

PERCEPTIONS REGARDING THE ATTENTION TO DIVERSITY AND EDUCATIONAL INCLUSION IN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

Percepciones respecto a la atención a la diversidad e inclusión educativa en estudiantes universitarios

*PATRICIA BRAVO MANCERO**

patybravom@hotmail.com

Universidad Nacional de Chimborazo / Riobamba-Ecuador

Orcid Code: <https://0000-0002-4671-8611>

*OFELIA SANTOS JIMÉNEZ***

ofesantos@hotmail.com

Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos / Lima-Perú

Orcid Code: <https://0000-0003-1294-0641>

Abstract

This article analyzes the perceptions of university students regarding attention to diversity and educational inclusion. In recent years at the international level, important efforts have been made to establish policies that specify in actions, the principle of Education for all. In Ecuador they are contemplated in the Constitution (2008) and in the Organic Law of Higher Education (2010). Hence, the question that guides the research is: What perceptions do students have regarding the Attention to Diversity and Educational Inclusion? To answer this question, a quantitative, interpretative, field and cross-sectional research was carried out. The informants were 124 students of eighth semester of six careers of the Faculty of Education Sciences, of the National University of Chimborazo: Social Sciences, Educational Psychology, Sciences, Basic Education, Early Childhood Education and Languages, during the academic period 2017-I. The instrument that was used was the Situational Scale of Attention to Diversity and Inclusion Education, questionnaire based on the Index for Inclusion of Tony Booth and Mel Ainscown, constituted by three subcategories: culture, practices and inclusive policies. The results indicate that students have a favorable perception regarding attention to diversity and educational inclusion. However, this positive image alone does not guarantee the success of the process, since it is necessary to consolidate the culture and inclusive practices. Working on it, would favor the construction of an inclusive university for an inclusive society.

Suggested form of citing: Bravo, Patricia & Santos, Ofelia (2019). Perceptions regarding the attention to diversity and educational inclusion in university students. *Sophía, colección de Filosofía de la Educación*, 26(1), pp. 315-340.

* Educational psychologist and doctor (c) in Education. Professional experience in basic, special and superior education, training courses organized by the Ministry of Education and the National Secretariat of Higher Education Science and Technology, and academic facilitator of the Higher Education Council. Speaker at congresses at national and international level, with publications in several indexed journals.

** PhD in education and pre and postgraduate teaching at the Faculty of Education of the National University of San Marcos (Lima-Peru). Specialties: communication, foreign language, evaluation, research.

Keywords

Perceptions, attention to diversity, educational inclusion, inclusive culture, inclusive practices, inclusive policies.

Resumen

Este artículo analiza las percepciones de estudiantes universitarios frente a la atención a la diversidad e inclusión educativa. En los últimos años, a nivel internacional, se han realizado importantes esfuerzos por establecer políticas que concreten en acciones el principio de la “Educación para todos”. En el Ecuador se encuentran contempladas en la Constitución (2008) y en la Ley Orgánica de Educación Superior (2010). La pregunta que orienta la investigación es: ¿Qué percepciones tienen los estudiantes frente a la atención a la diversidad e inclusión educativa? Para dar respuesta a esta interrogante se realizó una investigación cuantitativa, interpretativa, de campo y transversal. Los informantes fueron 124 estudiantes de octavo semestre de seis carreras de la Facultad de Ciencias de la Educación de la Universidad Nacional de Chimborazo: Ciencias Sociales, Psicología Educativa, Ciencias, Educación Básica, Educación Parvularia e Idiomas, durante el período académico 2017-I. El instrumento que se utilizó fue la Escala Situacional de Atención a la Diversidad e Inclusión Educativa, cuestionario basado en el *Index for Inclusión* de Tony Booth y Mel Ainscown, constituido por tres subcategorías: cultura, prácticas y políticas inclusivas. Los resultados indican que los estudiantes tienen una percepción favorable respecto a la atención a la diversidad e inclusión educativa. No obstante, esta imagen positiva por sí sola no garantiza el éxito del proceso, ya que se requiere consolidar una cultura y unas prácticas inclusivas. Trabajar en ello favorecería la construcción de una universidad inclusiva para una sociedad incluyente.

Palabras clave

Percepciones, atención a la diversidad, inclusión educativa, cultura inclusiva, prácticas inclusivas, políticas inclusivas.

Introduction

During the last few years, changes have taken place in Ecuador within the university context, which have mainly aimed at improving the quality of education. Thus, in 2011 comes into force the Organic Law of Higher Education (LOES) which considers equality as the key element to consolidate the recognition of diversity. It should be noted that, although progress has been made in the democratization of access to the university through measures such as free education up to the third level of studies, the enactment of these policies has not guaranteed by itself the creation of inclusive cultures and practices within the centers of higher education. Thus, in 2015, the National Secretariat for Higher Education, Science, Technology and Innovation (SENESCYT), in partnership with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), launched a proposal entitled “Building equality in higher education”, whose main objective is to provide guidelines to materialize equity

and inclusion in Ecuadorian universities, and consequently, contribute to the construction of a more humane, solidary, peaceful and just society.

In this sense, the main objective of this work is to analyze the values, beliefs, representations and practices of the actors, in relation to the topic of diversity and educational inclusion. The study is current and relevant since it explores a dimension little investigated in the medium and feeds the reflection on the elements that make up an education of quality for all. Consequently, the question addressed by the research is: What perceptions do students of the Faculty of Educational Sciences of the National University of Chimborazo (UNACH) 2017-I have regarding the attention to diversity and educational inclusion?

It should be noted that the quality of education has been a constant concern of the different governments, international organizations, teachers and future teachers. In this regard, in 1990 the World Conference on Education for All was held in Jomtien, Thailand, which approved the World Declaration on Education for All and the Framework for Action to Meet Basic Learning Needs, which marked the starting point for the international dialogue about the impact of human development policies on education.

For the development of this work, conceptualizations of attention to diversity and educational inclusion are presented, as well as their implications in the university environment. It outlines the conditions that are required to concretize it, the factors that affect the perceptions of the students and, finally, the dimensions that determine the progress of the inclusive process.

The methodology used, in general terms, has to do with quantitative and qualitative research, of a descriptive, interpretative and transversal nature. The sample was formed The collection of information was done through the application of the Situational Scale of Attention to Diversity and Educational Inclusion (ESADIE), based on the Guide for the inclusion of British teachers Tony Booth and Mel Ainscow (2015) and which is composed of 22 items distributed in three dimensions: culture, policies and inclusive practices. by 124 students of the following careers: Social Sciences, Educational Psychology, Sciences, Basic Education, Nursery Education and Languages, during the semester 2017-I.

Attention to diversity and educational inclusion in higher education

The transformations at the level of educational policies for attention to diversity and inclusion are the reflection of the process of vindication of the right to an education for all, which has been led by important international organizations such as the UN, UNESCO and UNICEF, together with families, professionals and those affected by segregation and exclusion from the education system.

For Arnaiz (2003), the central purpose of this movement has been to create welcoming institutions that provide quality education, valuing all students equally and without their personal (physical, intellectual, sensory), social, emotional or linguistic conditions being a limitation for access to the establishment. In this sense, Booth and Ainscow (2015) see inclusion as “an endless process that has to do with the participation of people” (p.24), therefore, it is effective for most students and improves the effectiveness of the entire education system.

According to the Organic Law of Intercultural Education (LOEI, 2011), education in Ecuador is considered a fundamental right that must be promoted, respected and guaranteed to all people throughout their lives (LOEI, 2011). This right is achieved when all citizens have access to quality education, which gives them equal opportunities. In this way, educational and social segregation and exclusion are reduced. Although, the model of educational inclusion is the path that educational contexts must follow, as a result of the agreements established in international and Latin American conventions, the implementation of its principles has not been an easy path to travel, insofar as that, to reach the objectives, factors that intervene in the success or failure of the proposal converge.

For his part, Tünnermann (2010) states that the international agenda on higher education, which has been led by UNESCO, was built from meetings and conferences, which led to strategic plans and specific inter-institutional work projects linked to these guidelines of action (p. 32). The world conferences on higher education of the years 1998 and 2009, as well as the regional preparatory and follow-up conferences, marked the way for the transition towards a knowledge society, the significant increase in university enrollment and the visualization of the leading role who has higher education in society. At the same time, Herdoiza (2015) argues that one of the main advances that has occurred in them “is to consider higher education as a public good and knowledge as a social good and, moreover, as a human right” (p.19). Consequently, these

conceptions must be accompanied by practices within the educational system to contribute to the construction of an inclusive community.

In this sense, the public educational policy in the country, during the last ten years, has outlined the same guidelines for higher education. As a result, in the National Plan for Good Living (PNBV, 2013)¹ the model of society to be achieved was drawn up and to which the university should contribute. Therefore, and according to Arnaiz (2003), the achievement of quality in higher education is inseparable from the achievement of equity and inclusion.

Likewise, from the implementation of the LOES (2010), it is legally guaranteed that all students have access to a higher education of quality and relevance, free public higher education up to the third level, the elevation of the professional preparation standards, as well as the strengthening of research, which marks a significant advance in educational regulations. To the indicated law, the work carried out in 2015 is added by:

The General Undersecretariat of Higher Education and the Coordination of Ancestral Knowledge of the SENESCYT with the technical assistance of Dr. Magdalena Herdoiza, PROMETEO researcher, with the technical contribution of SENESCYT and several agencies of the United Nations System (Herdoiza, 2015, p. 16).

In relation to what has been said, Herdoiza (2015) mentions that the main objective of this work was “to strengthen the actions of the Higher Education System (SES) actors in the implementation of the public policy of gender equality; of peoples and nationalities within a framework of interculturality; of people with disabilities”(p. 16). In addition, the academic Herdoiza (2015) notes that in the country the SES is made up of:

Universities, polytechnics, and higher institutes, whether public, private or co-financed [...]; by governing entities: [...] the Secretariat of Higher Education, Science, Technology and Innovation (SENESCYT), the Council of Higher Education (CES) and the Council for the Evaluation, Accreditation and Quality Assurance of Higher Education (CEAACES) (p. 9).

Herdoíza (2015) also highlights “the leadership role exercised by this system for the transformation of society” (p.19). Accordingly, it can be deduced that the primary function of the State and the national and international community is to enforce the fundamental human right to receive quality education.

In this context, education is considered a priority area in the development of the country. From the official discourse and as pointed out by María Ortiz (2015), the aim is to achieve a quality education system, for which institutions have been strengthened, infrastructure has been improved, salaries have been raised and an initial training and continuous training strategy for teachers has been worked on.

Conceptual understandings regarding attention to diversity and educational inclusion

The term diversity is linked, mentally, to a negative condition of people. Socially, it is used to represent a fragmented vision of reality that encompasses people with disabilities, of different sexual preferences, economic class, ethnicity, etc., which brings with it a set of stereotypes and prejudices regarding what those people can, know or should do or be.

This conception reduces its multidimensional complexity, without assuming itself as a natural and positive condition that touches everyone. According to Morin (in Solana, 1995): “The biological and the sociocultural of man should not be conceived as two separate or merely juxtaposed dimensions” (p. s/n), for this reason, they should be assumed as a bio-psycho-socio-cultural totality, perspective from which it is possible to understand the diversity of the human being. Therefore, it is important to understand that the aforementioned dimensions do not occur separately or independently in the reality of the teaching-learning process, but in an articulated manner. Consequently, to recognize human diversity is to understand its interactive unity; age, gender and intellectual capacities, for example, dimensions, otherwise, inseparable in the educational act.

The term diversity encompasses different interpretations according to the position from which it is analyzed. On the one hand, it encompasses the unique characteristics of individuals and, on the other, it refers to those that are the product of the context in which people live. Consequently, the first interpretation affirms and values the individual differences between the subjects, for example: height, color of hair, shape of the eyes, among others, and in the educational field: style and rhythm of learning, types of intelligences has, level of motivation, among others. On the other hand, Torres (in Bausela, 2002) states that “it points to inequalities, in relation to the conditions offered by the context for a person to access on equal opportunities, the rights contemplated in national policies” (p.1). Additionally, Ortiz Granja (2015) adds that diversity raises awareness that reflects:

The asymmetry that exists at all levels: social, economic, political and power [...] that diminish the possibility that the other can be considered as a subject, with its own identity, with specific characteristics and, as such, cannot be simply “assimilated” to achieve an equitable exchange (p.94).

Focusing the understanding on attention to diversity in the educational field, it is understood that it is the answer to individual differences, based on the recognition and evaluation of the characteristics of the students. But by no means -as interpreted by Bayot, Del Rincón and Hernández (2002) - does it mean to homogenize diversity, but rather to propose a curricular model that promotes the learning of all students. From this analysis it can be deduced that diversity has been used as a segregation mechanism, however, attention to diversity may change if we assume the perspective of Lizasoáin and Peralta (in Bausela, 2002), which means “moving in continuous opposites as uniformity/diversity and homogeneity/heterogeneity” (p. 2).

Students come to the university from different regions of the country and therefore from different ethnic, gender, religious belief backgrounds, among others. At the same time, we can observe the presence of students with sensorial (visual and auditory) and motor impairments who, to remain in the institution, had to “accommodate” to their infrastructure, methodology, didactic resources, administrative procedures and others, because supposedly students should adapt to the conditions of the university and not the opposite: the university provide a response according to their characteristics and needs.

The main difficulty to approach diversity is that in higher education a rigid thought prevails, which aims to homogenize the conditions that university students should have, focused mainly on the development of cognitive skills. Morán (2012) argues that thoughts guide actions and, vice versa, actions translate people’s way of thinking and are related to their way of acting. In short, perceptions and beliefs form a network that is difficult to break and that is visible in favorable or unfavorable attitudes towards difference.

In another aspect, Galán (2015) warns that in the university environment: “The phenomenon of prioritizing the external to the detriment of local values, is evident in academic life” (p. 117). Because of this, in the higher education institutions the western culture or dominant culture is overestimated, from which contents, experiences and teaching models are extracted, alien to the context and, therefore, not very relevant. In this regard, García, Bravo, Tello and Varguillas (2015) argue that:

In this way, the two fundamental aspects that should guide vocational training processes are unknown: on the one hand, the conceptions on multi and interculturality, and on the other the pedagogical guidelines to concretize it in the pedagogical processes that are developed within the classroom (p. 191).

For Lira and Ponce de León (2006), attention to diversity from the university is a challenge that demands four important aspects:

- “That there be adequate infrastructure, that access to materials be allowed” (p. 5). It is worth mentioning that elevators were built in the UNACH, the same ones that cannot be used because most of the time they remain damaged. There are still architectural barriers that limit mobility such as stairs, narrow doors, high windows for public attention, etc.
- “That there be administrative and academic personnel prepared to serve diverse students” (p. 5). In this sense, there is a shortcoming because the teachers trained for teaching - and much less those who have not been - are not prepared to address diversity. However, efforts are being made to improve this aspect, for which courses and workshops on attention to diversity in higher education have been given.
- “Prepare future professionals from different areas, not just teachers, to be aware of the subject” (p. 5). It is necessary to work in a more open, flexible and holistic training model, in which the attention to diversity is considered as a main objective in the preparation of future professionals of the four faculties of the UNACH.
- “Guarantee the employability of professionals with special educational needs” (p. 5). This issue is fundamental, articulating in a more direct way the university with the labor context and local needs.

In fact, as Diaz puts it (in Bausela, 2002), the university “is the most segregating and excluding context of all” (p.2), since, instead of ensuring compliance with the principle of equal opportunities for all students, rather limits access and learning opportunities. For this reason, in accordance with what Urbina, Simón and Echeita (2011), it becomes difficult to talk about an inclusive university in an environment with mental and physical barriers, with no specific resources for learning and participation, with limited teacher training in this aspect, with the presence of

a rigid curriculum, of traditional teaching methods and mainly of little inclusive attitudes of the members of the educational community.

In summary, according to Booth and Ainscow (2015), inclusion is considered “as an endless process that has to do with the participation of people, the creation of participatory systems and their adjustments, and the promotion of inclusive values” (p.24), that is, a different way of living, a particular style of acting and participating, understanding and considering each person. In the field of higher education, it also implies a process that encourages the participation and belonging of all students and, at the same time, the decision to eliminate the barriers that lead to exclusion processes. In this way, inclusive education conceives the institution as a community that must guarantee the right that all students must learn.

Although each educational system is unique, Echeita and Ainscown (2010) think that certain basic conditions must be considered to encourage attention to diversity and educational inclusion in institutions, which for better understanding have been adapted to the university context:

- “Inclusion is a process” (p.4). This means that universities should look for better ways to prepare future professionals to be able to coexist with diversity. Educate them so that they learn to value the difference. It is evident that this purpose is not achieved with a motivational talk or by inserting isolated contents within the initial formation curriculum. It is a path that must be started and that has its beginning in university policies, it must cross the curriculum and must be strengthened with the practices in all areas of institutional development: management, teaching, research and links with society. It requires, therefore, goodwill, time and effort.
- “Inclusion seeks the presence, participation, and success of all students” (p.5). Within the higher education centers, it is important to work for the presence, participation and learning of all students. Presence means ensuring the first level of equity, that is, that all students enter the university. Here the first controversy opens up, since there are different filters to select students who can opt for a career. The elements that are considered for the effect are primarily the level of cognitive development. On the other hand, it is argued that universities cannot accommodate all students because both the infrastructure and the teachers and the budget are insufficient. Participation corresponds to the second level of equity and refers to propitiate



learning situations in which all students can intervene. This level of inclusion corresponds to work for the teacher, since it will depend on their attitude, methodology and way of evaluating, ensuring that all students feel welcomed in the university classroom. Then, if the students are successful and are cared for in their characteristics, according to their ways of being, thinking and acting, they can learn and conclude their studies. This would be the highest level of equity in the inclusive process.

- “Inclusion requires the identification and elimination of barriers” (p. 5). The concept of barriers is fundamental to understand that there are limitations that do not favor inclusive education. These barriers range from materials (access, equipment, personal requirements), through methodological and curricular barriers that hinder the learning of all and end with the most difficult to eradicate: attitudinal and that refer to the way of thinking and acting in front of diversity. Here it is important to reflect that in higher education there is a need to work for inclusion, especially in the change of mental structures that hinder the relationship with the other.
- Inclusion responds to the diversity of characteristics of the students who attend the university. Although there are students who, due to different personal, social, economic and/or cultural circumstances have been relegated from the educational system, it should be noted that, through inclusion, “it must be ensured that those groups that, at the statistical level, find themselves under greater risk of vulnerability, be monitored with attention” (p. 5), that is, deploy services of detection and continuous monitoring of the conditions in which those students who show irregular attendance, economic, learning, behavioral difficulties, of adaptation, etc. are, and that in the short or long term could trigger situations of discrimination, inequity, desertion and exclusion from the higher education system. The idea is, from the university, to build a more egalitarian society.

324



On the perceptions of students facing diversity and educational inclusion

Psychology is the science that studies perceptions and from this disciplinary field Vargas (1994) defines perceptions as:

The cognitive process of consciousness that consists in the recognition, interpretation and meaning for the elaboration of judgments about the sensations obtained from the physical and social environment, in which other psychic processes intervene including learning, memory and the symbolization (p.2).

In this same sense, Vásquez, Cavallo, Aparicio, Muñoz, Robson, Ruiz, Secreto, Sepiarsky and Escobar (2012) argue that perceptions comprise a series of processes that interact and in which each person and the environment in which they operate, play an active role in shaping ways of understanding particular to each social group. Indeed, the perception also includes the construction of judgments that allow the individual to consciously elaborate the sensations, as well as the emission of criteria on them. To this are added the existential and environmental mechanisms of the individual: origin, gender, age, level of academic formation, among others, which play an important role in the reactions and interpretations.

At the same time, Salazar, Montero, Sánchez, Santoro and Villegas (2012) consider that perception “is much more dynamic than what had been supposed [...] is to select, formulate hypotheses, decide, process the stimulation eliminating, increasing or decreasing Aspects of stimulation” (p. 78). Therefore, learning, motivation, emotions, permanent or momentary characteristics of the subjects, their expectations and the context in which they interact, have a direct influence on perception. In addition, as Guardiola says (in Castilleja, Regino and Cogollo, 2015):

The perception is the mental image that is formed in the mind of the individual, according to the experiences and needs, resulting in a process of selection, interpretation and correction of sensations, characterized by being subjective, selective and temporary because it can vary from one individual to another, selective because an individual cannot perceive everything at the same time, so he must select what he wants to perceive and temporary because it is a phenomenon that occurs in the short term, since it can change with the course of time (p.4)

In relation to perceptions regarding attention to diversity and educational inclusion, there is agreement with the conception of Verdejo and Pappous (2013), who consider that students who are being trained for teaching show favorable or unfavorable attitudes towards the different characteristics of people. These perceptions cannot always be observed directly, but can be deduced from verbal expressions, observations or other indirect measurements, such as scales in which, from a series of items, they express their level of agreement or disagreement.

Factors that impact on students' perception

During initial training, future teachers should develop competencies to attend to diversity and educational inclusion. Boer, Pijil and Minaert (in Granada, et al., 2013), affirm that “the attitude of teachers towards inclusion is conditioned by the presence of several factors that can facilitate or hinder their inclusive practices” (p.54). These aspects, generally speaking, are two and are described below:

- The personal experiences; It is believed that this is related to the fact of having known, felt or experienced a direct situation (personal or family) or indirect (friends, neighbors, classmates) with some kind of diversity (Granada, et al., 2013). Thus, the more experiences they have, the better attitude toward inclusive education, than those with less experience.
- Initial training This factor is decisive to respond with quality to the diversity of students who are present in the educational context. Throughout the history of initial training, in Ecuador a close relationship can be noted between public policy, national curriculum and teacher training. This training, as Villagómez points out (in Ortiz Espinoza, 2015), “has traditionally been linked to the guidelines of public policy and the national curriculum” (p.84), which undoubtedly had a direct impact on rethink the initial training of teachers.

Regarding the decisions adopted by the Ecuadorian Government, Ortiz Espinoza (2015) argues that “for the first time it is declared that careers in Education Sciences are a national priority” (pp. 85-86). In this sense, already in the professional field, since the promulgation of the LOEI (2011)², the role of teachers changed, having to assume new tasks and responsibilities themselves. These changes have occurred mainly through the compulsory nature of the General Basic Education (EGB)³, the modification and updating of the curriculum, and the increase of cultural diversity and inclusion of students with special educational needs in common classrooms, ratifying the importance and relevance of a new profile of teacher training.

In studies carried out at an international level, the importance of initial teacher training as a key element to specify the attention to diversity and educational inclusion is highlighted. For Horne and Timmons (2009) it is important to strengthen in future teachers and teachers in service a favorable attitude towards educational inclusion, for which, during the formative stage of teachers, they must develop procedural and attitudinal cognitive skills related to the attention to diversity.

Ortiz Espinoza (2015) also points out that, in the opinion of the Ministry of Education, there has been an improvement in teacher training in the country, focusing it “as a profession that needs solid preparation” (p.86). It also emphasizes that “if teachers receive excellent training, they will perform better and therefore the quality of education will be raised” (p.86). From all these changes, we try to give teaching the importance it has in the transformation of society, since it will not change without the contribution of education. However, the reality lays far from the good intentions, since to enter the teaching career students must obtain at least 800 points, as for medicine, a career that has greater acceptance. In relation to the above, Vaillant (2013) and Vaillant and Rossel (2006) argue that, in Latin America, teaching lacks social recognition and does not motivate aspiring teachers with vocation, attitudes, skills open to inclusion and with a clear vision of converting the teaching profession into an instrument to create equality and equity relations in society.

Dimensions of perception

Higher education institutions should be a reference to implement values, principles, actions and decisions within their communities. In this sense, there are factors and dimensions that evaluate the way in which they are walking to reach the goal of being open and inclusive. Booth and Ainscown (2015) incorporate the concepts of inclusive culture, policies and practices, as benchmarks of the progress of the inclusive process. Next, the meaning of each one is explained:

- Inclusive culture: Booth and Ainscown (2015) point out that “this dimension is oriented towards reflecting on the importance of creating safe, welcoming and collaborative communities [...] where everyone feels welcomed” (page 49). According to the authors, refers to the commitments, participation, conviction, principles, inclusive values and school climate, that managers and teachers create to achieve the learning of students who present some type of special educational need. It is said that the teacher creates an inclusive culture in the classroom when he values all of his students. Therefore, the inclusive culture is defined both in the policies and practices that are developed and implemented in the educational center. Then, to implement it, the educational responses must be generated according to the needs of the students. It will be useless to generate inclusive policies and practices if you do not work, first, to achieve a teacher

profile with a true inclusive culture. “The teachers would have a different attitude according to the different needs that the students present” (Granada et al., 2013, p. 55). Therefore, a positive attitude towards all students must be guaranteed within the university classrooms, trusting in their learning possibilities.

- Inclusive policies: In this regard, Booth and Ainscown (2015) point out that “it is the capacity of an educational center to address the diversity of its students, promoting that everyone is valued with equity” (p. 49). In the case of university teaching, it refers to the measures taken to ensure the availability and organization of resources, to promote teacher training consistent with the attention to diversity and educational inclusion. These policies are aimed at considering them as essential elements in the institutional development and constitute the support to respond to the needs of the members of the institution.
- Inclusive practices: Professors Booth and Ainscow (2015) refer to the practices as concrete strategies to favor the participation of all members of the community, demonstrating the direct relationship that should exist between culture and inclusive policies. For this reason, inclusive practices reflect “inclusive values and policies established at the center” (p. 49).

In summary, attention to diversity must provide community members with effective responses to develop the educational, personal, social and cultural potential of all, but especially of those who have difficulties in any area.

Study parameters

This study was framed in the quantitative methodology, under the interpretive paradigm, with the purpose of having an integral view of the researched reality, oriented by the understanding of the meanings of the data. Hence, the research focused its work on the analysis of the data, the importance for the population studied and the use of the inductive and hermeneutical strategy to seek interactions and meanings to the data. In addition, it was a field and cross-sectional study, because the data was collected in the UNACH, during the academic period April-August 2017.

The study context, as a main axis in which the educational meanings are developed, was the UNACH. In this space the information of the investigation for the analysis phase and interpretation of the results was obtained.

The participants were 124 students who were in the last semester of the careers already mentioned, because this group had received all the subjects that make up the curriculum and therefore were key informants.

For the collection of the information and considering the number of participants, the techniques of the survey and the questionnaire were chosen as exploration instruments. To this end, the ESADIE was built, based on the Guide for Inclusive Education (Booth and Ainscow, 2015), through which it was intended to measure both the attitude and the manifestations of the belief system of the students involved in education, on the institutional and academic environment, regarding the inclusion of students in a situation of diversity.

The ESADIE contains two parts: a first informational data block consisting of four classification indicators (career, age, gender and ethnicity), and a second block composed of 22 closed items, distributed in three dimensions or subscales:

- Dimension A: inclusive culture
- Dimension B: inclusive policies
- Dimension C: inclusive practices

The first dimension consists of eight indicators that investigate whether the Faculty of Educational Sciences of the UNACH is a safe, welcoming and collaborative community that encourages, accepts and welcomes diversity. The second dimension is made up of four indicators that generate a reflection on the measures adopted in the UNACH to promote and reinforce the participation of students, as well as to promote that all are treated with equity. Dimension C has to do with inclusive practices and consists of ten aspects that put at the center of the reflection the 'what' and 'how' is taught and learned. Through the indicators and the questions from the different sections, we reflect about attention to diversity and educational inclusion in the university context.

The scale with Likert-type response options has closed questions to which the informants, individually, responded by indicating their degree of agreement (1 = totally disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = agree, 4 = strongly agree and 5 = totally agree) with the proposals proposed on attention to diversity and educational inclusion.

The validation of the instrument was carried out through the validation technique of experts at the international level (Universidad Nacional San Marcos of Peru and Universidad Católica del Ecuador), all experts agreeing that the instrument presented had construct validity and content and internal consistency (reliability).



After the data collection, the results were analyzed and interpreted in a statistical manner, by obtaining the mean, median and standard deviation. To achieve a complete vision of the reality investigated. The statistical results obtained were interpreted trying to deepen their meanings and implications.

Informative data

From the total sample of students, as shown in Chart 1, 30 students (24%) belonged to the Social Sciences Career, 28 (23%) to Educational Psychology, 17 (14%) to Science, 23 (19 %) to Basic Education, 18 (15%) to Early Childhood Education and 8 (5%) to Languages. If the data are revised by age, 90 students (73%) are between 24 and 27 years old, while 31 (25%) are between 28 and 31 years old, which means that there is a young population. However, the sample includes students between 28 and 38 years old. The career with the highest number of young students is Social Sciences (28) and Educational Psychology (25). The students who reach greater age are located in the Basic Education career.

In another aspect, the Faculty of Education Sciences is dominated by students who identify with the female gender: 84 (68%), while 40 (32%) do so with the male gender. The largest number of students is in the Educational Psychology career, with 22 (18%) students and the largest number of students in Social Sciences: 17 (14%).

Regarding the ethnic group, 110 students (89%) define themselves as mestizos, while 8 (6%) claim to be white and 6 (5%) assume that they are white and of African descent. Although the UNACH is located geographically in an area with a high indigenous population, it is becoming less frequent to observe students who come from rural areas. This can be understood from two perspectives: the first, the focus of university entrance tests, which focus on the logical-mathematical, verbal and spatial skills developed by the students and, therefore, ignore the Andean world view; the second, because many young indigenous people have abandoned their culture because it does not provide them with social recognition; on the contrary, they have been subject to segregation and discrimination for many years, so they prefer to identify with the predominant mestizo culture. Another interesting situation regarding the students is that they come from different provinces of Ecuador and from different cantons of the province of Chimborazo, for this reason the institution plays a fundamental role in the training of teachers in the country.

Chart 1
Informative data

General data-students																					
Careers	Stud.		Age				Gender				Ethnicity										
	f	%	17-24	25-31	32-38	T	%	F		M		T		Mest.		Indg.		Other		T	
								f	%	f	%	f	%	F	%	F	%	f	%	f	%
Social Sciences	30	24%	28	2	0	30	24%	13	10%	17	14%	30	24%	21	17%	5	4%	4	3%	30	24%
Educational Psychology	28	23%	23	5	0	28	23%	22	18%	6	5%	28	23%	27	22%	1	1%	0	0%	28	23%
Sciences	17	14%	14	3	0	17	14%	11	9%	6	5%	17	14%	16	13%	0	0%	1	1%	17	14%
Basic Education	23	19%	5	16	2	23	19%	16	13%	7	6%	23	19%	22	18%	0	0%	1	1%	23	19%
Early Childhood Education	18	15%	14	4	0	18	15%	17	14%	1	1%	18	15%	17	14%	1	1%	0	0%	18	15%
Languages	8	6%	7	1	0	8	6%	5	4%	3	2%	8	6%	7	6%	1	1%	0	0%	8	6%
Total	124	100%	91	31	2	124	100%	84	68%	40	32%	124	100%	110	89%	8	6%	6	5%	124	100%

Source: the authors

Situational Scale of Attention to Diversity and Educational Inclusion (ESADIE)

For the statistical analysis, the mean values and the standard deviation of the students' perceptions category were obtained, grouped in three dimensions, with their respective subdimensions, for the total sample ($N = 124$), as well as the frequencies and percentages of answers by items, which appear in charts 2, 3 and 4. All these elements serve as the basis for the analysis presented below.

In the first Dimension (inclusive culture) two sub dimensions were studied: community and inclusive values. In the first Dimension (inclusive culture) two sub dimensions were studied: community and inclusive values. The items presented were rated by students with scores above the midpoint of the scale (min 1/max 5) located at 3.9, while $M = 4.3$, which indicates that the response trend was on the Strongly Agree scale. In the result of the standard deviation (SD) it was observed that the dispersion of the answers was 1.09, this represents an acceptable uniformity, confirming the credibility of the frequency.

The item that obtained the highest score was 6: "The person is recognized as the subject and central actor, regardless of their social, political, religious, sexual orientation, abilities, learning styles" ($X = 4$; $M = 5$, $DT = 1.1$). The items with the lowest evaluation were number 2: "The students help each other" ($X = 3.5$, $M = 3$, $DT = 1.1$); item 3: "The teachers collaborate with each other" ($X = 3.5$, $M = 4$, $DT = 1$); and item 5: "Teachers do not favor a group of students over others" ($X = 3.5$, $M = 5$, $DT = 1.4$).

Regarding the second dimension (inclusive policies), the results obtained in the sub dimensions were analyzed: regulations, infrastructure and training.

The items associated with the second sub-dimension resulted in $X = 3.6$, which is higher than the mid-point (min 1 / max 5) and $M = 3.9$, which in the scale corresponds to Strongly Agree. According to the $SD = 0.98$, it can be observed that the dispersion of the answers is located in an acceptable uniformity of the results, confirming the credibility of the frequency. The item that has the highest value in their responses was 12: "Teacher training activities consider courses, seminars, workshops or others to respond to the diversity of students" ($X = 3.6$, $M = 4$; $DT = 1$). The approaches with the lowest score in the evaluation were 10: "The facilities of the Faculty (buildings, classrooms, library, restrooms, auditoriums, etc.), are physically accessible for all (people with physical, visual, and auditory disabilities)" ($X = 3.2$, $M = 3$, $DT = 1.1$); and 11: "The signage (buildings, classrooms, library, restrooms, auditoriums, etc.), considers diversity and inclusion" ($X = 3.2$, $M = 3$, $DT = 1.1$).

Chart 2
Dimension A: inclusive culture

No.	A1. Inclusive culture	X		M		SD		TD		D		A		SA		TA		Total	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%		
1	Teachers, students, administrative and service staff feel welcomed in the institution	3,7	5	1,14	7	6%	8	6%	36	29%	35	28%	38	31%	124				
2	Students help each other	3,5	3	1,1	5	4%	17	14%	42	34%	33	27%	27	22%	124				
3	Teachers collaborate with each other	3,5	4	1	4	3%	14	11%	40	32%	48	39%	18	15%	124				
4	The faculty and the students recognize and treat each other with respect	3,9	5	1,1	4	3%	8	6%	35	28%	32	26%	45	36%	124				
5	The faculty doesn't favor a group over others	3,5	5	1,4	14	11%	15	12%	30	24%	25	20%	40	32%	124				
A2. Inclusive Values																			
6	The person is recognized as the subject and central actor, indistinctly of their social, political, religious, sexual orientation, abilities, learning styles, etc.	4	5	1,1	3	2%	8	6%	28	23%	34	27%	51	41%	124				
7	The person is recognized as the subject and central actor, indistinctly of their social, political, religious, sexual orientation, abilities, learning styles, etc.	3,9	4	1	4	3%	4	3%	36	29%	41	33%	39	31%	124				
8	There are high expectations and confidence of the students, regarding their learning process	3,9	4	0,9	3	2%	5	4%	31	25%	51	41%	34	27%	124				

Source: the authors

Chart 3
 Dimension B: inclusive policies

No.	B1. Normative	X	M	SD	TD		D		A		SA		TA		Total
					f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	
9	Diversity and educational inclusion of students/teachers who belong to minority groups (ethnicity, gender, disability, migration).	3,8	4	0,9	2	2%	8	6%	37	30%	47	38%	30	24%	124
B2. Infrastructure															
10	The facilities of the institution (buildings, classrooms, library, restrooms, auditoriums, etc.) are physically accessible for all (people with physical, visual, auditory disabilities)	3,2	3	1,1	10	8%	22	18%	41	33%	35	28%	16	13%	124
11	Signaling (buildings, classrooms, library, restrooms, auditoriums, etc.) considers diversity and inclusion	3,2	3	1,1	8	6%	28	23%	40	32%	30	24%	18	15%	124
B3. Training															
12	The teacher training activities consider courses, seminars, workshops or others, to respond to the diversity of students	3,6	4	1	2	2%	18	15%	36	29%	40	32%	28	23%	124

Source: the authors

Chart 4
Dimension C: inclusive practices

No.	C1. Organization of learning	TD			D		A		SA		TA		Total		
		X	M	SD	f	%	F	%	f	%	f	%			
13	classes respond to the diversity of the students	3,6	3	0,9	5	4%	3	2%	48	39%	46	37%	22	18%	124
14	classes promote the understanding of differences	3,7	4	0,9	1	1%	10	8%	42	34%	46	37%	25	20%	124
15	Students are actively involved in their learning	3,8	4	0,9	1	1%	7	6%	40	32%	44	35%	32	26%	124
16	Students learn collaboratively	3,9	4	0,9	1	1%	2	2%	37	30%	48	39%	36	29%	124
17	Teachers use evaluation techniques that allow	3,6	4	1,1	4	3%	20	16%	31	25%	38	31%	31	25%	124
18	teachers support the learning and participation of all	3,7	4	1,1	5	4%	13	10%	31	25%	42	34%	33	27%	124
19	Class tutors support the learning and participation of all	3,6	4	1,1	3	2%	19	15%	35	28%	37	30%	30	24%	124
C2. Use of resources															
20	Teachers consider diversity a valuable resource to enrich teaching-learning processes	3,6	4	1,1	3	2%	16	13%	34	27%	42	33%	30	24%	124
21	Teachers use technological resources to respond to the needs of all	3,7	4	1	2	2%	13	10%	37	30%	42	34%	30	24%	124
22	Teachers generate resources to support the learning and participation of students from their diversity	3,6	4	1	4	3%	13	10%	34	27%	49	40%	24	19%	124

Source: the authors

For the third dimension (inclusive practices), the results of the two sub-dimensions that comprise it are presented: organization of learning and use of resources.

The items raised in the third dimension were evaluated with a score higher than the midpoint of the scale (min 1 / max 5) and were placed in $X = 3,6$ and $M = 3,9$, which in the rating scale corresponds to Strongly agree. As for the SD, it was observed that the dispersion of the answers was placed in 1, which means an acceptable uniformity in the results, confirming the credibility of the frequency. The aspect of the dimension with the highest score in their answers was 16: "The students learn collaboratively" ($X = 3.9$, $M = 4$, $DT = 0.9$).

In general, the approaches consulted through the ESADIE had an assessment above the average of the scale (min 1 / max 5) and were placed at $X = 3,6$ and $M = 3,9$ on the valuation scale comes close to Strongly Agree. As for the SD, the dispersion of the answers was 1, which gives an acceptable uniformity in the data obtained, confirming the credibility of the frequency.

336



Chart 5
General statistical results

Dimensions	X	M	DT
Dimension A	3,9	4,3	1
Dimension B	3,4	3,5	1
Dimension C	3,6	3,9	1
Total	3,6	3,9	1

Source: the authors

Results analysis

Considering the general trend of statistical results, students have a favorable perception towards diversity and educational inclusion, however, it is worth understanding its implications interpreting the results by dimension.

Dimension A: inclusive culture

The attention to the diversity and educational inclusion in Ecuador goes back to the approval of the Constitution (2008), the promulgation of the LOES (2010), the implementation of the National Plan of Good Living (2013-2017) and the concretion of efforts to build equality from higher

education through the publication of the work edited by Magdalena Herdoíza (2015) *Construyendo igualdad en la educación superior. Fundamentación y lineamientos para transversalizar los ejes de igualdad y ambiente*.

Inclusive policies are seen by students as support for the process of attention to diversity and educational inclusion, especially for those members of the institution who belong to traditionally excluded groups. However, in the theme of infrastructure, the representation of the actors differs a little from other analyzed aspects, because the services of the Faculty of Education Sciences present difficulties in access and signage, especially for people with physical and visual disabilities. Regarding the training of teachers, they know that UNACH organizes courses, seminars and workshops on different topics related to different disciplinary areas, but on this subject, there is almost no offer.

Dimension B: inclusive practices

In this dimension, the idea of students is that within the training process teachers respond to their needs, understand individual differences, involve them in each of the moments of the class and use a variety of methodologies and ways to evaluate learning. In addition, they have tutors who monitor their academic development. Along with material resources, they use various technological resources. The main argument that sustains this image is that, improving their abilities to manage diversity, they teach students to live with the difference.

Conclusions

The inclusive culture of the Faculty of Educational Sciences of the UNACH is manifested through the relations between the members of the university community: authorities, teachers and students; favors attention to diversity, develops values that set the process in motion and improves mutual collaboration and effective communication.

Regarding inclusive policies, students believe that the established regulations support the entry of diverse students to higher education. There is concern about preparing teachers to take on this challenge, although the efforts made are still insufficient. However, their perception is less favorable in relation to infrastructure because it does not respond to the needs of students with sensory or physical disabilities.

In relation to inclusive practices, they feel that teachers attend to their affective and learning needs using appropriate strategies and resources.



In summary, the students think that the political dimensions, culture and inclusive practices have been developed in the institution, but much remains to be done. Therefore, it is required that all members of the institution consider diversity as a source of wealth, that collaboration, participation and communication among university actors be improved and that inclusive competencies be developed. In short, attention to diversity is part of a complex network that requires the effort and commitment of all.

Notes

- 1 The *Plan Nacional del Buen Vivir* implied a political position that offered key guidelines to the Government of Rafael Correa to improve the quality of life of citizens.
- 2 This law was approved on March 31, 2011 and according to Fabara: "It has a renewed vision of educational processes, recognizes the existence of a learning community, in which society acts as a subject that learns and teaches" (in Ortiz Espinoza, 2015, p.84).
- 3 According to the Ministry of Education, Basic General Education in the country includes ten years.

Bibliography

- ARNAIZ, Pilar
2003 *Educación inclusiva: una escuela para todos*. Málaga: Aljibe.
- BAUSELA, Esperanza
2002 Atención a la diversidad en educación superior. *Profesorado: Revista de Currículum y Formación de Profesorado*, 6(1-2). Granada: Universidad de Granada.
- BAYOT, Agustín, DEL RINCÓN, Benito & HERNÁNDEZ, Fuesanta
2002 Orientación y atención a la diversidad: descripción de programas y acciones en algunos grupos emergentes. *Revista Electrónica de Investigación y Evaluación Educativa*, 8(1). Recuperado de <https://bit.ly/2TQlAbd/> [12/04/2018].
- BOOTH, Tony & AINSCOW, Mel
2015 *Guía para la educación inclusiva: desarrollando aprendizajes y participación en los centros escolares*. Madrid: Fundación FUHEM.
- CASTILLEJA, Leticia, REGINO, Esteban & COGOLLO, Etna
2015 *Percepción y uso de las Tecnologías de la Información Comunicación (TIC) por parte de los profesores dentro de su práctica pedagógica en la Institución Victoria Manzur de la Ciudad de Montería*. Bogotá: UNAD.
- ECHETA, Gerardo & AINSCOW Mel
2010 *La educación inclusiva como derecho: marco de referencias y pautas de acción para el desarrollo de una revolución pendiente*. II Congreso Iberoamericano de Síndrome de Down. Granada, España.

- GARCÍA, Jean, BRAVO, Patricia, TELLO, Margoth & VARGUILLAS, Carmen
 2015 Concepción de interculturalidad en la Universidad Nacional de Chimbo-
 razo: Una propuesta para la formación profesional desde la diversidad cul-
 tural. *Sophia, Colección de Filosofía de la Educación*, 19(1), 187-208. Quito:
 UPS/Abya-Yala.
- GALÁN, Jorge.
 2015 Los retos de la interculturalidad para la academia. *Sophia, Colección de Filo-
 sofía de la Educación*, 18, 111-124. Quito: UPS/Abya-Yala.
- GRANADA, Maribel, POMÉS, María & SAHUENSA, Susan
 2013 Actitud de los profesores frente a la inclusión educativa. *Centro de Estudios
 Interdisciplinarios en Etnolingüística y Antropología Socio-Cultural*, (25), ju-
 lio.
- HERDOIZA, Magdalena
 2015 *Construyendo igualdad en la educación superior: fundamentación y linea-
 mientos para transversalizar los ejes de igualdad y ambiente*. Quito: SENES-
 CYT/UNESCO.
- HORNE, Phyllis & TIMMONS, Vianne
 2009 Making it work: Teachers' perspectives on inclusion. *International Journal of
 Inclusive Education*, 13, 273-328.
- LIRA, Hugo & PONCE DE LEÓN, Rossana
 2006 Desafíos de la educación universitaria para atender la diversidad. *Horizontes
 Educativos*. Recuperado de <https://bit.ly/2FHcMBO/> [14/12/2018].
- LOES
 2010 *Ley Orgánica de Educación Superior*. Registro Oficial Suplemento 298. Qui-
 to, Ecuador.
- MORÁN, Eduardo
 2012 Hacia el pensamiento universitario. *Sophia, Colección de Filosofía de la Edu-
 cación*, 12, 123-140. Quito: UPS/Abya-Yala.
- ORTIZ ESPINOZA, María
 2015 El compromiso político en la formación docente. Aportes para repensar el
 currículo para la formación inicial. En *Reflexiones sobre la formación y el
 trabajo docente en el Ecuador y América Latina*. Quito: UPS/Abya-Yala.
- ORTIZ GRANJA, Dorys
 2015 La educación intercultural: el desafío de la unidad en la diversidad. *Sophia,
 Colección de Filosofía de la Educación*, 18(1), 91-110. Quito: UPS/Abya-Yala.
- PNBV
 2013 *Plan Nacional de Buen Vivir*. Recuperado de <https://uni.cf/2EqOF4z/>
- SALAZAR, José, MONTERO, Maritza, MUÑOZ, Carlos, SÁNCHEZ, Euclides, SANTO-
 RO, Eduardo & VILLEGAS, Julio
 2012 Percepción social. En *Psicología Social* (pp. 77-109). México: Trillas.
- SOLANA, José
 1995 La unidad y diversidad del hombre en la antropología compleja de Edgar
 Morin. *Gazeta de Antropología*. Universidad de Jaén. Recuperado de [https://
 bit.ly/2E0ik8E/](https://bit.ly/2E0ik8E/)
- TÜNNERMANN, Carlos
 2010 Las conferencias regionales y mundiales sobre educación superior de
 la UNESCO y su impacto en la educación superior de América Latina.



Universidades, julio-septiembre. Recuperado de <https://bit.ly/1bekQ1J> [14/02/2018].

UNESCO

1990 *Conferencia Mundial sobre Educación para Todos*. Jomtien, Tailandia.

URBINA, Carolina, SIMÓN, Cecilia & ECHEITA, Gerardo

2011 Concepciones de los profesores acerca de las conductas disruptivas: análisis a partir de un marco inclusivo. *Infancia y Aprendizaje*, 34(2), 205-217.

VAILLANT, Denise

2013 Formación inicial del profesorado en América Latina: dilemas centrales y perspectivas. *Revista Española de Educación Comparada*, 22, 185-206.

VAILLANT, Denise & ROSSEL, Cecilia

2006 *Maestros de escuelas básicas en América Latina: hacia una radiografía de la profesión*. Santiago de Chile: PREAL.

VARGAS, Luz

1994 Sobre el concepto de percepción. *Alteridades*, 4(8), 47-53. México DF: Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana Unidad Iztapalapa.

VÁSQUEZ, Claudia, CAVALLO, Marcela, APARICIO, Silvia, MUÑOZ, Beatriz, ROBSON, Cynthia, RUIZ, Luciana, SECRETO, María, SEPLIARSKY, Patricia & ESCOBAR, María

2012 *Factores de impacto en el rendimiento académico universitario: un estudio a partir de las percepciones de los estudiantes*. Decimoséptimas Jornadas Investigaciones en la Facultad. Facultad de Ciencias Económicas y Estadística. Ciudad de Rosario: Universidad Nacional de Rosario.

VERDEJO, Elena & PAPPOUS, Sakis

2013 Actitudes de los profesionales de la educación hacia la educación física inclusiva: una revisión bibliográfica. *Revista Digital de Investigación Educativa Conect@2*, 3(7), enero.

340



Date of receipt of document: February 14, 2018

Date of document review: April 23, 2018

Date of document approval: June 20, 2018

Date of publication of the document: January 15, 2019