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Article abstract

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For a sustainable education in Brazilian Library Science: diversity in undergraduate courses

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The study starts from the global goals of inequality reduction and legal frameworks towards people with disabilities to evaluate curricular components and institutional guidance of active undergraduate courses in Library Science in the southeast area of Brazil. This study, which is of an applied nature, aims to investigate if and how universities offer education oriented to qualification in and towards diversity. The empirical field consists of 22 (twenty-two) courses certified by the Ministry of Education of the Federal Government of Brazil. Once these courses were submitted to documental analysis, we located 13 (thirteen) political-pedagogic projects and 9 (nine) summarized course syllabi to execute the exploratory reading based on keywords related to the inclusion domain and later definition of analytical categories. The reading, analysis, and critical interpretation regarding the results show significant gaps in the librarian education about diversity. Disregarding the predominance of optional courses on Brazilian Sign Language (Libras), the undergraduate courses of the investigated area as an empirical field of this study fail to present, satisfactorily, components or specific objectives aimed toward the learning process of people with disabilities.

Keywords: disability studies, information profession, higher education, social inclusion, curriculum theory

Introduction

The Political Declaration of the 2023 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Summit alerted the significant delays of reach and throwback of the designed goals to reduce poverty, hunger, and inequalities until 2030 (UN 2023). With the motto of "leave no one behind", the UN (UN 2019) stands in favour of inclusion politics towards persons with disabilities (PWD), specifically those diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), who were historically invisibilized and excluded from citizenship.

From the ergonomy of public equipment, such as squares and buildings, to the ergonomy of digital platforms, the PWD face political, economic, social, cultural, technological, and attitudinal barriers when fighting for the rights of equality in the fields of educational and professional training in all levels of scholarly. This includes access to information, communication, and rights of sociotechnical mediation to social and cultural assets. The latter are research objects in Library and Information Science (LIS).

Within the scope of ASD, institutions such as the *American Library Association* (ALA) highlight the need for a broader understanding of neurodiversity and its peculiarities to implement informational and social justice (Mathiesen 2015) to this part of the population. Still, within the wider context of a configuration of relations between ergonomy and knowledge (which we here understand in an educational sense, meaning, within its processes of continuing education throughout life), the informational library science field occupies an epistemological place of thought regarding ways of corporeality adaptation and spaces proper to knowledge building by people and their communities. This intradisciplinary spectrum in the development of thought in LIS leads us from relations between building structures and their surroundings (from climate to decibel control) to furniture adequate to the adaptive performance of the cognitive process of understanding the reality of documental knowledge. Such knowledge can be in text, image, sound, sources registered from a given platform accessible via touch, hearing, smelling, vision, and/or taste.

The Brazilian Law of Inclusion (Brasil 2015) defines PWD as an individual with long-term physical, mental, intellectual, and/or sensory limitations preventing effective development and participation. So, when discussing disability in the educational environment, two dimensions emerge: the institutional, in the architectural, attitudinal, technological, and pedagogical accessibility horizon, and the representational, in the context of knowledge about this population. To sum-

marize, the orientation to PWD supports in all spectra and stages to its permanence and, simultaneously, qualified education of the student body, composed of future bachelors and credentialed teachers, mostly with no disabilities, to the domain of disability.

When visiting Brazil in 2013, the sociologist Michael Young (2014) asked: "What should all students know when leaving school?" To Michael Young, the curriculum is the key debate in the field of Education. It encompasses relations of power and the search for "better knowledge" to be offered to all people, aiming at professional excellence and critical thought in life practices. The so-called "better knowledge" which, according to the author, would be the "powerful knowledge", should not be restricted to the elite from the "knowledge of the powerful", "a system conceived to keep educational inequalities". (Young 2014, 201). Despite opposing the notion of curriculum as knowledge from school or university given its reality and locating it in the historicity and contradictions of knowledge built socially, Young (Costa Zanardi 2013) understands it as a set of specialized knowledge. This means it is intentionally organized by a disciplinary network of specialists in the educational environment. The production or dissemination of this curriculum would be refrained from beyond school walls. Because of this, Costa Zanardi and Ramos Dias Pascoal (2023) classified Young's theory as acritical as it diregards the student body's context and conditions of participation. Alongside Paulo Freire's pedagogy, they defend the emancipatory praxis, in which the curriculum occupies one of the social justice roles as it opens possibilities for dialogue, exchanges, and conditions for critical thinking instead of a mere transfer of knowledge between specialists, teaching authority, and a passive audience. The place of experience to emancipate the oppressed goes through curricular justice, "[. . .] and its relations with cognitive and social justice should reveal itself in the confluence of good-quality education for all, in diversity and social transformation." (Costa Zanardi and Ramos Dias Pascoal 2023) Opposing to the banking model of education, the curricular justice based on Freire assumes intervention in the world through alterity. So, we update the question: what should all student body learn when leaving the undergraduate course of Library Science so that PWDs are included as users and informational individuals to be seen and represented in information units?

This stage of research results, descriptive and applied structure, results from doctorate research in LIS in Brazil about the informational representation of ASD in Knowledge Organization Systems (KOS). It starts from Freire's emancipatory idea and legal frameworks of PWD protection in the country to certify whether the university education in the context of undergraduate courses in Library Science in Brazil points to the social inclusion or exclusion in the presence of pedagogical professional licensing processes.

Considering the right to representation and meta-representation of languages in a community (such languages as carriers of cultural ballast of each building of thought), as well as to bibliographic diversity, foreseen in the notion of social justice applied to information, the general objective is to observe if the student body in Library Science, within the pre-established geographic sample, finds coherent education with audience and subject diversity which they will see, describe, and catalogue in their professional routine. This includes the praxis for multiplying not only from models of reception and follow-up of transformations in the PWD community but also as other techniques and dynamics of diversity ergonomy in spaces of knowledge. These spaces compromise informational units in their most distinct settings, such as libraries, archives, museums, documentation centers, memory centers, and cultural centers.

This study supports the critical theories of curriculum, the Special Education domain, and other contemporary studies of social representations in LIS education. The specific objective is to evaluate the Political-Pedagogical Projects (PPP) of active courses certified by the Ministry of Education (MEC) in the education of bachelor's and teacher licensing in Library Science, both face-to-face and remote modalities. The objective is to identify content about disability in institutional policies or as curriculum components. At this stage, we specifically aim at the documental analysis from courses in the Southeast of Brazil. This area comprises four states: São Paulo (SP), Minas Gerais (MG), Rio de Janeiro (RJ), and Espírito Santo (ES). This geographic choice is due to the historical pioneering of the capital cities of RJ and SP in Library Science higher education almost one century ago (Fonseca 2007). Apart from that, until today, Southeast Brazil houses the highest number of undergraduate courses in this area.

To compose the analysis *corpus*, the initial search followed keywords designed by authorship to evaluate the name and syllabus of the components. We constituted the terminological instrument of data collection via a protocol of descriptors extraction from the theoretical framework accessed by the research. It resulted in simple and compound terms: a) "special education", b) "social inclusion", c) "diversity", d) "person or student with disability", e) "assistive technology", f) "inclusive technology", g) "accessibility". Considering the exploratory character of reading and analysis, the previously unlisted keywords, when identified and congruent with the theoretical-political framework of this research in similar terminology (morphologically and/or semantically), were included in validating the curricular component. This happened according to the criteria of selection we specified in the methods of investigation.

The empirical field happened on a digital platform, with the survey of *corpora* taking place in November 2023, by search and extraction from official websites of Brazilian public universities. It resulted in two document types: complete PPPs of courses and a summary of the syllabus when it failed

to localize complete projects. We examined the results considering the documental analysis technique (Gil 2008), organizing the metadata (search keywords, names of institutions, documental type, PPP year, and the context of the keyword use) in Microsoft Excel spreadsheets.

Excluding the introduction and final considerations, this study presents a brief history of Library Science teaching in Brazil, followed by the presentation and discussion of results from the documental survey conducted.

Library Science in Brazil: a brief panorama

Cunha and Cavalcanti (2008, 55) define library science as "part of bibliology that deals with activities related to organization, administration, legislation, and regulation of libraries." This field of knowledge emphasizes the dealing, organizing, and disseminating documents in textual or audiovisual forms with reproducible potential. Some authors point to a hierarchical relationship between bibliology and library science. However, Fonseca (2007) warns that, unlike countries like Brazil, Portugal, and Spain, the Spanish word *bibliotecología* is used similarly by professionals of information in Latin America when referring to undergraduate courses.

From the French language tradition perspective, in the first decades of the 20th century, Otlet (2018) evoked the need for creating a bibliology. In other words, the creation of a science and general techniques of document, a reflection, and systematization about production, circling, and uses of information registered in all sorts of documents. This new science would be responsible for "the facts that exercise an overall action on the book" (Otlet 2018, 14), in which library science and bibliography would treat the finished book. In the historical epistemology retrospective, Saldanha (2015) circumscribes Peignot, who came before Otlet. Peignot is here directly mentioned in the epistemological definition of the field, from the terminological and conceptual perspective, as one of the key characters in creating the notions of bibliology. Its demands and theories would be present in what would eventually be called, in the international context, Library and Information Science.

[. . .] it is about a "gesture" of speech and praxis, which is scientific and professional, present in different regions and in different speeches. However, it is manifested under other signifiers in the 800s and 900s (Saldanha 2015, 76).

According to the author, Peignot's bibliology locates itself in language studies applied to the registered knowledge, fostered by the encyclopedist movement, and limited by the publishing of *Dictionnaire Raisonné de Bibliologie* in 1802. The following generation, which carried a Eurocentric and Francophile tradition centred in Otlet, discourses from a positivist stand and bibliographic control supported by the technical reproducibility in growing speed in science and technology. Later, from the second half of the 20th century on, Robert

Estivals, also in the Francophile context, reformulated the concept to science about writing and written communication in a criticizing gesture to the Capitalist expansion to understand the production of writing and the social circuit of documents (Saldanha 2015). Given the different epistemological matrixes of the foundation concept of the field here discussed, we retrieved Fonseca's definition (2007), a relevant author in the field of historiography in Brazil, of deep French influence, which classifies "bibliology" as a documentological, historical-descriptive science, and "library science" as a documentological-applied science.

According to Fonseca (2007), French thinking not only influenced the philosophy of the book in its epistemological samples but also the education of the librarian person in the country from the curricular structuring. According to the author, under the influence of the *École Nationale des Chartes* of 1821, Manuel Cícero Peregrino da Silva, then the director of the National Library, created the first Library Science course in Latin America in 1911. Later, the course would be integrated into the Federal University of the State of Rio de Janeiro (UNIRIO), nowadays the only learning institution to offer two academic degrees, bachelor's and teacher licensing, in library science. The second Library Science course in Brazil originated in São Paulo in the 1920s and 1930s under the influence of the American school Columbia University.

Almeida and Baptista (2013) highlight the divergences in approaches between the schools in Brazil: the one from Rio de Janeiro presented a humanist focus, while the São Paulo one offered disciplinary proposals aimed at the technician aspect to managing and expanding libraries. The selection process of the humanist approach focused on oral tests of general culture, geography, history, literature, and languages such as French, Latin, and English. This method was closer to Jesse Shera's idea that educating the librarian person should be rigorous and erudite. On the other hand, according to Fonseca (2007), Shera radically opposed higher education, such as undergraduate courses. However, Shera showed a contradiction between these two approaches: despite the defence for a broad humanist education, he was a representative of the branch which criticized the cultural technician of the American tradition. From a broader view of the library science field praxis, Shera saw his concept of social epistemology, the Sherian eye, to aim towards an education built from scientific research. It should be socially and critically oriented to social dilemmas, such as public libraries. Shera's presence in Brazil manifested through events, courses, and lectures in the 1950s. It influenced syllabi and bibliographies from Library Science undergraduate courses (Paiva and Silva 2022), apart from the lessons taught in the *stricto sensu* graduate course in Brazil, under the terms "library science" and "documentation" during the 1970s in the Brazilian Institute of Bibliography and Documentation (IBBD). In this context, the differences in the education of the librarian person are

exposed, as well as the epistemological disputes on limits and curricular needs for a qualified professional profile.

According to the Committee of Teaching and Professional Education (CENF), the CFB/CRB System, the National Library Science Council, and the Regional Library Science Councils, bachelor's degree courses in Library Science were expanded between the 1950s and 1970s. They were concentrated on public schools as professionals fought as a class for recognition as a class of workers. In this period, we saw the consolidation of the IBBD, nowadays known as the Brazilian Institute of Information in Science and Technology (IBICT), with direct and indirect effects on pedagogical proposals in universities (Apóstolo, Moro & Alencar 2021).

Almeida and Baptista (2013) highlight three curriculum review frameworks: the so-called Core Curriculum, in 1962 and 1982, which is still versed in the dispute between disciplinary weights between general culture and instrumental components. Such dispute was marked in 1967 by the foundation of the Brazilian Association of Schools of Library Science and Documentation (ABEBD); and in 1996 with the implementation of Law no. 9394/1996, which established the new Lines of Direction and Bases of the Education, also known as LDB. Split into general and specific components, the undergraduate courses included a mandatory course load for complementary activities, internships, and other activities to develop professional skills needed for each area. According to the authors, the curricular autonomy the LDB offered allowed the teaching institutions to develop pedagogical projects adapted to their locations, considering their social and communitarian surroundings.

Oliveira (2016) defines curriculum as "the knowledge basis taught in education institutions". It is thus interpreted as a post-structuralist way, a discursive practice, a device to attribute meanings. "The curriculum is influenced and built by discourses from segments of society which consider the knowledge which is included in a curriculum and those which are excluded from it." (Oliveira 2016, 392) So, to the author, the micro-relations established by pedagogical practices directly influence the social behaviour via the education of students. It is a systematized representation of suitability and validation of what is considered knowledge and of what should be transmitted via curricular content from systems of classification, ordering, and distribution (Oliveira 2016).

In this scenario, Souza (2008) draws attention to the political movements Brazil went through, such as the military dictatorship (between the 1960s and 1980s) and the process of democratization (1988 onwards). Such influential movements consequently impacted in the librarian education. Pires and Paula (2022) remind us that these ethical, political, and epistemological movements reflected the gendering of the profession in the 20th century, which initially had a male profile until halfway through the aforementioned century. Lately, it would assume a mainly female profile until the 1980s. From the 1990s on, when Library Science strengthened its bonds with administration and computing, it distanced itself from the library and moved closer to the discourse of information management, expanding the male contingent in the courses. Maimone, Silveira, and Tálamo (2008) remark about the effects of the capitalist production model in library science educational practices, not always identifiable in the disciplines' designation.

Disciplines were directed towards literature and history, leading to reading and debates. Such activities were most likely absent from more technical disciplines, whose content was related to cataloging rules and classifications, mainly in education in São Paulo. Such technical disciplines did not lead students to reflection, only to its acceptance [...] Directly or indirectly influenced by capitalism, the courses started adopting fewer theoretical and intellectual disciplines in favor of more practical ones, which allowed a faster processing of information in libraries. The librarian was more worried about doing than thinking. (Maimone, Silveira & Tálamo 2008, 178-179)

According to the authors, the curricular reforms relegated the functions of critical development and informational phenomenological studies to postgraduate courses. As a result, undergraduate courses focused majorly on the education of works on register, organization, and bibliographic dissemination.

In contemporary politics, the Constitution of the Federative Republic of Brazil (Brasil 1988) and the Brazilian Law of Inclusion, also known as the Statute on Persons with Disabilities, anticipate access to and continuing and qualified education for PWD. This means that it provides a means of welcoming and permanence and education and research about diversity in the PWD universe.

Social pacts, such as the Agenda 2030, aim to reduce inequality and inclusive education, as described in the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) to be reached in the next six years. In Brazil, the National Education Plan (Brasil 2014) orients 20 goals and guidelines for 2014 to 2024, with the inclusion of basic education (Goal No. 4) and higher education quality (Goal No. 13) being part of these goals. According to Inep (2023), the data of the High Education Census indicates a decrease in the offer of in-person courses (-11%) when compared to the increase in the offer of remote courses (+189%). According to the curricular analysis, the increase in course offers does not guarantee good quality education and is oriented to inclusion themes.

Regarding diversity in teacher licensing courses, from 37,047 students enrolled, 15,441 chose the Portuguese—Brazilian Sign Language (Letras-Libras) major and 10,434 chose the Special Education major. Regarding the student body, the number of PWDs enrolled in undergraduate courses which come from the special quota spots is the lowest of the represented minorities: 99,866 (students who came

presentation, objectives, PPP's institutional areas, titles of curricular components, as well as syllabi, specific objectives, and bibliographic references.

After searching the terms in each PPP and/or syllabi and registering the identified items in the spreadsheet, we moved to the fourth stage, which is documental analysis, in which we organized the courses based on the following categories: i) mention to PWD in the PPP (in this category, we considered both implicit and explicit uses of references to the population, in institutional policies of accessibility and inclusion); ii) mention to PWD's context only in curricular components (in this case, we observed specific uses of expressions that refer to the population of interest, such as PWD, special needs, special education, accessibility, Libras, discipline title, syllabi, objectives and/or bibliographic references); iii) lack of mention of the PWD's context in any pedagogical context; and iv) specific mention of ASD (TABLE 2).

We would like to highlight that we mainly considered the contexts of use of the descriptors on the documental types evaluated. So, when a given descriptor was mentioned in the PPP but was absent from the curricular components or the institutional policies (for example, in the biographic content of the active faculty in the course), we excluded it from the quanti-qualitative evaluation of the course.

The data demonstrates that from the 22 (twenty-two) evaluated courses, 17 (seventeen) mention the PWD's context. However, they mostly do it with a focus on institutional policies of support to the student body based on legal frameworks of social inclusion and focused on physical and pedagogical accessibility.

Regarding curricular components, we highlight the presence of the "Brazilian Sign Language — Libras" discipline, which is offered by 16 (sixteen) courses. From that total, 12 (twelve) are offered in the condition of an optative discipline, with a varying course load from 30 hours to 100 hours per semester. We highlight that Decree No. 5.626 from 22/12/2005 determines the enforcement of this discipline in teacher licensing courses and all teaching training courses. It also flexes this discipline to electives in higher and professional education courses.

From the perspective of the diversity as the central theme of the curricular component, the courses favor the domain of ethnic-racial belonging and cultural plurality. We were unable to identify a Library Science discipline specifically oriented to the university of disability, especially the ASD (this, invisible in PPPs and syllabi in 20 of the 22 evaluated courses).

From the taxonomy perspective, we highlight the following disciplines as potential participants in the PWD's context: "Library Science, Education, and Diversity (Biblioteconomia, Educação e Diversidade)" (UNIRIO), "Communication, Cultures, and Diversity (Comunicação, Culturas e Diversidade)" (FABCI), and "Accessibility and Assistive Technolo-gies (Acessibilidade e Tecnologias Assistivas)" (FAVENI and UNIABEU). Other themes we observed in the *corpus* analyzed, such as citizenship, ethics, human rights, informational policies, user studies, mediation in information, information in health, social library science, and psychology, opened opportunities for debates on disability. However, they failed to explicit it in the course syllabus and classroom objectives. This incapacitates an equal verification of the correlation between legal frameworks, the conditions linked to PWD communities, and the emphasis on ASD.

From the perspective of the institutional register, the Clarentian University Center emerges as the institution that most offers subsides to PWD, including ASD, explicitly in the PPP. On the other hand, the Library Science teacher licensing course offered by UNIRIO, due to its direct association with the Education field, offers more variety regarding curricular components. They include: "Education of young people and adults: special needs (Educação de pessoas jovens e adultas: necessidades especiais)", "Special Library Science (Biblioteconomia especial)", "Education and Diversity (Educação e Diversidade)", "Development of Disabled Children (Desenvolvimento da Criança Deficiente)", "Special Education (Educação Especial)", "Education and Deafness I (Educação e Surdez I)", "Education and Deafness II (Educação e Surdez II)", and "Libras".

We also observed that the overall university framework, the outdated use of terminologies regarding the PWD domain, such as "people with deficiencies (portadores de deficiência)", "people with special needs (pessoas com necessidades especiais)", and "deficientes (handicapped)", despite most pedagogical documents being dated from 2010 on.

The research sheds light on satisfactory institutional organization, from the discursive and documental perspective to the ingress and support throughout the pedagogical path of students with specific disabilities, such as impairments. However, it reveals significant gaps regarding professional and civic education aimed at the librarian individual until 2030.

Conclusion

Given the analysis constituted from the relations between the objective and the *corpora* present in the research, the framework points to:

1. the rare occurrence of foundation about the focus guided to the needs of people and communities in their pluralities before the diversity of needs of each life and group of people with similar characteristics;

2. the expression on the course's PPPs and syllabi of acknowledgement and application of the present legislation. This demonstrates a fracture between i) legal frameworks and socio-critical advances on matters inherent to the diversity of differences that constitute

Table 1

List of undergraduate courses in Library Science located in the Southeast of Brazil as identified in 2023 between the e-MEC system and the network portals of the searched universities.

University	Course	Document evaluated	Modality
Pontifical Catholic University of Campinas	Bachelor's degree	PPP	In-person
Mesquita Filho São Paulo State University	Bachelor's degree	PPP	In-person
Claretian University Center	Bachelor's degree	PPP	Remote
Assunção University Center	Bachelor's degree	Summarized course syllabi online	In-person
Library and Information Science School	Bachelor's degree	PPP	In-person
Fluminense Federal University	Bachelor's degree	Summarized course syllabi online	In-person
Federal University of Espírito Santo	Bachelor's degree	PPP	In-person
Federal University of Espírito Santo	Bachelor's degree	PPP	Remote
Federal University of Minas Gerais	Bachelor's degree	PPP	In-person
Salgado de Oliveira University	Bachelor's degree	Summarized course syllabi online	Remote
Federal University of the State of Rio de Janeiro	Bachelor's degree	PPP	In-person
Federal University of the State of Rio de Janeiro	Teacher Licensing	PPP	In-person
Santa Cecília University	Bachelor's degree	Summarized course syllabi online	Remote
Metropolitan University of Santos	Bachelor's degree	Summarized course syllabi online	Remote
Uniabeu — University Center	Bachelor's degree	Summarized course syllabi online	Remote
Faveni University Center	Bachelor's degree	Summarized course syllabi online	Remote
Cidade Verde University Center	Bachelor's degree	Summarized course syllabi online	Remote
Formiga University Center	Bachelor's degree	Summarized course syllabi online	Remote
Federal University of São Carlos	Bachelor's degree	PPP	In-person
University of São Paulo	Bachelor's degree	PPP	In-person
University of São Paulo — Ribeirão Preto	Bachelor's degree	PPP	In-person
Federal University of Rio de Janeiro	Bachelor's degree	PPP	In-person

Table 2

Qualitative analytical categories of the pedagogical proposals with a focus on PWD.

Category	Focus	Number of courses
1	Mention to PWD in the PPP	8 (eight) of 13 (thirteen) courses with access to PPP
2	Mention to PWD only in the curricular components	8 (eight) of 13 (thirteen) courses with access to PPP
3	Lack of mention of PWD in any pedagogical context	5 (five) courses, 4 (four) of those with access to PPP
4	Specific mention of ASD	5 (five) courses, 4 (four) of those with access to PPP

every human cluster and ii) the pedagogical praxis of insertion and evaluation of such frameworks in the institutional process of university education;

3. the structural demand for transformation of the pedagogical policies in Brazilian education in Library Science via the sample of the context in the Southeast of the country to focus on the horizons of diversity in the education of the librarian individual.

From the global geopolitical goals of reducing inequality and the legal frameworks of protecting people with disabilities, the evaluation of the active undergraduate courses on Library Science in the Southeast of Brazil we conducted in this research offers a scenario of challenges, goals, and urgencies for future studies on education, library science, and diversity.

Centrally, when it comes to communities of faculty cores structurally actively engaged in the difficult task of reformulating the political-pedagogic projects of each course and the curricular changes, the results of this research suggest an emerging demand for action on the diversity praxis on the education of the librarian individual.

As a development, the qualitative documental evaluation is intended to be expanded to all active Library Science courses in the whole Brazilian territory.

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