

HIGH ABILITIES OR GIFTEDNESS WITH CEREBRAL PALSY: INDICATION OF LITERARY ABSENCE

ALTAS HABILIDADES O DOTACIÓN CON PARÁLISIS CEREBRAL: INDICACIÓN DE AUSENCIA LITERARIA

ALTAS HABILIDADES OU SUPERDOTAÇÃO COM PARALISIA CEREBRAL: INDICAÇÃO DE AUSÊNCIA LITERÁRIA

Ivani da Silva Soares ¹
Thiago Correa Lacerda ²
Ana Carolyna Cerqueira Alves ³

Manuscript received on: April 30, 2021.

Approved: May 27, 2021.

Published: May 31, 2021.

Abstract

By looking at the history of people with disabilities, we can see how these individuals have suffered with exclusion over time, and in the 21st century we realize that this reality is no different, they continue to fight for society to see them beyond disability and to recognize their talents. Therefore, this work aims to make a reflection on Double Exceptionality with Cerebral Palsy. For this, firstly, the concepts involved are presented with the objective of bringing knowledge and changing the look on students who have cerebral palsy, in addition to knowing how to identify high skills or giftedness in their profile. From this context, the work also has as prerogative to make a literary survey in Scielo bases (Scientific Electronic Library Online), Periódicos CAPES and BVS (Virtual Health Base) in the period of 15 years. With the results obtained, we found an absence of literature in relation to high abilities or giftedness concerning the individual with cerebral palsy. It is observed throughout this article that the driving force for this absence is the lack of knowledge on the subject, the prejudice that was culturally inserted into society and the myths that complicate the accurate diagnosis and identification of a person with dual exceptionality by disbelief in the possibility of an individual with cerebral palsy also having high abilities or giftedness.

¹ Master's student in Diversity and Inclusion at Universidad Federal Fluminense. Graduated in Pedagogy from the State University of Rio de Janeiro. Member of the research group in Science and Applications.

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2524-2877>

Contact: ivanisoares@id.uff.br

² PhD in Physics from Universidad Federal Fluminense. Lecturer in the Graduate Program in Diversity and Inclusion at Universidad Federal Fluminense and at the Federal Institute of Rio de Janeiro. Member of the research group in Science and Applications.

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2935-3657>

Contact: thiago.lacerda@ifrrj.edu.br

³ Master's student in Diversity and Inclusion at Universidad Federal Fluminense. Bachelor of Laws from Universidad Estácio de Sá. Member of the research group in Science and Applications.

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1647-1179>

Contact: anacarolynaalves@id.uff.br

Keyword: Double exceptionality; Cerebral palsy; Literary absence; Myths.

Resumen

Al observar la historia de las personas con discapacidad, podemos ver cómo estas personas han sufrido la exclusión a lo largo del tiempo, y en el siglo XXI nos damos cuenta de que esta realidad no es diferente, continúan luchando para que la sociedad los vea más allá de la discapacidad y para reconocer sus talentos. Por tanto, este trabajo tiene como objetivo hacer una reflexión sobre la Doble Excepcionalidad con Parálisis Cerebral. Para ello, en primer lugar, se presentan los conceptos involucrados con el objetivo de aportar conocimientos y cambiar la mirada de los estudiantes que tienen parálisis cerebral, además de saber identificar altas habilidades o superdotación en su perfil. Desde este contexto, el trabajo también tiene como prerrogativa realizar un relevamiento literario en las bases Scielo (Scientific Electronic Library Online), Periódicos CAPES y BVS (Virtual Health Base) en el período de 15 años. Con los resultados obtenidos, encontramos una ausencia de literatura en relación a las altas capacidades o superdotación del individuo con parálisis cerebral. Se observa a lo largo de este artículo que el motor de esta ausencia es el desconocimiento sobre el tema, el prejuicio que se insertó culturalmente en la sociedad y los mitos que complican el diagnóstico certero e identificación de una persona con doble excepcionalidad por la incredulidad en la posibilidad de que un individuo con parálisis cerebral también tenga altas capacidades o superdotación.

Palabra clave: Doble excepcionalidad; Parálisis cerebral; Ausencia literaria; Mitos.

Resumo

Ao observamos a história das pessoas com deficiência podemos constatar como esses indivíduos sofreram com a exclusão ao longo do tempo. No século XXI, percebemos que essa realidade não é diferente, eles continuam lutando a fim de que a sociedade os enxergue além da deficiência e para que possam reconhecer os seus talentos. Sendo assim, este trabalho tem o intuito de fazer uma reflexão a respeito da Dupla Excepcionalidade com a Paralisia Cerebral. Para isso, em primeiro lugar, são apresentados os conceitos envolvidos com o objetivo de trazer o conhecimento e mudar o olhar sobre os alunos que tenham tal deficiência. A partir deste contexto, o trabalho também tem como prerrogativa fazer um levantamento literário nas bases Scielo (Scientific Electronic Library Online), Periódicos CAPES e BVS (Base Virtual em Saúde) no período de 15 anos (2005 – 2020). Com os resultados obtidos, nos deparamos com uma ausência de literatura em relação às altas habilidades ou superdotação no que concerne ao indivíduo com paralisia cerebral. Observa-se ao longo do presente artigo que o motivo para essa ausência é a falta de conhecimento sobre o tema, o preconceito que foi culturalmente inserido na sociedade e os mitos que dificultam o diagnóstico certero e a identificação de uma pessoa com dupla excepcionalidade pela descrença na possibilidade de que um indivíduo com paralisia cerebral também tenha altas habilidades ou superdotação.

Palavra-Chave: Dupla excepcionalidade; Paralisia cerebral; Ausência literária; Mitos.

Introduction

The present research has as its guiding question the study of Double Exceptionality and the prejudice that occurs with the subject who possesses it. The term

double exceptionality was first proposed by James Gallagner in 1975. Through his research he realized that in some cases giftedness is accompanied by a disability (GALLAGNER, 1975 apud. DELOU, 2007), which goes in the opposite direction of the common social thinking from that time until today.

Double Exceptionality can come with a disability or disorder, which can be motor, visual, auditory, dyslexia, autism, ADHD, among others. According to Prior (2013), Double Exceptionality uses another term, giving the idea of twice exceptional, that is, the subject has a double condition. In this research, the focus will be only on the subject who has Double Exceptionality with Cerebral Palsy (CP).

According to Rotta (2002), the first person to write about CP was Little in 1843, in which he uses the term chronic encephalopathy of childhood. It should be noted that this name is used only by doctors; in education, the term used is Cerebral Palsy, a name suggested by Freud in 1897, or just the acronym CP.

A sequel of an encephalic aggression, which is characterized primarily by a persistent, but not invariable, disturbance of tone, posture, and movement, which appears in early childhood as a non-evolving lesion of the encephalon. (ROTTA, 2002, p. 49)

Based on the above definition, we can understand that one of the characteristics of CP is to affect motor functions and leave mild, moderate or severe sequelae. According to Silva et al (2019, p.5) "Motor changes are accompanied by disturbances in perception, communication, behaviors and seizures". Regarding the onset, CP can occur during pregnancy or birth, and even after 2 years from birth.



Figure 1: Classification of Cerebral Palsy, according to location and neurological severity. Source: Adapted from Aleva, (2015, p.09).

By observing Figure 1, we see the classification of CP: the top three are classified as spastic paralysis, each referring to the amount of limbs affected and their level of impairment. According to Gianni (2010) the subject who has spastic paralysis will have a delay in his motor development "due to muscular hypertonia and spasticity, because of the spinal cortex pathways lesion" (GIANNI, 2010, p.15). The last two are classified as asymmetric, affecting the individual's entire body, however, the intensity of the impairment varies from one limb to the other.

According to Murillo (2018), each represents the movement disorder and are linked to the area of the central nervous system injured. "CP is not a uniform neurological entity and its classification corresponds to the parts of the body affected and the descriptions of muscle tone and involuntary movements" (MURILLO, 2018, p.32). Cerebral Palsy is in the category of disability and includes patients with chronic non-progressive disorders in the central nervous system, which has no connection to cognition, so there is no way to relate CP to learning impairment (MURILLO, 2018).

On the other hand, the subjects who have High Abilities (AH) or Giftedness (SD) are, according to the National Council of Education: "Those who present a high potential and great involvement with the areas of human knowledge, isolated or combined: intellectual, leadership, psychomotor, arts and creativity" (Brazil, 2009, art.3).

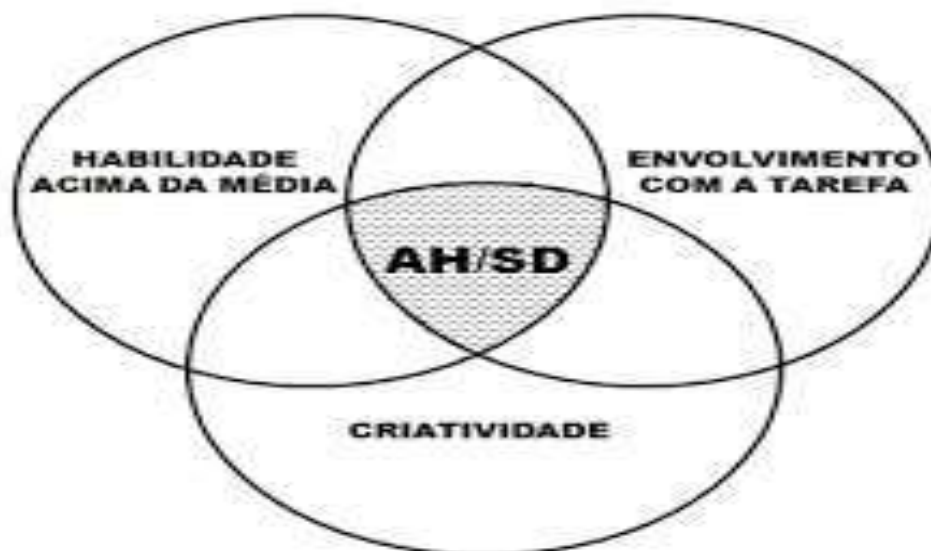


Figure 2: Diagram illustrating the Theory of the Three Rings. Source: Renzulli (1978)

However, when we analyze the specific literature, we realize that there is no concrete definition of High Abilities or Giftedness. Thus, we highlight one of the theories that help conceptualize AS or DS, which is the so-called "Three Rings Theory".

According to Renzulli (1978), the Three Rings Theory consists of three characteristics of the subject: creativity, involvement with the task, and above average ability. The subject who is at the intersection of the rings has gifted behavior according to Figure 2. The theory contributes to the thinking about the characteristic of a subject with AH or SD, which, according to the author, do not require an IQ test.

Gifted behavior consists of thoughts and actions resulting from an interaction between three basic groups of human traits: above-average general and specific abilities, high levels of commitment to the task, and high levels of creativity. Children who manifest or are able to develop an interaction among all three groups require a wide variety of educational opportunities, resources, and encouragement above and beyond those ordinarily provided through regular instructional programs. (RENZULLI, 2014, p.246)

For contribution to the concept of AH or SD, Landau (2002) says that the environment in which a child lives encourages his internal abilities such as: intelligence, creativity, and talents. This mediation between the object and the child strengthens the self, in order for the child feel stimulated to take risks. "While intellectual stimulation provides the information, meaning, and preparation for challenges, the environment provides the motivation for the child to effectively realize his or her full age potential. Thus, from the correlation of influence of these factors, giftedness can blossom" (LANDAU, 2002, p.42-43).

Thus, like Rezzulli (2014), Landau (2002) reinforces that the theories talk to each other and we see how much encouragement will help in the development of the subject who has AH or SD.

Another important thought in the conceptualization of AS or DS is the theory of multiple intelligences: "linguistic intelligence, logical-mathematical intelligence, spatial intelligence, corporal-cinesthetic intelligence, musical intelligence, interpersonal intelligence, intrapersonal intelligence, and naturalistic intelligence" (OLIVEIRA, 2014, p. 14, apud GARDENER, 1994).

Therefore, intelligences are divided into different areas, all of which should be valued by the educator, whether academic or humanistic. The variety of intelligences was valued by Oliveira (2010):

at the Boston Veterans Administration, Gardner worked with individuals who had suffered accidents or illnesses that affected specific areas of the brain. In several cases, brain injuries seemed to have selectively impaired a intelligence, leaving all others intact. For example, a person with a lesion in Broca's area (left frontal lobe) might have a substantial portion of her linguistic intelligence damaged, and thus experience great difficulty speaking, reading, and writing. But she might still be able to sing, do math, dance, reflect on feelings, and relate to others (OLIVEIRA2010, p.33 apud ARMSTRONG,2001).

When Gardner in 1994 presents the theory of multiple intelligences, he shows that everyone possesses intelligence. No matter if the individual has suffered an accident or has some disability, the human being is notoriously able to work with other areas in which they have not suffered any injury, no matter what stigma society places

on them, so much so that the research was conducted with people who have suffered brain injuries.

The objective of this literary research is to bring a reflection about High Abilities or Giftedness with Cerebral Palsy and how the scientific work (or lack of it) is able to improve the teacher's performance in the classroom. So, we want, mainly, to show the lack of literature on the subject, as an indication of the need for scientific work.

The article produced refers us to the survey of the literature, seeking to present concepts and show us the current scenario about the published works related to High Abilities or Giftedness with Cerebral Palsy and the myths that hinder the educational professional to recognize the AH or DS in those with CP, in order to avoid frustrations and educational failures.

Myths that hinder the identification of the double exceptionality involving cerebral palsy

When doing a historical analysis, we can realize that in the past, people who had some disability were excluded from society. According to Lopes and Fabris (2013) in the 18th century, people with disabilities were considered abnormal, punished and even murdered. However, in the late middle ages, the church started to recognize them as God's creature. "What is important to highlight after the dominance of Christianity is that abnormality ceased to be of the order of exclusion and began to compose the order of segregation, that is, the order of death or social disappearance" (LOPES; FABRIS, 2013, p.47).

We can observe from the reports the great prejudice that people with disabilities suffered, being persecuted and even killed. Thus, the prejudice built by society over time involves, in Brazil, issues such as exclusion mechanisms and welfare policies.) The prejudice against people with disabilities is cultural, but it is worth mentioning that we are in the XXI century, where people school environment (FIGUEIRA, 2008). Corroborating with the prejudice, we see that "students with disabilities, in regular schools, are attended in order to normalize themselves or to get closer to the norm.

Thus, these students will hardly be recognized for their potential" (COSTA; RANGNI, 2014, p.193).

Unfortunately, we live in a capacitist reality, whose individuals believe they have the legitimacy to impose labels on any human condition that is different from the standards that have been perpetuated by society throughout history. And when we talk about a disability such as CP, which has a set of characteristics that affect motor and cognitive development due to permanent neurological changes, it is notorious how much ignorance and prejudice there is in assuming that a person with this type of disability has limitations beyond the motor level.

The path to deconstruct the beliefs about CP is a long one, especially when we relate it to a condition of superiority, such as High Abilities or Giftedness. And even though it is totally wrong to preconceive ideas about these issues, society ended up building stereotypes and myths, which make it difficult to identify the double exceptionality when related to Cerebral Palsy. Rech and Freitas (2006, p. 62) say that "myths are only verbalized because of the ignorance or distortion that people use to explain what they ignore".

First of all, it is necessary to reject the theory that it is not possible for people to present superior abilities in one or more areas and at the same time have disabilities or conditions apparently incompatible with these characteristics. There are still difficulties regarding the diagnosis of double exceptionality, because the myth has been created that people with AS or DS do not present educational, emotional, or behavioral difficulties. In this way, Alencar and Fleith point out.

What the empirical data indicate, however, is a great frequency of gifted individuals who perform below their potential. It is very common to observe a discrepancy between the potential (what the subject is able to do and learn) and the actual performance (what the subject actually shows he/she knows). (ALENCAR; FLEITH, 2001, p. 94)

The truth is that a stigma has been developed about the person with AS or DS, giving him/her a status of a person above the average, which would not be compatible with that of a person with disability, according to common sense. We observe that the fact of having AH or DS does not mean excellence in performance, because several factors contribute to the result, be it satisfactory or not. It is worth mentioning that we must also get away from the idea that the person with AH must be good at absolutely everything, because no one has the capacity to obtain positive results in all the activities he or she sets out to perform throughout his or her life.

A disability that has its limitations does not in any way prevent the individual from also having characteristics of AS or DS, since sometimes it seems that an above-average intelligence is functioning and at other times it is observed that the learning is slow due to the disability. It should also be mentioned that many professionals are not prepared to recognize subjects with some kind of limitation and that may have better skills than those with development considered normal.

We still have the myth that is related to independence. We can observe that a theory has been built that the person with AS or DS does not need help, because they assume that they already have autonomy to develop on their own, which is not true, since there are limitations and difficulties faced in everyday life, but this does not exclude their giftedness, because it is also important to recognize their production capabilities, work, and development of new skills.

It is important to look at the individual with the double exceptionality to try to identify his condition as soon as possible, in order to avoid his suffering, behavioral changes, and the feeling of failure at the expense of the production of new tasks linked to his abilities. In addition, it should be kept in mind that there is not a unique profile of people with AS or DS; these myths that surround the subject make it difficult to make an accurate diagnosis and to identify a person with dual exceptionality.

The characteristics of the subject who has AS or DS are different from a person who has exceptionality, thus, there is no research that specifically describes the AH or DS in people with CP, however the characteristics of gifted students with physical disabilities is the closest, since one of the characteristics of those with CP is physical

disability. In this sense, Dawson and Souza (2015) present characteristics of gifted students with physical disabilities:

development of compensatory skills; Creativity to find alternative ways to communicate and accomplish tasks; Advanced academic skills; Superior memory; Exceptional problem-solving skills; Quick grasp of ideas; Ability to set and strive for long-term goals. Greater maturity than same-age peers; Good sense of humor; Persistence and patience; Motivation to achieve; Curiosity; Self-critical outlook and perfectionism. Cognitive development that may not be based on direct experience possible limited achievement due to pace of work. (DAWSON & SOUZA, 2015, p.30)

It is necessary for teachers to have a differentiated look towards students who have disabilities, that is, to look beyond the limitations. Costa and Rangni (2014) tells us that the potential of the subject is not impaired by its limitation, this shows us that the predominant capabilities of the human being are varied and can go beyond the condition of limitation.

Methodology

The methodology done in this research was a literature review. According to Carvalho et al (2019), we can use various materials, such as books, scientific articles, and texts extracted from the internet. Vergara (2006, p. 48) states that this type of work "provides analytical instrumentation for any other type of research, but it can also exhaust itself".

To begin data collection and analysis, we devised the following question, "How many articles do you have regarding High Abilities or Giftedness with Cerebral Palsy?" Thus, we used the main research platforms: SCIELO (Scientifique Eletronic Library Online), Periódicos CAPES and BVS (Virtual Health Base).

In this research the terms were used: High Abilities (AH) with Cerebral Palsy (CP), Giftedness (SD) with Cerebral Palsy (CP), Double exceptionality with Cerebral Palsy (CP), Chronic Encephalopathy with High Abilities/Superdotation.

Regarding the selection of material, the following inclusion processes were made: (1) research work, (2) only articles in Portuguese, (3) publication between the period of 15 years (2005 - 2020), (4) be related to double exceptionality with CP.

From this research, we discovered the absence of literature on double exceptionality with CP.

Results and Discussion

According to the terms that were used in the Scielo platform, we had only one work: "Contribution of art in specialized educational care and school inclusion, by Neves, Libéria Rodrigo, (2017)". However, the work of Neves (2017) is not part in the inclusion process, because it does not make the relationship of CP with AH.

In the CAPES Periodicals, all the terms described at the beginning of the methodology were used and the only article to appear as a result was "Relation between the functional profile gross motor function and manual ability of the student with CP", by Queiroz and Braccialli (2016). The article was excluded for not being part of the research profile. In the VHL, no article was found with the terms used in this research.

When applying the terms used to do this research in the CAPES, BVS, and SCIELO platforms, no scientific articles were found related to subjects with Cerebral Palsy and High Abilities or Giftedness. To proceed with the search, we used the terms Cerebral Palsy and High Abilities or Giftedness, separately. "The specialized literature for the double special educational need regarding high abilities/superadaptation and disability is quite scarce, requiring the development of further research and publications" (COSTA; RANGNI, 2010, p.50).

Through this result, it could be observed that the education professional or the health in general has looked to the subject with disabilities as if he could not can not

have high abilities or giftedness. It is necessary to have researches and articles published in relation to the double exceptionality with CP.

The first work found, by Neves (2017), on the SCIELO platform, aims to bring a discussion about the contribution of art in specialized care; the focus of the research, however, is in relation to intellectual disability, and how art can contribute to the development of cognition. The second article, by Queiroz and Braccialli (2016) was found in the CAPES Periodical, and its focus is on the motor coordination of students with CP and the inclusion process.

The articles that were found contribute to inclusion to the school environment and show the importance of students with CP having a mediator, besides indicating that art classes contribute to the development of cognition. In a way, the two articles add to improve the school environment and help with information so that the student with CP can have a better development within the school. If education professionals follow the guidelines of the articles produced by Neves (2017) and Queiroz and Braccialli (2016), knowing about the characteristics of High Abilities or Giftedness, they would be able to identify the AH or DS in the student with CP.

In recent years, few works regarding CP have been developed, and this scarcity of material favors the construction of myths that people with CP cannot have High Abilities or Giftedness.

Thus, it is observed the absence of literature in relation to the double exceptionality with CP. The importance of more studies investigating the identification process of double exceptionality and of proposals that promote the training of education professionals for this, especially regarding Cerebral Palsy, is evident.

Final considerations

Cerebral Palsy affects motor development. Sometimes, the person with this disability has symptoms such as: muscle stiffness, slow and contorted movements, difficulty walking, delayed speech development or difficulty speaking, and difficulty with precise movements such as picking up a pencil or spoon. A disability that has its

limitations, but does not in any way prevent the individual from also having characteristics of AS or DS.

Thus, we observe that the absence of literature in relation to the double exceptionality with CP may be related to the prejudice that is embedded in society through the capacitating culture. And to deconstruct the myths related to CP with AS or DS it is necessary to walk a long way. So, to facilitate this path, one of the tools we can use is the school inclusion of the student who has dual exceptionality with CP. It will be necessary for the teacher to have training that allows him to see his student beyond the physical disability.

In general, inclusion is challenging and makes educational professionals leave their comfort zone. However, inclusion goes far beyond access ramps and adapted bathrooms; the pedagogical practice is also part of the process. In the meantime, we suggest that educational researchers develop work in this area and produce training courses for teachers.

What also hinders the identification process are the labels placed on students who have CP. Therefore, the choice of this theme aims to generate in education professionals a greater reflection on how myths in relation to AS or DS hinder the development of the student. This work also aims to arouse interest about double exceptionality.

Nowadays, we have technology, which helps us bring information to the world, and therefore, we intend to create a blog about double exceptionality with CP to bring knowledge, contributing to the breaking of prejudice. Besides using the discussions in the blog and the knowledge about AS and DS and CP to develop a playful booklet, aiming to help teachers identify these students with the types of double exceptionality discussed in this text.

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