust to their environment successfully, there are cases where behaviours such as vandalism, truancy and fighting may occur.

Scenario 1: Anti-social Behaviour

“Andrew is a 14 year old troubled boy. He is a high school student and over the past 2 years his behaviour changed drastically. He is now a bully and encourages other students to get into trouble. This boy does not receive guidance at home and feels disoriented. He annoys people in general and school peers, teachers and staff are his favourite target. Curiously, he is not a sad or depressive adolescent. He has simply developed adjustment problems and does not follow or respect any kind of rules. Lately he started abusing drugs and alcohol. No one knows what to do.”

When presented with the first scenario, almost half of the respondents did not make any suggestion. Figure 4.21 illustrates the range of responses.

Figure 4.21

Scenario 1

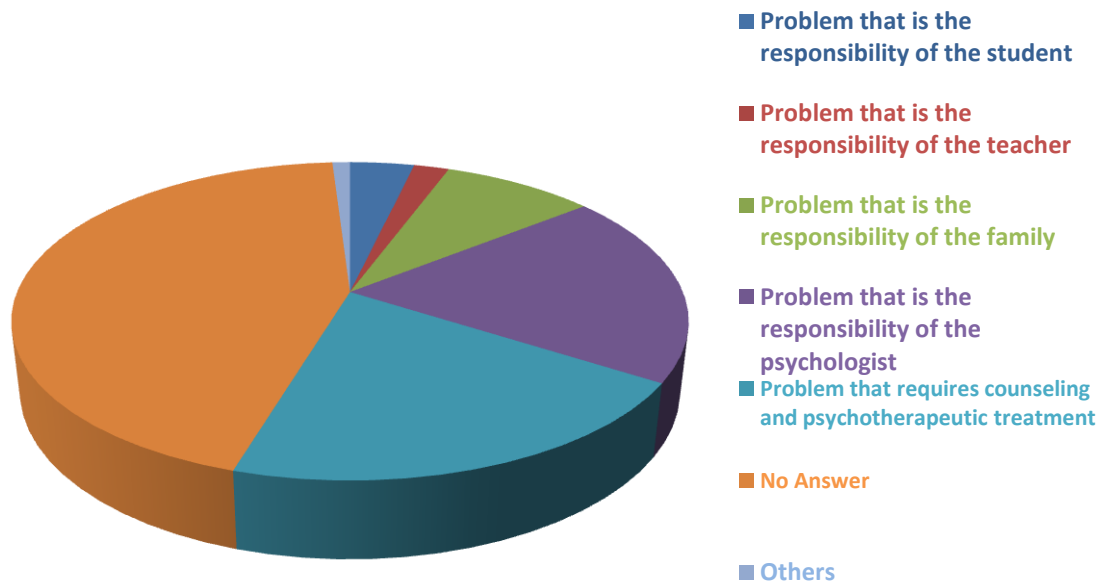


Figure 4.21 Responses to question twenty-six refers to teachers' opinion regarding how to address the anti-social behaviour of a student with mental problems.

Among the respondents who did provide an answer, the following data came to light. The least responsible for dealing with behavioural issues in students with special education needs were the teachers themselves. Instead, according to teachers' opinions, Andrew's problem was considered mainly to be the responsibility of a psychologist and a trained psychotherapist. The following report made by a teacher supports this argument:

Respondent number 21: *"Psychologists are better prepared to deal with these kinds of problems than teachers."*

According to respondent number 15, Andrew requires not only professional help but also the support of the family. This response follows:

“Andrew does not have any support at home. He is not socially adjusted. Teachers cannot help him. He should go to a rehabilitation clinic. I think he needs love.”

What can be inferred by this respondent’s opinion is that teachers do not feel capable of dealing with such behavioural disturbances as in the hypothetical case of Andrew and should therefore not be called upon to address these issues in class without the help of trained professionals and the child’s family. Respondent number 15 stresses the importance of a trained professional taking over, which in this case is a social worker.

“He shows deviant behavior: He is a kid at risk. He should be treated by a psychologist. A social worker should be in charge of this kid. Maybe the best thing for him would be to be separated from his family. He needs treatment to stop taking drugs.”

The large number of respondents who did not provide any suggestions with respect to scenario 1 may be attributed to the lack of teacher awareness surrounding mental health professionals which their schools have not provided. The majority of the teachers, however, did contribute insightful suggestions. According to teachers’ opinions, Andrew requires counselling and psychotherapeutic treatment. Teachers also believed that Andrew’s anti-social behaviour is the responsibility of a psychologist or the family. The findings did not show that the issue of Andrew’s anti-social behaviour should be addressed by the teacher. Those with more than ten years experience suggested Andrew see a psychologist. In fact, only 2% reported that teachers be the ones to deal with this problem. The female respondents were the most inclined to suggest that the problem be dealt with by a trained mental health care professional.

Scenario 2: Depressive Behaviour

“Carol is 15 years old now. She is a young, shy, timid and introspective girl. She feels sad all the time, cries a lot and

isolates herself from the other kids. She does not mingle with her peers and avoids any in-group activities. Her friends at school are worried about her. She does not allow anyone to help her, keeps everybody at a distance and does not reveal what is upsetting her and causing her to be unhappy. However, Carol is finding ways to change her life and over the past month she is trying to cheer herself up by taking cannabis. Teachers realize that something is very wrong with this young girl but they do not know how to reach her.”

A higher percentage of male teachers compared to female teachers did not provide any response. However, out of the teachers who did respond, the need for a psychologist and also for psychotherapeutic treatment were the most cited. Figure 4.22 illustrates the degree to which female teachers suggested that Carol be treated either by a psychologist or a psychotherapist. Once again, teachers did not consider themselves to be trained to deal with such circumstances.

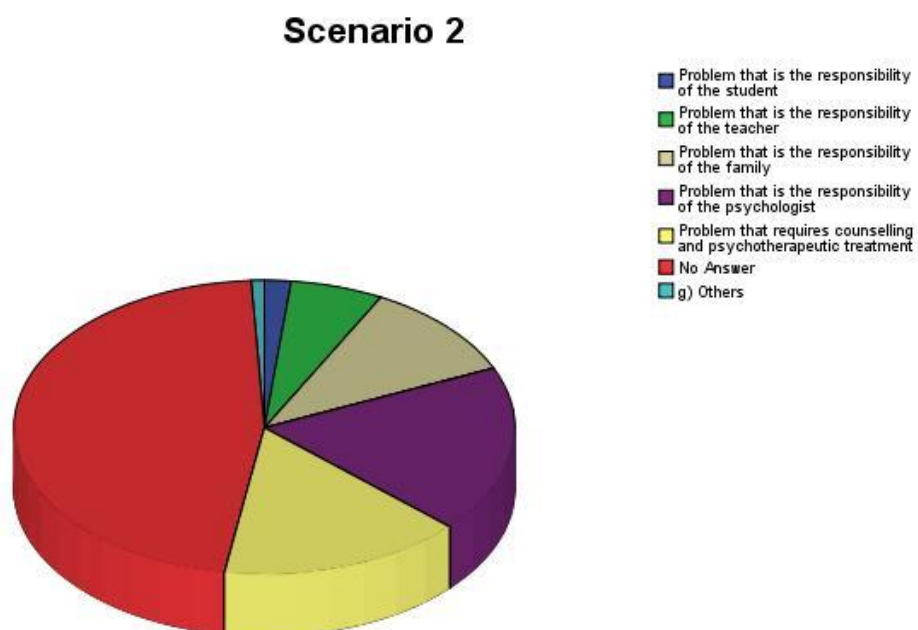


Figure 4.22 Responses to question twenty-six refers to teachers' opinion regarding how to address the depressive behaviour of a student with mental problems.

The suggestions made by teachers regarding scenario two are consistent with the findings from the first scenario. Depression can have a negative impact on student performance in addition to disrupting the class as a whole. Carol's unwillingness to accept outside help further accentuates the problem, making it unimaginable, especially for teachers who have little faith in the educational system, no specialized training to deal with such issues and lastly, no support provided to them by the school. The following statement by a teacher illustrates this point.

Respondent number 108: *"Teachers do not have the skills to deal with Carol's problem. It is not our duty to solve these cases in the classroom."*

This further emphasizes the need for mental health professionals in regular schools which is, as mentioned above, what teachers feel is greatly lacking in regular high schools. Teachers also believe that in Carol's case, a psychologist would be According to the opinions of three teachers, the following was reported:

Respondent number 78: *"I think Carol does not like herself. She needs a psychologist to help her to increase her self esteem and medical intervention to solve the drug problem."*

Respondent number 127: *"She does not mingle with her peers. It seems that her parents do not pay much attention to her. She needs psychological support... maybe the school psychologist could help her. It is not a task for teachers to worry about."*

Respondent number 108: *"Teachers do not have the skills to deal with Carol's problem. It is not our duty to solve these cases in the classroom."*

Scenario 3: Adjustment Behaviour

“Peter has reached the age of 15 without getting involved in serious problems. In the past years he had some troubles but he has never been a member of a group. He had was doing well at school and his behaviour was considered normal for his age. He kept himself away from situations involving police and uncontrolled behaviours. Nevertheless his behaviour changed in the past six months by getting involved in drug abuse. Now he smokes cannabis and has already tried cocaine. Nobody knows what made him change and how to deal with this new behaviour.”

Though more than half of the respondents did not provide any insight on Peter’s adjustment issues, the majority of the respondents who made suggestions were once again strongly in favour of psychotherapeutic treatment. Furthermore, teachers felt that perhaps Peter would be better off in a rehabilitation clinic. Figure 4.23 displays the different responses:

Scenario 3

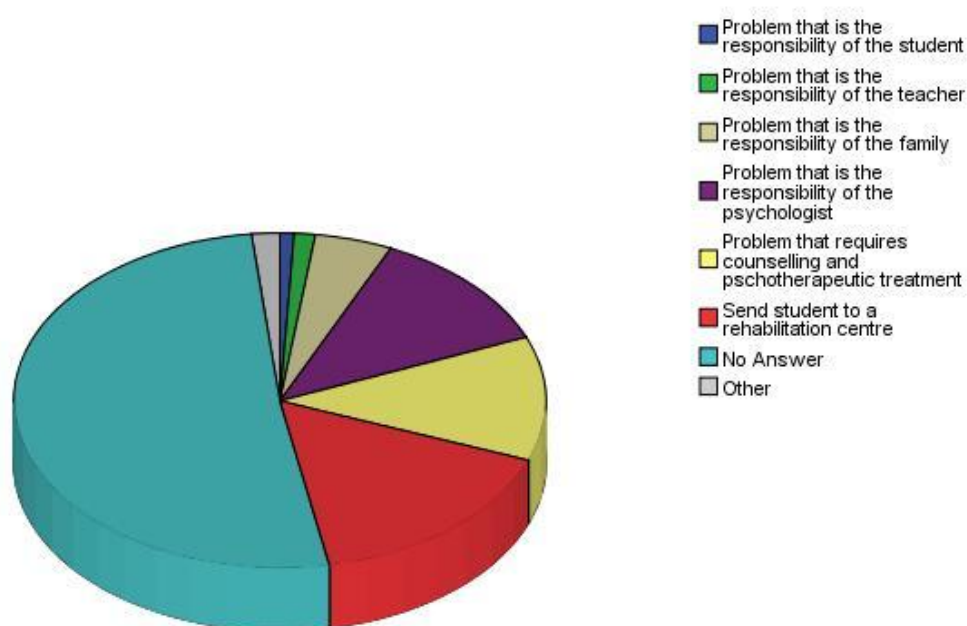


Figure 4.23 Responses to question twenty-six refers to teachers' opinion regarding how to address the adjustment behaviour of a student with mental problems.

With reference to teachers' recommendation that Peter receive psychiatric treatment or visit a psychologist to help him address his adjustment issues, the following reports were made by teachers regarding how Peter's adjustment issues need to be addressed:

Respondent number 49: *"He needs to go to a rehabilitation clinic."*

Respondent number 130: *"He expresses deviant behavior. If he was a good student and a good kid before and he drastically changed then something very serious happened. If the family cannot deal with this situation a psychologist or the intervention of the social services are options to consider. Unfortunately, teachers do not have the skills to cope with this kind of situation."*

There was a consistent correlation with the first two scenarios regarding teachers' assertion that adjustment problems of this kind are not their responsibility but rather the responsibility of psychologists, psychiatrists and in extreme cases, psychiatric facilities or rehabilitation centres.

Teachers consider issues of anti-social, depressive and maladaptive behaviours to be conditions not to be taken lightly thus requiring trained professionals. The need for trained professionals was found to be one of the main issues in this theme which emerged from the study. Trained professionals who will provide psychosocial interventions, specialized materials ordered in a timely fashion, and a curriculum which will be adapted to accommodate the needs of students with special needs were all themes which the data brought to light. More male teachers than their female counterparts did not answer the question.

Finally, the themes analyzed in this section provided insight into the following research question:

How do the regular high schools of the ARM meet the educational needs of special students in the area of mental health?

The data strongly suggests that regular high schools do not do nearly enough to meet the needs of students with mental problems. The burden falls on the teachers, who, from their perspective, are neither trained nor supported by their schools. Furthermore, very little is done to prepare students in terms of special education materials which do not arrive at schools in a timely fashion. More importantly, the absence of trained professionals in the area of mental health, a finding which is cause for much concern in the context of effective inclusion, further supports the argument that changes need to be incorporated.

4.5 Fundamental changes are necessary for effective inclusion to occur

Lack of materials, specialized training teachers, trained professionals in the area of mental health, a suitable curriculum, and support for students and teachers – all prove

counterproductive for the effective inclusion of students with mental problems. This study provides significant evidence to suggest that schools are not doing nearly enough to accommodate the students with mental problems. In fact, teachers clearly reveal that their schools fail to provide even the fundamental prerequisites for the successful integration of these students. Furthermore, government policy is not being applied in schools with respect to inclusion of students with mental problems. When asked to make recommendations regarding what needs to be done to improve class performance, two respondents made the following recommendations:

Respondent number 5: “*Apply the legislation.*”

Respondent number 18: “*Apply the law.*”

As mentioned in the analysis of the first theme, both teachers and schools are in favour of the integration of students with mental problems (chi-squared $p=0.000$). Teachers with over ten years experience had more positive perceptions towards integration than those with less than five years experience. However, this was not statistically significant with years of experience (chi-squared $p=0.070$). Figure 4.24 shows the strength of this response:

Figure 4.24

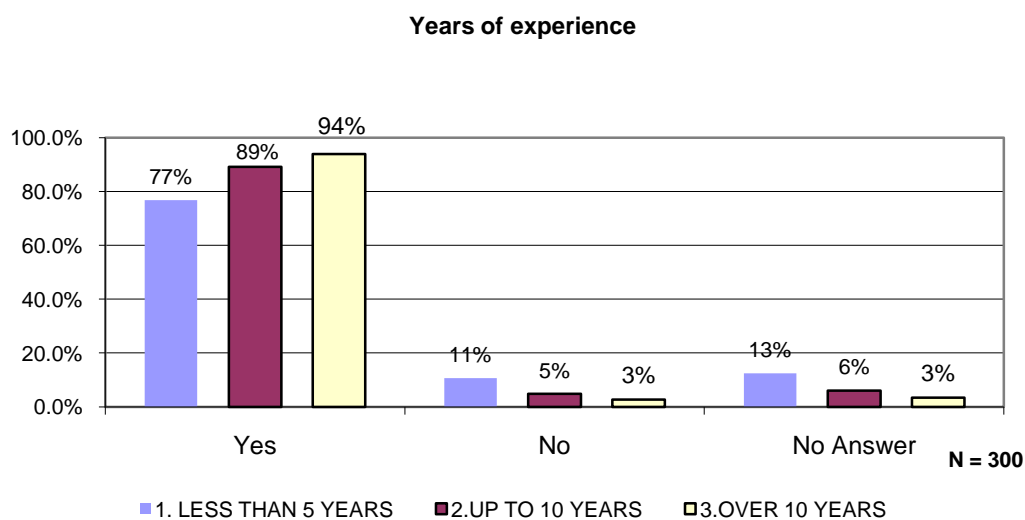


Figure 4.24 responses to question eighteen and refers to the schools receptiveness towards inclusion according to teachers’ opinions and years of experience.

Though receptive to the idea of inclusion, schools fail to provide the fundamental requirements for the inclusion of students with mental problems (chi-squared $p=0.000$). According to male teachers especially, schools are not prepared to welcome students into schools. More than half of the female respondents rendered their schools ill-prepared to welcome their students as opposed to 72% of male teachers. Though there was no statistically significant difference in between men and women (chi-squared $p=0.075$). Figure 4.25 illustrates this point:

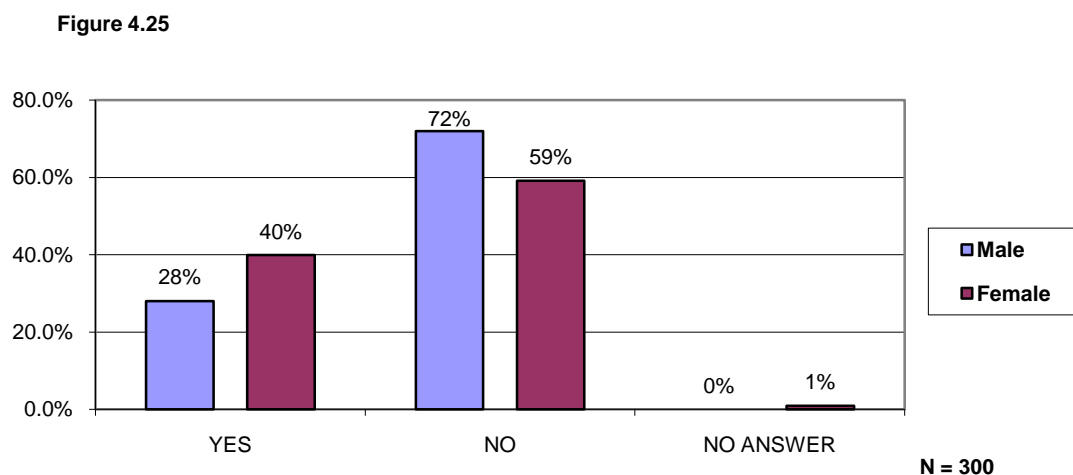


Figure 4.25 refers to question twenty one and relies upon teachers' opinion about the schools' capacity to properly receive students with mental problems.

When teachers were asked to recommend what needs to be done for the improvement of the performance of students with mental problems, the majority provided no response. Figure 4.26 shows the percentage of the non-respondents:

Figure 4.26

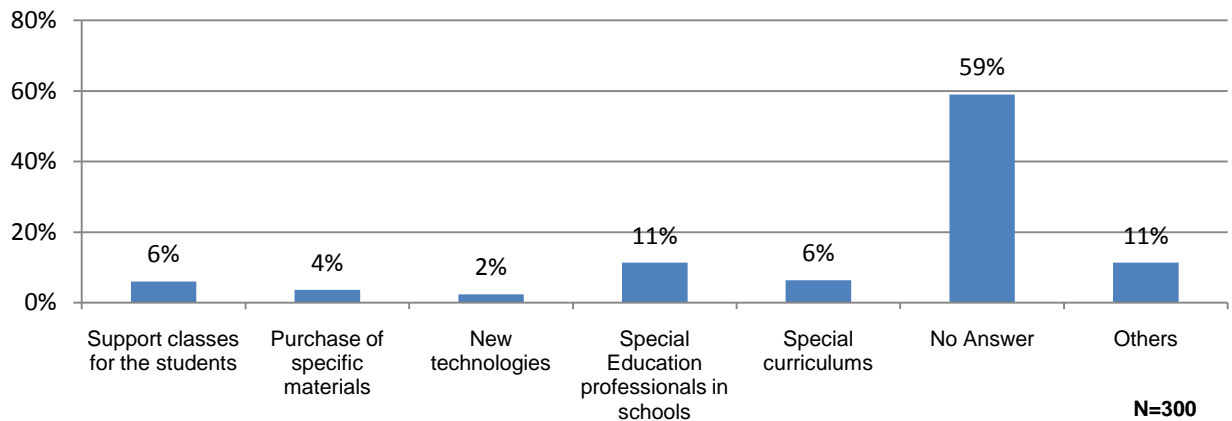


Figure 4.26 responses to question eight relates to teachers' opinion about the measures that should be taken to improve the performance of the students with mental problems included in high schools.

Seventy six percent of male teachers did not respond compared to 53% of female teachers. Figure 4.27 below illustrates this point.

Figure 4.27

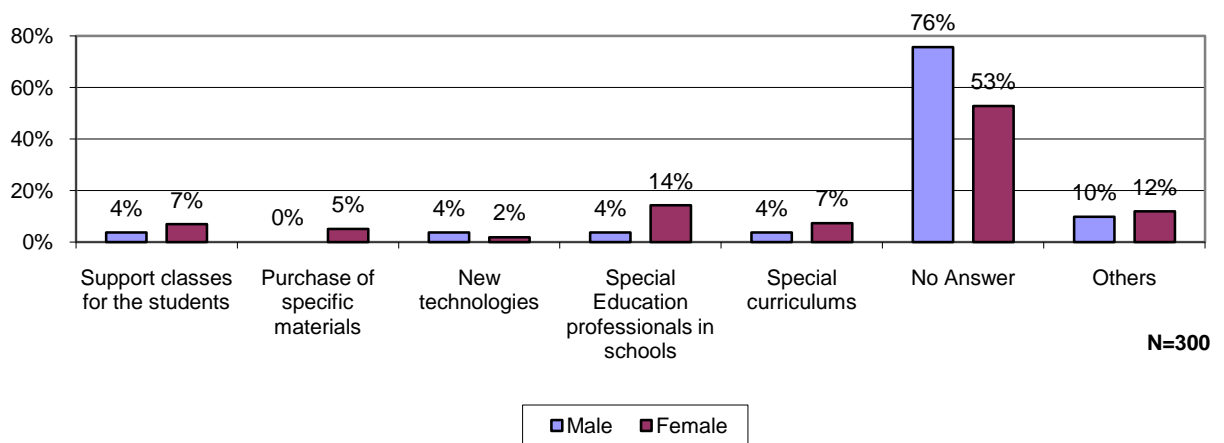


Figure 4.27 represents teachers' opinions related to the performance of students with mental problems according to: support classes for the students, purchase of specific materials technologies, special education professionals in regular high schools and adapted curriculums.

Years of Experience	Students are resourced with the same materials (books, articles, Internet)	Specific information resources are adapted to students accordingly to their needs and abilities
Less than 5	4 (13.8%)	25 (86.2%)
5 to 10	21 (27.0%)	58 (69.0%)
More than 10	48 (39.0%)	75 (61.0%)
	Total = 73 (32.0%)	Total = 158 (68.0%)

Table 4.2 shows teachers' opinion about the use of similar or adapted materials according to their years of experience.

Significant differences were found with years experience (chi-squared $p=0.016$). More experienced teachers were less willing to adapt resources than their less experienced colleagues. Overall the group is significantly in favour of adapting resources (chi-squared $p=0.000$).

Years of Experience	Introduction of innovative methods	Not in favor of innovative methods
Less than 5	22 (95.7%)	1(4.3%)
5 to 10	46 (83.6%)	9(16.4%)
More than 10	71(74.0%)	25(26.0)
	Total = 139 (79.9%)	Total = 35 (20.1%)

Table 4.3 shows the number of teachers who are in favor of or against using innovative methods in the classroom according to years of experience.

Teachers with more than 10 years of experience are less willing to innovate their methods (chi-squared $p= 0.046$). This difference was statistically significant with years experience and willingness to use innovative methods.

Years of Experience	Students are resourced with the same materials (books, articles, Internet)	Specific information resources are adapted to students according to their needs and abilities
Less than 5	4 (13.8%)	25 (86.2%)
5 to 10	26 (31.0%)	58 (69.0%)
More than 10	47 (34.6%)	89 (65.4%)
	Total = 77 (30.9%)	Total = 172 (69.1%)

Table 4.4 represents teachers' opinions about the diversity of materials that should be used for regular students and for students with mental problems.

This difference was not statistically significant with years of experience (chi-squared $p=0.090$), but as a group there is a significant view that special education resources are needed (chi-squared $p=0.000$).

The fact that more male participants than their female counterparts failed to provide any recommendations with respect to what measures need to be taken in order to enhance the performance of the students with mental problems, may be attributed to the observation that males reported a higher tendency of feeling unsupported than did females. This argument is further supported by the data with respect to the recommendation with the highest response among those who did answer the question. This response, shown in figure 4.27 regarded the recommendation that special education professionals be recruited into schools, which was made by 14% of female teachers as opposed to only 4% of male teachers. Female teachers may also have a greater awareness of what is required. The percentage of those who made recommendations for the improvement of students' performance was very low, as evident in the percentage of those who did not respond which represented 59% of the participants (figure 4.28).

Figure 4.28

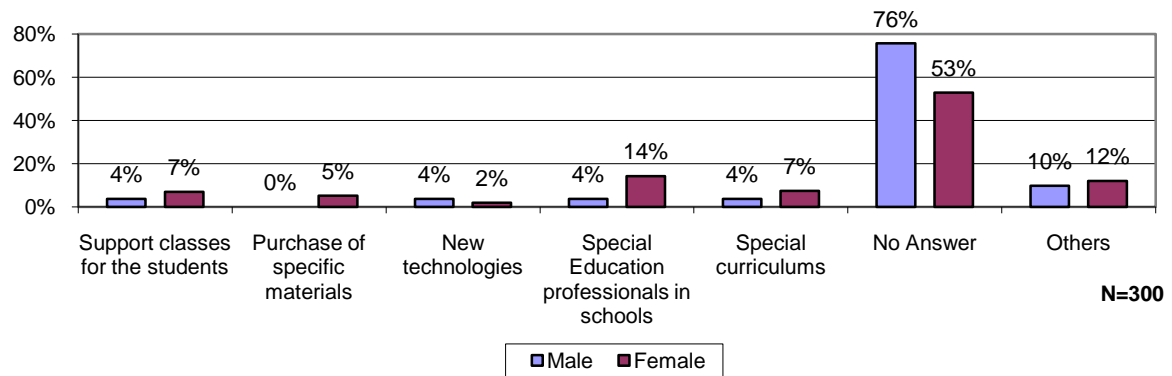


Figure 4.28 responses to question eight and relies upon teachers' opinion about what should be done to improve the performance of students with mental problems.

Special education professionals in schools were reported as the most important change recommended by 11% of the teachers.

Respondent number 2: "More Special Education teachers giving support in regular high schools."

The need for a specialized curriculum was reported by 6% of the participants. For example:

Respondent number 115: recommended the following: *"To design a new curriculum for students with mental problems."*

When asked specifically whether or not a trained psychologist should be on staff, the vast majority of teachers stated that schools should have a psychologist who will provide guidance to students with mental problems (chi-squared $p=0.000$). Those mostly in favour of having a psychologist were female teachers however this fact is not statistically significant between male and female respondents (chi-squared $p=0.088$) as shown in figure 4.29 below:

Figure 4.29

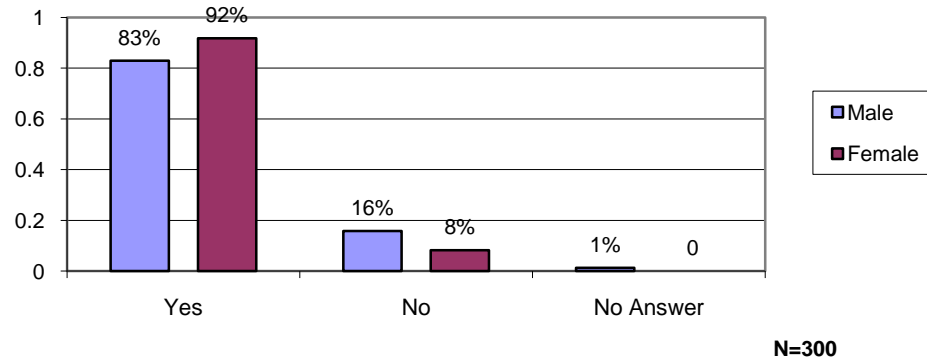


Figure 4.29 responses to question twenty about teachers' opinions regarding having a psychologist to guide students with mental problems in regular high schools.

The same trend is evident with reference to the last question posed to the respondents. Following reports given by almost 90% of the teachers who responded by reporting that changes do in fact need to occur to ensure that the education needs of students with mental problems are met, teachers were asked to specify these changes. Figure 4.30 shows the fairly low response rate of those who selected *adapted curriculum* (less than one fourth of the teachers). A similar trend to that of the need for trained professionals also appears in the following figure which shows that more than half of the respondents did not answer the question.

Figure 4.30

Years of experience

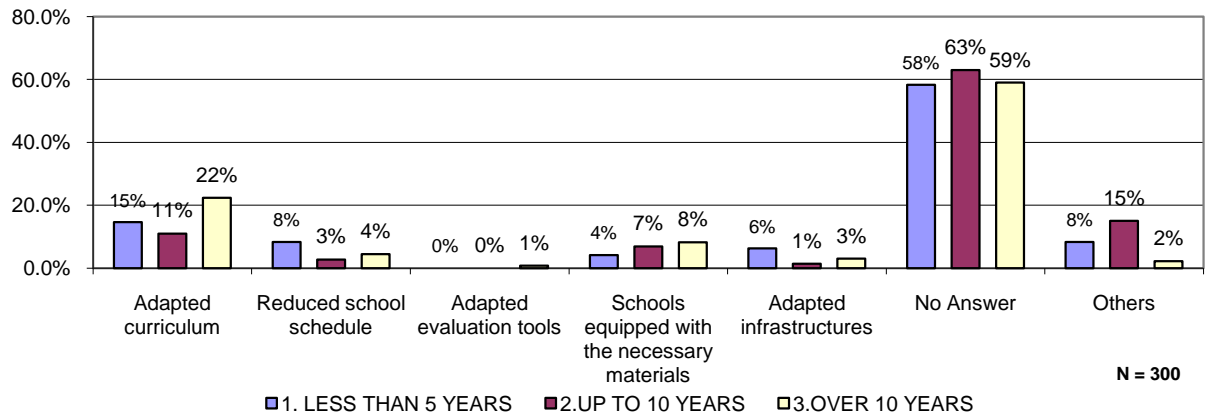


Figure 4.30 responses to question twenty five which refers to teachers' opinion about the changes that need to be made for the accommodation of students with mental problems in regular high schools. Teaching experience was taken into consideration.

When asked to identify whether or not the curriculum currently in use was appropriate, however, the general consensus was that it was definitely inappropriate (chi-squared $p=0.000$). The results show no significance difference with years of experience (chi-squared $p=0.217$). Figure 4.31 illustrates this argument.

Figure 4.31

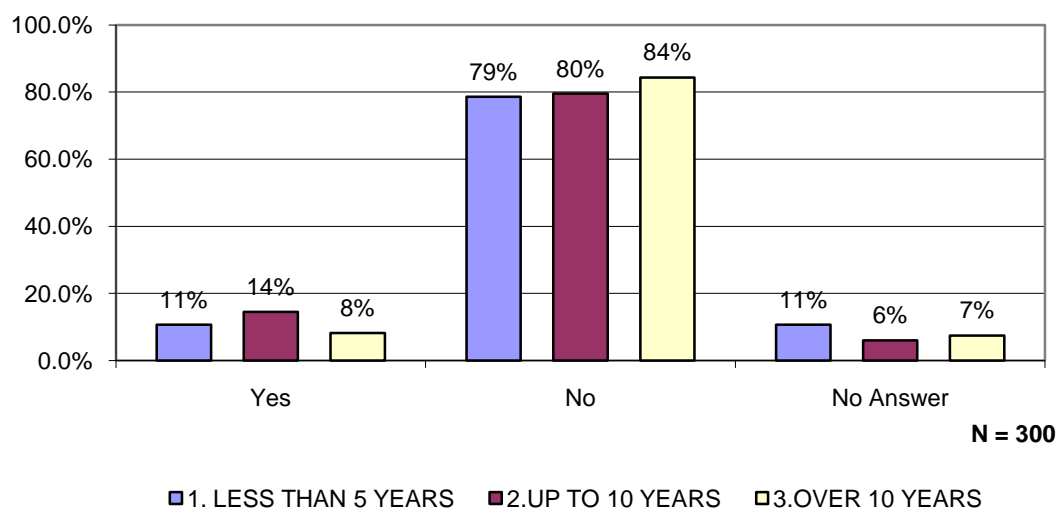


Figure 4.31 responses to question fourteen which relies upon teachers' opinion of the adequacy of the current curriculum for students with mental problems in regular high schools.

Lastly, as analyzed in previous themes, the importance of special training for teachers is also fundamental. Despite the obvious lack of training, more than half of the teachers reported investing their time in self-learning, specifically by attending workshops voluntarily.

It is noteworthy to mention here that the survey revealed a positive note regarding whether or not students with mental problems are respected by teachers, schoolmates, school personnel, and the school community. According to the opinions of teachers, teachers were the ones with the highest respect for these students. This evidence is illustrated in the figures that follow:

Figure 4.32

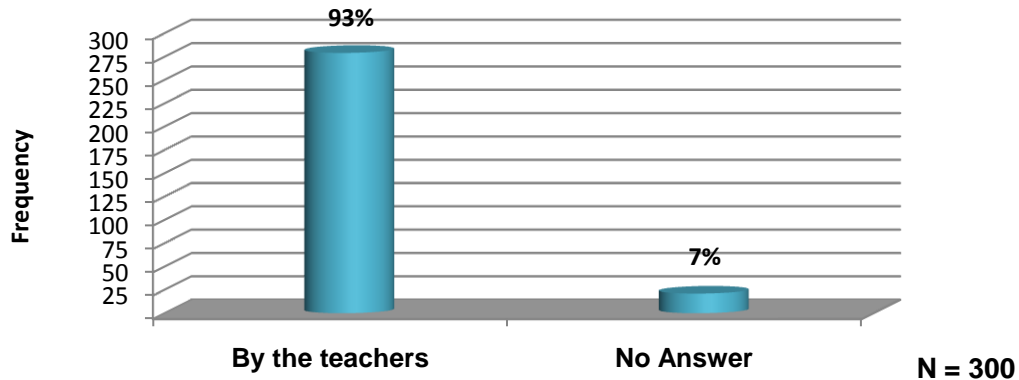


Figure 4.32 responses to question twenty four which considers teachers' opinions related to their observation regarding whether or not students with mental problems are respected by the teachers in regular high schools. This difference was statistically significant (chi-squared $p=0.000$).

Figure 4.33

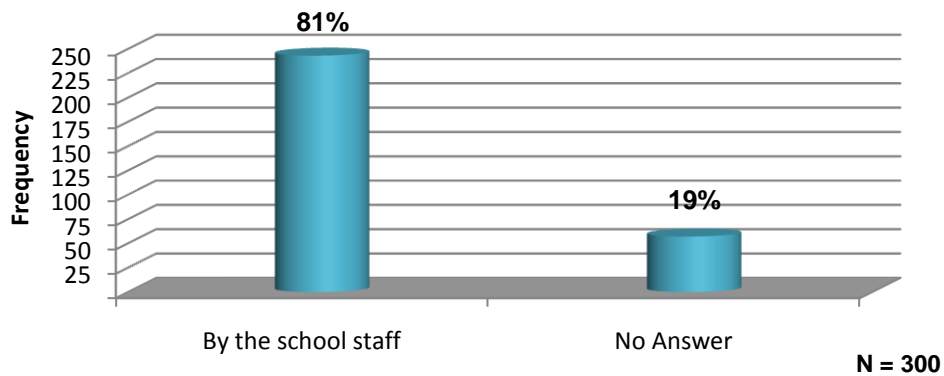


Figure 4.33 responses to question twenty four which considers teachers' opinion related to their observation of the degree to which students with mental problems are respected by the school staff in regular high schools. This difference was statistically significant (chi-squared $p=0.000$).

Figure 4.34

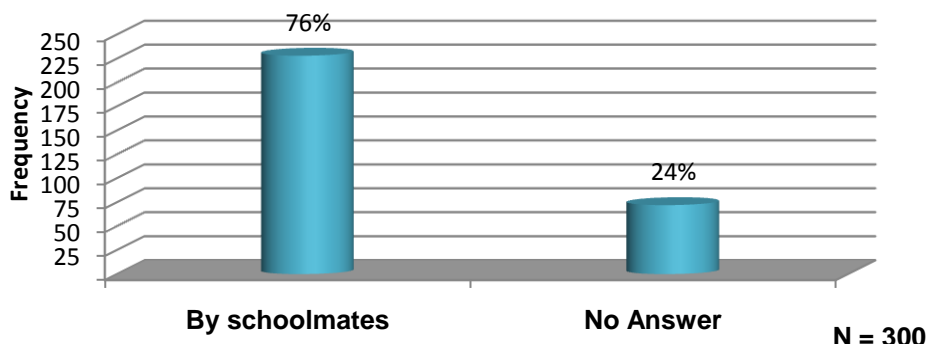


Figure 4.34 responses to question twenty four which considers teachers' opinions related to their observation with respect to the degree to which students with mental problems are respected by their schoolmates in regular high schools. This difference was statistically significant (chi-squared $p=0.000$).

Figure 4.35

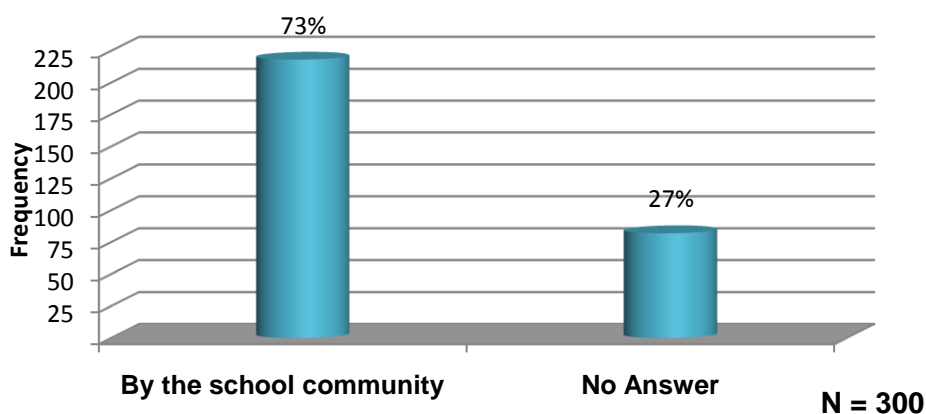


Figure 4.35 responses to question twenty four which considers teachers' opinions related to their observation regarding the degree to which students with mental problems are respected by the school community in regular high schools. This difference was statistically significant (chi-squared $p=0.000$).

The theme analyzed above provides insight into the last research question which follows:

What fundamental questions need to be addressed in the near future in order to improve the quality of inclusive education in the high schools of the ARM?

Teachers strongly believe that changes are required for effective inclusion to occur. According to the responses analysed with close reference to this theme, the fundamental changes which are required are as follows. First and foremost, schools need to be prepared. A school prepared for inclusion is one that invests in the appropriate materials and does so in a timely fashion. Moreover, a school prepared for inclusion is one that adopts the suitable materials, trains its teachers, and hires mental health professionals. Students also need to be prepared by schools. One teacher addresses most of the weaknesses analysed in this chapter regarding the absence of effective Inclusion in the regular schools of Madeira:

Respondent number 243: *“There is no such thing as Inclusion in our high schools. Yes, students with special needs are included in regular high schools and they are ignored and abandoned because nobody knows how to reach them, how to teach them. We do not have workshops, we do not have any information, and nobody tells us how to communicate with them... so what happens? They are in the classroom but it is as if they are not there.”*

The data clearly shows that teachers are deeply concerned about the questionable educational infrastructure that does not provide the bare essentials. Teachers feel unsupported, anxious, inadequate, insecure, and clearly believe that schools are neither equipped nor prepared to accommodate the needs of students with mental problems in the regular schools.

5 Chapter 5 - Discussion

"The moral test of government is how it treats those who are in the dawn of life . . . the children; those who are in the twilight of life . . . the elderly; and those who are in the shadow of life . . . the sick . . . the needy . . . and the disabled."

- *Hubert H.*

Humphrey

5.1 Introduction

The right to equal opportunities in education is an entitlement for all students, regardless of race, religion, socioeconomic status, or mental/and physical impairment. What lies at the very heart of inclusion in regular schools is the responsibility of those holding the educational reigns, namely the school system, to steer students with mental problems along the same path as those with fewer mental and physical challenges. Society awaits all children to coexist as adults, to effectively interact with one another in harmony. Though the home plays a major role, schools play an equally important role and an informed one at that.

It cannot be emphasized enough, however, that effective inclusion of students with mental problems in regular schools is a complex issue that involves much more than a warm welcome from school personnel and approval from the government. Government policy, educational trends, and public awareness all encompass the essentiality of including special education needs students into regular schooling. Placing a student with mental problems in a classroom filled with nondisabled children does not, on its own, constitute effective inclusion. There needs to be an organized educational infrastructure and an effective support system for schools to rely on.

The government of Portugal has passed its decrees, laid out its principles in black and white under the official guise of educational policy, and enacted laws to protect the rights of students with mental problems. Regular schools, in turn, opened their doors to special education needs students. The question remains: has governmental policy followed through on its promises to reform the educational system in the context of inclusion for all? Have the individual needs of students with mental

problems needs been met? Is the reality present in the regular schooling system of Madeira reflective of the standards laid out in government policy and in compliance with educational policy on inclusion?

Chapter IV shed light on these queries and the answers are far from promising. Seeing as Portugal is a member of the European Union, intense pressures are being placed on Portugal to meet the educational criteria laid out by Europeans standards. Steps have been taken, no doubt, in terms of educational policy in Portugal at least. The focus of this study was to ascertain the degree to which these policies have been put to the test. How have the regular schools, specifically in Madeira, fared in the context of inclusion? What do the teachers have to say about it?

Teachers presented us with a crystal clear picture of an inadequately prepared regular schooling system. It is evident that not nearly enough has been done to accommodate the needs of students with mental problems. The task is daunting for teachers who are left unaided and unsupported, untrained and unprepared, anxious and extremely concerned. There are challenges at a fundamental level, challenges which teachers are forced to face in a schooling system which deprives them of valuable tools.

This study has highlighted these very complexities which accompany effective inclusion of students with mental problems. The inadequate educational infrastructure was analyzed through the informed perspectives of teachers. How do teachers fare in their ability to cope with the challenges of having students with mental problems in their classrooms? What has become of the resources promised to these teachers to help them overcome these hurdles?

This chapter will provide a discussion on the following central issues on teachers' views regarding the degree to which inclusion of students with mental problems is effective:

- Boundaries of the study
- Educational policy
- Teacher preparedness
- Specialized pedagogic materials
- Mental health care professionals
- Teaching experience and attitudes towards inclusion
- Gender and teachers' attitudes

- Summary

5.2 Boundaries of the study

The boundaries of this study remained within the focus of one main group: the teachers. After all, it is the teachers who have to work closely with students with mental problems. Professor Judy Lupart accurately describes the significance of the role of teachers in the following excerpt from her paper on inclusion:

“Teachers are the school-based professionals who have a lengthy, personal relationship with each child in their classrooms. They are the ones who take the knowledge base as it is presented in our school curriculums, and who chart the course for the learning success of their students”

(Lupart, 2008, p.10)

When a challenge presents itself in relation to students with mental problems, there is no greater authority on the matter than the teachers themselves. The answers of the teachers weighted towards their views, experiences, and knowledge on matters concerning teacher and student preparedness, specialized pedagogic materials, educational policy, the need for mental health care professionals, and specialized training for teachers. The views of parents, the community, or government finance ministers were not the focus of this study. The study was aimed at an in-depth analysis of teachers’ views on the aforementioned areas. However, the responsibility of parents and the Regional Board of Education was addressed, once again, from the teachers’ point of view.

There is evidence in the literature that strongly suggests that teachers are not effectively prepared to rise to the occasion of inclusion (Singh, 2006). The ability of teachers to perform their tasks efficiently in addition to their level of confidence is a crucial component in determining the level of success regarding the inclusion of students with mental problems.

5.3 Limitations of the sample

To perform the field work the researcher used a sample of three hundred teachers working in different schools all over the Island of Madeira covering the schools located in the North, South, East and West of the Island. Therefore, the rich and poor areas were also covered in the sample. It was not the purpose of the researcher to randomly choose the teachers. The researcher distributed the questionnaires to the nearest and smallest schools following the Ethical procedures imposed in this research. In the largest schools, the questionnaires were given to the senior teachers who possibly distributed the questionnaires to the teachers who were in favour of inclusion. The researcher cannot determine the method used for the sample selection was made within the schools where the questionnaires were distributed.

With respect to the smallest schools, the researcher delivered the questionnaires in person following a phone call to arrange the convenient schedule for both teachers and researcher to meet for the purpose of delivering the questionnaires. Once this was decided, the meeting took place and it was agreed that fifteen days would be sufficient time for the completion of the questionnaires. The researcher then went to the schools to pick up the questionnaires. It was agreed upon that the questionnaires would be sealed in an envelope and placed in an area designated by the teachers and the researcher. Therefore, teacher confidentiality and anonymity was assured.

Regarding the larger schools, the questionnaires were left in an envelope and personally given to the headmasters and senior teachers who were placed in charge of distributing them to the other teachers. The meeting to deliver the questionnaires was agreed upon by telephone. The researcher met each headmaster individually and explained the purpose of the study following the ethical procedures requested to conduct the research. The same procedure was applied in the big schools: fifteen days following the date of delivery, the researcher passed by the schools and collected the questionnaires that would be kept and in a sealed envelope in a place previously agreed.

The sample included a higher number of teachers working in the south of the island because this is an area (Madeira Island map chapter three) with the highest concentration of schools. Therefore, the sample contains large and small schools in the south of the island and with respect to the schools in the north; most are smaller in size and poorer than those in the south.

Lastly, a total of five hundred questionnaires were distributed but only three hundred were actually returned to the researcher. The two hundred questionnaires have yet to be accounted for.

5.4 Educational policy

The declaration of the Salamanca agreement of 1994 brought the implementation of an inclusive educational system. Changes have been made with reference to inclusion. However, greater attention is being paid to primary level education, followed by pre-school education, leaving secondary level education last on the list. Findings from a study presented at the International Special Education Congress in 2000 on the state of inclusion in Portugal, teachers were found to be the sole support system for students with mental problems (Correia & Martins, 2000). These findings are in direct correlation with the findings revealed in this paper.

Schools need to be restructured. Resources need to be given to making education truly inclusive for all. This means training the teachers, preparing them for the challenges they will be facing and it also means providing teachers with support. This study showed that teachers turn to their colleagues for support, fellow teachers who are equally confused, perhaps even frustrated. Inadequately trained teachers cannot provide specific guidance to each other. The challenges faced by teachers are not simply restricted to teaching students with mental problems but difficulties come with balancing the needs of nondisabled students and students with mental problems.

What is educational policy? Educational policy is nothing more than a written interpretation of the promises made by politicians. Educational policy translates the political intentions of the country. Portugal transformed its political regime to a democratic state fairly recently in political history. Equality and justice for all is deeply rooted in democratic philosophy. Students with mental problems are members of society and are not to be seen as a charity case which was a common trend in previous centuries. What has educational policy promised? As analyzed extensively in chapter II of this paper, according to the Legislative Decree of 3/2008 approved by the Portugal Legislative Assembly of March, 2008 outlines the following main domains which are summarized as follows:

1. Provide justice and equality for all
2. Encourage parent involvement in the educational process
3. Penalizing schools for any discrimination
4. Provide technological resources
5. Appoint specialized professionals: speech therapists, sign language experts, language therapists, trained psychologists, mental health care professionals
6. Provide teachers with specialized training
7. Adapt curriculum to suit the needs of students with mental problems
8. Adapt evaluation process to the individual needs of the students
9. Schools who practice inclusion are eligible for private funding

(Annex V)

Educational reform in Portugal has been left in the hands of politicians and the restructuring, reforms, and reorganization of Portugal's inclusion movement has been based on those politicians' policies when it should have been based on the collaborative efforts of science and education. Special education (mental problems) is taking the hardest blow for the following reasons according to research conducted by Correia and Martins (2007):

1. Parents are only slightly involved in the education of their children with mental problems
2. Teachers are confused and unmotivated, not seeming to know what is happening around them
3. Students with mental problems see their rights being disrespected and restrained every day.

(Correia & Martins, 2007,

p.189)

Though our research revealed that according to teachers' views, students with mental problems are generally treated with respect, the fact that there is no school psychologist for these students to turn to, an adapted curriculum that would be better suited for these students, and specialized materials, makes light of the argument that students with mental problems are actually treated with respect. Students with mental

problems are indeed welcomed into the regular schooling system, however, the lack of the appropriate services strongly suggests that the ‘needs’ of these students are, in fact, not respected. The most shocking reality remains; that of teachers lack of specialized training. The Portuguese government is not providing sufficient funding to provide for these students in spite of the reforms in legislation. It is evident that teachers are left to their own devices and forced to rely on whatever few sources their schools provide them with.

The question of funding is too large to be ignored. Accommodating the physically or mentally impaired students who need attentive care is a process which requires sufficient funding. There is much evidence to suggest that not enough money is going to regular schools.

“Critics of inclusion have asserted that special education funds have not been appropriated to general education in a sufficient amount to make inclusion viable in all cases. In other words, in order for inclusion to work, funds need to be available to make inclusion effective and viable in the general education setting.”

(Savich,
2008)

5.5 Teacher preparedness

The shift in pedagogy in favor of inclusion has placed an even greater emphasis on teacher education programs. There has also been international pressure concerning teacher preparedness for some time now. UNESCO has been pressing for more content on inclusive education to become part of teacher training programs (UNESCO, 1994). The educating of teachers is an ongoing process, moving beyond the qualifications of a university degree. Teachers need to keep abreast of developments in science and educational reforms. Schools have a responsibility to provide these teachers with the means through which continued education of teachers can be acquired, especially in the area of mental problems (Spandagou et.al, 2009).

University curricula need to include more compulsory courses on inclusive education. Based on national and state reports in Australia, teachers are insufficiently trained and subsequently ill-prepared. In 2004, the Australian Department of Education reported that 70% of the teachers were underprepared or not prepared at all with regard to understanding or implementing the policies on inclusive education. It was also found that the more discernable the disability of the student, the more negative the attitudes of the teachers were towards those students (Sharma et.al, 2006).

In our study, the data is very clear on the lack of preparedness of teachers in the context of inclusion. The majority of the teachers felt concerned and unable to meet the needs of students with mental problems and this is a clear reflection of the overwhelming task of trying to meet the challenging demands placed on teachers. The evidence suggests that this is due to the fact that teachers are not familiarized with the specialized information that comes with inclusive education.

Regular classrooms which are open to the inclusion of students with mental problems are extremely diverse. In fact, diversity is present even in classrooms where there are no disabled students. Teachers are expected to adapt their teaching styles to cater to the diverse needs of an equally diverse classroom. Minister for education in Alberta, Canada states the following:

“Teachers must understand that all students can learn, albeit at different rates and in different ways. They know how (including when and how to engage others) to identify students’ different learning styles and ways students learn. They understand the need to respond to differences by creating multiple paths to learning for individuals and groups of students, including students with special learning needs.”

(Sharma et.al,
2006)

The data analyzed in chapter IV clearly reveals a lack of teacher training which explains why teachers are so frustrated with feelings of insecurity, concern and anxiety. Moreover, teachers do not feel that it is their responsibility to address any of the behavioral issues that may arise in their classrooms. In a paper presented at the 2009

“Though regular classroom teachers are willing to take responsibility of all children, including those with special needs, they will not be confident if they are not equipped with necessary skills.”

(Gafoor & Asaraaf, 2008, p.2)

As mentioned in the introduction of this chapter, inclusion goes beyond the school gates. Inclusion can only be accomplished within a classroom setting and teachers are at the very centre of the classrooms. Students with mental problems are placed in such classrooms and teachers have reported feeling overwhelmed by the demands that such an inclusive setting involves, especially in light of the fact that there is an absence of formal training (Wilson-Younger, 2009). Lack of knowledge leads to frustration and the teaching profession (though still not regarded as a profession by many) has earned its reputation as a highly stressful job, leading teachers to experience burnout. When a teacher feels that she has failed to meet the needs of her students, this leads to a reduced level of efficacy in terms of teacher performance as a whole. Teachers can easily lose their motivation and enthusiasm, especially after years of feeling inadequate.

Training teachers arms them with knowledge and with knowledge comes confidence. Confident teachers feel secure and are less prone to anxiety and are ultimately much better teachers. While it is noteworthy to mention that the needs of students with mental problems cannot possibly be met by teachers alone, it is also important to note that teachers play perhaps the most crucial role in the education of students.

An interesting finding which came to light from our study is that despite the vast literature on the fact that teachers usually hold negative views towards inclusion, the teachers interviewed for the purposes of this study were strongly in favour of inclusion. Teachers' and administrators' positive attitudes are building blocks upon which the foundations for inclusive education can be laid.

5.6 Specialized pedagogic materials

Though the school is responsible for dictating the curriculum for regular students, in the case of students with mental problems, it is the students who need to dictate what the curriculum should be. Teachers who have received specialized training are far more optimistic about the prospect of a student with a mental problem entering her classroom (Wilson-Younger, 2009). The teachers who answered the questionnaire were in favour of inclusion on a philosophical level, however, on a practical level, teachers reported feelings of frustration reflective of a sense of abandonment on the part of the educational policy makers who failed to make good on their promises.

There is an abundance of literature on the different models of inclusion which teachers can follow in addition to useful suggestions regarding steps teachers can take in order to improve the performance of students with mental problems. These suggestions include attending workshops and training seminars which will help teachers modify their methods of instruction to meet the needs of these students (Wilson-Younger, 2009). How did the teachers in our survey feel about their level of efficiency in the classroom? The regular schools of Madeira provide no training for their teachers and no specialized curriculum in the context of inclusive education. In spite of this reality, only 12% of the teachers in the survey took the initiative to voluntarily attend workshops and only 15% reported adapting the curriculum to meet the needs of disabled students. This places students with mental problems at a definite disadvantage and is hardly reflective of the ‘equal opportunities for all students’ philosophy promised in black and white in the legislature.

There are ways to improve the quality of education for students with mental problems. Analysis of the data irrefutably shows that teachers are fully aware of what needs to be done to accommodate these students’ needs. Lack of awareness on the part of teachers was not an issue in the findings.

5.7 Mental health care professionals

Trained psychologists, psychotherapists, speech therapists and mental health care professionals in general can make invaluable contributions to the betterment of the mental health of students with mental problems. Disruptive behavior, in the absence of

a trained psychologist who can provide sufficient intervention, can wreak havoc on an entire classroom, hindering the academic performance of all students. The absence of mental health care professionals can be catastrophic to the mental well-being of students with mental problems.

Mental health care professionals need to work in collaboration with teachers by providing awareness on the socio cultural aspects of inclusive learning. Special education needs can be a challenge even for teachers who are trained to work with students with mental problems. It can be mentally and even physically taxing on teachers to have to deal with the diverse demands of each student. Teachers are also in need of counseling to help them overcome emotional hurdles that come with having to deal with disruptive, depressive, and even aggressive behavior. With reference to mental health care professionals in the context of inclusion, Godovnikova (2009) states the following.

“It is essential to create special conditions everywhere that will make it possible to facilitate the integral development of these children, and the most essential condition is cooperative work on the part of all specialists who are involved in the psychological, pedagogical, medical, and social accommodation of the students and are helping teachers accomplish the ideas of remedial developmental instruction.”

(Godovnikova, 2009, p.36)

5.8 Teaching experience and attitudes towards inclusion

According to other research, the years of experience variable has been linked to teachers' attitudes towards students with mental problems. The longer a teacher has been active in the profession, the lower the level of enthusiasm and the higher the level of fatigue. Another important factor to consider is that teachers who have recently graduated from universities are at a definite advantage when compared to their more

experienced counterparts. Nowadays, university curriculums include courses in special education, which means that younger teachers with less teaching experience are more likely to have received more specialized training (Kalyva et.al, 2007).

With reference to the study in this paper regarding years of experience, the greater the experience of the teachers, the more likely they were to feel unsupported, concerned with the challenges, and most importantly, the more inadequate teachers felt in terms of preparedness. However, with regard to adapting the school curriculum to meet the needs of students with mental problems, the more experienced teachers cited adapted curriculum as a top priority for the changes which need to be made.

Teaching experience was not a determining factor in the attitudes of teachers concerning:

- Inclusion (to which teachers had a positive attitude)
- Health care professionals (must be hired in all schools)
- Reform in the Educational system (major changes need to be made)
- Workshops to improve teachers' knowledge related to special education of students with mental problems included in regular high schools in ARM. It has been proved that the eldest teachers feel unsecure and not motivate it to deal with Inclusion in a pro active way. Teachers' mentality must change (teachers must be provided with this tool).
- Self-learning (teachers find their own resources)
- School preparedness (schools are inadequately prepared)

Teachers are in favor of inclusion as long as the conditions for effective inclusion are met. These conditions involve the presence of mental health care professionals, the appropriate teaching materials, an adapted curriculum to follow, the participation of the parents of students with mental problems, and specialized training in the form of workshops. Teacher awareness of what steps need to be taken with reference to effective inclusion was found to be significant, especially as far as the aforementioned conditions are concerned.

The underlying question brought to light by the findings relates to the inadequacy of the local educational authorities to specifically train and educate teachers on the academic demands that go with teaching students with mental problems. The weakness of the infrastructure of the local educational authorities (Regional Board of Education)

to provide the necessary background of knowledge required for the successful inclusion of students with mental problems is abundantly clear.

5.9 Gender and teachers' attitudes

It is important to mention here that the gender ratio in the sample of the study was far from equal. Women outnumbered men by almost three to one. This is due to the fact that the teaching 'profession' is primarily made up of women. This category of gender analysis sheds light on the process of what needs to be done in the context of inclusive education. The reports given by the male and female participants reflected both similar and diverse attitudes. Female teachers were more likely to attend workshops voluntarily which accounts for the fact that a higher percentage of their male counterparts felt that special educational professionals were needed. This strongly suggests that male teachers are less exposed to specialized training and therefore felt a stronger need for professional support to be available in schools. This also explains why twice as many males felt that schools were not equipped to receive students with mental problems.

However, more female teachers than male teachers believed that the schools do not prepare these students effectively enough. Female teachers tended to give students with mental problems more attention in addition to slowing down the teaching pace to accommodate their needs. In contrast, male teachers appeared less motivated to do what they clearly considered to be beyond the scope of their responsibilities as teachers.

Therefore the greatest differences appeared in the emotional and behavioral categories. Though the opinions of both male and female teachers were considered in this study, the reality is that the vast majority of teachers are women, attitudes which reflect the views of the majority of the teacher population in the regular schools of Madeira.

5.10 Summary

Teachers of regular schools in the autonomous region of Madeira, Portugal, are dissatisfied with the educational infrastructure on inclusion education in terms of

teacher and student preparedness, teaching and learning materials, a specialized curriculum, and a department of mental health care professionals. The general attitudes of both male and female teachers is that of insecurity, feelings of being unsupported, anxiety, and concern for the 'fate' of students with mental problems upon entering general education. The reasons are clear, the teachers lack training and are being deprived of the support promised to them by the government. Educational policy has definitely not followed through with the provisions published in their official documents.

Students with mental problems require specific attention and though a significant number of female teachers are making the extra effort to compensate for their schools inadequacies, not enough is being done. With regard to the behavioural problems which arise in students with mental problems, the message is crystal clear: teachers do not consider themselves responsible for dealing with these challenges. The challenges of inclusive education are too great to be overcome by teachers alone. Teachers recommend changes be made to alleviate the problem. Despite the difficulties faced by teachers, inclusive education is viewed in a positive light by teachers, which is indeed a promising finding.

6 Chapter 6 - Conclusion and Recommendations for further research

Inclusion is a concept not easily defined and an even greater challenge to implement. The first step has been made; students with mental problems are included in the regular schooling system. Government policy has influenced educational policy on the matter of inclusive education. Studies have been carried out and authors have written hundreds of pages on the controversial nature of inclusion in addition to the different educational recipes for success. Educational policy is crystal clear on the matter of inclusion. Students with mental problems must be treated fairly and have a fundamental right to the adequate resources which are necessary for their effective educational development. The resources which have been well documented in the official guidelines presented in educational policy, include the following; specialized training for teachers, specific materials to be adopted by all regular schools, a separate curriculum adapted to the specific needs of students with mental problems, and mental health care professionals in all schools.

Madeira became independent from the mainland Government in 1976. In the same year The Portuguese Constitution proclaimed that everyone had the right to an education based on a foundation of equal opportunities to both access to and success at school. (Jesus Maria Sousa, 1999).

The Government did not impose to the education and culture to any particular philosophical, aesthetic, political or religious ideology (Jesus Maria Sousa, 1999). "Education was also expected to improve economy, promote pro-active social behavior, respect the cultural differences, encourage democratic participation in a free society and endorse mutual understanding, tolerance and a spirit of community." (Jose Maria Sousa, 1999). These general principles aimed at creating a "new" education were challenged by a changing society. "Nevertheless, the Education System Act, which established the general framework for the reorganization of the Portuguese education system, had to wait twelve years to be discussed in the Assembly of the Republic. The Law (Law 46/86) developing those principles written on the Constitution didn't arrive as fast as we would expect. (Jesus Maria, 1999).

The foundation of the Portugal's education policy focuses on several issues. When developing a policy the individual as well as the group should be taken in

consideration assuring that each and all are protected by the law thinking about the particularities and specificities of each individual. Furthermore, one should consider whether the same quality education is available for all people. "Education is often stratified according to the age, sex, economic background, mental problems and social origin of the persons to be educated". (Jesus Maria, 1999).

Geography can also affect the fairness of schooling. The Education System Act acknowledged that Portugal's "unevenness of regional and local development should be corrected, which should enhance in all regions of the country equal access to the benefits of education, culture, and science." ["...assimetrias de desenvolvimento regional e local a serem corrigidas, devendo incrementar em todas as regiões do País a igualdade no acesso aos benefícios da educação, da cultura e da ciência". (art.3.h.)]. (Jesus Maria, 1999).

A decade ago, a Portuguese resident of Madeira had less opportunities of having a higher degree than a Portuguese citizen living on the mainland. The creation of the University of Madeira (the youngest Portuguese University) made real the political intention of correcting such geographic inequities. (Jesus Maria Sousa, 1999).

Another important issue that should be analyzed is the curriculum itself. It is designed to satisfy just one population of students. It should consider a wide range of students including the less able and the brighter students. The question that one must ask when considering a policy is: education should be equal for all people, or should it be diversified according to each person's aptitudes, interests, social needs, mental problems, and talents? Should it be the same for all Portugal, or is there a place for regional variations according to regional needs? "Little has been done in this regard. The nation's curriculum is still heavily centralized. Before the Revolution, one spoke of one uniform curriculum from Minho (a northern region from Portugal) to Timor. One curriculum remains too much the reality today." (Jesus Maria Sousa, 1999).

The Education System Act speaks of democratization of society and teaching that guarantees "the right to a just and effective equality of opportunity for access to and success in school." Education is expected to "promote the development of a democratic and pluralistic spirit, that respects others and their ideas, and is open to dialogue and a free exchange of opinions." Education is also expected to "form citizens capable of judging with a critical and creative spirit the social milieu of which they are part and to strive for its progressive transformation." (Jesus, Maria Sousa, 1999).

It is unjust to say that Portugal and Madeira do not have legislation. Law exists and regulates the conditions in which students with mental problems can be included but most of the times it fails to be applied in the classrooms. However, in recent years, the new generation of teachers is trying to make a difference in the educational system. Their attitude towards students with mental problems included in regular high schools is different from the attitude of the old generation of teachers as this researched shown on chapter IV. Further research is necessary to analyze this difference of behavior among the population of teachers in ARM.

All political intentions converge in a unique thought: all Portuguese people should have the right to education and culture. "But the reality of attaining this goal is seen in the schooling rates, illiteracy rates, length of compulsory education, and the like. Salazar used to say the democratization of education would go against "natural inequalities," the legitimated and necessary hierarchy of values and persons in a well-ordered society." (Jesus Maria Sousa, 1999).

One of the main questions that should be addressed in the Portuguese policy is whether the policy gives priority to the individual or groups of individuals. Does society as a whole matter more than the individual? Or is the policy designed for the interests of particular pressure groups, one social class more than the others, an economic lobby, a political party or a religious group? Or is there a balance between the interests of each individual and the whole society? Or is the struggle among social classes and the tension between the individual and society being ignored? Many questions that should be answered in future research.

In spite of acknowledging the contribution of individual action to the development of society, the Education System Act shows a preoccupation with the individual. The document expresses "the right to be different, out of respect for personalities and different ways of life, as well as consideration for and valuing of different fields of knowledge and culture". (José Maria Sousa).

The educational infrastructure of a school system is what determines the degree to which the goals of any educational philosophy are achieved. The goal of an inclusive educational system is to ensure that all students, regardless of the diverse differences in mental and physical ability, are given equal opportunities to develop into well-rounded, well-adjusted, and socially accepted members of society. Students with mental problems are 'special' in that they require 'special' attention in order to fulfill their full potential as students. Schools must be equipped with well planned curricular and

specialized workshops on inclusive education for teachers, mental health care professionals which include a school psychologist at least, and prompt access to specialized materials which will cater to the needs of students with mental problems. This study showed written testimonies of teachers, the majority of whom attest to the failure on the part of the schooling system to meet these requirements. Teachers are not trained to deal with the challenges of teaching in an inclusive educational system. Moreover, schools are not prepared to offer support and fundamental resources to students and teachers alike. Lastly, there are no trained mental health care professionals present in schools to provide much needed and invaluable support to students and teachers.

Teachers view inclusion in a positive light but feel that many changes need to be adopted by the Regional Board of Education for inclusion to succeed. Given the current educational reality in the schools of Madeira, Portugal teachers feel concern for students with mental problems. There is confusion and dissatisfaction on the part of teachers who feel unprepared, unsupported, and even burdened with responsibilities that they feel do not belong to them. Teachers are stating their need for help from their schools and they are firm in their beliefs that teachers alone cannot ensure effective inclusion.

As a high school teacher of many years, I feel honoured to be in this profession, for it comes with many rewards, rewards seen in the eyes of my students and in their academic achievements. It is my job to ensure that my students receive the optimum education that a school can provide. I am also aware of the many challenges that come with being a teacher and how it can often become an emotionally taxing and physically exhausting task. High school students can be difficult, no doubt, but there is a long and rich history of the trials and errors of teaching high school students for teachers to fall back on. What is more, teachers are well-versed in the strategies of how to deal with the challenges that creep into the classroom. Teaching students with mental problems, however, is a very recent phenomenon and a new experience for the majority of regular high school teachers who have no specialized training in this field.

Teaching a classroom filled with students with diverse abilities and clashing personality traits is challenging enough without welcoming mentally and physically challenged adolescents to the class. Factors such as student safety, emotional welfare, and learning difficulties, all enter the realm of an inclusive education class. Teachers are called upon to manage all these challenges in the knowledge that the educational

policy their government promised them has failed to provide them with sufficient tools to make inclusive education work effectively. It is unrealistic to assume that inclusive education can be expected to succeed in the absence of the required support. Government policy is responsible for educational policy and the unfortunate reality is that teachers are not involved in the process of policy making. Teachers are at the very core of student needs and requirements, special or not, and must be actively involved in the decision making regarding inclusive education. How regular students interact with students with mental problems can only be observed by teachers. Teachers are also authorities on the level of satisfaction experienced by students with mental problems for it is the teachers who observe these students for six to seven hours a day.

Reality does not happen exactly according with the Law. How to expand the individual's capacities? Do schools provide variety of resources? Are schools prepared to provide to students different options? Are there individual and specified curriculums to meet the needs of students with mental problems? Does the educational system contemplate an individual process of evaluation the students? Contrary to the intentions expressed in the Education System Act, the reality of Portuguese education is closer to neglect of individual differences. This research paper aimed to show that in spite of the current policies, the Salamanca Statement and the Decree of Law (3/2008) it is still necessary to improve the teaching/learning process of the students with mental problems to provide to each student an adequate education in regular schools by respecting their specific and individual needs.

The Decree of Law 372008 is very clear in pointing all the conditions that schools must have to provide a fair education to all the students but as the findings shown schools in Madeira Island are not well equipped, the curriculum used is not the most adequate one, there is lack of resources, lack of budget. Schools as social institutions are culturally responsible to change peoples' minds by creating a solid relationship with the parents and with the community in general.

Inclusive education is a project in progress and to governments, perhaps, an experiment to be tested. Governments want to see successful outcomes in all sectors of society. Unfortunately, however, in the case of education, very little money is spent on improving the educational system. An education which is based on equal opportunities and mutual respect is a reflection of an equal and dignified society. Students need to feel protected and provided for as do teachers. Parents also need to feel that they can

play an active role in their children's learning experience. Research is abundant on the intricacies of inclusive education, but more research is required into the perceptions of teachers, students, and parents on what can be done to improve the educational system to make inclusive education highly effective. The answer always lies at the heart of the issue. More research needs to be conducted closer to the classroom and the truth can only be spoken by the true authorities on the subject of inclusive education: the students (regular and students with mental problems) and the teachers. A comparison between the perceptions of teachers and the perceptions of students is an interesting example for further studies.

This study was focused on the teachers' perspectives of inclusion and the inclusive process of students with mental problems in regular high schools. Future studies are needed to analyze parental influence in the inclusive process in Madeira Island based on cultural aspects. As we have discussed previously teachers make part of a dynamic process which is Education. This study aimed to analyze one of the four pillars that sustain the foundation of the Portuguese Educational System. The other three pillars also play a key role in the inclusive process: Parents, peers and community. Further research is needed to study parental influence in this process. As it was presented in this study there are huge differences between the north and the south of the island. Moreover, in the north a mental problem is still viewed as a social embarrassment therefore studies are needed to evaluate at which extend this influences the inclusion of students with mental disabilities in Madeira Island.

Chapter five presents discusses the findings of this research. In the light of that discussion it is crucial to acknowledge that the three case scenarios were elucidative of teachers' unpowered feelings towards students with mental problems. The three scenarios intended to present different mental problems and behavioral problems in order to oblige the teachers to be conscious of their own capacities and limitations to deal with students that require special attention due to their specificities and needs. Findings shown that there was a huge absence of responses which indicates that teachers either do not know how to deal with those problems or they were not capable of identifying the problems mentioned in the case scenarios. However, the ones who did answer excluded themselves of taking any kind of responsibility in the students' problems. Most of them think that a psychologist or the parents are the ones who should provide a solution to students' mental and behavioral problems. In addition, teachers

feel uncomfortable, insecure, unable and unprepared to teach students with mental problems in regular high schools in Madeira Island. They pointed as main problems the lack of pedagogic resources, lack of methods due to the fact that there isn't an appropriate curriculum that they can rely on to develop strategies and methodologies specifically designed for these students.

“Education policy has two rarely coincident dimensions: an official and a real one. We can't say there isn't any education policy because there isn't any concrete document on it. Portugal waited twelve years for the Education System Act to be written; this did not mean it lacked an education policy in the meantime Education policy is always in evolution.” (Jesus Maria Sousa1999). It depends on the efforts of all the parts included in this dynamic process: administrators, professors, teachers, parents, peers and community to develop truthful, equal and fair opportunities for all the students attending regular high schools in Madeira Island.

“We can corrupt wonderful principles or we can give real meaning even to insipid political pronouncements” (Jesus Maria Sousa 1999).

It is important to make a difference in a system that still needs a lot of reforms but it is slowly walking towards the light of an Equal Education for All.

Investigating the attitudes, beliefs, and concerns of regular high school teachers in the island of Madeira regarding the effectiveness of inclusive education in their schools is a fundamental contribution to the body of research on the subject of inclusion. The guidelines laid out in the educational policy were put to the test. This study showed that, according to the opinions of teachers, none of the requirements have been met by the 35 schools surveyed in this study. The distance between theory and practice has always been long and in the case of inclusive education, giant steps need to be taken to narrow the gap between the theory in policy and reality in the school. In this study I hope to have contributed to providing enough insight into what needs to be done to make inclusive education a reality which is not simply preached but also practiced effectively.

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- <http://www.unesco.org/education/uie/pdf/country/Brazilnational.pdf> (Secretary for Special Needs Education, Brazil Ministry of Education)

Appendix 1 Decreto-Lei nº 319/91, de 23 de Agosto

A legislação que regula a integração dos alunos portadores de deficiência nas escolas regulares, publicada há mais de 10 anos, carece de actualização e de alargamento. A evolução dos conceitos relacionados com a educação especial, que se tem processado na generalidade dos países, as profundas transformações verificadas no sistema educativo português decorrentes da publicação da Lei de Bases do Sistema Educativo, as recomendações relativas ao acesso dos alunos deficientes ao sistema regular de ensino emanadas de organismos internacionais a que Portugal está vinculado e finalmente, a experiência acumulada durante estes anos levam a considerar os diplomas vigentes ultrapassados e de alcance limitado. Com efeito, foi considerada no presente diploma a evolução dos conceitos resultantes do desenvolvimento das experiências de integração, havendo a salientar:

A substituição da classificação em diferentes categorias, baseada em decisões de foro médico, pelo conceito de "alunos com necessidades educativas especiais", baseado em critérios pedagógicos;

A crescente responsabilização da escola regular, pelos problemas dos alunos com deficiência ou com dificuldades de aprendizagem;

A abertura da escola a alunos com necessidades educativas especiais, numa perspectiva de "escolas para todos";

Um mais explícito reconhecimento do papel dos pais na orientação educativa dos seus filhos;

A consagração, por fim, de um conjunto de medidas cuja aplicação deve ser ponderada de acordo com o princípio de que a educação dos alunos com necessidades educativas especiais deve processar-se no meio menos restritivo possível, pelo que cada uma das

medidas só deve ser adoptada quando se revele indispensável para atingir os objectivos educacionais definidos.

Assim:

No desenvolvimento do regime jurídico estabelecido pela Lei nº 46/86, de 14 de Outubro (Lei de Bases do Sistema Educativo), e nos termos da alínea c) do nº 1 do artigo 201º da Constituição, o Governo decreta o seguinte:

Artigo 1º

Âmbito de aplicação

As disposições constantes do presente diploma aplicam-se aos alunos com necessidades educativas especiais que frequentam os estabelecimentos públicos de ensino dos níveis básico e secundário.

Artigo 2

Regime educativo especial

1 - O regime educativo especial consiste na adaptação das condições em que se processa o ensino-aprendizagem dos alunos com necessidades educativas especiais.

2 - As adaptações previstas no número anterior podem traduzir-se nas seguintes medidas:

- a) Equipamentos especiais de compensação;
- b) Adaptações materiais;
- c) Adaptações curriculares;
- d) Condições especiais de matrícula;
- e) Condições especiais de frequência;
- f) Condições especiais de avaliação;
- g) Adequação na organização de classes ou turmas;

- h) Apoio pedagógico acrescido;
- i) Ensino especial.

3 - A aplicação das medidas previstas no número anterior tem em conta o caso concreto, procurando que as condições de frequência dos alunos objecto da sua aplicação se assemelhem às seguidas no regime educativo comum, optando-se pelas medidas mais integradoras e menos restritivas. 3

Artigo 3º

Equipamentos especiais de compensação

1 - Consideram-se equipamentos especiais de compensação o material didáctico especial e os dispositivos de compensação individual ou de grupo.

2 - Considera-se material didáctico especial, entre outros:

- a) Livros em braille ou ampliados;
- b) Material áudio-visual;
- c) Equipamento específico para leitura, escrita e cálculo.

3 - Consideram-se dispositivos de compensação individual ou de grupo, entre outros:

- a) Auxiliares ópticos ou acústicos;
- b) Equipamento informático adaptado;
- c) Máquinas de escrever braille;
- d) Cadeiras de rodas;
- e) Próteses.

Artigo 4º

Adaptações materiais

Consideram-se adaptações materiais:

- a) Eliminação de barreiras arquitectónicas;
- b) Adequação das instalações às exigências da acção educativa;
- c) Adaptação de mobiliário.

Artigo 5º

Adaptações curriculares

1 - Consideram-se adaptações curriculares:

- a) Redução parcial do currículo;
- b) Dispensa da actividade que se revele impossível de executar em função da deficiência.

2 - As adaptações curriculares previstas no presente artigo não prejudicam o cumprimento dos objectivos gerais dos ciclos e níveis de ensino frequentados e só são aplicados quando se verifique que o recurso a equipamentos especiais de compensação não é suficiente.

Artigo 6º

Condições especiais de matrícula

1 - Compreende-se nas condições especiais de matrícula a faculdade de a efectuar:

- a) Na escola adequada, independentemente do local de residência do aluno;
- b) Com dispensa dos limites etários existentes no regime educativo comum;
- c) Por disciplinas.

2 - A matrícula efectuada ao abrigo da alínea a) do número anterior efectua-se quando as condições de acesso e os recursos de apoio pedagógico existentes facilitem a integração do aluno com necessidades educativas especiais.

3 - A matrícula efectuada ao abrigo da alínea b) do nº 1 apenas é autorizada aos alunos que, devidamente avaliados e preenchendo condições a regulamentar por despacho do Ministro da Educação, demonstrem um atraso de desenvolvimento global que justifique o ingresso escolar um ano mais tarde do que é obrigatório ou que revelem uma precocidade global que aconselhe o ingresso um ano mais cedo do que é permitido no regime educativo comum.

4 - A matrícula efectuada ao abrigo da alínea c) do nº 1 pode efectuar-se nos 2º e 3º ciclos do ensino básico e no ensino secundário desde que se assegure a sequencialidade do regime educativo comum.

Artigo 7º

Condições especiais de frequência

Consideram-se condições especiais de frequência as decorrentes do regime de matrícula previsto na alínea c) do nº 1 do artigo anterior.

Artigo 8º

Condições especiais de avaliação

Consideram-se condições especiais de avaliação as seguintes alterações ao regime educativo comum:

- a) Tipo de prova ou instrumento de avaliação;
- b) Forma ou meio de expressão do aluno;
- c) Periodicidade;

- d) Duração;
- e) Local de execução.

Artigo 9º

Adequação na organização de classes ou turmas

1 - O número de alunos das classes ou turmas que integrem alunos com necessidades educativas especiais não pode ser superior a 20.

2 - As classes ou turmas previstas no número anterior não devem incluir mais de dois alunos com necessidades educativas especiais, salvo casos excepcionais adequadamente fundamentados.

3 - O limite previsto no nº 1 aplica-se apenas aos casos em que, de acordo com o órgão de administração e gestão da escola ou área escolar, as necessidades especiais dos alunos requeiram atenção excepcional do professor.

Artigo 10º

Apoio pedagógico acrescido

O apoio pedagógico acrescido consiste no apoio lectivo suplementar individualizado ou em pequenos grupos e tem carácter temporário.

Artigo 11º

Ensino especial

1 - Considera-se ensino especial o conjunto de procedimentos pedagógicos que permitam o reforço da autonomia individual do aluno com necessidades educativas especiais devidas a deficiências físicas e mentais e o desenvolvimento pleno do seu projecto educativo próprio, podendo seguir os seguintes tipos de currículos:

- a) Currículos escolares próprios;
- b) Currículo alternativos.

2 - Os currículos escolares próprios têm como padrão os currículos do regime educativo comum, devendo ser adaptados ao grau e tipo de deficiência.

3 - Os currículos alternativos substituem os currículos do regime educativo comum e destinam-se a proporcionar a aprendizagem de conteúdos específicos.

4 - As medidas previstas nos artigos anteriores podem ser aplicadas em acumulação com as estabelecidas no presente artigo.

Artigo 12º

Encaminhamento

Nos casos em que a aplicação das medidas previstas nos artigos anteriores se revele comprovadamente insuficiente em função do tipo e grau de deficiência do aluno, devem os serviços de psicologia e orientação em colaboração com os serviços de saúde escolar, propor o encaminhamento apropriado, nomeadamente a frequência de uma instituição de educação especial.

Artigo 13º

Competências

Compete ao órgão de administração e gestão da escola decidir:

- a) Aplicar o regime educativo especial, sob proposta conjunta dos professores do ensino regular e de educação especial, ou dos serviços de psicologia e orientação, consoante a complexidade das situações;
- b) O encaminhamento a que se refere o artigo anterior.

Artigo 14º

Propostas

1 - As situações menos complexas cuja avaliação não exija especialização de métodos e instrumentos ou cuja solução não implique segregação significativa dos alunos podem dar lugar a propostas subscritas pelos professores do ensino regular e de educação especial, de carácter não formal mas devidamente fundamentadas.

2- As situações mais complexas são analisadas pelos serviços de psicologia e orientação, em colaboração com os serviços de saúde escolar, e dão lugar a propostas formais, consubstanciadas num plano educativo individual, de acordo com os requisitos do artigo seguinte.

Artigo 15º

Plano educativo individual

1 - Do plano educativo individual constam obrigatoriamente os seguintes elementos:

- a) Identificação do aluno;
- b) Resumo da história escolar e outros antecedentes relevantes, designadamente, grau de eficácia das medidas menos restritivas anteriormente adoptadas;
- c) Caracterização das potencialidades, nível de aquisições e problemas do aluno;
- d) Diagnóstico médico e recomendações dos serviços de saúde escolar, se tal for adequado;
- e) Medidas do regime educativo especial a aplicar;
- f) Sistema de avaliação da medida ou medidas aplicadas;
- g) Data e assinatura dos participantes na sua elaboração.

2 - O recurso à medida prevista na alínea i) do nº 2 do artigo 2º implica que no plano educativo individual conste:

- a) A orientação geral sobre as áreas e conteúdos curriculares especiais adequadas ao aluno;
- b) Os serviços escolares e outros de que o aluno deverá beneficiar.

Artigo 16º

Programa educativo

1 - A aplicação da medida prevista na alínea i) do nº 2 do artigo 2º dá lugar à elaboração, por ano escolar, de um programa educativo de que conste obrigatoriamente:

- a) O nível de aptidão ou competência do aluno nas áreas ou conteúdos curriculares previstos no plano educativo individual;
- b) Os objectivos a atingir;
- c) As linhas metodológicas a adoptar;
- d) O processo e respectivos critérios de avaliação do aluno;
- e) O nível de participação do aluno nas actividades educativas da escola;
- f) A distribuição das diferentes tarefas previstas no programa educativo pelos técnicos responsáveis pela sua execução;

- g) A distribuição horária das actividades previstas no programa educativo;
- h) A data do início, conclusão e avaliação do programa educativo;
- i) A assinatura dos técnicos que intervieram na sua elaboração.

2 - O programa educativo previsto no número anterior é submetido à aprovação do órgão de administração e gestão da escola.

Artigo 17º

Responsável

1 - A elaboração do programa educativo é da responsabilidade do professor de educação especial que superintende na sua execução.

2 - Na elaboração do programa educativo participam os técnicos responsáveis pela sua execução.

Artigo 18º

Encarregados de educação

1 - A avaliação do aluno tendente à aplicação de qualquer medida do regime educativo especial carece da anuência expressa do encarregado da educação.

2 - Os encarregados de educação devem ser convocados para participar na elaboração e na revisão do plano educativo individual e do programa educativo.

Artigo 19º

Revisão

1 - O plano educativo individual pode ser revisto sempre que o aluno mude de estabelecimento de ensino ou área escolar ou quando seja formulado pedido fundamentado por qualquer dos elementos responsáveis pela sua execução.

2 - O programa educativo dos alunos que transitem para outro estabelecimento de ensino no decurso do ano escolar poderá ser revisto quando se verifique a sua inexecutabilidade ou mediante pedido fundamentado por qualquer dos elementos responsáveis pela sua execução.

3 - Nos casos previstos nos números anteriores o plano educativo individual ou programa educativo deve ser submetido à aprovação do órgão de administração e gestão da escola no prazo de 30 dias.

Artigo 20º

Certificado

Para efeitos de formação profissional e emprego o aluno cujo programa educativo se traduza num currículo alternativo obtém, no termo da sua escolaridade, um certificado que especifique as competências alcançadas.

Artigo 21º

Educação pré-escolar e ensino básico mediatizado

Por portaria do Ministro da Educação serão fixadas as normas técnicas de execução necessárias à aplicação das medidas fixadas neste diploma à educação pré-escolar e ao ensino básico mediatizado.

Artigo 22º

Regime de transição

1 - Nos estabelecimentos de ensino ou áreas escolares em que não tenham sido criados os serviços de psicologia e orientação, o plano educativo individual é elaborado por uma equipa de avaliação, designada para o efeito pelo órgão de administração e gestão da escola.

2 - A equipa referida no número anterior tem a seguinte composição:

- a) Um representante do órgão de administração e gestão da escola;
- b) O professor do aluno ou o director de turma;
- c) O professor de educação especial;
- d) Um psicólogo, quando possível;
- e) Um elemento da equipa de saúde escolar.

3 - A equipa de avaliação é coordenada pelo órgão de administração e gestão da escola ou seu representante, que promove as respectivas reuniões.

4 - Até à plena aplicação do modelo de direcção, administração e gestão instituído pelo Decreto-Lei nº 172/91, de 10 de Maio, as competências atribuídas pelo presente diploma ao órgão de administração e gestão da escola são exercidas, nos estabelecimentos do 1º ciclo do ensino básico, pelo órgão com competência pedagógica.

Artigo 23º

Condições de aplicação

As condições e os procedimentos necessários à aplicação das medidas previstas no nº 2 do artigo 2º são estabelecidos por despacho do Ministro da Educação, que determinará ainda as condições de reordenamento e de reafecção dos meios humanos, materiais e

institucionais existentes no sistema educativo, visando atingir a máxima eficácia social e pedagógica na prossecução das medidas constantes do presente diploma.

Artigo 24º

Revogação

São revogados os seguintes diplomas:

- a) Decreto-Lei nº 174/77, de 2 de Maio;
- b) Decreto-Lei nº 84/78, de 2 de Maio.

Visto e aprovado em Conselho de Ministros de 11 de Julho de 1991. - Aníbal António Cavaco Silva - Roberto Artur da Luz Carneiro - Arlindo Gomes de Carvalho.

Promulgado em 4 de Agosto de 1991.

Publique-se.

O Presidente da República, MARIO SOARES.

Referendado em 8 de Agosto de 1991.

Pelo Primeiro-Ministro, Joaquim Fernando Nogueira, Ministro da Presidência.

Appendix II: Salamanca Statement

THE SALAMANCA STATEMENT AND FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION ON SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION

Adopted by the

**WORLD CONFERENCE ON SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION: ACCESS AND
QUALITY**

Salamanca, Spain, 7-10 June 1994

United Nations Ministry of Educational, Scientific and Education and Science
Cultural Organization Spain

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Preface

More than 300 participants representing 92 governments and 25 international organizations met in Salamanca, Spain, from 7 to 10 June 1994 to further the objective of Education for All/ by considering the fundamental policy shifts required to promote the approach of inclusive education, namely enabling schools to serve all children, particularly those with special educational needs. Organized by the Government of Spain in co-operation with UNESCO, the Conference brought together senior education officials, administrators, policy-makers and specialists, as well as representatives of the United Nations and the Specialized Agencies, other international governmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and donor agencies. The Conference adopted the Salamanca Statement on Principles, Policy and Practice in Special Needs Education and a Framework for Action. These documents are informed by the principle of inclusion, by recognition of the need to work towards "schools for all" - institutions which include everybody, celebrate differences, support learning, and respond to individual needs. As such, they constitute an important contribution to the agenda for achieving Education for All and for making schools educationally more effective. Special needs education - an issue of equal

concern to countries of the North and of the South - cannot advance in isolation. It has to form part of an overall educational strategy and, indeed, of new social and economic policies. It calls for major reform of the ordinary school. These documents represent a worldwide consensus on future directions for special needs education. UNESCO is proud to be associated with this Conference and its important conclusions. All concerned must now rise to the challenge and work to ensure that Education for All effectively means FOR ALL, particularly those who are most vulnerable and most in need. The future is not faded, but will be fashioned by our values, thoughts and actions. Our success in the years ahead will depend not so much on what we do as what we achieve. It is my hope that all readers of this document will help to enact the recommendations of the Salamanca Conference by endeavouring to translate its message into practice within their respective fields of responsibility. Federico Mayor

THE SALAMANCA STATEMENT ON PRINCIPLES, POLICY AND PRACTICE IN SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION

THE SALAMANCA STATEMENT

Reaffirming the right to education of every individual, as enshrined in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and renewing the pledge made by the world community at the 1990 World Conference on Education for All to ensure that right for all regardless of individual differences,

Recalling the several United Nations declarations culminating in the 1993 United Nations Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities, which urges States to ensure that the education of persons with disabilities is an integral part of the education system,

Noting with satisfaction the increased involvement of governments, advocacy groups, community and parent groups, and in particular organizations of persons with disabilities, in seeking to improve access to education for the majority of those with special needs still unreached; and

recognizing as evidence of this involvement the active participation of highlevel representatives of numerous governments, specialized agencies and inter-governmental organizations in this World Conference,

1 .

We, the delegates of the World Conference on Special Needs Education representing ninety-two governments and twenty – five international organizations, assembled here in Salamanca, Spain, from 7-10 June 1994, hereby reaffirm our commitment to Education for All, recognizing the necessity and urgency of providing education for children, youth and adults with special educational needs within the regular education system, and further hereby endorse the Framework for Action on Special Needs Education, that governments and organizations may be guided by the spirit of its provisions and recommendations.

2 .

We believe and proclaim that :

- every child has a fundamental right to education, and must be given the opportunity to achieve and maintain an acceptable level of learning,
- every child has unique characteristics, interests, abilities and learning needs,
- education systems should be designed and educational programmes implemented to take into account the wide diversity of these characteristics and needs,
- those with special educational needs must have access to regular schools which should accommodate them within a child-centred pedagogy capable of meeting these needs,
- regular schools with this inclusive orientation are the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all; moreover, they provide an effective education to the majority of children and improve the efficiency and ultimately the cost-effectiveness of the entire education system.

3 .

We call upon all governments and urge them to:

- give the highest policy and budgetary priority to improve their education systems to enable them to include all children regardless of individual differences or difficulties,
- adopt as a matter of law or policy the principle of inclusive education, enrolling all children in regular schools, unless there are compelling reasons for doing otherwise,
- develop demonstration projects and encourage exchanges with countries having experience with inclusive schools,
- establish decentralized and participatory mechanisms for planning, monitoring and evaluating educational provision for children and adults with special education needs,
- encourage and facilitate the participation of parents, communities and organization of persons with disabilities in the planning and decision-making processes concerning provision for special educational needs,
- invest greater effort in early identification and intervention strategies, as well as in vocational aspects of inclusive education,
- ensure that, in the context of a systemic change, teacher education programmes, both pre-service and in-service, address the provision of special needs education in inclusive schools.

4.

We also call upon the international community; in particular we call upon:

- governments with international cooperation programmes and international funding agencies, especially the sponsors of the World Conference on Education for All, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the World Bank:
- to endorse the approach of inclusive schooling and to support the development of special needs education as an integral part of all education programmes;

- the United Nations and its specialized agencies, in particular the International Labour Office (ILO), the World Health Organization (WHO), UNESCO and UNICEF:

- to strengthen their inputs for technical cooperation, as well as to reinforce their cooperation and networking for more efficient support to the expanded and integrated provision of special needs education;

• non-governmental organizations involved in country programming and service delivery:

- to strengthen their collaboration with the official national bodies and to intensify their growing involvement in planning, implementation and evaluation of inclusive provision for special educational needs;

• UNESCO, as the United Nations agency for education:

- to ensure that special needs education forms part of every discussion dealing with education for all in various forums,

- to mobilize the support of organizations of the teaching profession in matters related to enhancing teacher education as regards provision for special educational needs,

- to stimulate the academic community to strengthen research and networking and to establish regional centres of information and documentation; also, to serve as a clearinghouse for such activities and for disseminating the specific results and progress achieved at country level in pursuance of this Statement,

- to mobilize funds through the creation within its next Medium-Term Plan (1996-2002) of an expanded programme for inclusive schools and community support programmes, which would enable the launching of pilot projects that showcase new approaches for dissemination, and to develop indicators concerning the need for and provision of special needs education.

5.

Finally, we express our warm appreciation to the Government of Spain and to UNESCO for the organization of the Conference, and we urge them to make every effort to bring this Statement and the accompanying Framework for Action to the attention of the world community, especially at such important forums as

the Wo r l d Summit for Social Development (Copenhage n , 1995) and the Wo r l d Confe rence on Women (Beijing, 1 9 9 5) .

Adopted by accl a m at i o n , in the city of Salamanca, S p a i n ,on this 10th of June, 1994 .

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FR A M E WO R K FOR AC T I O N ON SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCAT I O N

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I n t r o d u c t i o n

1 . This Fra m ewo rk for Action on Special Needs Educat i o n

was adopted by the Wo r l d Confe rence on Special Needs

E d u c a t i o n o r g a n i z e d b y t h e G o v e r n m e n t o f S p a i n i n c o - o p e r a t i o n

with UNESCO and held in Salamanca from 7 to 10 Ju n e

1994. Its purpose is to info rm policy and guide action by

gove rn m e n t s , i n t e r n ational orga n i z at i o n s , n ational aid age nc

i e s , n o n - gove rnmental orga n i z at i o n s and other bodies in

implementing the **Salamanca Statement on Principles, Policy and Practice in Special Needs Education**. The **Framework** draws extensively upon the national experience of the participating countries as well as upon resolutions, recommendations and publications of the United Nations system and other intergovernmental organizations, especially the **Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities**¹. It also takes account of the proposals, guidelines and recommendations arising from the five regional seminars held to prepare the World Conference.

2. The right of every child to an education is proclaimed in the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** and was forcefully reaffirmed by the **World Declaration on Education for All**.

1 United Nations Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with

Disabilities, A/RES/48/96, United Nations Resolution adopted by the General

Assembly at its 48th session on 90 December 1993.

5

THE SALAMANCA STATEMENT

Every person with a disability has a right to express their wishes with regard to their education, as far as this can be ascertained. Parents have an inherent right to be consulted on the form of education best suited to the needs, circumstances and aspirations of their children.

3. The guiding principle that informs this **Framework** is that schools should accommodate **all children** regardless of their

physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other conditions. This should include disabled and gifted children, street and working children, children from remote or nomadic populations, children from linguistic, ethnic or cultural minorities and children from other disadvantaged or marginalized areas or groups. These conditions create a range of different challenges to school systems. In the context of this Framework, the term 'special educational needs' refers to all those children and youth whose needs arise from disabilities or learning difficulties. Many children experience learning difficulties and thus have special educational needs at some time during their schooling. Schools have to find ways of successfully educating all children, including those who have serious disadvantages and disabilities. There is an emerging consensus that children and youth with special educational needs should be included in the educational arrangements made for the majority of children. This has led to the concept of the inclusive school. The challenge confronting the inclusive school is that of developing a child-centred pedagogy capable of successfully educating all children, including those who have serious disadvantages and disabilities. The merit of such schools is not only that they are capable of providing quality education to all children; their establishment is a crucial step in helping to change discriminatory attitudes, in creating welcoming communities and in developing an inclusive

FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION

society. A change in social perspective is imperative. For far too long, the problems of people with disabilities have been compounded by a disabling society that has focused upon their impairments rather than their potential.

4. Special needs education incorporates the proven principles of sound pedagogy from which all children may benefit. It assumes that human differences are normal and that learning must accordingly be adapted to the needs of the child rather than the child fitted to preordained assumptions regarding the pace and nature of the learning process. A child-centred pedagogy is beneficial to all students and, as a consequence, to society as a whole.

Experience has demonstrated that it can substantially reduce the drop-out and repetition that are so much a part of many education systems while ensuring higher average levels of achievement. A child-centred pedagogy can help to avoid the waste of resources and the shattering of hopes that is all too frequently a consequence of poor quality instruction and a 'one size fits all' mentality towards education. Child-centred schools are, moreover, the training ground for a people-oriented society that respects both the differences and the dignity of all human beings.

5. This **Framework for Action** comprises the following sections:

- I. New thinking in special needs education
- II. Guidelines for action at the national level
- A. Policy and organization

B. School factors

C. Recruitment and training of educational personnel

D. External support services

E. Priorities

F. Community perspectives

G. Resource requirements

III. Guidelines for action at the regional and international level.

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I

NEW THINKING

IN SPECIAL

NEEDS

EDUCATION

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6. The trend in social policy during the past two decades has

been to promote integration and participation and to combat

exclusion. Inclusion and participation are essential to human

dignity and to the enjoyment and exercise of human rights.

Within the field of education, this is reflected in the development

of strategies that seek to bring about a genuine equalization

of opportunity. Experience in many countries demonstrates

that the integration of children and youth with special

educational needs is best achieved within inclusive schools

that serve all children within a community. It is within this

context that those with special educational needs can achieve

the fullest educational progress and social integration. While

inclusive schools provide a favorable setting for achieving equal opportunity and full participation, their success requires a concerted effort, not only by teachers and school staff, but also by peers, parents, families and volunteers. The reform of social institutions is not only a technical task; it depends, above all, upon the conviction, commitment and good will of the individuals who constitute society.

7. The fundamental principle of the inclusive school is that all children should learn together, wherever possible, regardless of any difficulties or differences they may have. Inclusive schools must recognize and respond to the diverse needs of their students, accommodating both different styles and rates of

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Learning and ensuring quality education to all through appropriate curricula, organizational arrangements, teaching strategies, resource use and partnerships with their communities.

There should be a continuum of support and services to match the continuum of special needs encountered in every school.

8. Within inclusive schools, children with special educational needs should receive whatever extra support they may require to ensure their effective education. Inclusive schooling is the most effective means for building solidarity between children with special needs and their peers. Assignment of children to special schools - or special classes or sections within a school on a permanent basis - should be the exception, to be recommended

only in those infrequent cases where it is clearly demonstrated that education in regular classrooms is incapable of meeting a child's educational or social needs or when it is required for the welfare of the child or that of other children.

9. The situation regarding special needs education varies enormously from one country to another. There are, for example, countries that have well established systems of special schools for those with specific impairments. Such special schools can represent a valuable resource for the development of inclusive schools. The staff of these special institutions possess the expertise needed for early screening and identification of children with disabilities. Special schools can also serve as training and resource centres for staff in regular schools. Finally, special schools or units within inclusive schools - may continue to provide the most suitable education for the relatively small number of children with disabilities who cannot be adequately served in regular classrooms or schools. Investment in existing special schools should be geared to their new and expanded role of providing professional support to

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regular schools in meeting special educational needs. An important contribution to ordinary schools, which the staff of special schools can make, is to the matching of curriculum content and method to the individual needs of pupils.

10. Countries that have few or no special schools would, in general

l, be well advised to concentrate their efforts on the development of inclusive schools and the specialized services needed to enable them to serve the vast majority of children and youth - especially provision of teacher training in special needs education and the establishment of suitably staffed and equipped resource centres to which schools could turn for support.

Experience, especially in developing countries, indicates that the high cost of special schools means, in practice, that only a small minority of students, usually an urban elite, benefit from them. The vast majority of students with special needs, especially in rural areas, are as a consequence provided with no services whatsoever. Indeed, in many developing countries, it is estimated that fewer than 1 per cent of children with special educational needs are included in existing provision.

Experience, moreover, suggests that inclusive schools, serving all of the children in a community, are most successful in eliciting community support and in finding imaginative and innovative ways of using the limited resources that are available.

11. Educational planning by governments should concentrate on education for **all** persons, in **all** regions of a country and in **all** economic conditions, through both public and private schools.

12. Because in the past relatively few children with disabilities have had access to education, especially in the developing regions of the world, there are millions of adults with disabilities who lack even the rudiments of a basic education. A

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concerted effort is thus required to teach literacy, numeracy and basic skills to persons with disabilities through adult education programmes.

13. It is particularly important to recognize that women have often been doubly disadvantaged, bias based on gender compounding the difficulties caused by their disabilities. Women and men should have equal influence on the design of educational programmes and the same opportunities to benefit from them. Special efforts should be made to encourage the participation of girls and women with disabilities in educational programmes.

14. This **Framework** is intended as an overall guide to planning action in special needs education. It evidently cannot take account of the vast variety of situations encountered in the different regions and countries of the world and must, accordingly, be adapted to fit local requirements and circumstances. To be effective, it must be complemented by national, regional and local plans of action inspired by a political and popular will to achieve **education for all**.

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II

GUIDELINES

FOR ACTION

AT THE

NATIONAL LEVEL

A . POLICY AND ORGANIZATION

15 . *Integrated education and community-based rehabilitation represent complementary and mutually supportive approaches to serving those with special needs. Both are based upon the principles of inclusion, integration and participation, and represent well-tested and cost-effective approaches to promoting equality of access for those with special educational needs as part of a nationwide strategy aimed at achieving **education for all**. Countries are invited to consider the following actions concerning the policy and organization of their education systems.*

16 . Legislation should recognize the principle of equality of opportunity for children, youth and adults with disabilities in primary, secondary and tertiary education carried out, in so far as possible, in integrated settings.

17 . Parallel and complementary legislative measures should be adopted in the fields of health, social welfare, vocational training and employment in order to support and give full effect to educational legislation .

18. Educational policies at all levels, from the national to the local, should stipulate that a child with a disability should attend the neighbourhood school that is, the school that would be attended if the child did not have a disability. Exceptions to this rule

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should be considered on a case-by-case basis where only education in a special school or establishment can be shown to meet the needs of the individual child.

19. The practice of 'mainstreaming' children with disabilities should be an integral part of national plans for achieving **education for all**. Even in those exceptional cases where children are placed in special schools, their education need not be entirely segregated. Part-time attendance at regular schools should be encouraged. Necessary provision should also be made for ensuring inclusion of youth and adults with special needs in secondary and higher education as well as in training programmes. Special attention should be given to ensuring equality of access and opportunity for girls and women with disabilities.

20. Special attention should be paid to the needs of children and youth with severe or multiple disabilities. They have the same rights as others in the community to the achievement of maximum independence as adults and should be educated to the best of their potential towards that end.

21. Educational policies should take full account of individual differences and situations. The importance of sign language as the medium of communication among the deaf, for example, should be recognized and provision made to ensure that all deaf persons have access to education in their national sign language. Owing to the particular communication needs of deaf and deaf/blind persons, their education may be more suit

ably provided in special schools or special classes and units
in mainstream schools.

22. Community-based rehabilitation should be developed as part of
a global strategy for supporting cost-effective education and
training for people with special educational needs. Community

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based rehabilitation should be seen as a specific approach within
community development aimed at rehabilitation, equalization
of opportunities and social integration of all people with disabilities:
it should be implemented through the combined
efforts of people with disabilities themselves, their families
and communities, and the appropriate education, health, vocational
and welfare services.

23. Both policies and financing arrangements should encourage
and facilitate the development of inclusive schools. Barriers
that impede movement from special to regular schools should
be removed and a common administrative structure organized.
Progress towards inclusion should be carefully monitored
through the collection of statistics capable of revealing the
number of students with disabilities who benefit from
resources, expertise and equipment intended for special needs
education as well as the number of students with special educational
needs enrolled in regular schools.

24. Co-ordination between educational authorities and those responsible
for health, employment and social services should be

strengthened at all levels to bring about convergence and complementarity. Planning and co-ordination should also take account of the actual and potential role that semi-public agencies and non-governmental organisations can play. A particular effort needs to be made to elicit community support in meeting special educational needs.

25. National authorities have a responsibility to monitor external funding to special needs education and, working in cooperation with their international partners, to ensure that it corresponds to national priorities and policies aimed at achieving **education for all**. Bilateral and multilateral aid agencies, for their part, should carefully consider national

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policies in respect of special needs education in planning and implementing programmes in education and related fields.

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B. SCHOOL

FAC T O R S

26. *Developing inclusive schools that cater for a wide range of pupils in both urban and rural areas requires: the articulation of a clear and forceful policy on inclusion together with adequate financial provision - an effective public information effort to combat prejudice and create informed and positive attitudes - an extensive programme of orientation and staff training - and the provision of necessary support services.*

Changes in all the following aspects of schooling, as well as many others, are necessary to contribute to the success of inclusive schools: curriculum, buildings, school organization, pedagogy, assessment, staffing, school ethos and extra-curricular activities.

27. Most of the required changes do not relate exclusively to the inclusion of children with special educational needs. They are part of a wider reform of education needed to improve its quality and relevance and to promote higher levels of learning achievement by all pupils. The **World Declaration on Education for All** underscores the need for a child-centred approach aimed at ensuring the successful schooling of all children. The adoption of more flexible, adaptive systems capable of taking fuller account of the different needs of children will contribute both to educational success and

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inclusion. The following guidelines focus on points to be considered in integrating children with special educational needs into inclusive schools.

Curriculum flexibility

28. Curricula should be adapted to children's needs, not vice versa. Schools should therefore provide curricular opportunities to suit children with different abilities and interests.

29. Children with special needs should receive additional instructional support in the context of the regular curriculum, not a

different curriculum. The guiding principle should be to provide all children with the same education, providing additional assistance and support to children requiring it.

30. The acquisition of knowledge is not only a matter of formal and theoretical instruction. The content of education should be geared to high standards and the needs of individuals with a view to enabling them to participate fully in development. Teaching should be related to pupils' own experience and to practical concerns in order to motivate them better.

31. In order to follow the progress of each child, assessment procedures should be reviewed. Formative evaluation should be incorporated into the regular educational process in order to keep pupils and teachers informed of the learning mastery attained as well as to identify difficulties and assist pupils to overcome them.

32. For children with special educational needs a continuum of support should be provided, ranging from minimal help in regular classrooms to additional learning support programmes within the school and extending, where necessary, to the

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provision of assistance from specialist teachers and external support staff.

33. Appropriate and affordable technology should be used whenever necessary to enhance success in the school curriculum and to aid communication, mobility and learning. Technical aids can

be offered in a more economical and effective way if they are provided from a central pool in each locality, where there is expertise in matching aids to individual needs and in ensuring maintenance.

34. Capability should be built up and research carried out at national and regional levels to develop appropriate support technology systems for special needs education. States that have ratified the Florence Agreement should be encouraged to use this instrument to facilitate the free circulation of materials and equipment related to the needs of people with disabilities.

Concurrently States that have not adhered to the Agreement are invited to do so in order to facilitate the free circulation of services and goods of educational and cultural nature.

School management

35. Local administrators and school heads can play a major role in making schools more responsive to children with special educational needs if they are given necessary authority and adequate training to do so. They should be invited to develop more flexible management procedures, to redeploy instructional resources, to diversify learning options, to mobilize child-to-child help, to offer support to pupils experiencing difficulties and to develop close relations with parents and the community. Successful school management depends upon the active and creative involvement of teachers

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and staff, and the development of effective co-operation and team work to meet the needs of students.

36. School heads have a special responsibility in promoting positive attitudes throughout the school community and in arranging for effective co-operation between class teachers and support staff. Appropriate arrangements for support and the exact role to be played by various partners in the educational process should be decided through consultation and negotiation.

37. Each school should be a community collectively accountable for the success or failure of every student. The educational team, rather than the individual teacher, should share the responsibility for the education of special needs children. Parents and volunteers should be invited to take an active part in the work of the school. Teachers, however, play a key role as the managers of the educational process, supporting children through the use of available resources both within and outside of the classroom.

Information and research

38. The dissemination of examples of good practice could help to improve teaching and learning. Information on relevant research findings would also be valuable. Pooling of experience and the development of documentation centres should be supported at national level, and access to sources of information broadened.

39. Special needs education should be integrated into the research and development programmes of research institutions and curriculum

development centres. Particular attention should be given in this area to action-research focusing on innovative

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teaching-learning strategies. Classroom teachers should participate actively in both the action and reflection involved in such inquiries.

Pilot experiments and in-depth studies should also be launched to assist in decision-making and in guiding future action.

These experiments and studies could be carried out on a co-operative basis by several countries.

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C. RECRUITMENT

AND TRAINING

OF

EDUCATIONAL

PERSONNEL

40. *Appropriate preparation of all educational personnel stands out as a key factor in promoting progress towards inclusive schools. Furthermore, the importance of recruiting teachers with disabilities who can serve as role models for children with disabilities is increasingly recognized. The following actions could be taken.*

41. Pre-service training programmes should provide to all student teachers, primary and secondary alike, positive orientation towards disability, thereby developing an understanding of what can be achieved in schools with locally available support

services. The knowledge and skills required are mainly those of good teaching and include assessing special needs, adapting curriculum content, utilizing assistive technology, individualizing teaching procedures to suit a larger range of abilities, etc. In teacher-training practice schools, specific attention should be given to preparing all teachers to exercise their autonomy and apply their skills in adapting curricula and instruction to meet pupils' needs as well as to collaborate with specialists and co-operate with parents.

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42. The skills required to respond to special educational needs should be taken into account during assessment of studies and teacher certification.

43. As a matter of priority, written materials should be prepared and seminars organized for local administrators, supervisors, headteachers and senior teachers to develop their capacity to provide leadership in this area and to support and train less-experienced teaching staff.

44. The major challenge lies in providing in-service training to all teachers, taking into account the varied and often difficult conditions under which they serve. In-service training should, wherever possible, be developed at school level by means of interaction with trainers and supported by distance education and other self-instruction techniques.

45. Specialized training in special needs education leading to additional qualifications should normally be integrated with or preceded by training and experience as a regular education teacher in order to ensure complementarity and mobility.

46. The training of special teachers needs to be reconsidered with a view to enabling them to work in different settings and to play a key role in special educational needs programmes. A non-categorical approach encompassing all types of disabilities should be developed as a common core, prior to further specialization in one or more disability-specific areas.

47. Universities have a major advisory role to play in the process of developing special needs education, especially as regards research, evaluation, preparation of teacher trainers, and designing training programmes and materials. Networking among universities and institutions of higher learning in developed and developing countries should be promoted. Linking research and training in this way is of great

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significance. It is also important to actively involve people with disabilities in research and training roles in order to ensure that their perspectives are taken fully into account.

48. A recurrent problem with education systems, even those that provide excellent educational services for students with disabilities, is the lack of role models for such students. Special needs students require opportunities to interact with adults with disabilities who have achieved success so that they can pattern their own lifestyles and aspirations on realistic expectations. In addition, students with disabilities should be given training and provided with examples of disability empowerment and leadership so that they can assist in shaping the policies

that will affect them in later life. Education systems should therefore seek to recruit qualified teachers and other educational personnel who have disabilities and should also seek to involve successful individuals with disabilities from within the region in the education of special needs children.

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D. E X T E R N A L S U P P O R T S E R V I C E S

49. Provision of support services is of paramount importance for the success of inclusive educational policies. In order to ensure that, at all levels, external services are made available to children with special needs, educational authorities should consider the following.

50. Support to ordinary schools could be provided by both teacher-education institutions and by the outreach staff of special schools. The latter should be used increasingly as resource centres for ordinary schools offering direct support to those children with special educational needs. Both training institutions and special schools can provide access to specific devices and materials as well as training in instructional strategies that are not provided in regular classrooms.

51. External support by resource personnel from various agencies,

departments and institutions, such as advisory teachers, educational psychologists, speech and occupational therapists, etc., should be co-ordinated at the local level. School clusters have proved a useful strategy in mobilizing educational resources as well as community involvement. Clusters of schools could be assigned collective responsibility for meeting the special educational needs of pupils in their area and give scope for allocating resources as required. Such arrangements

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should involve non-educational services as well. Indeed, experience suggests that education services would benefit significantly if greater efforts were made to ensure optimal use of all available expertise and resources.

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E. PRIORITY

AREAS

52. Integration of children and young people with special educational needs would be more effective and successful if special consideration were given in educational development plans to the following target areas: early childhood education to enhance the educability of all children, girls' education and the transition from education to adult working life.

Early childhood education

53. The success of the inclusive school depends considerably on early identification, assessment and stimulation of the very

young child with special educational needs. Early childhood care and education programmes for children aged up to 6 years ought to be developed and/or re-oriented to promote physical, intellectual and social development and school readiness. These programmes have a major economic value for the individual, the family and the society in preventing the aggravation of disabling conditions. Programmes at this level should recognize the principle of inclusion and be developed in a comprehensive way by combining pre-school activities and early childhood health care.

54. Many countries have adopted policies in favour of early childhood education, either by supporting the development of

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kindergartens and day nurseries or by organizing family information and awareness activities in conjunction with community services (health, maternal and infant care), schools and local family or women's associations.

Girls' education

55. Girls with disabilities are doubly disadvantaged. A special effort is required to provide training and education for girls with special educational needs. In addition to gaining access to school, girls with disabilities should have access to information and guidance as well as to models which could help them to make realistic choices and preparation for their future role as adult women.

Preparation for adult life

56. Young people with special educational needs should be helped to make an effective transition from school to adult working life. Schools should assist them to become economically active and provide them with the skills needed in everyday life, offering training in skills which respond to the social and communication demands and expectations of adult life. This calls for appropriate training technologies, including direct experience in real life situations outside school. Curricula for students with special educational needs in senior classes should include specific transitional programmes, support to enter higher education whenever possible and subsequent vocational training preparing them to function as independent, contributing members of their communities after leaving school. These activities should be carried out with the active

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involvement of vocational guidance counsellors, placement officers, trade unions, local authorities, and the different services and agencies concerned.

Adult and continuing education

57. Persons with disabilities should be given special attention in the design and implementation of adult and continuing education programmes. Persons with disabilities should be given priority access to such programmes. Special courses should also be designed to suit the needs and conditions of different

groups of adults with disabilities.

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F. COMMUNITY

PERSPECTIVES

58. *Realizing the goal of successful education of children with special educational needs is not the task of the Ministries of Education and schools alone. It requires the co-operation of families, and the mobilization of the community and voluntary organizations as well as the support of the public-at-large. Experience from countries or areas that have witnessed progress in equalizing educational opportunities for children and youth with special educational needs suggests several useful lessons.*

Parent partnership

59. The education of children with special educational needs is a

shared task of parents and professionals. A positive attitude on the part of parents favours school and social integration.

Parents need support in order to assume the role of a parent of a child with special needs. The role of families and parents could be enhanced by the provision of necessary information in simple and clear language; addressing the needs for information and training in parenting skills is a particularly important task in cultural environments where there is little tradition of schooling. Both parents and teachers may need

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support and encouragement in learning to work together as equal partners.

60. Parents are privileged partners as regards the special educational needs of their child, and to the extent possible should be accorded the choice in the type of education provision they desire for their child.

61. A co-operative, supportive partnership between school administrators, teachers and parents should be developed and parents regarded as active partners in decision-making.

Parents should be encouraged to participate in educational activities at home and at school (where they could observe effective techniques and learn how to organize extra-curricular activities), as well as in the supervision and support of their children's learning.

62. Governments should take a lead in promoting parental partnership

ership, through both statements of policy and legislation concerning parental rights. The development of parents' associations should be promoted and their representatives involved in the design and implementation of programmes intended to enhance the education of their children. Organizations of people with disabilities should also be consulted concerning the design and implementation of programmes.

Community involvement

63. Decentralization and local-area-based planning favour greater involvement of communities in education and training of people with special educational needs. Local administrators should encourage community participation by giving support to

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representative associations and inviting them to take part in decision-making. To this end, mobilizing and monitoring mechanisms composed of local civil administration, education, health and development authorities, community leaders and voluntary organizations should be established in geographical areas small enough to ensure meaningful community participation.

64. Community involvement should be sought in order to supplement in-school activities, provide help in doing homework and compensate for lack of family support. Mention should be made in this connection of the role of neighbourhood associations in making premises available, the role of family associat

ions, youth clubs and movements, and the potential role of elderly people and other volunteers, including persons with disabilities, in both in-school and out-of-school programmes.

65. Whenever action for community-based rehabilitation is initiated from outside, it is the community that must decide whether the programme will become part of the ongoing community development activities. Various partners in the community, including organizations of persons with disabilities and other non-governmental organizations, should be empowered to take responsibility for the programme. Where appropriate, government agencies at both the national and local level should also lend financial and other support.

Role of voluntary organizations

66. As voluntary associations and national non-governmental organizations have more freedom to act and can respond more readily to expressed needs, they should be supported in developing new ideas and pioneering innovative delivery

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methods. They can play the roles of innovator and catalyst and extend the range of programmes available to the community.

67. Organizations of people with disabilities i.e., those in which they themselves have the decisive influence - should be invited to take an active part in identifying needs, expressing views on priorities, administering services, evaluating performance and advocating change.

P u b l i c a w a r e n e s s

68 . P o l i c y - m a k e r s a t a l l l e v e l s , i n c l u d i n g t h e s c h o o l l e v e l , s h o u l d r e g u l a r l y r e a f f i r m t h e i r c o m m i t m e n t t o i n c l u s i o n a n d p r o m o t e p o s i t i v e a t t i t u d e s a m o n g c h i l d r e n , a m o n g t e a c h e r s a n d a m o n g t h e p u b l i c - a t - l a r g e t o w a r d s t h o s e w i t h s p e c i a l e d u c a t i o n a l n e e d s .

69 . M a s s m e d i a c a n p l a y a p o w e r f u l r o l e i n p r o m o t i n g p o s i t i v e a t t i t u d e s t o w a r d s t h e i n t e g r a t i o n o f d i s a b l e d p e r s o n s i n s o c i e t y , o v e r c o m i n g p r e j u d i c e a n d m i s i n f o r m a t i o n , a n d i n f u s i n g g r e a t e r o p t i m i s m a n d i m a g i n a t i o n a b o u t t h e c a p a b i l i t i e s o f p e r s o n s w i t h d i s a b i l i t i e s . T h e m e d i a c a n a l s o p r o m o t e p o s i t i v e a t t i t u d e s o f e m p l o y e r s t o w a r d h i r i n g p e r s o n s w i t h d i s a b i l i t i e s .

T h e m e d i a s h o u l d b e u s e d t o i n f o r m t h e p u b l i c o n n e w a p p r o a c h e s i n e d u c a t i o n , p a r t i c u l a r l y a s r e g a r d s p r o v i s i o n f o r s p e c i a l n e e d s e d u c a t i o n i n r e g u l a r s c h o o l s , b y p o p u l a r i z i n g e x a m p l e s o f g o o d p r a c t i c e a n d s u c c e s s f u l e x p e r i e n c e s .

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G. R E S O U R C E

R E Q U I R E M E N T S

70 . *The development of inclusive schools as the most effective means for achieving education for all must be recognized as a key government policy and accorded a privileged place on the nation's development agenda. It is only in this way that adequate resources can be obtained. Changes in policies and priorities cannot be effective unless adequate resource requirements are met. Political commitment, at both the national*

and community level, is needed both to obtain additional resources and to redeploy existing ones. While communities must play a key role in developing inclusive schools, government encouragement and support is also essential in devising effective and affordable solutions.

71. The distribution of resources to schools should take realistic account of the differences in expenditure required to provide appropriate education for all children, bearing in mind their needs and circumstances. It may be realistic to begin by supporting those schools that wish to promote inclusive education and to launch pilot projects in some areas in order to gain the necessary expertise for expansion and progressive generalization. In the generalization of inclusive education, the level of support and expertise will have to be matched to the nature of the demand.

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72. Resources must also be allocated to support services for the training of mainstream teachers, for the provision of resource centres and for special education teachers or resource teachers. Appropriate technical aids to ensure the successful operation of an integrated education system must also be provided. Integrated approaches should, therefore, be linked to the development of support services at central and intermediate levels.

73. Pooling the human, institutional, logistic, material and financial

resources of various ministerial departments (Education, Health, Social Welfare, Labour, Youth, etc.), territorial and local authorities, and other specialized institutions is an effective way to maximize their impact. Combining both an educational and a social approach to special needs education will require effective management structures enabling the various services to co-operate at both national and local levels, and allowing the public authorities and associative bodies to join forces.

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III

GUIDELINES

FOR ACTION

AT THE

REGIONAL AND

INTERNATIONAL

LEVEL

FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION

74. *International co-operation among governmental and nongovernmental, regional and interregional organizations can play a very important role in supporting the move towards inclusive schools. Based on past experience in this area, international organizations, intergovernmental and non-governmental as well as bilateral donor agencies, could consider joining forces in implementing the following strategic approaches.*

75. Technical assistance should be directed to strategic fields of intervention with a multiplier effect, especially in developing countries. One important task for international co-operation is to support the launching of pilot projects aimed at trying out new approaches and at capacity building.

76. The organization of regional partnerships or partnerships among countries with similar approaches in special needs education could result in the planning of joint activities under the auspices of existing regional or other co-operative mechanisms.

Such activities should be designed to take advantage of economies of scale, to draw upon the experience of participating countries, and to further the development of national capabilities.

77. A priority mission incumbent upon international organizations is to facilitate exchange of data, information and results of pilot

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programmes in special needs education between countries and regions. Collection of internationally comparable indicators of progress in inclusion in education and employment should become a part of the worldwide database on education. Focal points might be established in sub-regional centres in order to facilitate information exchanges. Existing structures at the regional and international levels should be strengthened and their activities extended to such fields as policies, programming, training of personnel and evaluation.

78 . A high percentage of disability is the direct result of lack of information , poverty and low health standards. As the worldwide prevalence of disabilities is increasing , particularly in the developing countries , there should be joint international action in close collaboration with national efforts to prevent the causes of disability through education which , in turn , would reduce the incidence and prevalence of disabilities , thereby further reducing the demands on the limited financial and human resources of a country.

79 . International and technical assistance to special needs education derives from numerous sources. It is , therefore , essential to ensure coherence and complementarity among organizations of the United Nations system and other agencies lending assistance in this area .

80 . International co-operation should support advanced training seminars for educational managers and other specialists at the regional level and foster co-operation between university departments and training institutions in different countries for conducting comparative studies as well as for the publication of reference documents and instructional materials .

81 . International co-operation should assist in the development of regional and international associations of professionals

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concerned with the enhancement of special needs education and should support the creation and dissemination of newsletters or journals as well as the holding of regional meetings and conferences .

82. International and regional meetings covering issues related to education should ensure that special educational needs are addressed as an integral part of the debate and not as a separate issue. As a concrete example, the issue of special needs education should be put on the agenda of regional ministerial conferences organized by UNESCO and other intergovernmental bodies.

83. International technical co-operation and funding agencies involved in support and development of Education for All initiatives should ensure that special needs education is an integral part of all development projects.

84. International co-ordination should exist to support universal accessibility specifications in communication technology underpinning the emerging information infrastructure.

85. This Framework for Action was adopted by acclamation after discussion and amendment in the Closing Session of the Conference on 10 June 1994. It is intended to guide Member States and governmental and non-governmental organizations in implementing the Salamanca Statement on Principles, Policy, and Practice in Special Needs Education.

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Appendix III Decreto-lei nº 3/2008

Constitui desígnio do XVII Governo Constitucional promover a igualdade de oportunidades, valorizar a educação e promover a melhoria da qualidade do ensino. Um aspecto determinante dessa qualidade é a promoção de uma escola democrática e inclusiva, orientada para o sucesso educativo de todas as crianças e jovens. Nessa medida importa planear um sistema de educação flexível, pautado por uma política global integrada, que permita responder à diversidade de características e necessidades de todos os alunos que implicam a inclusão das crianças e jovens com necessidades educativas especiais no quadro de uma política de qualidade orientada para o sucesso educativo de todos os alunos.

Nos últimos anos, principalmente após a Declaração de Salamanca (1994), tem vindo a afirmar-se a noção de escola inclusiva, capaz de acolher e reter, no seu seio, grupos de crianças e jovens tradicionalmente excluídos. Esta noção, dada a sua dimensão eminentemente social, tem merecido o apoio generalizado de profissionais, da comunidade científica e de pais.

A educação inclusiva visa a equidade educativa, sendo que por esta se entende a garantia de igualdade, quer no acesso quer nos resultados.

No quadro da equidade educativa, o sistema e as práticas educativas devem assegurar a gestão da diversidade da qual decorrem diferentes tipos de estratégias que permitam responder às necessidades educativas dos alunos. Deste modo, a escola inclusiva pressupõe individualização e personalização das estratégias educativas, enquanto método de prossecução do objectivo de promover competências universais que permitam a autonomia e o acesso à condução plena da cidadania por parte de todos.

Todos os alunos têm necessidades educativas, trabalhadas no quadro da gestão da diversidade acima referida. Existem casos, porém, em que as necessidades se revestem de contornos muito específicos, exigindo a activação de apoios especializados.

Os apoios especializados visam responder às necessidades educativas especiais dos

alunos com limitações significativas ao nível da actividade e da participação, num ou vários domínios de vida, decorrentes de alterações funcionais e estruturais, de carácter permanente, resultando em dificuldades continuadas ao nível da comunicação, da aprendizagem, da mobilidade, da autonomia, do relacionamento interpessoal e da participação social e dando lugar à mobilização de serviços especializados para promover o potencial de funcionamento biopsicosocial.

Os apoios especializados podem implicar a adaptação de estratégias, recursos, conteúdos, processos, procedimentos e instrumentos, bem como a utilização de tecnologias de apoio. Portanto, não se trata só de medidas para os alunos, mas também de medidas de mudança no contexto escolar.

Entre os alunos com deficiências e incapacidades alguns necessitam de acções positivas que exigem diferentes graus de intensidade e de especialização. À medida que aumenta a necessidade de uma maior especialização do apoio personalizado, decresce o número de crianças e jovens que dele necessitam, do que decorre que apenas uma reduzida percentagem necessita de apoios personalizados altamente especializados.

Assim:

No desenvolvimento do regime jurídico estabelecido pela Lei n.º 46/86, de 14 de Outubro, e nos termos da alínea c) do n.º 1 do artigo 198.º da Constituição, o Governo decreta o seguinte:

Capítulo I

Objectivos, enquadramento e princípios orientadores

Artigo 1.º

Objecto e âmbito

1 - O presente decreto-lei define os apoios especializados a prestar na educação pré-escolar e nos ensinos básico e secundário dos sectores público, particular e cooperativo, visando a criação de condições para a adequação do processo educativo às necessidades educativas especiais dos alunos com limitações significativas ao nível da actividade e da participação num ou vários domínios de vida, decorrentes de alterações funcionais e estruturais, de carácter permanente, resultando em dificuldades continuadas ao nível da comunicação, da aprendizagem, da mobilidade, da autonomia, do relacionamento

interpessoal e da participação social.

2 - A educação especial tem por objectivos a inclusão educativa e social, o acesso e o sucesso educativo, a autonomia, a estabilidade emocional, bem como a promoção da igualdade de oportunidades, a preparação para o prosseguimento de estudos ou para uma adequada preparação para a vida profissional e para uma transição da escola para o emprego das crianças e dos jovens com necessidades educativas especiais nas condições acima descritas.

Artigo 2.º

Princípios orientadores

1 - A educação especial prossegue, em permanência, os princípios da justiça e da solidariedade social, da não discriminação e do combate à exclusão social, da igualdade de oportunidades no acesso e sucesso educativo, da participação dos pais e da confidencialidade da informação.

2 - Nos termos do disposto no número anterior, as escolas ou os agrupamentos de escolas, os estabelecimentos de ensino particular com paralelismo pedagógico, as escolas profissionais, directa ou indirectamente financiados pelo Ministério da Educação (ME), não podem rejeitar a matrícula ou a inscrição de qualquer criança ou jovem com base na incapacidade ou nas necessidades educativas especiais que manifestem.

3 - As crianças e jovens com necessidades educativas especiais de carácter permanente gozam de prioridade na matrícula, tendo o direito, nos termos do presente decreto-lei, a frequentar o jardim-de-infância ou a escola nos mesmos termos das restantes crianças.

4 - As crianças e os jovens com necessidades educativas especiais de carácter permanente têm direito ao reconhecimento da sua singularidade e à oferta de respostas educativas adequadas.

5 - Toda a informação resultante da intervenção técnica e educativa está sujeita aos limites constitucionais e legais, em especial os relativos à reserva da intimidade da vida privada e familiar e ao tratamento automatizado, conexão, transmissão, utilização e

protecção de dados pessoais, sendo garantida a sua confidencialidade.

6 - Estão vinculados ao dever do sigilo os membros da comunidade educativa que tenham acesso à informação referida no número anterior.

Artigo 3.º

Participação dos pais e encarregados de educação

1 - Os pais ou encarregados de educação têm o direito e o dever de participar activamente, exercendo o poder paternal nos termos da lei, em tudo o que se relacione com a educação especial a prestar ao seu filho, acedendo, para tal, a toda a informação constante do processo educativo.

2 - Quando, comprovadamente, os pais ou encarregados de educação não exerçam o seu direito de participação, cabe à escola desencadear as respostas educativas adequadas em função das necessidades educativas especiais diagnosticadas.

3 - Quando os pais ou encarregados de educação não concordem com as medidas educativas propostas pela escola, podem recorrer, mediante documento escrito, no qual fundamentam a sua posição, aos serviços competentes do ME.

Artigo 4.º

Organização

1 - As escolas devem incluir nos seus projectos educativos as adequações relativas ao processo de ensino e de aprendizagem, de carácter organizativo e de funcionamento, necessárias para responder adequadamente às necessidades educativas especiais de carácter permanente das crianças e jovens, com vista a assegurar a sua maior participação nas actividades de cada grupo ou turma e da comunidade escolar em geral.

2 - Para garantir as adequações de carácter organizativo e de funcionamento referidas no número anterior, são criadas por despacho ministerial:

- a) Escolas de referência para a educação bilingue de alunos surdos;
- b) Escolas de referência para a educação de alunos cegos e com baixa visão.

3 - Para apoiar a adequação do processo de ensino e de aprendizagem podem as escolas

ou agrupamentos de escolas desenvolver respostas específicas diferenciadas para alunos com perturbações do espectro do autismo e com multideficiência, designadamente através da criação de: a) Unidades de ensino estruturado para a educação de alunos com perturbações do espectro do autismo;

b) Unidades de apoio especializado para a educação de alunos com multideficiência e surdocegueira congénita.

4 - As respostas referidas nas alíneas a) e b) do número anterior são propostas por deliberação do conselho executivo, ouvido o conselho pedagógico, quando numa escola ou grupos de escolas limítrofes, o número de alunos o justificar e quando a natureza das respostas, dos equipamentos específicos e das especializações profissionais, justifiquem a sua concentração.

5 - As unidades referidas no n.º 3 são criadas por despacho do director regional de educação competente.

Capítulo II

Procedimentos de referenciação e avaliação

Artigo 5.º

Processo de referenciação

1 - A educação especial pressupõe a referenciação das crianças e jovens que eventualmente dela necessitem, a qual deve ocorrer o mais precocemente possível, detectando os factores de risco associados às limitações ou incapacidades.

2 - A referenciação efectua-se por iniciativa dos pais ou encarregados de educação, dos serviços de intervenção precoce, dos docentes ou de outros técnicos ou serviços que intervêm com a criança ou jovem ou que tenham conhecimento da eventual existência de necessidades educativas especiais.

3 - A referenciação é feita aos órgãos de administração e gestão das escolas ou agrupamentos de escolas da área da residência, mediante o preenchimento de um documento onde se explicitam as razões que levaram a referenciar a situação e se anexa toda a documentação considerada relevante para o processo de avaliação.

Artigo 6.º

Processo de avaliação

1 - Referenciada a criança ou jovem, nos termos do artigo anterior, compete ao conselho executivo desencadear os procedimentos seguintes:

- a) Solicitar ao departamento de educação especial e ao serviço de psicologia um relatório técnico-pedagógico conjunto, com os contributos dos restantes intervenientes no processo, onde sejam identificadas, nos casos em que tal se justifique, as razões que determinam as necessidades educativas especiais do aluno e a sua tipologia, designadamente as condições de saúde, doença ou incapacidade;
- b) Solicitar ao departamento de educação especial a determinação dos apoios especializados, das adequações do processo de ensino e de aprendizagem de que o aluno deva beneficiar e das tecnologias de apoio;
- c) Assegurar a participação activa dos pais ou encarregados de educação, assim como a sua anuência;
- d) Homologar o relatório técnico-pedagógico e determinar as suas implicações;
- e) Nos casos em que se considere não se estar perante uma situação de necessidades educativas que justifiquem a intervenção dos serviços da educação especial, solicitar ao departamento de educação especial e aos serviços de psicologia o encaminhamento dos alunos para os apoios disponibilizados pela escola que melhor se adequem à sua situação específica.

2 - Para a elaboração do relatório a que se refere a alínea a) do número anterior pode o conselho executivo, quando tal se justifique, recorrer aos centros de saúde, a centros de recursos especializados, às escolas ou unidades referidas nos n.os 2 e 3 do artigo 4.º

3 - Do relatório técnico-pedagógico constam os resultados decorrentes da avaliação, obtidos por referência à Classificação Internacional da Funcionalidade, Incapacidade e Saúde, da Organização Mundial de Saúde, servindo de base à elaboração do programa educativo individual.

4 - O relatório técnico-pedagógico a que se referem os números anteriores é parte integrante do processo individual do aluno.

5 - A avaliação deve ficar concluída 60 dias após a referenciação com a aprovação do

programa educativo individual pelo presidente do conselho executivo.

6 - Quando o presidente do conselho executivo decida pela não aprovação, deve exarar despacho justificativo da decisão, devendo reenviá-lo à entidade que o tenha elaborado com o fim de obter uma melhor justificação ou enquadramento.

Artigo 7.º

Serviço docente nos processos de referenciação e de avaliação

1 - O serviço docente no âmbito dos processos de referenciação e de avaliação assume carácter prioritário, devendo concluir-se no mais curto período de tempo, dando preferência à sua execução sobre toda a actividade docente e não docente, à excepção da lectiva.

2 - O serviço de referenciação e de avaliação é de aceitação obrigatória e quando realizado por um docente é sempre integrado na componente não lectiva do seu horário de trabalho.

Capítulo III

Programa educativo individual e plano individual de transição

Artigo 8.º

Programa educativo individual

1 - O programa educativo individual é o documento que fixa e fundamenta as respostas educativas e respectivas formas de avaliação.

2 - O programa educativo individual documenta as necessidades educativas especiais da criança ou jovem, baseadas na observação e avaliação de sala de aula e nas informações complementares disponibilizadas pelos participantes no processo.

3 - O programa educativo individual integra o processo individual do aluno.

Artigo 9.º

Modelo do programa educativo individual

1 - O modelo do programa educativo individual é aprovado por deliberação do conselho pedagógico e inclui os dados do processo individual do aluno, nomeadamente

identificação, história escolar e pessoal relevante, conclusões do relatório de avaliação e as adequações no processo de ensino e de aprendizagem a realizar, com indicação das metas, das estratégias, recursos humanos e materiais e formas de avaliação.

2 - O modelo do programa educativo individual integra os indicadores de funcionalidade, bem como os factores ambientais que funcionam como facilitadores ou como barreiras à actividade e participação do aluno na vida escolar, obtidos por referência à Classificação Internacional da Funcionalidade, Incapacidade e Saúde, em termos que permitam identificar o perfil concreto de funcionalidade.

3 - Do modelo de programa educativo individual devem constar, de entre outros, obrigatoriamente:

- a) A identificação do aluno;
- b) O resumo da história escolar e outros antecedentes relevantes;
- c) A caracterização dos indicadores de funcionalidade e do nível de aquisições e dificuldades do aluno;
- d) Os factores ambientais que funcionam como facilitadores ou como barreiras à participação e à aprendizagem;
- e) Definição das medidas educativas a implementar;
- f) Discriminação dos conteúdos, dos objectivos gerais e específicos a atingir e das estratégias e recursos humanos e materiais a utilizar;
- g) Nível de participação do aluno nas actividades educativas da escola;
- h) Distribuição horária das diferentes actividades previstas;
- i) Identificação dos técnicos responsáveis;
- j) Definição do processo de avaliação da implementação do programa educativo individual;
- l) A data e assinatura dos participantes na sua elaboração e dos responsáveis pelas respostas educativas a aplicar.

Artigo 10.º

Elaboração do programa educativo individual

1 - Na educação pré-escolar e no 1.º ciclo do ensino básico, o programa educativo individual é elaborado, conjunta e obrigatoriamente, pelo docente do grupo ou turma, pelo docente de educação especial, pelos encarregados de educação e sempre que se

considere necessário, pelos serviços referidos na alínea a) do n.º 1 e no n.º 2 do artigo 6.º, sendo submetido à aprovação do conselho pedagógico e homologado pelo conselho executivo.

2 - Nos 2.º e 3.º ciclos do ensino básico e no ensino secundário e em todas as modalidades não sujeitas a monodocência, o programa educativo individual é elaborado pelo director de turma, pelo docente de educação especial, pelos encarregados de educação e sempre que se considere necessário pelos serviços referidos na alínea a) do n.º 1 e no n.º 2 do artigo 6.º, sendo submetido à aprovação do conselho pedagógico e homologado pelo conselho executivo.

3 - No caso dos alunos surdos com ensino bilingue deve também participar na elaboração do programa educativo individual um docente surdo de LGP.

Artigo 11.º

Coordenação do programa educativo individual

1 - O coordenador do programa educativo individual é o educador de infância, o professor do 1.º ciclo ou o director de turma, a quem esteja atribuído o grupo ou a turma que o aluno integra.

2 - A aplicação do programa educativo individual carece de autorização expressa do encarregado de educação, excepto nas situações previstas no n.º 2 do artigo 3.º

Artigo 12.º

Prazos de aplicação do programa educativo individual

1 - A elaboração do programa educativo individual deve decorrer no prazo máximo de 60 dias após a referenciação dos alunos com necessidades educativas especiais de carácter permanente.

2 - O programa educativo individual constitui o único documento válido para efeitos de distribuição de serviço docente e não docente e constituição de turmas, não sendo permitida a aplicação de qualquer adequação no processo de ensino e de aprendizagem sem a sua existência.

Artigo 13.º

Acompanhamento do programa educativo individual

- 1 - O programa educativo individual deve ser revisto a qualquer momento e, obrigatoriamente, no final de cada nível de educação e ensino e no fim de cada ciclo do ensino básico.
- 2 - A avaliação da implementação das medidas educativas deve assumir carácter de continuidade, sendo obrigatória pelo menos em cada um dos momentos de avaliação sumativa interna da escola.
- 3 - Dos resultados obtidos por cada aluno com a aplicação das medidas estabelecidas no programa educativo individual, deve ser elaborado um relatório circunstanciado no final do ano lectivo.
- 4 - O relatório referido no número anterior é elaborado, conjuntamente pelo educador de infância, professor do 1.º ciclo ou director de turma, pelo docente de educação especial, pelo psicólogo e pelos docentes e técnicos que acompanham o desenvolvimento do processo educativo do aluno e aprovado pelo conselho pedagógico e pelo encarregado de educação.
- 5 - O relatório explicita a existência da necessidade de o aluno continuar a beneficiar de adequações no processo de ensino e de aprendizagem, propõe as alterações necessárias ao programa educativo individual e constitui parte integrante do processo individual do aluno.
- 6 - O relatório referido nos números anteriores, ao qual é anexo o programa educativo individual, é obrigatoriamente comunicado ao estabelecimento que receba o aluno, para prosseguimento de estudos ou em resultado de processo de transferência.

Artigo 14.º

Plano individual de transição

- 1 - Sempre que o aluno apresente necessidades educativas especiais de carácter permanente que o impeçam de adquirir as aprendizagens e competências definidas no currículo deve a escola complementar o programa educativo individual com um plano individual de transição destinado a promover a transição para a vida pós-escolar e,

sempre que possível, para o exercício de uma actividade profissional com adequada inserção social, familiar ou numa instituição de carácter ocupacional.

2 - A concretização do número anterior, designadamente a implementação do plano individual de transição, inicia-se três anos antes da idade limite de escolaridade obrigatória, sem prejuízo do disposto no artigo anterior.

3 - No sentido de preparar a transição do jovem para a vida pós-escolar, o plano individual de transição deve promover a capacitação e a aquisição de competências sociais necessárias à inserção familiar e comunitária.

4 - O plano individual de transição deve ser datado e assinado por todos os profissionais que participam na sua elaboração, bem como pelos pais ou encarregados de educação e, sempre que possível, pelo próprio aluno.

Artigo 15.º

Certificação

1 - Os instrumentos de certificação da escolaridade devem adequar-se às necessidades especiais dos alunos que seguem o seu percurso escolar com programa educativo individual.

2 - Para efeitos do número anterior, os instrumentos normalizados de certificação devem identificar as adequações do processo de ensino e de aprendizagem que tenham sido aplicadas.

3 - Sem prejuízo do disposto no número anterior, as normas de emissão e os formulários a utilizar são as mesmas que estejam legalmente fixadas para o sistema de ensino.

Capítulo IV

Medidas educativas

Artigo 16.º

Adequação do processo de ensino e de aprendizagem

1 - A adequação do processo de ensino e de aprendizagem integra medidas educativas que visam promover a aprendizagem e a participação dos alunos com necessidades

educativas especiais de carácter permanente.

2 - Constituem medidas educativas referidas no número anterior:

- a) Apoio pedagógico personalizado;
- b) Adequações curriculares individuais;
- c) Adequações no processo de matrícula;
- d) Adequações no processo de avaliação;
- e) Currículo específico individual;
- f) Tecnologias de apoio.

3 - As medidas referidas no número anterior podem ser aplicadas cumulativamente, com excepção das alíneas b) e e), não cumuláveis entre si.

4 - As medidas educativas referidas no n.º 2 pressupõem o planeamento de estratégias e de actividades que visam o apoio personalizado aos alunos com necessidades educativas especiais de carácter permanente que integram obrigatoriamente o plano de actividades da escola de acordo com o projecto educativo de escola.

5 - O projecto educativo da escola deve conter:

- a) As metas e estratégias que a escola se propõe realizar com vista a apoiar os alunos com necessidades educativas especiais de carácter permanente;
- b) A identificação das respostas específicas diferenciadas a disponibilizar para alunos surdos, cegos, com baixa visão, com perturbações do espectro do autismo e com multideficiência.

Artigo 17.º

Apoio pedagógico personalizado

1 - Para efeitos do presente decreto-lei entende-se por apoio pedagógico personalizado:

- a) O reforço das estratégias utilizadas no grupo ou turma aos níveis da organização, do espaço e das actividades;
- b) O estímulo e reforço das competências e aptidões envolvidas na aprendizagem;
- c) A antecipação e reforço da aprendizagem de conteúdos leccionados no seio do grupo ou da turma;
- d) O reforço e desenvolvimento de competências específicas.

2 - O apoio definido nas alíneas a), b) e c) do número anterior é prestado pelo educador de infância, pelo professor de turma ou de disciplina, conforme o nível de educação ou de ensino do aluno.

3 - O apoio definido na alínea d) do n.º 1 é prestado, consoante a gravidade da situação dos alunos e a especificidade das competências a desenvolver, pelo educador de infância, professor da turma ou da disciplina, ou pelo docente de educação especial.

Artigo 18.º

Adequações curriculares individuais

1 - Entende-se por adequações curriculares individuais aquelas que, mediante o parecer do conselho de docentes ou conselho de turma, conforme o nível de educação e ensino, se considere que têm como padrão o currículo comum, no caso da educação pré-escolar as que respeitem as orientações curriculares, no ensino básico as que não põem em causa a aquisição das competências terminais de ciclo e, no ensino secundário, as que não põem em causa as competências essenciais das disciplinas.

2 - As adequações curriculares podem consistir na introdução de áreas curriculares específicas que não façam parte da estrutura curricular comum, nomeadamente leitura e escrita em Braille, orientação e mobilidade; treino de visão e a actividade motora adaptada, entre outras.

3 - A adequação do currículo dos alunos surdos com ensino bilingue consiste na introdução de áreas curriculares específicas para a primeira língua (L1), segunda língua (L2) e terceira língua (L3):

- a) A língua gestual portuguesa (L1), do pré-escolar ao ensino secundário;
- b) O português segunda língua (L2) do pré-escolar ao ensino secundário;
- c) A introdução de uma língua estrangeira escrita (L3) do 3.º ciclo do ensino básico ao ensino secundário.

4 - As adequações curriculares podem consistir igualmente na introdução de objectivos e conteúdos intermédios em função das competências terminais do ciclo ou de curso, das características de aprendizagem e dificuldades específicas dos alunos.

5 - As adequações curriculares individuais podem traduzir-se na dispensa das actividades que se revelem de difícil execução em função da incapacidade do aluno, só sendo aplicáveis quando se verifique que o recurso a tecnologias de apoio não é suficiente para colmatar as necessidades educativas resultantes da incapacidade.

Artigo 19.º

Adequações no processo de matrícula

1 - As crianças e jovens com necessidades educativas especiais de carácter permanente gozam de condições especiais de matrícula, podendo nos termos do presente decreto-lei, frequentar o jardim-de-infância ou a escola, independentemente da sua área de residência.

2 - As crianças com necessidades educativas especiais de carácter permanente podem, em situações excepcionais devidamente fundamentadas, beneficiar do adiamento da matrícula no 1.º ano de escolaridade obrigatória, por um ano, não renovável.

3 - A matrícula por disciplinas pode efectuar-se nos 2.º e 3.º ciclos do ensino básico e no ensino secundário, desde que assegurada a sequencialidade do regime educativo comum.

4 - As crianças e jovens surdos têm direito ao ensino bilingue, devendo ser dada prioridade à sua matrícula nas escolas de referência a que se refere a alínea a) do n.º 2 do artigo 4.º independentemente da sua área de residência.

5 - As crianças e jovens cegos ou com baixa visão podem matricular-se e frequentar escolas da rede de escolas de referência para a educação de alunos cegos e com baixa visão a que se refere a alínea b) do n.º 2 do artigo 4.º, independentemente da sua área de residência.

6 - As crianças e jovens com perturbações do espectro do autismo podem matricular-se e frequentar escolas com unidades de ensino estruturado a que se refere alínea a) do n.º 3 do artigo 4.º independentemente da sua área de residência.

7 - As crianças e jovens com multideficiência e com surdocegueira podem matricular-se e frequentar escolas com unidades especializadas a que se refere a alínea b) do n.º 3 do artigo 4.º, independentemente da sua área de residência.

Artigo 20.º

Adequações no processo de avaliação

1 - As adequações quanto aos termos a seguir para a avaliação dos progressos das aprendizagens podem consistir, nomeadamente, na alteração do tipo de provas, dos instrumentos de avaliação e certificação, bem como das condições de avaliação, no que respeita, entre outros aspectos, às formas e meios de comunicação e à periodicidade, duração e local da mesma.

2 - Os alunos com currículos específicos individuais não estão sujeitos ao regime de transição de ano escolar nem ao processo de avaliação característico do regime educativo comum, ficando sujeitos aos critérios específicos de avaliação definidos no respectivo programa educativo individual.

Artigo 21.º

Currículo específico individual

1 - Entende-se por currículo específico individual, no âmbito da educação especial, aquele que, mediante o parecer do conselho de docentes ou conselho de turma, substitui as competências definidas para cada nível de educação e ensino.

2 - O currículo específico individual pressupõe alterações significativas no currículo comum, podendo as mesmas traduzir-se na introdução, substituição e ou eliminação de objectivos e conteúdos, em função do nível de funcionalidade da criança ou do jovem.

3 - O currículo específico individual inclui conteúdos conducentes à autonomia pessoal e social do aluno e dá prioridade ao desenvolvimento de actividades de cariz funcional centradas nos contextos de vida, à comunicação e à organização do processo de transição para a vida pós-escolar.

4 - Compete ao conselho executivo e ao respectivo departamento de educação especial orientar e assegurar o desenvolvimento dos referidos currículos.

Artigo 22.º

Tecnologias de apoio

Entende-se por tecnologias de apoio os dispositivos facilitadores que se destinam a melhorar a funcionalidade e a reduzir a incapacidade do aluno, tendo como impacte permitir o desempenho de actividades e a participação nos domínios da aprendizagem e da vida profissional e social.

Capítulo V

Modalidades específicas de educação

Artigo 23.º

Educação bilingue de alunos surdos

1 - A educação das crianças e jovens surdos deve ser feita em ambientes bilingues que possibilitem o domínio da LGP, o domínio do português escrito e, eventualmente, falado, competindo à escola contribuir para o crescimento linguístico dos alunos surdos, para a adequação do processo de acesso ao currículo e para a inclusão escolar e social.

2 - A concentração dos alunos surdos, inseridos numa comunidade linguística de referência e num grupo de socialização constituído por adultos, crianças e jovens de diversas idades que utilizam a LGP, promove condições adequadas ao desenvolvimento desta língua e possibilita o desenvolvimento do ensino e da aprendizagem em grupos ou turmas de alunos surdos, iniciando-se este processo nas primeiras idades e concluindo-se no ensino secundário.

3 - As escolas de referência para a educação bilingue de alunos surdos a que se refere a alínea a) do n.º 2 do artigo 4.º constituem uma resposta educativa especializada desenvolvida, em agrupamentos de escolas ou escolas secundárias que concentram estes alunos numa escola, em grupos ou turmas de alunos surdos.

4 - As escolas de referência para a educação de ensino bilingue de alunos surdos têm como objectivo principal aplicar metodologias e estratégias de intervenção interdisciplinares, adequadas a alunos surdos.

5 - As escolas de referência para a educação bilingue de alunos surdos integram:

- a) Docentes com formação especializada em educação especial, na área da surdez, competentes em LGP (docentes surdos e ouvintes dos vários níveis de educação e ensino), com formação e experiência no ensino bilingue de alunos surdos;
- b) Docentes surdos de LGP;
- c) Intérpretes de LGP;
- d) Terapeutas da fala.

6 - Para os alunos surdos, o processo de avaliação, referido no artigo 6.º, deve ser desenvolvido por equipas a constituir no agrupamento de escolas ou nas escolas secundárias para a educação bilingue destes alunos.

7 - As equipas referidas no número anterior devem ser constituídas pelos seguintes elementos:

- a) Docente que lecciona grupo ou turma de alunos surdos do nível de educação e ensino da criança ou jovem;
- b) Docente de educação especial especializado na área da surdez;
- c) Docente surdo de LGP;
- d) Terapeutas da fala;
- e) Outros profissionais ou serviços da escola ou da comunidade.

8 - Deve ser dada prioridade à matrícula de alunos surdos, nas escolas de referência para a educação bilingue de alunos surdos.

9 - A organização da resposta educativa deve ser determinada pelo nível de educação e ensino, ano de escolaridade, idade dos alunos e nível de proficiência linguística.

10 - As respostas educativas devem ser flexíveis, assumindo carácter individual e dinâmico, e pressupõem uma avaliação sistemática do processo de ensino e de aprendizagem do aluno surdo, bem como o envolvimento e a participação da família.

11 - Os agrupamentos de escolas que integram os jardins-de-infância de referência para a educação bilingue de crianças surdas devem articular as respostas educativas com os serviços de intervenção precoce no apoio e informação das escolhas e opções das suas famílias e na disponibilização de recursos técnicos especializados, nomeadamente de

docentes surdos de LGP, bem como na frequência precoce de jardim-de-infância no grupo de crianças surdas.

12 - As crianças surdas, entre os 3 e os 6 anos de idade, devem frequentar a educação pré-escolar, sempre em grupos de crianças surdas, de forma a desenvolverem a LGP como primeira língua, sem prejuízo da participação do seu grupo com grupos de crianças ouvintes em actividades desenvolvidas na comunidade escolar.

13 - Os alunos dos ensino básico e secundário realizam o seu percurso escolar em turmas de alunos surdos, de forma a desenvolverem a LGP como primeira língua e aceder ao currículo nesta língua, sem prejuízo da sua participação com as turmas de alunos ouvintes em actividades desenvolvidas na comunidade escolar.

14 - A docência dos grupos ou turmas de alunos surdos é assegurada por docentes surdos ou ouvintes com habilitação profissional para leccionar aqueles níveis de educação e ensino, competentes em LGP e com formação e experiência no ensino bilingue de alunos surdos.

15 - Na educação pré-escolar e no 1.º ciclo do ensino básico deve ser desenvolvido um trabalho de co-responsabilização e parceria entre docentes surdos e ouvintes de forma a garantir aos alunos surdos a aprendizagem e o desenvolvimento da LGP como primeira língua, e da língua portuguesa, como segunda língua.

16 - Sempre que se verifique a inexistência de docente surdo competente em LGP, com habilitação profissional para o exercício da docência no pré-escolar ou no 1.º ciclo do ensino básico, deve ser garantida a colocação de docente surdo responsável pela área curricular de LGP, a tempo inteiro, no grupo ou turma dos alunos surdos.

17 - Não se verificando a existência de docentes competentes em LGP nos 2.º e 3.º ciclos do ensino básico e no ensino secundário, as aulas leccionadas por docentes ouvintes são traduzidas por um intérprete de LGP.

18 - Ao intérprete de LGP compete fazer a tradução da língua portuguesa oral para a língua gestual portuguesa e da língua gestual portuguesa para a língua oral das

actividades que na escola envolvam a comunicação entre surdos e ouvintes, bem como a tradução das aulas leccionadas por docentes, reuniões, acções e projectos resultantes da dinâmica da comunidade educativa.

19 - Os docentes surdos de LGP asseguram o desenvolvimento da língua gestual portuguesa como primeira língua dos alunos surdos.

20 - Os docentes ouvintes asseguram o desenvolvimento da língua portuguesa como segunda língua dos alunos surdos.

21 - Aos docentes de educação especial com formação na área da surdez, colocados nas escolas de referência para a educação bilingue de alunos surdos, compete:

- a) Leccionar turmas de alunos surdos, atendendo à sua habilitação profissional para a docência e à sua competência em LGP;
- b) Apoiar os alunos surdos na antecipação e reforço das aprendizagens, no domínio da leitura/escrita;
- c) Elaborar e adaptar materiais para os alunos que deles necessitem;
- d) Participar na elaboração do programa educativo individual dos alunos surdos.

22 - Aos docentes surdos com habilitação profissional para o ensino da área curricular ou da disciplina de LGP compete:

- a) Leccionar os programas LGP como primeira língua dos alunos surdos;
- b) Desenvolver, acompanhar e avaliar o processo de ensino e de aprendizagem da LGP;
- c) Definir, preparar e elaborar meios e suportes didácticos de apoio ao ensino/aprendizagem da LGP;
- d) Participar na elaboração do programa educativo individual dos alunos surdos;
- e) Desenvolver actividades, no âmbito da comunidade educativa em que se insere, visando a interacção de surdos e ouvintes e promovendo a divulgação da LGP junto da comunidade ouvinte;
- f) Ensinar a LGP como segunda língua a alunos ou outros elementos da comunidade educativa em que está inserido, difundir os valores e a cultura da comunidade surda contribuindo para a integração social da pessoa surda.

23 - As escolas de referência para a educação bilingue de alunos surdos devem estar

apetrechadas com equipamentos essenciais às necessidades específicas da população surda.

24 - Consideram-se equipamentos essenciais ao nível da escola e da sala de aula os seguintes: computadores com câmaras, programas para tratamento de imagem e filmes, impressora e scanner; televisor e vídeo, câmara e máquinas fotográficas digitais, retroprojector, projector multimédia, quadro interactivo, sinalizadores luminosos de todos os sinais sonoros, telefone com serviço de mensagens curtas (sms), sistema de vídeo-conferência, software educativo, dicionários e livros de apoio ao ensino do português escrito, materiais multimédia de apoio ao ensino e aprendizagem em LGP, ao desenvolvimento da LGP e sobre a cultura da comunidade surda, disponibilizados em diferentes formatos; material e equipamentos específicos para a intervenção em terapêutica da fala.

25 - Constituem objectivos dos agrupamentos de escolas e escolas secundárias:

- a) Assegurar o desenvolvimento da LGP como primeira língua dos alunos surdos;
- b) Assegurar o desenvolvimento da língua portuguesa escrita como segunda língua dos alunos surdos;
- c) Assegurar às crianças e jovens surdos, os apoios ao nível da terapia da fala do apoio pedagógico e do reforço das aprendizagens, dos equipamentos e materiais específicos bem como de outros apoios que devam beneficiar;
- d) Organizar e apoiar os processos de transição entre os diferentes níveis de educação e de ensino; e) Organizar e apoiar os processos de transição para a vida pós-escolar;
- f) Criar espaços de reflexão e partilha de conhecimentos e experiências numa perspectiva transdisciplinar de desenvolvimento de trabalho cooperativo entre profissionais com diferentes formações que desempenham as suas funções com os alunos surdos;
- g) Programar e desenvolver acções de formação em LGP para a comunidade escolar e para os familiares dos alunos surdos;
- h) Colaborar e desenvolver com as associações de pais e com as associações de surdos acções de diferentes âmbitos, visando a interacção entre a comunidade surda e a comunidade ouvinte.

26 - Compete ao conselho executivo do agrupamento de escolas ou da escola secundária

garantir, organizar, acompanhar e orientar o funcionamento e o desenvolvimento da resposta educativa adequada à inclusão dos alunos surdos.

Artigo 24.º

Educação de alunos cegos e com baixa visão

1 - As escolas de referência para a educação de alunos cegos e com baixa visão concentram as crianças e jovens de um ou mais concelhos, em função da sua localização e rede de transportes existentes.

2 - As escolas de referência a que se refere a alínea b) do n.º 2 do artigo 4.º constitui uma resposta educativa especializada desenvolvida em agrupamentos de escolas ou escolas secundárias que concentrem alunos cegos e com baixa visão.

3 - Constituem objectivos das escolas de referência para a educação de alunos cegos e com baixa visão:

- a) Assegurar a observação e avaliação visual e funcional;
- b) Assegurar o ensino e a aprendizagem da leitura e escrita do braille bem como das suas diversas grafias e domínios de aplicação;
- c) Assegurar a utilização de meios informáticos específicos, entre outros, leitores de ecrã, software de ampliação de caracteres, linhas braille e impressora braille;
- d) Assegurar o ensino e a aprendizagem da orientação e mobilidade;
- e) Assegurar o treino visual específico;
- f) Orientar os alunos nas disciplinas em que as limitações visuais ocasionem dificuldades particulares, designadamente a educação visual, educação física, técnicas laboratoriais, matemática, química, línguas estrangeiras e tecnologias de comunicação e informação;
- g) Assegurar o acompanhamento psicológico e a orientação vocacional;
- h) Assegurar o treino de actividades de vida diária e a promoção de competências sociais;
- i) Assegurar a formação e aconselhamento aos professores, pais, encarregados de educação e outros membros da comunidade educativa.

4 - As escolas de referência para a educação de alunos cegos e com baixa visão integram docentes com formação especializada em educação especial no domínio da

visão e outros profissionais com competências para o ensino de braille e de orientação e mobilidade.

5 - As escolas de referência para a educação de alunos cegos e com baixa visão devem estar apetrechadas com equipamentos informáticos e didácticos adequados às necessidades da população a que se destinam.

6 - Consideram-se materiais didácticos adequados os seguintes: material em caracteres ampliados, em braille; em formato digital, em áudio e materiais em relevo.

7 - Consideram-se equipamentos informáticos adequados, os seguintes: computadores equipados com leitor de ecrã com voz em português e linha braille, impressora braille, impressora laser para preparação de documentos e concepção de relevos; scanner; máquina para produção de relevos, máquinas braille; cubarítmos; calculadoras electrónicas; lupas de mão; lupa TV; software de ampliação de caracteres; software de transcrição de texto em braille; gravadores adequados aos formatos áudio actuais e suportes digitais de acesso à Internet.

8 - Compete ao conselho executivo do agrupamento de escolas e escolas secundárias organizar, acompanhar e orientar o funcionamento e o desenvolvimento da resposta educativa adequada à inclusão dos alunos cegos e com baixa visão.

Artigo 25.º

Unidades de ensino estruturado para a educação de alunos com perturbações do espectro do autismo

1 - As unidades de ensino estruturado para a educação de alunos com perturbações do espectro do autismo constituem uma resposta educativa especializada desenvolvida em escolas ou agrupamentos de escolas que concentrem grupos de alunos que manifestem perturbações enquadráveis nesta problemática.

2 - A organização da resposta educativa para alunos com perturbações do espectro do autismo deve ser determinada pelo grau de severidade, nível de desenvolvimento cognitivo, linguístico e social, nível de ensino e pela idade dos alunos.

3 - Constituem objectivos das unidades de ensino estruturado:

- a) Promover a participação dos alunos com perturbações do espectro do autismo nas actividades curriculares e de enriquecimento curricular junto dos pares da turma a que pertencem;
- b) Implementar e desenvolver um modelo de ensino estruturado o qual consiste na aplicação de um conjunto de princípios e estratégias que, com base em informação visual, promovam a organização do espaço, do tempo, dos materiais e das actividades;
- c) Aplicar e desenvolver metodologias de intervenção interdisciplinares que, com base no modelo de ensino estruturado, facilitem os processos de aprendizagem, de autonomia e de adaptação ao contexto escolar;
- d) Proceder às adequações curriculares necessárias;
- e) Organizar o processo de transição para a vida pós-escolar;
- f) Adoptar opções educativas flexíveis, de carácter individual e dinâmico, pressupondo uma avaliação constante do processo de ensino e de aprendizagem do aluno e o regular envolvimento e participação da família.

4 - As escolas ou agrupamentos de escolas com unidades de ensino estruturado concentram alunos de um ou mais concelhos, em função da sua localização e rede de transportes existentes.

5 - As escolas ou agrupamentos de escolas com unidades de ensino estruturado integram docentes com formação especializada em educação especial.

6 - Às escolas ou agrupamentos de escolas com unidades de ensino estruturado compete:

- a) Acompanhar o desenvolvimento do modelo de ensino estruturado;
- b) Organizar formação específica sobre as perturbações do espectro do autismo e o modelo de ensino estruturado;
- c) Adequar os recursos às necessidades das crianças e jovens;
- d) Assegurar os apoios necessários ao nível de terapia da fala, ou outros que se venham a considerar essenciais;
- e) Criar espaços de reflexão e de formação sobre estratégias de diferenciação pedagógica numa perspectiva de desenvolvimento de trabalho transdisciplinar e cooperativo entre vários profissionais;
- f) Organizar e apoiar os processos de transição

entre os diversos níveis de educação e de ensino;

- g) Promover e apoiar o processo de transição dos jovens para a vida pós-escolar;
- h) Colaborar com as associações de pais e com as associações vocacionadas para a educação e apoio a crianças e jovens com perturbações do espectro do autismo;
- i) Planear e participar, em colaboração com as associações relevantes da comunidade, em actividades recreativas e de lazer dirigidas a jovens com perturbações do espectro do autismo, visando a inclusão social dos seus alunos.

7 - As escolas ou agrupamentos de escolas onde funcionem unidades de ensino estruturado devem ser apetrechados com mobiliário e equipamento essenciais às necessidades específicas da população com perturbações do espectro do autismo e introduzir as modificações nos espaços e nos materiais que se considerem necessárias face ao modelo de ensino a implementar.

8 - Compete ao conselho executivo da escola ou agrupamento de escolas organizar, acompanhar e orientar o funcionamento da unidade de ensino estruturado.

Artigo 26.º

Unidades de apoio especializado para a educação de alunos com multideficiência e surdocegueira congénita

1 - As unidades de apoio especializado para a educação de alunos com multideficiência e surdocegueira congénita constituem uma resposta educativa especializada desenvolvida em escolas ou agrupamentos de escolas que concentrem grupos de alunos que manifestem essas problemáticas.

2 - A organização da resposta educativa deve ser determinada pelo tipo de dificuldade manifestada, pelo nível de desenvolvimento cognitivo, linguístico e social e pela idade dos alunos.

3 - Constituem objectivos das unidades de apoio especializado:

- a) Promover a participação dos alunos com multideficiência e surdocegueira nas actividades curriculares e de enriquecimento curricular junto dos pares da turma a que pertencem;
- b) Aplicar metodologias e estratégias de intervenção interdisciplinares visando o

desenvolvimento e a integração social e escolar dos alunos;

- c) Assegurar a criação de ambientes estruturados, securizantes e significativos para os alunos;
- d) Proceder às adequações curriculares necessárias;
- e) Adoptar opções educativas flexíveis, de carácter individual e dinâmico, pressupondo uma avaliação constante do processo de ensino e de aprendizagem do aluno e o regular envolvimento e participação da família;
- f) Assegurar os apoios específicos ao nível das terapias, da psicologia e da orientação e mobilidade aos alunos que deles possam necessitar;
- g) Organizar o processo de transição para a vida pós-escolar.

4 - As escolas ou agrupamentos de escolas com unidades especializadas concentram alunos de um ou mais concelhos, em função da sua localização e rede de transportes existentes.

5 - As escolas ou agrupamentos de escolas com unidades especializadas integram docentes com formação especializada em educação especial.

6 - Às escolas ou agrupamentos de escolas com unidades especializadas compete:

- a) Acompanhar o desenvolvimento das metodologias de apoio;
- b) Adequar os recursos às necessidades dos alunos;
- c) Promover a participação social dos alunos com multideficiência e surdocegueira congénita;
- d) Criar espaços de reflexão e de formação sobre estratégias de diferenciação pedagógica numa perspectiva de desenvolvimento de trabalho transdisciplinar e cooperativo entre os vários profissionais;
- e) Organizar e apoiar os processos de transição entre os diversos níveis de educação e de ensino;
- f) Promover e apoiar o processo de transição dos jovens para a vida pós-escolar;
- g) Planear e participar, em colaboração com as associações da comunidade, em actividades recreativas e de lazer dirigidas a crianças e jovens com multideficiência e surdocegueira congénita, visando a integração social dos seus alunos.

7 - As escolas ou agrupamentos de escolas onde funcionem unidades de apoio

especializado devem ser apetrechados com os equipamentos essenciais às necessidades específicas dos alunos com multideficiência ou surdocegueira e introduzir as modificações nos espaços e mobiliário que se mostrem necessárias face às metodologias e técnicas a implementar.

8 - Compete ao conselho executivo da escola ou agrupamento de escolas organizar acompanhar e orientar o desenvolvimento da unidade especializada.

Artigo 27.º

Intervenção precoce na infância

1 - No âmbito da intervenção precoce na infância são criados agrupamentos de escolas de referência para a colocação de docentes.

2 - Constituem objectivos dos agrupamentos de escolas de referência:

- a) Assegurar a articulação com os serviços de saúde e da segurança social;
- b) Reforçar as equipas técnicas, que prestam serviços no âmbito da intervenção precoce na infância, financiadas pela segurança social;
- c) Assegurar, no âmbito do ME, a prestação de serviços de intervenção precoce na infância.

Capítulo VI

Disposições finais

Artigo 28.º

Serviço docente

1 - Sem prejuízo do disposto no número seguinte, as áreas curriculares específicas definidas no n.º 2 do artigo 18.º, os conteúdos mencionados no n.º 3 do mesmo artigo e os conteúdos curriculares referidos no n.º 3 do artigo 21.º são leccionadas por docentes de educação especial.

2 - Os quadros dos agrupamentos de escolas devem, nos termos aplicáveis ao restante pessoal docente, ser dotados dos necessários lugares.

3 - A docência da área curricular ou da disciplina de LGP pode ser exercida, num período de transição até à formação de docentes surdos com habilitação própria para a

docência de LGP, por profissionais com habilitação suficiente: formadores surdos de LGP com curso profissional de formação de formadores de LGP ministrado pela Associação Portuguesa de Surdos ou pela Associação de Surdos do Porto.

4 - A competência em LGP dos docentes surdos e ouvintes deve ser certificada pelas entidades reconhecidas pela comunidade linguística surda com competência para o exercício da certificação e da formação em LGP que são, à data da publicação deste decreto-lei, a Associação Portuguesa de Surdos e a Associação de Surdos do Porto.

Appendix IV: Questionnaire

Questionnaire

PhD - School of Health and Education

High School _____
Name (optional) _____
Years of Experience _____
Subject _____
Date _____
Gender: Male _____ Female _____

1- What are your major concerns towards your students?

2- How do you feel when you learn that you will be having students with mental problems?

Signal with an x

Safe ☐

Unsafe ☐

Concerned ☐

Indifferent ☐

Angry ☐

Anxious ☐

Satisfied ☐

Dissatisfied ☐

Capable ☐

Incapable ☐

Supported ☐

Unsupported ☐

3- Do you feel capable of coping with their specific needs?

Signal with an (X)

Yes ☐ No ☐

4 - If NO, what are your difficulties in teaching students with mental problems?

5 - What is the students' overall reaction when in their classroom they have a colleague with mental problems?

Signal with an (X)

Indifference ☐

Satisfaction ☐

Dissatisfaction ☐

Respect ☐

Mock ☐

Inclusion ☐

Separatism ☐

6 - Do you think school helps students to respectfully accept differences?

Signal with an (X)

Yes ☐ No ☐

7 - Does your school support you to overcome any issues that a student with mental problems might require from a teacher?

Signal with an (X)

Yes ☐ No ☐

8- What measures do you take to improve your performance in a class with students with mental problems?

Signal with an (X)

- Self-instruction ☐
- Attend Workshops by own initiative ☐
- Attend mandatory Workshops ☐
- Get the adequate material by own initiative ☐
- Request in advance the appropriate material ☐
- Search for appealing materials ☐
- Introduction of Innovative Methods ☐
- Not in favour of Innovative Methods ☐
- Introduction of Innovative Methodologies ☐
- Not in favour of Innovative Methodologies ☐
- Read books related to teaching students with mental problems ☐

- Watch Programmes related to teaching students with mental problems □
- Share with colleagues your difficulties□
- Students with mental problems are given increased attention □
- Students with mental problems are given less attention to □
- Students with mental problems are given no attention □
- Only regular education students are taken into account □
- Students are resourced with the same materials (books, articles, Internet) □
- Specific information resources are adapted to students accordingly to their mental needs and abilities □
- Same instructional methods for all class □
- All social working structures are introduced (all class, small groups, in pairs and individually) □
- Students are gathered as homogenously as possible □
- Depending on the circumstance, students are gathered together according to their special learning needs □
- Students develop throughout the curricular programme all together and at the same rhythm □
- The teaching rhythm may change according to the student's mental problems. □
- The same assessment Project or criteria is applied for every student □
- Bearing in mind the differences between students the assessment criteria is adapted□

9 – What measures could be introduced by the Education Department so as to improve the teachers' performance with students with mental problems?

10 – Is your school equipped with appropriate material supplies to teach students with mental problems?

Signal with an (X)

Yes ☐ No ☐

11 – Are teachers well prepared to teach students with mental problems?

Signal with an (X)

Yes ☐ No ☐

12 – In your opinion, should students with mental problems, be incorporated in regular education schools?

Signal with an (X)

Yes ☐ No ☐

13 – In your opinion, what measures ought to be carried out to improve the educational system for students with mental problems?

14 – In your opinion, is the curriculum in force appropriate to students with mental problems?

Signal with an (X)

Yes ☐ No ☐

15 – Do you have any suggestions to improve the educational system for students who have a mental problem and need individual support in class?

16 – Do you agree with the implementation of Inclusion in **secondary schools**?

Signal with an (X)

Yes ☐ No ☐

17 – If you answered **NO** please state your arguments.

18 – Is your school receptive to the practice of Inclusion?

Signal with an (X)

Yes ☐ No ☐

19- Do schools prepare students with mental problems for inclusion in society?

Signal with an (X)

Yes ☐ No ☐

20 – Do you think schools ought to have a psychologist to provide support for students with mental problems?

Signal with an (X)

Yes ☐ No ☐

21 – Is your school properly prepared to receive students with mental problems?

Signal with an (X)

Yes ☐ No ☐

22 – If you answered **YES - please state in which areas?**

23 – Does the school community welcome students with mental problems with respect?

Signal with an (X)

Yes ☐ No ☐

24 – Are students with mental problems respected?

Signal with an (X)

By Teachers ☐

By school employees ☐

By Colleagues ☐

By the school Community ☐

25 – Do you think it is necessary to introduce intervention measures for students with mental problems who are included in regular educational school?

Mark with an (X)

Yes ☐ No ☐

26- If you answered **YES** please state some of the reasons.

27 – Read the following three case studies, identify their problematical issue and make a suggestion for each.

CASE 1 (*Anti-social behaviour*)

Andrew is a 14 year old troubled boy. He studies in a high school and in the past 2 years his behaviour changed drastically. He is now a bully and encourages kids to get in trouble. This kid does not receive guidance at home and feels disoriented. He annoys people in general and at school peers, teachers and staff are his favourite target. Curiously, he is not a sad or depressive adolescent. He has simply developed adjustment problems and does not follow or respect any kind of rules. Lately he started taking drugs and alcohol. No one knows what to do.

CASE 2 (*Depressive behaviour*)

Carol is 15 years old now. She is a young, shy, timid and introspective girl. She feels sad all the time, cries a lot and isolates herself from the other kids. She does not mingle with her peers and avoids any activity in group. Her friends at school are worried about her. She does not allow anyone to help her by keeping everybody at distance and not revealing what is upsetting and making her unhappy. However, Carol takes an attitude to change her life and over the past month she tries to cheer up by taking cannabis. Teachers realize that something is very wrong with this kid but they do not know why and how to reach her.

CASE 3 (*Adjustment behaviour*)

Peter has reached the age of 15 without getting involved in serious problems. In the past years he had some troubles but he has never been a member of a group. He had achievement at school and his behaviour was considered normal for his age. He kept himself away from situations involving police and uncontrolled behaviours. Nevertheless his behaviour changed in the past six months by getting involved in drug abuse. Now he smokes cannabis and has already tried cocaine. Nobody knows what made him change and how to deal with this new behaviour.

Thank you!

Magda Franco

Appendix V: Consent Form

Psychology Research Informed Consent Form

Research Title: Beyond Segregation: Integrated Education of Children with Special Needs in the Area of Mental Health in the Autonomous Region of Madeira

In order to participate in this research study, it is necessary that you give your informed consent.

By signing this informed consent form you are indicating that you understand the nature of the research study and your role in that research and that you agree to participate in the research.

Please consider the following points before signing:

- I understand that I am participating in psychological research;
- I understand that my participation will be anonymous (that is, my name will not be linked with my data) and that all information I provide will remain confidential;
- I understand that I will be provided with an explanation of the research in which I participated and be given the name and telephone number of an individual to contact if I have questions about the research. In addition, I understand that I may contact Magda Paula Fernandes Franco if I have questions concerning my rights as a participant in psychological research;
- I understand that participation in research is not required, is voluntary, and that, after any individual research project has begun, I may refuse to participate further without penalty.

By signing this form I am stating that I am over 18 years of age, and that I understand the above information and consent to participate in this study being conducted by Magda Paula Fernandes Franco.

Name (printed):

Signature:

Magda Paula Fernandes Franco

University of Northumbria

Research Supervisors

Professor Greg O'Brien, Dr. Colin Chandler