

ASSESSMENT OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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Abstract

Introduction: inclusive education in university curricula is essential to ensure equity and respect for diversity in higher education. Educational inclusion focuses on eliminating barriers that prevent the learning and participation of all students, regardless of their cultural, social or ability differences. **Objectives:** we aim to find out how university students understand and think about inclusive education at their university, in this specific case the University of Alicante (Spain). **Methodology:** this is a non-experimental, expo-facto, descriptive, survey-based and cross-sectional design. The type of sampling is accessibility. From the results obtained, it will be possible to conclude the level of training of higher education students on inclusive education for its subsequent generalization as secondary school teachers and the pedagogical practices and strategies that must be implemented to provide quality education. The Questionnaire used for the evaluation of inclusive university education (CEEIU) is by the author De la Herrán Gascón et al. (2017). **Results:** Based on the analysis of the results, it will be possible to conclude the level of training of higher education students on inclusive education for its later generalization as secondary education teachers in their respective educational centers. **Conclusions:** In addition, in view of the results obtained, we can affirm that inclusive education promotes pedagogical innovation, since it encourages universities to adopt flexible and adaptive methodologies. Inclusive education not only benefits students with specific needs, but also improves the learning experience for all. In the university context, it also contributes to reducing school dropout, by providing an environment that recognizes and values individual particularities. Thus, this study is aimed at promoting tolerant and respectful attitudes in attention to functional diversity and educational inclusion in university students.

Keywords: *University education, educational inclusion, students.*

1. Introduction

Talking about inclusion requires talking about equitable access, but access without probability of success is an empty phrase (International Association of Universities, 2008). In Spain, the number of students who enter the university system is higher than the European Union average, but the university dropout rate is also double the EU average (European Commission, 2018; INEE, 2017). According to the MCIU (2019), 21.5% of university students dropped out of their studies during the first year and 34.4% finished later than scheduled. These data should motivate a reflection on the conditions under which the university plans of all students are developed. Traditionally, much of the work that has tried to explain university permanence and/or dropout has done so from a meritocratic model, where the motivation, effort and resilience of the student explained their chances of success (Ayala & Manzano, 2018; Esteban et al., 2016; Tuero et al., 2018). Later, from a more comprehensive approach, the relevance of factors that, outside the control of the students, are related to the institutional capacity to offer quality educational responses to their needs was highlighted (Tinto, 2012). Access barriers affect students with disabilities, who make up 1.5% of university students (MCIU, 2019; Fundación Universia, 2018). In Spain, the traditional conceptions that university institutions have about their functions and methodologies (Arias et al., 2018) are influencing the socioeconomic level, ethnic origin, age or disability of students as obstacles to accessing higher education (Ariño, 2014; Egido et al., 2014).

2. Method

The objectives of our study project are as follows:

1. Identify the opinion of students on whether inclusion is a priority or not and whether it should be considered a social right
2. Identify whether the culture of their university favours and supports inclusion
3. Confirm the need for inclusion in the university environment

Hypothesis:

H1. It is expected to confirm that for students inclusion in the university is considered a priority and a social right.

H2. The university is an organisation that favours the inclusion of all types of students.

H3. Inclusion is necessary in the university environment.

As for the research method of our study, it is a non-experimental, expo-facto, descriptive, survey and cross-sectional design. The type of sampling is by accessibility. From the results obtained, it will be possible to conclude the level of training of higher education students on inclusive education for its later generalisation as secondary education teachers and the pedagogical practices and strategies that must be implemented to provide quality education. The Questionnaire for the Evaluation of Inclusive University Education (CEEIU) by Herrán Gascón et al. (2017).

Table 1. Sample data.

Number of de subjects	Average age	Standard deviation	sex	
	M	SD	Men	Women
39	25,74	6,69	8	31

3. Results

The results obtained regarding the level of training of higher education students are shown in Table 2, Table 3, Table 4, Table 5 and Table 6.

Table 2. Level of development of inclusive education (EI) at the University of Alicante (UA) through projects.

	Frecuencia	%
YES	34	87,2
I DON'T KNOW	5	12,8
Total	39	100

Table 3. Quality of teaching at the UA.

Defined by academic results	Frecuencia	%
SI	26	66,7
NO	4	10,3
NO LO SE	8	20,5
Total	39	100

Table 4. Students with special educational needs make academic work difficult.

	Frecuencia	%
SI	3	7,7
NO	35	89,7
NO LO SE	1	2,6
Total	39	100

Table 5. For EI to be effective, work by students is important.

	Frecuencia	%
SI	35	89,7
NO	1	2,6
NO LO SE	3	7,7
Total	39	100

Table 6. EI is part of the teaching work

	Frecuencia	%
SI	36	92,3
NO LO SE	3	7,7
Total	39	100

4. Conclusions

Based on the results obtained, the objectives and hypotheses raised are confirmed. It is concluded that for university students, inclusion is a priority at any stage of the educational system and that the institutional culture of the university stands out both for the competency assessment of students and for the development of educational inclusion, which is a requirement to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 4 (UNESCO, 2015) so that university institutions commit to offering inclusive, equitable and quality education for all.

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