Higher Education from an ICT and Inclusive Communication Approach

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ABSTRACT

In today's society, inclusive education contributes positively to reinforce tolerance, non-discrimination, communication, respect, equality, and inclusion of all regardless of our differences as human beings. The objective of the research is to offer a perspective of the teaching-learning process from new technologies, discrimination and inclusive communication in higher education. The methodology used was the critical documentary review from the qualitative approach. It was concluded that education has an important role both in its formal and non-formal context, in the family and in the community.

Keywords: Communication; Discrimination; Inclusive education; Higher education; ICTs

Introduction

In a society where globalization is increasingly present as a determining factor among others, which directly contributes to exclusion and inequality, affecting the educational system at all levels, it is important to highlight the need to end discrimination derived from negative attitudes or lack of attention to diversity in different areas such as situations derived from economic, social class, ethnicity, language, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation or skills. In addition to the above, the pandemic, as a phenomenon derived from globalization, brought to light problems such as extreme poverty, social inequalities

in education, health and labor precariousness, among other inequalities mentioned above, which exacerbated those already existing in society (Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, 2020).

For Mateo (2010), diversity is classified from another approach where intellectual and neurological factors; physical and sensory factors; personal and social adaptation factors; and environmental and educational factors, are determinants in inclusive education. Therefore, higher education needs to promote interaction and assertive communication from the spectrum of human diversity, inclusion and the development of transversal competencies, which facilitate and improve the interaction of students in a more inclusive educational system. In this regard, the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) suggests a quality, inclusive and equitable higher education as an effective and tangible way to avoid social inequalities.

Based on these considerations, inclusive education contributes positively and from education to reinforce tolerance, non-discrimination, communication, respect, equality, empathy and the inclusion of all regardless of our differences as human beings. This promotes the effective and assertive integration of students in the different spheres of action of society. In this regard, "the school is a privileged place to promote tolerance and convergence among different people and to inculcate the positive value of diversity" (Cano-Moreno, 2013, p. 210).

Likewise, higher education and society as a whole have a key role to play in the training of university students if the proposed challenges are to be successfully met. However, public investment in higher education is considered a priority in order to achieve the above objectives.

In addition, the Bologna Plan presents a series of changes and transformations of the traditional teaching-learning processes, among which the inclusion of the competencies that students must acquire throughout their initial training should be highlighted. These competencies arise with the implementation of the EHEA, so it is important to know how they are constituted and what they represent for the current university system.

On the other hand, this new educational model aims to achieve a more unified society through the development and strengthening of intellectual, social, scientific, cultural and technological dimensions. It is a rather ambitious and complex plan that was launched in

Europe, in order to promote education in the European Higher Education Area (Romero-Figuera, 2021).

Therefore, inclusion from the perspective of education is of utmost importance in our society, because this in turn generates equality and justice, which leads to keep in mind, that when talking about inclusive education, this is based on equality, tolerance, non-discrimination and full acceptance for all citizens. Therefore, inclusion in the education system is linked to the most marginalized or vulnerable groups in order to develop the greatest potential among learners, but also to improve the ability to enrich and promote social cohesion (UNESCO, 2020).

Likewise, inclusive education is a process that allows addressing and responding to diversity from different areas, this situation directly favors students and allows greater participation in other activities of a cultural and social nature, strengthening the learning process, which translates into the development of social skills that prevent and promote exclusion in the educational and social spheres (Mesías-Crespin *et al.,* 2022).

It is necessary to take into account the following fundamentals in inclusive education:

- Inclusion is another component of educational quality.
- Giving preference to marginalized or vulnerable people decreases the exclusion gap.
- The right of all people to an education linked to the development of competencies throughout life.
- Encourage an open, comprehensive, social and holistic educational approach, this eliminates biases in education.
- Develop social skills and empower students in their education, strengthening the social inclusion of the citizen of the future.
- Significantly reduce discrimination, promotes social cohesion.

Based on the above ideas, developing, promoting and incorporating humanistic contents in the curricula of the higher education system directly favors equality and inclusion from acceptance, which implies a teaching-learning process based on values such as: respect, commitment, responsibility, sense of belonging, trust, equity, empathy, solidarity, among other values.

Consequently, the objective of the following research is to offer a perspective of the teaching-learning process from new technologies, discrimination and inclusive communication in the field of higher education.

Development

This literature review article was framed around the critical documentary review method (Valencia, 2019), which constitutes one of the main qualitative-based methodological expressions dedicated to exploring multiple approaches, especially theoretical ones, related to a specialized field of study and aimed at understanding its theoretical objectives.

Therefore, we used the following databases managed by the Network of Scientific Journals of Latin America and the Caribbean, Spain and Portugal (REDALYC), the Portal for the Dissemination of Hispanic Scientific Production (DIALNET) and the Scientific Electronic Library OnLine (SciELO).

Also, different sources were examined: approximately 10 books and manuals, 30 articles from indexed journals, of which a total of 12 works were used for having more information related to the topic.

Technologies and inclusive education

For Messiou & Ainscow (2021), inclusion in education is related to a social learning process, which focuses on the learner and is less linked to organizational or technical aspects, to achieve a more equitable and quality education system, which is why it becomes a fundamental axis in the debate on educational public policies (Reyes-Chávez & Prado-Rodríguez, 2020). Hence, the importance of studying the situation of each country according to its needs, cultural context and other particularities, in order to avoid obstacles that do not favor the development and training of students.

Undoubtedly, teachers should analyze their teaching process from the approach of different active methodologies where the use of information and communication technology (ICT) can be useful, because it is an effective resource in inclusive education (UNESCO, 2020).

Similarly, the full development of digital competencies between the binomial (teacher - discussant) is considered a form of educational and social inclusion, which involves implementing a design of inclusive practice such as collaboration and problem solving in the classroom, which focus on the development of social skills and can positively impact the results of students with special educational needs, and in turn favors the balance between community, education system and diversity (Reyes-Chávez & Prado-Rodríguez, 2020).

In this regard, teachers from this perspective have tools that facilitate and promote learning in the student, for this reason, contextualizing from technology and universal design for learning (UDL) is to talk about removing barriers in the learning process, which in turn leads to personalized learning that ensures quality education, allowing the student to appropriate what they have learned and improve their cognitive process in order to apply it in different contexts (Paz-González *et al.,* 2023).

The following lines of action promote inclusive education from the ICT approach in higher education:

- Availability of free WiFi in the educational environment, technological equipment and links to different educational platforms that favor universal access.
- ICTs linked to inclusive education must be adapted to the real needs of students, especially those with special educational needs, who may be more vulnerable to any type of discrimination.

On the other hand, the lines of action described have a permanent character for the student, because they seek to develop skills and abilities that facilitate inclusion and promote an education for all people and that is based on human rights, avoiding discrimination in any area of life.

Most frequent discrimination and the reasons for it

Based on the above, the importance of inclusion in our society is clear for the United Nations Organization, UN (2023), in its penultimate "Report of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (ODS)" in which it states that countries must be committed to working for the human rights of people from the approach of inclusion and the welfare state, therefore, it is necessary a strong, humanistic and sustainable change in time, if we do not want to "leave no one behind" as established by the ODS. The following report shows that women and people with disabilities are the most vulnerable and marginalized

in their environments. Therefore, progressively reducing discrimination is crucial to avoid inequalities or injustices in society regardless of our differences as human beings.

According to UN (2023), these data indicate that one out of every six people worldwide suffers some type of discrimination for any of the above reasons. These figures reveal that women suffer more discrimination on the basis of gender, race (ethnicity, color or language), age and religion, and that these discriminations, which are less widespread, affect women and men approximately equally.

However, women are more likely to be discriminated against sexually than men because of their marital status. Another point to highlight in this report is that people with disabilities are more likely to suffer some type of discrimination, which is quantified in one out of three people claim to have suffered some type of discrimination, being this data significant with reference to people without disabilities, as can be seen in (Figure 1) according to the selected reasons.

Source: Self elaboration, adapted from (UN, 2023)
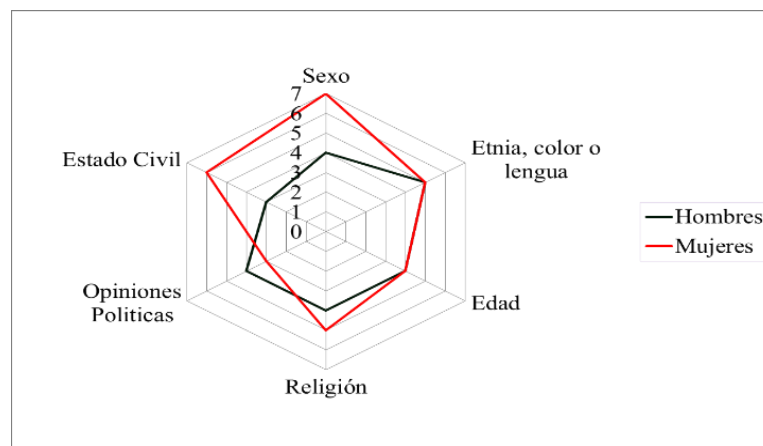
Figure 1: Proportion of the population experiencing discrimination between the period 2015-2022 by the selected grounds.

Inclusive communication in today's society

Changes in society occur in indifferent areas, therefore, language is not exempt from these changes, where evolution is continuous depending on the context. Therefore, the current language from inclusion is based on facilitating assertive communication of all people and with special emphasis on those who have been marginalized by their needs, feelings or preferences, this change is to avoid offending people with unnecessary words, which significantly improves the interaction.

Hence the importance that the higher education system should prioritize inclusive language as an essential part of its methodology in the teaching process, because this will have a positive impact on the training of university students and the updating of teaching staff.

Along the same lines, "semantics" as part of the context, "categorization" related to culture beyond the dictionary definition and "flavor", which indicates that words are not neutral, and helps to show a reality from respect and equality, but above all to incorporate other points of view that enrich communication and prevent linguistic distortion in favor of inclusive language in the field of education (Wertheim, 2023). To avoid the distortions exposed in inclusive language, it is important to put the emphasis on people, as detailed in Table 1.

Table 1: Practical Guide for Inclusive Language

	Non-inclusive expression	Inclusive expression
Persons with physical disability or medical condition	Disabled Incapacitated Handicapped Invalid Sick	Person with Intellectual or Physical Disability
	deaf-mute	Hearing impaired person, deaf person or person with deafness
	Blind or visually impaired	Visually impaired or blind persons
	Crippled, helpless	Person with motor disability
	Mentally retarded	Person with intellectual disability
	Dwarf,	Short people small people
	People who suffer/are victims of disability	People living with disabilities
	HIV patients	People with HIV
	People suffering/victims of Cancer, Diabetes, Parkinson's disease, etc. …	People with Cancer, Diabetes, Parkinson's…
	People suffering/victims of Bipolarity, Depression …	People with Bipolarity, Depression…
Minorías, Inmigración y Racismo	Ethnic minorities, Indians	Native peoples and communities or indigenous individuals
	Dialects	Indigenous languages
	Immigrants, Emigrant	Migrants
	People of color	Afro-descendant populations, people of African descent, racialized people or black people
Personas adultas mayores	Old man/old woman, elders and grandparents	Older adults, male and female seniors
Diversidad sexual	Sexual minorities	Sexual Diversities, LGBT+ population, LGBTTTIQ population
	Sex change	Gender affirming or Transgender people

Source: Self elaboration, adapted from (Monterrey Tech 2022; Sixth Key, 2024).

Information analysis

After analyzing the information worked on in the research, a word cloud was elaborated (see Figure 2) where the most representative words in the text were highlighted.

Therefore, fifty words were chosen which had a regularity greater than three, this gives us a visual understanding of the predominant themes.

Figure 2: Words with higher regularity in the document review

Conclusions

The purpose of this paper is to offer a perspective of the teaching-learning process from new technologies, discrimination and inclusive communication in the field of higher education. Therefore, the research was framed in the critical documentary review, highlighting that the inclusion of information and communication technology, discrimination and inclusive communication from respect, reciprocity, equality, acceptance and non-discrimination in higher education does not depend only on the teaching staff, Therefore, these actions are related to social work that includes society as a whole, because if we want to progressively reduce the percentage of people discriminated and marginalized for reasons of social class, ethnicity, language, religion, age, sex and sexual orientation, among others, we will be far from social inclusion. Therefore, the above leads to consider the importance of developing transversal competencies in the field of education, to then put into practice in our daily environments

as teachers or students, as well as implementing social protection measures to combat discrimination and support the most vulnerable and marginalized groups in society.

Education plays an important role in both formal and non-formal contexts, in the family and in the community, which indicates that inclusion is not a trivial issue in society. On the contrary, it is of transcendental importance for an integral, social and holistic education that is fundamental for equity, social cohesion and lifelong learning.

In this regard, the documentary analysis also shows that the issue of inclusion is not an exclusive matter for academics or specialists. That is, inclusion concerns everyone as a society and as agents of change in the fight against racism and in favor of inclusion from the diversity of human beings, this leads to an analysis both in the academic and social sphere, and to understand that a good way to motivate this debate begins in the classroom with the critical and reflective thinking of the students, where they can express their points of view from respect, equality, consideration and acceptance of the other from diversity and inclusion.

In relation to the limitations of this documentary review, it is relevant to specify that the interest of the topic is focused on higher education and the management of inclusion in the formation of university students. Therefore, for further research it is suggested to expand and work with migrants from the perspective of personal and social adaptation, another area where discrimination and exclusion are present.