

MENDIVE

REVISTA DE EDUCACIÓN

Translated from the original in Spanish

Attitude of basic education students towards peers with educa tional special needs

Actitudes de estudiantes de
educación básica hacia
compañeros con necesidades
educativas especiales

Atitudes dos estudantes do
ensino básico em relação aos
seus colegas de turma com
necessidades educativas
especiais

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ABSTRACT

The article is the result of a study that aimed to describe the attitude of students from the Dolores Sucre Basic Education School, in the city of Azogues, towards the inclusion of Peers With Special Educational Needs, associated with disability. To evaluate this attitude, the Chedoke-McMaster CATCH

Scale Attitude towards Children with Disabilities instrument was used, in the period 2018-2019. Their search is based on a quantitative methodology of a non-experimental and field type, with a sample of 100 students. For the information processing, the SPSS program (version 22) was used. The results indicate that the attitude towards the inclusion of Students with Special Educational Needs Associated With Disability Tends to be unfavorable in those who do not have a relationship and contact with these people, while those who have some kind of direct link with them show positive empathy, hence a favorable attitude.

Key words: student attitude; disability; inclusion; educational needs.

RESUMEN

El artículo es el resultado de un estudio que tiene como objetivo describir las actitudes de los estudiantes de la Escuela de Educación Básica "Dolores Sucre", de la ciudad de Azogues, hacia la inclusión de compañeros con Necesidades Educativas Especiales, asociados a la discapacidad. Para evaluar dichas actitudes se utilizó el instrumento escala de actitudes hacia los niños con discapacidad de Chedoke-McMaster CATCH Scale, en el período 2018-2019. La investigación se sustenta en una metodología de carácter cuantitativo de tipo no experimental y de campo, con una muestra de 100 estudiantes. Para el procesamiento de la información se utilizó el programa SPSS (versión 22).

Los resultados indican que las actitudes hacia la inclusión de estudiantes con Necesidades Educativas especiales, asociados a la discapacidad, tienden a ser desfavorables en aquellos que no guardan relación y contacto con estas personas; mientras, aquellos que tienen algún tipo de vínculo directo con ellas, muestran una empatía positiva y, por ende, una actitud favorable.

Palabras clave: actitud del estudiante; discapacidad; inclusión; necesidades educativas.

RESUMO

O artigo é o resultado de um estudo que visa descrever as atitudes dos alunos da Escola Dolores Sucre do Ensino Básico, na cidade de Azogues, em relação à inclusão de colegas com necessidades educativas especiais (SEN), associadas à deficiência. Para avaliar estas atitudes, foi utilizada em 2018-2019 a Escala Chedoke-McMaster CATCH de atitudes em relação às crianças com deficiência. A investigação é apoiada por uma metodologia quantitativa de tipo não experimental e de campo, com uma amostra de 100 estudantes. O software SPSS (versão 22) foi utilizado para processamento de dados. Os resultados indicam que as atitudes em relação à inclusão de estudantes com NEE associados à deficiência tendem a ser desfavoráveis naqueles que não têm qualquer relação e contacto com estas pessoas, enquanto que aqueles que têm algum tipo de ligação directa com eles, mostram uma empatia positiva, daí uma atitude favorável.

Palavras-chave: atitude do estudante; deficiência; inclusão; necessidades educativas.

INTRODUCTION

The inclusive education in Ecuador has been placed on the agenda of education for all. There are a lot the efforts that are being developed to try to balance the proposals and, thus, to ensure that the education system can meet various necessities; but the presence of attitudes that can be discriminatory and not very inclusive towards students that need to be included for different situations is still perceived.

The inclusion practice has been the least important on the agendas of specialists or responsible for directing the social and education systems, and to that incorporate the concept of means including confrontation and rupture of a belief system of the dominant culture that has norm and regulated daily life for many years.

Although it is true, at present it has gone from repressive and even punitive actions, which provoke exclusive and segregating responses, to others of a welfare nature, until reaching inclusive proposals that seek the equitable participation of those who present more pronounced singularities, which show the inadequacy of the environment for their personal development and social participation (Macías Gómez *et al.*, 2019).

The first of inclusion is the positive attitude of response to diversity from educational institutions; this implies integration, but it goes further, since it introduces the need to adapt the school to diversity, and not the other way around, understanding diversity in terms of normality, because it is normal for us to be different. In other words, the education we all desire is one that offers its students educational opportunities while respecting their participation and differences, necessary situations for their academic and personal progress.

Despite great efforts in the educational context, inclusion is still understood as the action of integrating students with special educational needs into the common classroom, without this meaning implementing profound changes in teaching methodologies, much less in the culture of the Schools Centers (Canales Nuñez *et al.*, 2018).

In this sense, institutions, organizations and educational systems, as well as national and international legislation, have chosen to establish strategies that tip the balance towards a positive intervention that mitigates the unjust and discriminatory situation of many centuries.

Research conducted on the attitudes of students towards peers with Educative Especial Needs (NEE) associated with disability should be seen as an urgent need for a harmonious development and healthy living in schools. Still in schools the problem of students is NEE differently to what other students is treated, so the integration of the first requires a different educational offering and a transformation of the mainstream education system.

From a retrospective analysis of 925 documents published in the database Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI) during period 2000-2011, IT has been possible to demonstrate the presence of certain negative prejudices in the educational context, causing rejection is Students with disabilities, which, according to this research, the success of their educational inclusion depends largely on the attitude of teachers and peers, even when they have a well-adapted curriculum (García Fernández *et al.*, 2017).

In our country, specifically since 2000, education has a more inclusive vision, as demonstrated by several state decrees with laws that enact this orientation. Chronologically, We palpate

that the Code of childhood and Adolescence in the year 2002, the Decennial Plan of Education PDE in the year 2006, the Constitution of the Republic in 2008 and the Organic Law of Intercultural Education LOEI 2011 have been strengthening the foundations to create a more inclusive culture. Today, the national education system welcomes students who previously only had space only in special schools, which confirms progress in this matter.

Considering how important the attitudes of classmates can be towards the process of inclusion of students with SEN associated with disabilities, it is imperative to develop research that addresses this problem. In this sense, the article presented is the result of a study that allows us to explore the type of attitudes manifested by students in regular classrooms, towards classmates who have a disability. Through the scale instrument and of attitudes towards children with disabilities of Chedoke-McMaster (CATCH), affective components, cognitive and behavioral attitudes, students of basic education to children with SEN associated with disability are analyzed.

Education, inclusion and disability: interrelated concepts

Undoubtedly, one of the most significant facts in the context of education in recent years is inclusive education. It has been emerging as a phenomenon capable of covering all educational requirements. In this regard, Calvo & Verdugo (2012) considers that the emergence of special education was something positive, since this meant recognizing that there is a need for an education that attends to diversity, and that schools are organized to attend to all the students.

Education is considered one of the main drivers for the social participation of all people under conditions of equality. From

this it follows that ensuring an educational system as inclusive as possible should be one of the main pillars of any disability policy (Garabal Barbeira *et al.*, 2018).

The term SEN refers, precisely, to a special support to be able to access knowledge, with the student being able to have a disability or not. To feel competent does not mean necessarily feel able to carry out the task autonomously or individual, but also with help from others. Situation directly linked to the educational system, which should have the technical and human resources to satisfy everyone's needs.

Regarding the term inclusion, Calvo & Verdugo (2012) affirm that "the term requires the implementation of an educational system based on diversity, with the aim of fulfilling the right to education, equal opportunities and participation in a ordinary environment" (p.19).

Guaranteeing an education under the principle of fulfilling rights with equity and respect has become a contemporary issue that has been a real challenge for those who are involved in the difficult task of educating.

Throughout history, the terms inclusion, education and disability have been interrelated. Reference is made to special education or educational integration; however, to refer to the subject itself, they were used derogatory terms when they had a disability.

Negative attitudes towards disability constitute social barriers that hinder the full exercise of human rights and favor discrimination and social exclusion (Hüg *et al.*, 2019).

Different authors have understood as a key factor for the inclusion of students with disabilities, interpersonal relationships established with other nondisabled peers, being attitudes a key

element (Polo Sánchez *et al.*, 2018; Lopez & Moreno, 2019).

From these references, derive a series of common characteristics, which may be favoring or hindering the inclusion of people with disabilities (Izquierdo, LH 2015):

1. Attitudes are a central piece of social thought and reflect the positive or negative degree with which people tend to judge any aspect of reality.
2. Attitudes are closely related to behavior. They are antecedents of behavior, influence the way people think and act and are manifested by what people do and say.
3. Attitudes play an important role thanks to their ability to insert the individual into their social environment.
4. Attitudes are established from cultural values.

Not only it is considered important to assess the attitudes of students and teachers towards inclusion, it is also necessary to know the other actors of the educational community, such as administration and services personnel and teams that make up the different organs of government (López & Moreno, 2019).

On the other hand, a processes ongoing innovation in schools, intended to provide tools that encourage improvement and updating of teachers is required. Understanding its complexity constitutes a fundamental factor in the implementation of the transformations that are required in the training institution. In this sense, one of the main actors that must be involved in educational change is the teacher, through the application of innovation during their teaching management (Cargua García *et al.*, 2019).

The success of inclusive education is directly related to teaching action in the classroom and the recognition of diversity as a wealth that contributes to learning (Pantiæ, 2017).

Measurement of attitudes towards disability

The end of all measurement theory, is to whatever the science, is to estimate the errors of the measures; since any measurement brings certain margin of error, the author emphasizes the difference between the measurement of distances between two objects, things of which physical sciences are responsible, and to measure attitudes, values, personality etc. Since a measurable attitude can be: a positive or negative feeling, a predisposition to act in a certain way, the level of like or dislike of something, a positive or negative disposition, among others.

The attitudes themselves are not observable, their approach, therefore, must be based on an analysis of their manifestations. In the aspect of measuring attitudes, for students from 9 to 13 years, it is considered the attitudes Instrument Scale towards children with above disabilities, whose exploratory dimensions are affective, cognitive and compartmental, as one of the more effective.

Factors influencing students' attitudes towards disability

It should be noted that there are many factors that influence the formation of attitudes; in this research, aspects such as: contact, relationship, frequency of contact, gender and type of disability were considered.

In this regard, Cárdenas (2003) states that "These occur based on social interaction, are built, mature and are formed through their own experiences and factors such as: social, family, cultural, religious, etc. Although these

factors are true in the same way, they can directly influence the individual's way of acting".

L attitudes as they vary from individual to individual and are determined by the beliefs, values and rules of a group; in fact, these can be modified or changed according to the stimulus, being the circumstances the ones that can modify an attitude. Cárdenas (2003) affirms that attitudes are not understood as immutable, and can change with age and circumstances. These changes are due to social, economic, psychological and academic situations (p.5).

So exposed above, it becomes very important investigate the impact that result in students' attitudes against peers with disabilities in order to generate intervention strategies future capable of negative potential mitigating effects that may arise in relations interpersonal.

The purpose of this research was to describe the students' attitudes towards disability in the "Dolores Sucre" basic general education school in the city of Azogues, to analyze the affective, cognitive and behavioral attitudes of the students and to relate variables such as: contact, relationship, frequency of contact and type of disability, in relation to positive and negative attitudes.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The present investigation used a quantitative methodology of a non-experimental and field type; quantitative, as it was done with the application of the scale instrument attitudes towards children with disabilities of Chedoke-McMaster (CATCH), which allowed analyzing the three components of attitudes: affective, cognitive and behavioral, and can be statistically quantified data collected

immediately after application and interpreted through thoughtful and numerical analysis.

It is, therefore, relevant in the field of inclusive education, as it allowed to analyze students' attitudes toward peers with disabilities towards generating conclusions to address the problems encountered in a technical and efficiently way.

It had a co relational descriptive scope, since, according to the instrument used, information is collected concerning the components mentioned above. The main objective of this research was to analyze the attitudes of students towards disability in the basic general education school "Dolores Sucre" in the city of Azogues.

For the development of this research, the population of the basic education school "Dolores Sucre" was used, in the evening section of the city of Azogues, which is made up of 134 students, who are within the ages required for the application of the CATCH, and that they decided to be part of this investigation. With the cited population, the following formula was used to calculate the sample size:

$$n = Z^2 P \times Q \times N$$

$$E^2 (N-1) + Z^2 \times P \times Q$$

$$n = (1.96)^2 (0.50) (0.50) 134$$

$$(0.05)^2 (134-1) + 1.96^2 (0.50) (0.50)$$

$$n = 100$$

n = Sample size

Z = Confidence level 1.96

P = Probability of the event occurring (50 %) 0.5

Q = Probability that the event will NOT occur (50 %) 0.5

E = Margin of error (4.95 %)

N = Population 134

To carry out this research, the Chedoke-McMaster (CATCH) instrument was used, consisting of 36 strategically distributed questions, which seek to address the attitude of peers who have students with disabilities as peers, with five response options ranging from: very disagree, disagree, undecided, agree and strongly agree. Likewise, it was requested to include demographic aspects at the bottom of the answer sheet such as: relationship with people with disabilities, frequency of contact and type of disability, all this to have a broader idea regarding the demographic aspect of the population studied.

Specifically, the scale is made up of 3 attitude subscales: affect behavior and thought, which are grouped in three dimensions:

Affective: items 2, 6, 10, 13, 14, 15, 18, 21, 23, 28, 31, 34.

Cognitive: items 1,3,4,8,12,17,19,24,27,30,33,36.

Behavioral: items 5,7,9,11,16,20,22,25,26,29,32,35

The respective analysis was carried out through the statistical program SPSS version 22, where the results were compiled and the respective operationalization were carried out. The descriptive measures that were used were: descriptive values, frequency and percentage distributions, means and crossing of variables. The results were illustrated with statistical tables.

Thus, valuation ranges were performed to determine when positive values are and when they are negative, taking into consideration three

dimensions: affective, cognitive and behavioral, which are expressed in Table 1:

Table 1- Score ranges for each of the dimensions

Dimension	Score	Value	Value
Affective	0-24	0	Negative attitude
	25-48	1	Positive attitude
Cognitive	0-24	0	Negative attitude
	25-48	1	Positive attitude
Behavioral	0-24	0	Negative attitude
	25-48	1	Positive attitude

RESULTS

For the CATCH tabulation, a value was given to each area addressed, ranging from 0, which would be unfavorable to 144, which would be totally favorable. Within the analysis, important variables were considered such as: total sample analyzed, sample analyzed with contact, gender, frequency of contact and type of disability.

Table 2 reflects the results of the sample regarding favorable and unfavorable attitudes. The affective dimension reaches 35 % of positive attitude, the cognitive dimension with 39 %, while the behavioral dimension with 38 %, which shows a predominant negative attitude in the students of this study towards disability, thus causing a very unfavorable environment for the implementation of inclusive education within the school and social environment. In this regard, Martos, Biassoni, Torres, Sol & Hüg (2019) consider that negative attitudes towards disability cause social barriers that prevent the full exercise of their rights, favoring discrimination and exclusion.

Table 2 - CATCH. Sample analyzed by areas

Area	Favorable	Unfavorable	Total
Affective	35	65	100
Cognitive	39	61	100
Behavioral	38	62	100

Attitudes against contact

It can be evidenced in contingency tables 3 and 4, the results of the general attitude vs. contact with the disability; those that are consistent with the individual analyzes for each dimension; thus concluding, thanks to the application of the Chi Square test, the existence of a significant relationship between the contact variable and attitude in all dimensions ($X^2(1) = 37.974; p < 0.05$).

Table 3 - Total vs c ontact CATCH

			Contact		Total
			no	Yes	
	Negative attitude	Count	59	3	62
Total		% within CONTACT	79.7 %	11.5 %	62.0 %
	Positive attitude	Count	15	23	38
		% within CONTACT	20.3 %	88.5 %	38.0 %
Total		Count	74	26	100
		% within CONTACT	100 %	100 %	100 %

Table 4 - Chi square test vs contact CATCH

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson's Chi-Square	37,974	1	,000		
Continuity correction	35,135	1	,000		
Probability index	39,606	1	,000		
Fisher's exact test				,000	,000
Linear by linear association	37,594	1	,000		
No. of valid cases	100				

As can be seen, in all areas the results are positive in the responses of those who in some way have contact with people with disabilities. Favorable attitudes of 85.5 % against 11.5 % of unfavorable responses are observed; this

may be due to the interaction with these people and the empathy that this provokes.

Attitudes vs type of contact

The following total table shows the same trend in terms of results. Positive results in those who keep family contact 88.2 % versus 11.8 %; meanwhile are observed, the Chi square test of the relationship between all dimensions vs contact type, is less than 0.05, indicating that exists a highly significant relationship (see Table 5 and 6).

Table 5 - Total vs type contact CATCH

			TypeContact			Total
			Family	Friendship	None	
Negative attitude	Count		2	0	60	62
	% within CONTACT		11.8 %	0.0 %	78.9 %	62.0 %
Positive attitude	Count		15	7	16	38
	% within CONTACT		88.2 %	100.0 %	21.1 %	38.0 %
Total	Count		17	7	76	100
	% within CONTACT		100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %

Table 6 - Test Chi square Total contact type CATCH

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	38,895	two	,000
Likelihood Ratio	42,270	two	,000
Linear-by-Linear Association	33,132	1	,000
N of Valid Cases	100		

Obviously, the type of contact is significantly determining in this study; Knowing, sharing or feeling the needs and capacities of those who suffer from a disability undoubtedly marks a positive trend, which is expressed in their attitudinal responses, contrary to those who do not live or share closely this situation.

Answers quite favorable in those who keep friendship, empathy generated by this type of situation is in sight, you can refer then that the closer the

contact will generate n more positive attitudes, as such it confirms Abellan, Gallego and Reina (2018) when stating that the closest or frequent contacts such as having family members or friends with disabilities would manifest themselves with more positive attitudes, as opposed to those who maintain more superficial contacts, such as those who share the classroom are also observed.

Attitudes vs type of disability

The total results between the behavioral dimension vs. type of disability show a similar trend (see table 7 and 8); that is, favorable attitudes in people in the different types of disability, the highest being the one expressed in the face of visual impairment, with 100 . In that way, the value of chi square obtained for the total ratio is the 0.00; that means that there is relationship between the variables.

Table 7 - Total vs disability type CATCH

					Tipo de	Discapaci			Total
Actitud negativa	Count		1	1	0	1	1	5	6
		% within TIPODISCA	6.7 %	20 %	0 %	12.5 %	25 %	78.4 %	62 %
Actitud positiva	Count		5	4	3	7	3	1	3
								6	8

		% within TIPODISCA	8 3. 3 %	80 %	1 0 0 %	87 .5 %	75 %	2 1. 6 %	3 8 %
Total		Count	6	5	3	8	4	7 4	1 0 0
		% within TIPODISC	1 0 0 %	10 0 %	1 0 0 %	10 0 %	10 0 %	1 0 0 %	1 0 0 %

Table 8 - Chi Square test vs type of disability

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	32,942	5	, 000
Likelihood Ratio	34,608	5	, 000
Linear-by-Linear Association	24,920	1	, 000
N of Valid Cases	100		

In short, the type of disability does not bring significant differences in terms of results; what is important is the relationship with the disability.

It is important to maintain contact and relationship with people with disabilities in order to achieve comprehensive conceptions regarding them; this will undoubtedly improve attitudes towards them and their true inclusion.

DISCUSSION

Inclusive education currently is a fundamental part of the national education system. The term inclusion has become something that goes beyond a simple concept, thus giving a glimpse of our human side, allowing us to share and be in contact with people who bring

with them different difficulties or some disability.

Calvo & Verdugo (2012) considers that the term inclusion entails the implementation of a system based on diversity and equal opportunity, respect for individual differences.

In general terms, it can be said that the results show that there is a high percentage of the students interviewed with negative attitudes towards disability. These results are consistent with the student reality that is observed daily in the classrooms of the educational center, evidencing a marked isolation of students with disabilities and learning problems, especially in recess hours and collaborative work, causing not only learning problems but also emotional.

These stored results regarding some developed studies (Cárdenas, 2003; Calvo & Verdugo, 2012; Izquierdo, LH 2015) reflecting how today, despite all the efforts of governments, inclusion policies go on. In the educational contexts and the open promotion in favor of inclusion, there are prejudices that influence the construction of individual and social stereotypes that generate discriminatory spaces for people with disabilities.

It can be concluded, based on the results, those who have positive attitudes towards these people, are those who keep contact and are in some way connected with them, this certainly shows that the greater the interaction, relationship and frequency contact, the greater your empathy for them. In this regard, Abellán, Gallego and Reina (2018) state that closer or frequent contacts, such as having family members or friends with disabilities, would manifest themselves with more positive attitudes towards them, considering that people with disabilities live better with their families, being you are the only constant element in their lives; while, within the pedagogical

space, Hüg *et al.* (2019) consider that it is imperative to address this issue, since the school environment constitutes a privileged space to address this problem and promote positive attitudes towards people with disabilities.

When comparing it with similar research, we can relate it to that carried out by Ruiz and Cedillo (2017), who think that an important factor in the successful integration of students with disabilities into regular schools is directly related to contact with them, since it is an element that is associated with significant differences in terms of attitude towards them, especially when it is the result of a school relationship. In turn, it was found that the type of disability of the people with whom they live and the frequency of such contact do not generate statistically significant discrepancies.

In a general sense, it can be considered that this research demonstrates the need to strengthen the inclusion of people with disabilities; greater socialization and general knowledge about disability is necessary, with greater participation, not only with the family but with the entire educational community. Having obtained more than 60 % of the students interviewed with a negative attitude towards disability, the need to address inclusive issues and the development of inter-institutional projects that promote acceptance and attention to differences is imperative, this being an essential component from the first years of schooling, since this stage is key for the comprehensive development of students.

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Conflict of interest:

Authors declare not to have any conflicts of interest.

Authors' Contribution:

Juan Carlos Alvarez Cevallos: Conception of the idea, authorship coordinator, literature search and review, preparation of instruments, application of instruments, compilation of information resulting from the instruments applied, preparation of tables, graphs and images, preparation of the database, writing of the original (first version), correction of the article.

Jorge Poveda Zuñiga: Conception of the idea, literature search and review, translation of terms or information obtained, preparation of instruments, statistical analysis, and preparation of tables, graphs and images, review of the applied bibliographic standard, review and final version of the article.

Ernesto Quevedo Mora: Conception of the idea, translation of terms or information obtained, application of instruments, compilation of information resulting from the instruments applied, review of the applied bibliographic standard, review and final version of the article.



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