Inclusive education and school coexistence. Towards sustainable development from the educational systems

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ABSTRACT

Attention to diversity is fundamental in the conformation and consolidation of an equitable and quality educational process. The purpose of this article is to analyze the relationship between inclusive education and school coexistence, based on the contributions of each process to sustainable development. This unit constitutes the basis for the formation of modes of action that promote a positive attitude towards the diversity of learners that favors the attention of all in the educational context. The analysis carried out is the result of the use of synthetic analytical and inductive-deductive methods.

Keywords: Inclusive education; School coexistence; Sustainable development; Educational systems.

Introduction

The binomial inclusive education-school coexistence generates multiple relationships of coordination and complementarity that reveal their interactive nature, which constitutes a challenge for the quality of the educational response.

Inclusion implies transforming the education system as a whole to meet the diversity of educational needs of all children, adolescents and young people, thus ensuring maximum development, learning and participation. It implies a drive to advance in

education for all, which means making effective the rights to education and equal opportunities for the entire population.

Inclusive education is a process of learning to live with people's differences, a process that involves participation and coexistence. In order to develop inclusive educational institutions, it is necessary to create an environment of coexistence and respect for diversity, through which strategies can be strengthened to develop valid learning, balanced and respectful personalities, and above all, responsible citizens before themselves and others.

This relationship takes on singular importance today, within the framework of action of the 2030 agenda for sustainable development, approved in September 2015 by the United Nations General Assembly, composed of 17 goals, of which specifically goal 4 states to ensure inclusive, equitable and quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

The purpose of this article is to analyze the relationship between inclusive education and school coexistence, based on the contributions of each process to sustainable development.

Development

Achieving quality education is the basis for improving people's lives and sustainable development. López et al. (2018) state that the literature on the concept of sustainable development has focused mainly on its environmental dimension, followed on the economic one generally, thus relegating the social perspective to the last plane, as its weakest pillar. Consequently, the social dimension of sustainable development, although it has made progress, continues to suffer from theoretical and empirical shortcomings.

Alcalá del Olmo & Gutiérrez (2020), mean that "educating for sustainable development has become one of the main pedagogical challenges to be addressed" (p. 60).

Lara et al. (2021), conceive that sustainable development is a process of equitable development in a continuous and lasting manner that implies respect for diversity, strengthening full citizen participation, in peaceful coexistence and in harmony with

nature and its components, to meet the needs of current generations without jeopardizing the quality of life of future generations.

Contributing to sustainable development in educational systems implies assuming a positive attitude towards the diversity of learners that favors the attention of all in an educational and social context, as well as identifying and promoting the elimination of barriers to learning and participation in educational institutions.

Attention to diversity implies promoting in everyone what each one has that is unique, it is directed to all learners according to their educational needs, the responsibility of attending to diversity falls on all teachers of the center, on the school staff, on the family, on the community. Diversity has gone from being what identifies certain children, adolescents and young people, by highlighting their differences, to being what guides education.

According to Álvarez (2006), diversity is considered an intrinsic reality of human reality, it implies, at the pedagogical level, compensating for differences, which in many cases have become inequalities, whether these are derived from gender, SEN, learning rhythms, unequal development processes and unfavorable family environments. It also implies promoting in everyone what is unique in each one of them, it is addressed to all students according to their educational needs, so the responsibility for attending to diversity falls on all teachers of the school, on the whole school group, on the family itself and on the community.

Gayle (2005) states that attention to diversity constitutes the organization of the system of educational influences considering the purpose and objectives of each level and type of education as the highest aspiration. To this end, it is necessary to mobilize resources, support and assistance that meet the needs and demands of learners, in order to achieve these purposes.

The inclusion process aims to minimize barriers so that everyone can participate regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, cultural, etc. characteristics. Both inclusive education and school coexistence imply attending all learners with quality, equity and relevance, making effective the rights to education, participation and equal opportunities.

It is evident; therefore, that inclusive education is a process of learning to live with people's differences, a process that involves participation and coexistence. It is necessary, in order to develop inclusive educational institutions, to create in them an environment of coexistence and respect for diversity, through which strategies can be

strengthened to develop valid learning, balanced and respectful personalities, and, above all, responsible citizens before themselves and the world.

Promoting school coexistence is fundamental for the development of inclusive education and educational institutions, as well as for the development of the four theoretical dimensions that interact in a systemic way with each other in the configuration of inclusive education: policies, concepts, structures and practices (Booth et al., 2006).

According to Fierro et al. (2012), school coexistence is the set of relational practices of the agents that participate in the daily life of educational institutions. These relational practices - observable in teaching processes, in the management of norms, in the construction of agreements, in conflict resolution, in evaluation, in the recognition of differences, in dealing with parents, in interactions among students and with their teachers - give rise to processes of inclusion or exclusion, of participation or segregation, of peaceful or violent resolution of differences, among others.

School coexistence is the framework that defines how to establish satisfactory interpersonal and group relations in the school environment, the process through which all members of the educational community learn to live together with others.

One of the conceptual elements that support coexistence is related to the need to address coexistence at the curricular level and include the personal and socio-affective development of students in educational actions, an element that supports the relevance of the psycho-pedagogical diagnosis as a process of study, research and prior knowledge essential in the implementation of actions with a level of assurance of the basic conditions to guarantee the quality of educational attention to each student in any context, to ensure equal opportunities and conditions of success for the development of all.

The necessary, polemic and controversial binomial psycho-pedagogical diagnosis-inclusive education generates multiple relationships of subordination, coordination and complementarity that reveal their interactive nature, which constitutes a challenge for the quality of the educational response and for school coexistence.

A broad conception of individual differences and special educational needs in regular classrooms also requires a flexible notion of psycho-pedagogical diagnosis.

According to Fernández (2019), the psycho-pedagogical diagnosis is a process of psycho-pedagogical research, with a continuous, participatory and guiding character, aimed at the identification of difficulties, achievements, potentialities and the

determination of educational needs, as well as support, resources and aids for the stimulation of development in the process of educational care.

The psycho-pedagogical diagnosis makes possible the search, compilation, systematization and interpretation of information about the students for decision making, which in the teaching-learning process is concretized in educational strategies that contribute to the improvement of the educational work.

Based on the information provided by the diagnosis, the teacher is in a better position to lead and promote the development of the students, to offer differentiated and personalized attention, and to seek the necessary resources and support for each one. The psycho-pedagogical diagnosis should include an evaluation of the interaction between learners and the learning situation (one of the objectives is the transformation of the teaching-learning processes in different directions), of the current characteristics and capacities of the educational institution and of the participating and contributing factors (teachers, directors, family, community) to respond to the needs detected and of the possibilities of projecting the required change.

The purpose of the psycho-pedagogical diagnosis for inclusive education is to offer a diversified response for diversified classrooms, centered on universal design, through the implementation of cooperative, interactive and developmental forms for all, in which no limits or barriers are established.

According to Booth and Ainscow (2002), barriers to learning and participation arise from the interaction between students and their contexts; the people, policies, institutions, cultures, and social and economic circumstances that affect their lives.

According to López (2011), barriers are the obstacles that hinder or limit learning, participation and coexistence under equitable conditions. Barriers prevent or inhibit learners' participation and learning. Booth and Ainscow (2011) state that participation is learning with others and collaborating with them, maintaining active involvement with what is being learned and taught, and recognizing and being recognized for who one is and being accepted for this very thing.

Barriers coexist in three dimensions:

1. School culture, referring to the values, beliefs and attitudes shared by the educational community),

2. The processes of planning, coordination and operation of the center: educational and curricular projects, organization, methodology, and

3. The practices and interactions established in the classroom.

There are different types of barriers related to: gender, language, race, ethnicity, religion, socio-cultural and economic origin, functional diversity and culture, among others. Attitudinal or social barriers take the form of prejudice, overprotection, ignorance, discrimination, to mention a few examples, which can be identified in teachers, managers, family members, classmates or other members of the community.

The aim is to eliminate all barriers to participation that arise from the interaction between the different educational agents and their contexts, through strategies for school coexistence based on the following basic aspects (Ainscow et al, 2006):

Group cohesion

- Socio-moral, socio-emotional and conflict resolution education

 - Peer support relationships

- Understanding and acting against bullying and cyberbullying

School coexistence is a psycho-pedagogical construct that is currently not only confined to educational institutions, but also to virtual spaces and immediate communication, in what various authors have called cybercoexistence.

The relationship between information and communication technologies (ICT) and inclusive education can be analyzed from a twofold perspective: on the one hand, their use can favor the achievement of quality education and eliminate the barriers that prevent all people from approaching education.

In addition to facilitating access to information and enhancing people's capabilities, technologies serve as an educational tool to change people's attitudes towards disability, which contributes to inclusive and quality education. ICTs offer multiple opportunities to enhance school coexistence by promoting participation through cooperative work in the educational institution and networking. It enables collaborative group learning.

With different technological resources, it is possible to use active methodologies, promote a motivating classroom climate and carry out group activities, among others. These make it possible to implement flexible and innovative educational models for lifelong learning and open up quality educational opportunities for young people and adults who did not study or did not continue their studies, and allow people to be permanently updated. ICTs favor learning to learn and learning to live together by enabling collaborative learning and virtual communities.

Conclusions

Inclusive education is essential to achieve quality education for all, including people with special educational needs associated or not with disabilities, as well as for the development of inclusive societies. Faced with this challenge, it is essential to achieve higher levels of participation of all learners in the educational context, where inclusive coexistence implies supporting and assuming the diversity of all with the aim of eliminating the social exclusion that occurs as a result of certain attitudes and responses to diversity. Learning to live together is a learning process in itself that also contributes to improve and enhance other lifelong learning.

Currently, the new school context is conditioned by the digital transformation, which to some extent influences school coexistence. Faced with the demands of ICT, it is necessary to contribute to the development of social skills and values that contribute to the improvement of the teaching-learning process in both face-to-face and virtual learning spaces, while at the same time contributing to the adoption of new forms of relationships, equally respectful of the rights of all.