





A look from the care ethics perspective at inclusion at the Bachelor's Level

Una mirada desde la ética del Cuidado a la inclusión a nivel licenciatura

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Key Handbooks

Identification of areas for improvement: The study provides valuable insights into specific areas where improvements can be made to promote inclusion and support diversity within the university campus. Practical recommendations: Based on the study's findings, practical recommendations are offered for implementing effective changes in infrastructure and support services, thus benefiting students with particular conditions and fostering a more inclusive educational environment. Diversity: Recognize and embrace the diverse perspectives, experiences, and backgrounds of individuals contributing to knowledge generation. This includes acknowledging different cultural, social, and intellectual contexts. Accessibility: Ensure that knowledge creation processes, resources, and outcomes are accessible to a wide range of individuals, regardless of geographical location, socio-economic status, or physical abilities. Equity: Promote fairness and justice in knowledge generation by providing equal opportunities for participation and recognition, and addressing systemic barriers that may hinder certain groups from contributing to or benefiting from knowledge creation. Collaboration: Foster collaborative efforts across disciplines, sectors, and communities to harness collective expertise and address complex challenges from multiple angles. Openness: Embrace openness and transparency in knowledge creation processes, including sharing data, methods, and findings, to facilitate replication, scrutiny, and innovation. Ethical considerations: Uphold ethical principles and values in knowledge generation, including integrity, respect for human dignity, and responsibility towards society and the environment. In conclusion, both at the University of Guadalajara in general and in the geography degree program in particular, there is still a long way to go to develop a comprehensive and truly broad inclusion program. Therefore, recommendations are made by teaching staff and students for there to be a policy that also encompasses this diversity among members of the university community.

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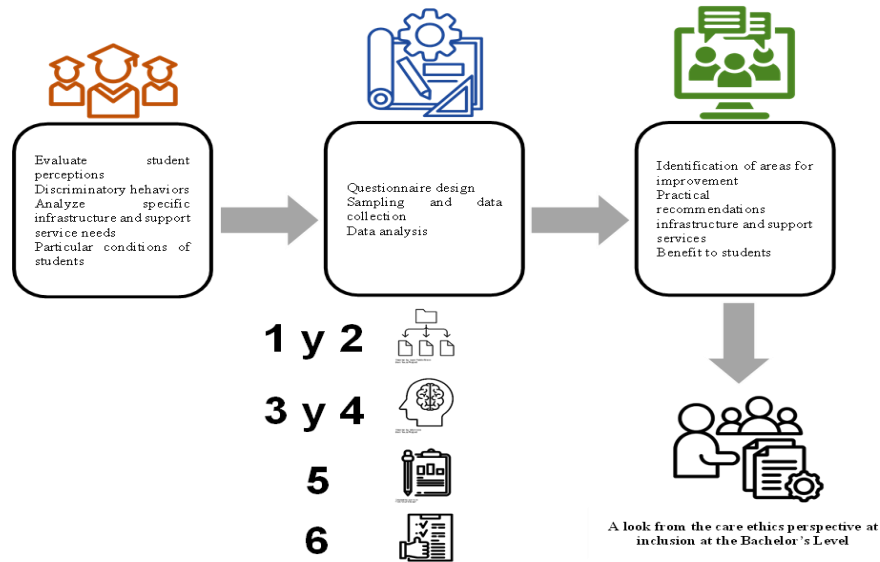
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Abstract

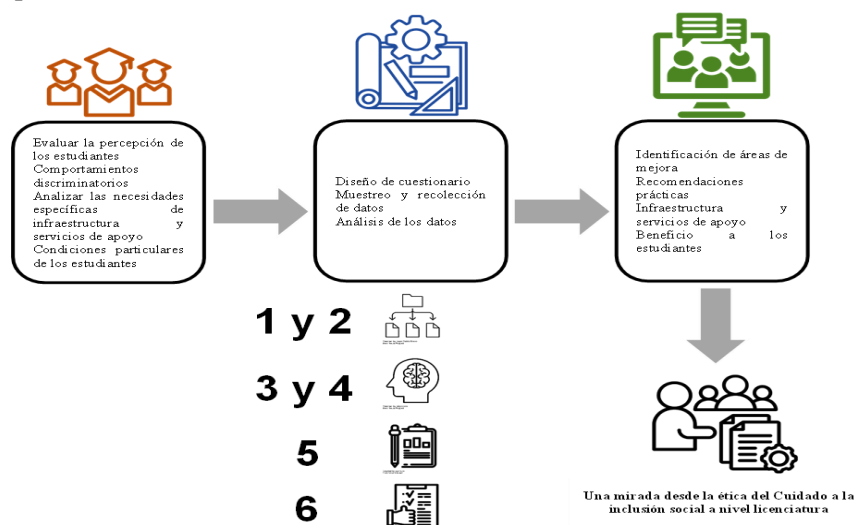
The context, narrative, and specificity of moral judgments should reflect a maturity in which the individual recognizes their immersion in a network of relationships with others. Objectives: To assess the perception of Geography undergraduate students at the University of Guadalajara regarding discriminatory behaviors, as well as to analyze specific infrastructure needs and support services for students with particular conditions. The methodology involved designing a structured questionnaire to gather data on inclusion perception, discriminatory experiences, and infrastructure needs among students, as well as sampling and data collection through university students living with particular conditions. Results: The staff at the University of Guadalajara has implemented policies and actions aimed at promoting a culture of inclusion, equity, and social justice in its network schools since 2005. Conclusions: The administrative and teaching staff at the University of Guadalajara in general, as well as in the geography undergraduate program in particular, are working on truly comprehensive and broad inclusion programs.



Access to education, Student diversity, Higher education, Geography, Inclusion, Equality of opportunity

Resumen

El contexto, la narrativa y la especificidad de los juicios morales deben reflejar una madurez en la que el individuo reconozca su inmersión en una red de relaciones con los demás. Objetivos: Evaluar la percepción de los estudiantes de la licenciatura en Geografía de la Universidad de Guadalajara respecto a los comportamientos discriminatorios así como, analizar las necesidades específicas de infraestructura física y servicios de apoyo para estudiantes con condiciones particulares. La metodología empleada implicó el diseño de un cuestionario estructurado para recopilar datos sobre la percepción de inclusión, experiencias discriminatorias y necesidades de infraestructura entre los estudiantes además de muestreo y recolección de datos a través de estudiantes universitarios que viven condiciones particulares. Resultados. El personal de la Universidad de Guadalajara ha implementado políticas y acciones dirigidas a promover una cultura de inclusión, equidad y justicia social en sus escuelas de la red desde 2005. Conclusiones: El personal administrativo y docente de la Universidad de Guadalajara en general como en el programa de la licenciatura en geografía en particular, se trabaja en programas de inclusión integral verdaderamente Amplio.



Acceso a la educación, Diversidad estudiantil, Educación superior, Geografía, Inclusión, Igualdad de oportunidades

Introduction

In the context of contemporary education, the promotion of inclusion has emerged as a fundamental guiding principle. This approach seeks to ensure that all students, regardless of their individual abilities, have equitable access to quality education. However, the effective implementation of inclusive practices in educational settings presents significant challenges, ranging from understanding the individual needs of students to creating learning environments that foster diversity and equity.

Central objective, the present study aims to explore students' perceptions and experiences regarding inclusion in the educational sphere, with a particular focus on identifying barriers, needs, and opportunities for improvement. Through a comprehensive analysis, it seeks to understand how policies, practices, and attitudes within educational institutions influence the perceived degree of inclusion by students.

Research question, how do students perceive inclusion in educational environments, and what are the main barriers and needs identified in relation to this concept? With the aim of proposing concrete actions that contribute to ensuring that all students have the possibility of becoming leaders in the near future once they graduate from the Bachelor's Degree in Geography and perform as entrepreneurs, academics, entrepreneurs, and/or community leaders who are individuals driving sustainable social development in Mexico, and in general, actions of equity and environmental care (Fardella Rozas & Niño Gutiérrez, 2017).

Literature Review, academic literature provides a solid foundation for the analysis of inclusion in education. Authors have addressed the importance of inclusive education and strategies for its effective implementation. On the other hand, experts have developed theoretical frameworks and guidelines to promote inclusive practices in educational systems worldwide. In this line of thought, it is also important to mention that the different types of learning in higher education play a fundamental role in applying them in the current work field (Valencia, Niño Gutiérrez & López, 2023).

Additionally, researchers like Espín and Mera (2019) have examined the difficulties associated with implementing curriculum adaptations for students with special needs, while Luque (2009) has highlighted the importance of addressing basic human needs in inclusive educational environments. Similarly, García (2003) has emphasized the role of questionnaires as data collection tools in studies on educational inclusion.

In this context, the University of Guadalajara has emerged as a relevant case study (Niño-Gutiérrez et al., 2023), with initiatives such as the Stimulus Program for Students with Disabilities and the creation of infrastructures and services adapted to students needs. However, there are areas for improvement identified by authors such as Campana, Velasco, Aguirre, & Guerrero (2014), who emphasize the importance of inclusive physical and social environments for the educational success of all students.

Theoretical Framework

Socioformation is the theory that encompasses the study of the meaningful learning of students at any educational level with an inclusive vision to have access to quality education anywhere in the world. In this sense, the theory that will frame the study is in that regard (Niño-Gutiérrez, 2022). Carol Gilligan, through her research, designed a new paradigm that broadens the horizon of ethics and democracy, allowing the elimination of the hierarchical and binary gender model that has defined the sense and functions of masculinity and femininity throughout history, which she calls the Ethics of Care.

This paradigm arises from the study and analysis of women's feelings and reasoning, discovering the value of care, which has only been developed in homes, where private and domestic life takes place. Thus, in a patriarchal context, care is perceived as a feminine ethic; however, in a democratic context, care becomes a human ethic that includes everyone, regardless of gender, age, or context. That is, it must transcend the limits of the home and manifest itself in all areas where any member of society needs to perform various activities.

Gilligan relates the Ethics of Care to what she calls moral injury and resistance to injustice, emphasizing the need to change paradigms to avoid losing the ability to love and generate trust among each other, an important dimension for individual and social well-being. Currently, the Ethics of Care is threatened because society resists leaving behind the model that excludes the acceptance of differences among equals. Therefore, interpersonal relationships have become rough, hostile, and hypocritical, and democracy based on real equality is not practiced. This generates the need to universalize the obligations of care, since along with assistance, they are matters of human interest, not just women, and empathy is quickly lost.

The ethics of care is characterized by affection, resilience, democratic citizenship, and resistance to moral harm. The internalization of the binary gender model, rooted in patriarchal culture where being a man implies not being a woman or resembling one, undermines the understanding capacity in women and the capacity for concern for others in men. This ethic serves as a guide to act with attention in the human world. Recognizing the validity of the feminine perspective in the formation of moral development implies understanding the importance, for both sexes throughout life, of the connection between oneself and others, as well as the universality of the need for compassion and care.

The Ethics of Justice is based on the premise of equality (everyone should be treated the same), while the ethics of care is based on the premise of non-violence (no one should be harmed). Both perspectives converge in understanding that inequality negatively affects all parties in an unequal relationship, and that violence is destructive for all involved. Therefore, dialogue between equity and care allows for a better understanding of gender relations, as well as a more complete description of adult work and family relationships.

The distinction between the ethical orientation of justice and rights, and that of care and responsibility, allows for an explanation with a different view of moral development aimed at expressing feelings of empathy and sympathy. Therefore, the context, narrative, and specificity of moral judgments should reflect a maturity where the individual recognizes their immersion in a network of relationships with others. Interactive universalism recognizes the plurality of ways of being human and the differences between them, without necessarily validating all pluralities and differences as morally and politically valid; it sees difference as a starting point for reflection and action. Universality is a regulatory ideal that seeks to develop moral attitudes and foster political transformations that produce a viewpoint acceptable to all.

The perspective of generalized otherness implies seeing each and every individual as rational being with the same rights and duties that one desires for oneself. What constitutes moral dignity is not what differentiates one from another, but what they share as rational and acting agents.

The perspective of concrete otherness shows each rational being as a unique individual with a history, identity, and specific affective-emotional constitution. By treating the other according to the norms of empathy and care, not only their humanity is confirmed but also their individuality as a person. Although the perspective of generalized otherness predominates in contemporary psychology and moral theory, a view limited by this perspective becomes incoherent and cannot distinguish between beings.

Conceptual Framework

Defining the term inclusion and understanding its scope is complex, as it is simply understood as being part of something or belonging. However, in the context of social sciences, it refers to creating an environment that fosters a person or group's sense of belonging, so that they feel supported, respected, and valued ([National Cancer Institute Dictionary, 2016](#)).

Considering this definition in the realm of inclusive education, it is understood as one that facilitates access to quality education for all individuals, removing physical and social barriers (prejudices) and promoting their participation to achieve better learning. This implies the construction of an educational system with diversified pedagogical practices, allowing students to acquire knowledge in an equitable environment, regardless of their learning difficulties, different physical capabilities, diverse cognitive characteristics, ethnic-cultural background, or socioeconomic situation ([Lovari, et al., 2019](#)).

Despite all intentions to address the needs of special education students, "there is no specific methodology for timely curriculum adaptations" (Espín & Mera, (2019)). Therefore, constant observation stands out as the most useful tool for making adjustments in teaching work.

It is important to note that when institutions choose to promote inclusion, they do so in line with the principle established in Inclusive Education according to the United Nations Convention, approved by the General Courts and published in the Official State Gazette, where Inclusive or personalized education is established as "a fundamental human right of all students." It is expected, then, that teachers pay greater attention to students' learning, avoiding simulated and inaccurate approaches, as inclusive education promotes authentic and realistic practices.

Although research and new social approaches regarding inclusion seek to facilitate learning in all its forms, it is important to recognize that needs differ among students, which can result in situations of disadvantage and risks of inattention or discrimination. These specific needs require appropriate and specific responses for their attention (Luque, 2009).

Human needs, according to Luque, 2009, are defined as objectives and strategies whose failure to fulfill can cause serious harm to a person's integration into their context and social group. Physical health and autonomy are considered basic human needs. On the other hand, autonomy refers to the ability to make decisions and respond to various situations.

The appropriate response to special situations in the educational field begins with understanding by the relevant authorities. It is known that many people, instead of receiving adequate education, are affected and pressured by various factors, some of which are mentioned below.

Methodological Framework

- a) Definition of research design: A research design was established that combined quantitative and qualitative methods to comprehensively address the topic at hand.
- b) Development of data collection instruments: Questionnaires were designed for the quantitative part, and interview scripts were developed for the qualitative part.
- c) Validation of instruments: The questionnaires and interview scripts underwent pilot testing and validation to ensure their reliability and validity.
- d) Participant selection: Specific selection criteria were applied to identify and recruit participants for both the survey and the interviews.
- e) Collection of quantitative data: The questionnaires were administered to the selected sample, ensuring representative coverage of the target population.
- f) Collection of qualitative data: In-depth interviews were conducted with a selection of key participants to obtain detailed and contextual perspectives.
- g) Analysis of quantitative data: Statistical analysis of the data collected through the questionnaires was performed using appropriate tools and techniques to explore patterns and relationships.
- h) Analysis of qualitative data: A thematic analysis approach was applied to identify recurrent and significant themes emerging from the qualitative interviews.
- i) Integration of results: Quantitative and qualitative findings were integrated to obtain a holistic understanding of the phenomenon under study.
- j) Interpretation of results: The results were interpreted in light of relevant literature, and the theoretical and practical implications of the findings were discussed.
- k) Discussion of limitations: The study's limitations, including potential biases and methodological constraints that could affect the validity and generalizability of the results, were discussed.
- l) Conclusions and recommendations: Conclusions based on the study's findings were presented, and recommendations for future research or practices in the studied area were formulated."

Results

In humans, we distinguish three fundamental dimensions: biological, psychological, and social. By focusing solely on one of them, we incur in inadequate reductionism, as these dimensions are part of a whole and are therefore interdependent (Gutiérrez, 2011).

The affectation of any of the dimensions can generate imbalances in behavior, in the way of acquiring knowledge, motivations, and even in relationships with others. In this sense, people with special needs often face difficulties, and the classroom environment can amplify this process, as it is common for differences to attract attention. However, this imbalance can also serve as a catalyst for seeking a response to a need, which often is not adequately received, especially in the case of adults, resulting in exclusion.

The interaction between these dimensions is undoubtedly complex, as it leads us to consider individuals as part of a set of interconnected factors. For example, (Niembro et al., 2021), mentions:

The psychological factors that must be considered as part of social exclusion, which is more than poverty, and can have greater implications with the absence of social participation and with the lack of access to basic goods and social welfare networks. This causes individuals to live in situations that complicate access to quality education; likewise, this absence of goods and possibilities can be a cause of lack of inclusion, as the student would not feel equal to their peers.

It is evident that the socioeconomic level of families influences all educational levels, including bachelor's degrees:

In some cases, closely linked to the need for student work, in others weighing the real opportunity costs of continuing studying based on future benefits. Thus, the probability of dropping out of school is significantly higher for students belonging to the first two income quintiles in all countries (CIAE, 2024).

It is important to recognize that not all students with special needs receive the necessary support from their families to access higher educational levels, and in some cases, even if they have the opportunity, they may not make the most informed decisions, regardless of individual characteristics.

Furthermore, differences in learning identified by teachers and, even more so, by their classmates, can lead to a series of psychological and motivational factors that can trigger what is known as systematic depression. However, this situation could be resolved simply by providing additional materials or, in some cases, exploring other pedagogical or learning options that better suit the student's abilities.

Moreover, it must be considered that these factors can be further increased if it is considered that in a classroom, students already have significant differences, ranging from gender differences to geographical location, which by mere analysis would already show their needs and the quality of services, not to mention the individual problems that each student may face.

Special educational needs refer to the difficulty an individual has in accessing learning easily. These difficulties can manifest as psychomotor problems, intellectual disabilities, language disorders, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), as well as physical, sensory, auditory, or visual disabilities, and other signs that interfere with learning. The causes of special educational needs can be genetic, environmental, or a combination of both, and they can occur during prenatal, natal, or postnatal stages (UTPL, 2020).

There are different classifications of special educational needs according to experts in the field, which distinguish between two main types: permanent and transient.

Permanent needs correspond to problems that persist throughout the entire school period and a person's life. These can vary in severity, from mild to severe, and include total or partial weakness of the senses (auditory, visual, motor), reduced mental capacity, or communication disorders. On the other hand, transient needs are learning problems that can be overcome over time, such as language disorders, dyslexia, dysgraphia, and dyscalculia, among others.

Another classification of special educational needs includes those associated with disability and those that are not but require accurate diagnoses. Some examples of these classifications are:

i) Learning disorders: generalized or specific difficulties in learning activities such as writing, spelling, or reading.

ii) Emotional difficulties: problems following rules and behaving appropriately in the school environment.

iii) Physical difficulties: medical conditions that limit or slow down the learning process.

iv) Cognitive disability: disorders such as Down syndrome or intellectual developmental disorder.

v) Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD): pervasive developmental brain disorders that affect social interaction, communication, and behavior.

vi) Social difficulties: problems making friends or relating to others, expressing oneself, or understanding what others say.

These classifications are important for understanding the individual needs of students and providing them with appropriate support for their educational and personal development (UNIR, 2022).

It is true that most people, especially those from past generations, lack a precise diagnosis of their special needs, largely due to previous lack of awareness about these issues. Some individuals may have faced mild problems that they managed to overcome over time, or they simply learned to manage effectively without the need for a formal diagnosis.

In addition to more common special needs, such as learning disorders or emotional difficulties, there are also others like those of so-called gifted individuals. These individuals often have faster-than-average intellectual development, presenting exceptional cognitive abilities and solving problems in various ways. However, they may face challenges in their educational and social environment, especially during childhood, as they require special programs and educational opportunities tailored to their specific needs, such as course acceleration and constant evaluation of their progress.

According to the 2020 census conducted by the National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI), there are a total of 1,590,583 people nationwide who have some mental problem or condition. Of this group, 54% are men and 46% are women.

However, "government data, in Mexico, states that only 2 out of every 10 people with a mental problem or condition that requires attention receive it, and those who do receive it do not always receive the appropriate treatment" (Badillo, D. 2022).

Recent information mentions that in Mexico, 3 out of 10 people suffer from a mental disorder at some point in their lives, and more than 60 percent of the population suffering from any of them do not receive treatment (Robledo, Z. 2023).

It is common for most of these individuals to discover one of these conditions while they are in school; few are diagnosed at an early age. In other cases, conditions that only require mild therapies can worsen due to poor social interaction and a lack of understanding from families. This can result in adults with difficulties in developing individually and adapting, even in environments that promote so-called "inclusion". Higher education entails multiple benefits for individual and national development, making access to it, internationally, one of the most discussed educational policies in the last two decades. On a comparative level, worldwide access to this level has increased considerably during this period, with the gross enrollment ratio between 2000 and 2018 rising from 19% to 38%, respectively (UNESCO-IESALC, 2020).

Despite efforts to promote inclusion, inequalities in access to higher education persist, which can manifest due to various factors such as race, economic situation, gender, or considerations related to different capabilities. One critical problem in the region (Latin America and the Caribbean) is that a high percentage of students who enter higher education programs (HEIs) do not graduate from them, a situation that disproportionately affects those in more vulnerable situations. In the mid-2010s, on average for the region, only one out of every three students completed their degrees on time, while among the population aged 25 to 29 who had enrolled in an HEI program at some point in their lives, only 46% had graduated, 22% had dropped out of their studies, and 32% were still studying. The graduation rate showed enormous heterogeneity in the region, with Mexico and Peru having a rate of 65%, while in Honduras, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, and Costa Rica, it did not reach 40% (Valenzuela & Yáñez, 2022).

Similarly, Mexico shares similar issues with the rest of Latin America. Higher education in Mexico, despite the efforts and advances of the last two decades, must persist in the pursuit of greater equity and educational quality. Both aspects concentrate the greatest difficulties and represent the greatest challenge of the system at the higher level. The main initiatives should focus on expanding educational opportunities for a greater number of young people, mainly in the regions and social groups most disadvantaged, as well as significantly improving their educational offerings.

The most recent data indicates that, in rounded figures, in the 2011-2012 academic year, enrollment in higher education was 2,932,000 students (excluding graduate studies). The Sixth Government Report of the 2006-2012 administration states that "the total coverage of higher education was equivalent to 32.8% of the population of age to attend this educational level (19 to 23 years old)". Additionally, the same report estimates that for the current school year (2012-2013), coverage will increase to approximately 35%, and it notes that the goal of coverage established in the National Development Plan and in the sectoral program, which had set a coverage of 30% for 2012, has been achieved in advance.

Despite significant progress in educational coverage, the fact that only three out of every ten young people of college age are in university classrooms places us well below our trading partners and some Latin American countries (such as Costa Rica, Chile, Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, and Cuba) ([UNAM, 2012](#)).

As mentioned, while there has been significant progress in educational coverage, numerous challenges persist that require effective responses, including the issue of dropout rates, which is closely related to the effective implementation of inclusion policies.

At the World Education Forum 2015, organized by the United Nations (UN) in Incheon, Korea, the Incheon Declaration was proposed, which establishes a comprehensive and ambitious agenda with the aim of ensuring inclusive, equitable, and quality education for all, as well as promoting opportunities for lifelong learning. This declaration aligns with proposals for Sustainable Development 2030.

Within the framework of these efforts, the University of Guadalajara has implemented policies and actions aimed at promoting a culture of inclusion, equity, and social justice in its network schools since 2005. Recognizing the challenges this entails, the institution has worked to improve universal accessibility in its facilities, including the installation of ramps, adapted restrooms, guide lines for visually impaired individuals, and supportive railings, among other measures.

Additionally, efforts have been made to make academic programs inclusive by developing learning processes with support staff for students with hearing impairments in various university campuses. A concrete example of this commitment is the creation of the Wixárika Upper Secondary Education School in the 2019 A calendar, with locations in San Miguel Huaixtita and Ocota de la Sierra, in the municipality of Mezquitic, in the Northern Zone of the State of Jalisco. This school offers technical high school options in Clothing Design and Handicrafts, as well as in Agricultural and Forestry. A significant portion of the teachers are bilingual and members of local ethnic groups, while the rest receive training in the community's native language.

In recent years, the university has focused much of its efforts on promoting inclusion in terms of gender diversity, through courses, regulations, and brochures. Additionally, the Extension and Social Action Coordination has been created, proposing initiatives and actions for greater inclusion and equity, in line with human rights within the Institutional Development Plan 2019-2025. These actions aim to strengthen conditions of access, learning, trajectory, and terminal efficiency, as well as to value the richness of diversity in the university community.

The overall objective is to promote inclusion and equity in university activities and spaces to ensure the full development of community members, particularly those who, due to economic reasons, disability, ethnic origin, language or nationality, gender or sexual preferences, or any other cause, have been vulnerable ([University of Guadalajara, 2020](#)).

One of these actions is the creation of the Stimulus Program for Students with Disabilities, although it is focused solely on those with physical conditions, such as wheelchair use, visual impairment, or hearing problems. Another objective of the program is to provide training and education to academic and administrative staff of the University on topics related to academic inclusion, such as training of support readers in standardized tests, Mexican Sign Language courses, and training on diversified educational environments, among others.

However, despite the policies outlined in the Institutional Plan should translate into pedagogical, structural, and linkage actions regarding inclusion, social justice, and human rights, there seems to have been a neglect of considering the diverse cognitive conditions of the institution's students. This includes conditions such as attention deficit disorder, individuals with Asperger's Syndrome, or anxiety disorders, among others. Among the most widely accepted instruments in the academic field are the survey, the questionnaire, and the psychometric test. In this case, reference is made to data collection through the questionnaire to obtain the diagnosis of the sample of the 36 participants in this study (Niño Castillo, Hernández & Niño-Gutiérrez, 2020).

In order to obtain a perspective of students on inclusion, 36 questionnaires were administered to students of the Bachelor's Degree in Geography at the University center for social Sciences and Humanities of the University of Guadalajara, as a first information base for the research. The questionnaire was considered a very useful instrument for data collection, especially when subjects are difficult to access due to distance or dispersion, or due to the difficulty of gathering them (García, 2003).

The data obtained from these questionnaires can be classified first as factual data, as they refer to the personal domain of the individuals that make up the social group studied (the students), as well as the environment around them, including school, in addition to relationships and behaviors. They also include opinion data, which can be considered subjective as they reflect points of view. Lastly, there are data related to attitudes and motivations, referring to individual actions. Of the 36 participating students, 20 are female and 16 are male. Regarding age intervals (see figure 1), there are 9 individuals in each of the age groups of 18 to 20 years old and 20 to 22 years old.

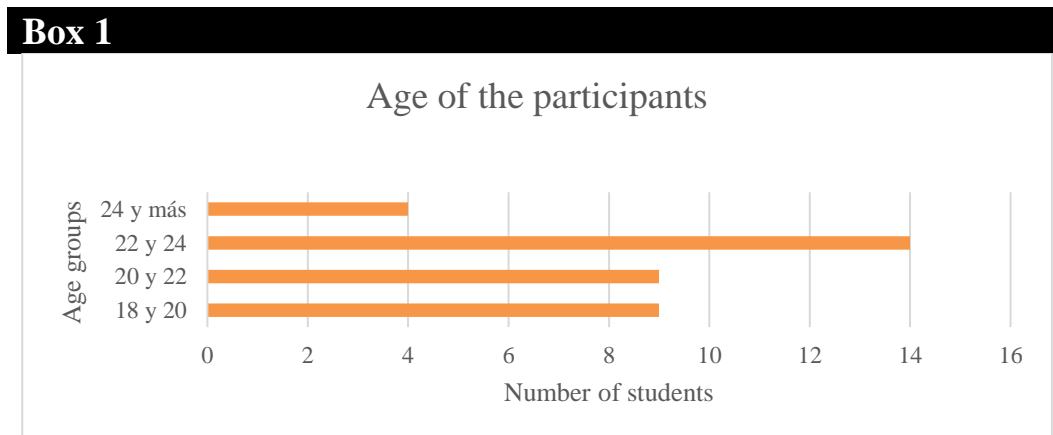


Figure 1

Age of the participants.

Source: Own elaboration based on questionnaire.

To verify the participants' knowledge on the subject in question, they were asked if they had been diagnosed with any psychological or psychiatric condition. Six students responded affirmatively, of whom three mentioned suffering from depression (subjects 7, 15, and 19). Subject 7 also mentioned being evaluated for a possible diagnosis of Asperger's. Subject 12 mentioned being diagnosed with an anxiety disorder. Subjects 24 and 34, on the other hand, only indicated that they had been diagnosed without specifying the condition. The other 30 remaining subjects stated they had no diagnosis of any kind. To better understand the mentioned conditions, we will provide some generalities regarding them:

Discussion

In a depressive episode, a person experiences a depressed mood (sadness, irritability, feeling of emptiness) or a loss of pleasure or interest in activities. A depressive episode is distinct from the usual fluctuations in mood. These episodes last most of the day, nearly every day, for at least two weeks. Additional symptoms may include:

- Difficulty concentrating
- Excessive guilt or low self-esteem
- Hopelessness about the future
- Thoughts of death or suicide
- Sleep disturbances
- Changes in appetite or weight
- Marked fatigue or lack of energy.

Depression can cause difficulties in all aspects of life, including community and home life, as well as work and school. Depressive episodes can be classified as mild, moderate, or severe, depending on the number and intensity of symptoms, as well as their impact on the person's functioning. Depressive episodes can belong to different typologies:

- Major depressive disorder: the person experiences a first and single episode;
- Recurrent depressive disorder: the person has already experienced at least two depressive episodes, and
- Bipolar disorder: depressive episodes alternate with periods of manic episodes, which include euphoria or irritability, increased activity or energy, and other symptoms such as increased talkativeness, racing thoughts, inflated self-esteem, decreased need for sleep, distractibility, and impulsive or reckless behavior” ([World Health Organization, 2023](#)).

It is important to note that there are effective treatments for these conditions, many of which include school-based positive coping programs for children and adolescents. However, these approaches have not yet been fully generalized. Additionally, in some cases, medications may be prescribed, but only a specialist can make recommendations in this regard. On the other hand, family support is essential.

In the school context, it would be ideal for tutors to have a clear understanding of their students' needs, which would allow teachers to adjust their approach to avoid triggering severe depressive episodes, foster a trusting environment, and provide the best recommendations for the learning of students with diverse abilities. It would also be important for tutors to inform other teachers about each student's situation and work to minimize any exclusionary attitudes from the rest of the group.

Anxiety disorder, according to the [World Health Organization \(2023\)](#), presents symptoms such as: Excessive fear or worry about a specific situation (such as a panic attack or a social situation) or, in the case of generalized anxiety disorder, about a wide range of everyday situations. They generally experience these symptoms for an extended period, at least several months, and tend to avoid situations that cause them anxiety.

- Other symptoms of anxiety disorders include:
- Difficulty concentrating or making decisions
- Irritability, tension, or restlessness
- Nausea or abdominal discomfort
- Palpitations
- Sweating, trembling, or shaking
- Sleep disturbances
- Sense of imminent danger, panic, or doom.

It is relevant to highlight that drug use can exacerbate these types of conditions; however, it is crucial to identify the specific type of anxiety, as there are several variants, just as with depression, that have different causes.

The types of anxiety disorders, according to the World Health Organization (WHO), include:

- Generalized Anxiety Disorder: persistent and excessive worry about everyday activities or events.
- Panic Disorder: panic attacks and fear of their recurrence.
- Social Anxiety Disorder: high levels of fear and worry about social situations where the person may feel humiliated, embarrassed, or rejected.

- Agoraphobia: excessive fear, worry, and avoidance of situations that may induce panic or make someone feel trapped, helpless, or embarrassed.
- Separation Anxiety Disorder: excessive fear or worry about being separated from individuals with whom one has a close emotional bond.
- Specific Phobias: intense and irrational fears of specific objects or situations that lead to avoidance behaviors and considerable distress.
- Selective Mutism: consistent inability to speak in certain social situations, despite being able to speak comfortably in other settings, primarily affecting children.

It is crucial for teachers to be aware of the symptoms and behaviors associated with these disorders in order to develop appropriate support strategies for both the affected student and the rest of the group. This does not imply excluding the student from activities but rather adapting programs with appropriate considerations.

Teachers should support cognitive transmission and assess if the student is suitable for certain tasks. If not, both school and legal guardians should be informed. This is not a discriminatory action but rather in the student's best interest. For example, if a student with muscular paralysis enrolls in a Geography degree program and faces difficulties with subjects like cartography, this could lead to a depressive state and eventually lead them to withdraw from the program.

Since not all individuals have a proper diagnosis, a question was included in the survey about whether they believed they had any psychological, psychiatric, or learning disorder. Eight affirmative responses were received, which generally expressed issues related to attention and anxiety that hinder their learning. In these cases, educational authorities should provide the appropriate channel to access specialists and obtain an accurate diagnosis, which could easily mitigate mild disorders.

Box 2

Table 1

Responses to question: believe to have any disorder

Question	Answers
Anxiety disorders reflected in academic performance	1
Anxiety sometimes distracts me a lot	2
Attention deficit, hyperactivity	16
Attempts to stop procrastination, emotional blockages	17
ADHD, Anxiety	20
Anxiety because I feel that others understand and I don't, and it frustrates me	25
Anxiety, heart palpitations, and the urge to go to the bathroom	26
Depression and anxiety	36

Source: Own elaboration based on questionnaire

It's interesting to observe how responses to certain survey questions reflect students' perception of inclusion and infrastructure needs on campus.

When analyzing responses to the question of whether they have experienced any different treatment due to their condition, a variety of responses are observed. Some students mention they haven't experienced any of the mentioned behaviors, while others indicate experiencing indifference or negative treatment. The lack of response from some participants may indicate a lack of awareness of discriminatory behaviors or a reluctance to admit them.

Regarding the question of whether special infrastructure is required to receive adequate education, most participants point out the need for changes. Some suggest modifications to physical infrastructure, such as wide windows or dim lights, while others emphasize the importance of changes in others' behavior, such as maintaining order and silence in the learning environment. Additionally, additional services are mentioned, such as having a psychologist on campus and teacher training. On the other hand, some participants believe no specific changes are needed. These responses highlight the importance of creating inclusive educational environments that address the needs of all students, considering both physical adaptations and educational practices and emotional support.

Box 3**Table 2**

Behavioral requirements

Behavior	Quantity
Silence	3
Psychologists	2
Order in the classrooms when speaking	1
Teacher Training	1
Quiet Areas	1

*Source: Own elaboration based on questionnaire***Box 4****Table 3**

Infrastructure adjustment requirements

Infrastructure	Amount
Large Classrooms and Open Spaces	2
Smaller Classrooms	1
Good Ventilation	3
Dim Lights	1
Warm Temperature in the Classrooms	1
Benches in Cooler Areas	1
Leaving Only Two Access Doors for Security	1

Source: Own elaboration based on questionnaire

The design of school spaces fosters a change in performance, the development of creativity, and autonomy in students' tasks. Therefore, it is important for school leaders and teachers to strive to integrate appropriate teaching environments.

According to [Campana, Velasco, Aguirre, & Guerrero \(2014\)](#), school infrastructure plays an important role in academic performance as it serves a motivational and functional function. That is, it generates a more positive attitude in students towards learning and facilitates the teaching-learning process. Individuals with different needs require spaces that provide them with comfort in terms of tranquility and spaciousness, especially those with neurodivergence (neurodiversity is a non-medical term that includes conditions such as autism, dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia, and ADHD).

Natural light, warm colors, order, diverse furniture, or classroom connectivity are some of the key pieces taken into account when transforming these school spaces. These new places help students and teachers feel comfortable, safe, cozy, and inspired. They then become a structure of opportunities for creation, research, observation, and responsibility. Through the creation of these shared learning spaces, students also increase their knowledge expansion opportunities by having the possibility to work with all classmates of the same age and even different ages ([Marchante Goyo, 2022](#)).

It is important to clarify that individuals with different needs do not always feel stressed by others' behaviors, but their mood may be changeable. Therefore, order within the classroom is important for them, as it helps avoid distractions caused by people who talk too much or are nervous. In this regard, it is necessary to discuss with the entire group about the observed behavior in class. Regarding the question, it should be considered that some students may require a specialized format of teaching to learn. Out of the 16 surveyed students, the majority indicated that they do not need a special format but can learn like any other. Only one of the students with a specific diagnosis mentioned requiring a special format. However, seven students expressed the need for a special format of teaching.

Curricular adaptations or just good treatment, any educational institution that declares itself as inclusive must ensure non-discrimination in all its forms. Students with special needs should be evaluated to determine if the proposed activities and objectives of the specialty can be achieved and to what extent. If necessary, their families should be informed and the relevant curricular adaptations should be made, a task that depends on the authorities and the teacher.

There are students who are passed without having reached the skills and competencies established in the program, either because the teacher is unaware of their learning particularities or prefers to work with the majority, without paying attention to individualities. Other students fail because they do not seek help mechanisms or options to resolve the situation.

Conclusions

In conclusion, although the University of Guadalajara has created a program, the Policy of Inclusion for applicants and students at the University of Guadalajara has been limited, as the relevance of those with different cognitive abilities or learning difficulties has not been considered. This limitation is reflected in the lack of a diagnostic system for first-time students, resulting in teachers being unaware of their students' situations, both generally and individually.

Furthermore, there have been no courses implemented to train teaching staff in handling specific cases or in recommending and implementing appropriate pedagogical strategies for such students. In some cases, part of the faculty has taken courses on their own initiative outside the institution, sought external advice, or researched the situations they face.

For example, within the program, 4 students with Asperger's Syndrome have been identified, of which 2 arrived without a previous diagnosis. In these cases, they were referred to the University Center for Health Sciences to assess their situation and receive guidance, and so that the corresponding tutors and professors could generate recommendations regarding their curriculum path.

In conclusion, both at the University of Guadalajara in general and in the geography degree program in particular, there is still a long way to go to develop a comprehensive and truly broad inclusion program. Therefore, recommendations are made by teaching staff and students for there to be a policy that also encompasses this diversity among members of the university community.

All of this suggests that the Ethics of Care has not been applied within the studied institution, as it is not recognized as a social responsibility to effectively and appropriately attend to current and future students with different learning styles or cognitive characteristics. It is understood that such actions would improve the quality of life not only for these individuals but also for society as a whole.

Recommendations

- a) Awareness of discriminatory behaviours: Implement awareness programs to increase awareness of discriminatory behaviours and promote an inclusive environment on campus.
- b) Improvements in physical infrastructure: Make modifications to the campus physical infrastructure, such as installing wider windows or regulating lighting, to meet the specific needs of students with particular conditions.
- c) Expansion of support services: Expand support services available on campus, such as the presence of psychologists and teacher training, to ensure that students receive the necessary support for their emotional and academic well-being.

Declarations

Conflict of interest

The authors declare no interest conflict. They have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence in this chapter.

Author contribution

Arellano-Amaya, María de los Dolores: Carried out primary research, gathered data and information, and drafted sections related to the ethical perspective for care and social inclusión in the university.

Macías-Huerta, María del Carmen: Focused on the administration of questionnaires among geography undergraduate students

Niño-Castillo, Jacob Elías: Contributed to translating the text from Spanish to English, as well as providing specific contributions to the chapter text to ensure it aligns with the 2024 handbook template.

Availability of data and materials

Availability of data: The collected data as well as supplementary materials accompanying the publication of this research are accessible to other users. Through request to the authors.

Availability of materials: The authors specify that the materials are freely available for other users to use without any restrictions or conditions associated with access to them. This means that the materials, such as data sets, experimental protocols, software code, or other resources, can be accessed and utilized by anyone interested in the research without requiring permission or facing any limitations. This commitment to open access promotes transparency, reproducibility, and collaboration in research, allowing others to verify findings, replicate experiments, or build upon the work without barriers.

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Abbreviations

ADHD: Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

ASD: Autism Spectrum Disorders

HEI: Higher Education Programs

UN: United Nations

WHO: World Health Organization

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Background

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