

Towards an Inclusive University Education: Reality and Challenges

Hacia una educación universitaria inclusiva: realidad y retos

Rumo a uma educação universitária inclusivo: realidade e desafios

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ABSTRACT. It is a reality that the International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities recognizes the right to inclusive education. This reality is regulated by the General Law on the rights of persons with disabilities and their social inclusion. It is also a fact that university education is part of the Spanish education system and the provisions in the legislation on education are applicable to it. However, this basic and objective approach does not match the situation in which students with disabilities and other specific educational support needs who enter university find themselves in. In that sense, the objective of this paper is to analyze the Spanish university education system to make a diagnosis of the reality and the pending challenges to achieve an inclusive university education.

Key words:
university,
education,
inclusion,
disability,
specific
educational
support needs

RESUMEN. Es una realidad que la Convención Internacional de los derechos de las personas con discapacidad reconoce el derecho a la educación inclusiva y es una realidad que así se regula en la Ley General de derechos de las personas con discapacidad y de su inclusión social. En cuanto a la normativa nacional, la enseñanza universitaria forma parte del sistema educativo español y le es aplicable lo previsto en la legislación en materia de

Palabras clave:
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educación. Sin embargo, este planteamiento básico y objetivo no se corresponde con la situación en la que se encuentran los estudiantes con discapacidad y otras necesidades específicas de apoyo educativo que acceden a la Universidad. En ese sentido, el objetivo de este trabajo es realizar un análisis del sistema educativo universitario español, que nos permita hacer un diagnóstico de la realidad y de los retos pendientes para lograr una educación universitaria inclusiva.

discapacidad,
necesidades
específicas
de apoyo
educativo

RESUMO. É uma realidade que a Convenção Internacional sobre os Direitos das Pessoas com Deficiência reconhece o direito à educação inclusiva. e é uma realidade regulada pela Lei Geral sobre os direitos das pessoas com deficiência e da sua inclusão social. É uma realidade que a educação universitária é parte do sistema educativo espanhol e aplica as disposições da legislação em matéria de educação. No entanto, esta abordagem básica e objetiva não corresponde à situação em que se encontram os alunos com deficiência e outras necessidades educativas especiais que entram na universidade. Nesse sentido, o objetivo deste trabalho é analisar o sistema de ensino universitário espanhol que permite fazer um diagnóstico da realidade e desafios restantes para alcançar uma educação universitária inclusiva.

Palavras-chave:
universidade,
educação,
inclusão,
deficiência,
necessidades
educativas
especiais

Article 24 of the International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (ICRPD) recognizes that these people have a right an education (United Nations Organization [UNO], 2006). For this regulation to be effective, without discrimination and based on equal opportunities, the States that have ratified the convention will ensure an inclusive education system at all the levels, as well as life-long education geared toward: (a) full development of the human potential and the sense of dignity and self-esteem, strengthening of respect for human rights, fundamental liberties, and human diversity; (b) maximum development of personality, talents, and creativity of people with disability, as well as their mental and physical capabilities; (c) making possible that people with disabilities participate effectively in a free society.

Since Spain ratified the Convention and took effect on the third of May of 2008, it is part of our country's legal system. This article has direct application, along with general principles that are essential to guarantee its compliance, such as respect for the inherent dignity, the individual autonomy, including freedom to make their own decision, and independence of people; non-discrimination, total and effective participation and inclusion in society, respect for the difference and acceptance of people with disabilities as part of the human diversity and condition, equal opportunities and, mainly, accessibility.

In 2013, the Consolidated Text of the General Act on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and their Social Inclusion (Official Gazette [BOE], 2013) was approved, expressly incorporating in article 16

the inclusive education as part of the holistic attention, understood as:

...processes or any other intervention measure geared toward enabling disabled people to reach their maximum level of development and personal autonomy, and to obtain and maintain their full independence, physical, mental, and social ability, as well as their full inclusion and participation in all aspects of life, as well as obtaining suitable employment (article 13).

Inclusive education will be applied through the support means and adjustments recognized in Chapter IV and in the Education Organic Law 2/2006, dated May 3 (BOE, 2006). Chapter IV is important (articles 18 to 21) because the right to inclusive education is expressly recognized in our legal system:

“1. The persons with disabilities have the right to an inclusive, high-quality and free education, in equal conditions as the rest. 2. It is the education administrations who are responsible for ensuring an inclusive education system at all educational levels, as well as education throughout life (...) paying attention to the diversity of educational needs of the disabled student body, by regulating the support means and reasonable adjustments for the attention of those who need a special attention in terms of learning or inclusion... (BOE, December 3, 2013, article 18).

With the purpose of guaranteeing the right of the persons with disabilities to an inclusive education and without any prejudice to the measurements anticipated in the regulations in the field of education, it is hereby established as additional warranties, among others, that:

People studying at the university, and whose disability severely interferes with their adaptation to the general examination sitting regime, may request and the universities shall grant--in accordance with their corresponding rules for permanency which, in any case, shall take into account the situation of the persons with disabilities studying at the university--an extension in the number of said sittings to the extent that they offset their difficulty, without prejudice of the level of exigency. The examination will be adapted, in such case, to the characteristics of the disability of the interested party” (BOE, December 3, 2013, article 20, c).

May this introduction help us place ourselves at the starting line of this work: the right to an inclusive education of the persons with disabilities at all education levels, including university education is legally recognized.

Additionally, the data support the reality of the biome University-Disability. We took as reference the *III Estudio sobre el grado de inclusión del sistema universitario español respecto de la realidad de la discapacidad* (Third Study on the Degree of Inclusion of the Spanish University System regarding the Reality of Disabilities), conducted in 2016 by the Universia Foundation and the Spanish Committee of Representatives of Persons with Disabilities (CERMI). The executive summary offers the following data:

The total number of students with disabilities in the 55 participant universities, according to the data contributed by them, is of 17,634, which accounts for 1.7% of total students (1,057,039) of these universities. From these, there are more students with disabilities that choose public universities (1.8% of 914,083) over private universities (1.1% of 142,956). However, the most significant differences focus on the existing deviation between those who choose in-person (1.2% of 833,061) and distance learning (3.3% of 223,978). Moreover, the percentage of college

students with disabilities who extend their studies (master's degree or postgraduate studies) stays at a constant 1.2% (of 128,921), and those who choose to pursue a doctorate is 0.9% (of 58,115), following the trend which states that the higher the level of education, the lower the representation of persons with disabilities.

The standard profiles of the university community with disabilities are the following:

- Undergraduate college students with disabilities: male (51.8%), with physical disabilities (45.4%), Social and Legal Sciences student (43.8%).
- Postgraduate and Master's degree students with disabilities: male (52.7%), with physical disabilities (44.8%), pursue studies linked to Social and Legal Sciences (48.4%).
- Doctorate students with disabilities: male (56.4%), with physical disabilities (43.3%), pursuing doctorate studies linked to Social and Legal Sciences (35.7%). (Universia Foundation, 2016, p. 11).

Indeed, the presence of students with disabilities in Spanish universities is confirmed, both undergraduate and graduate (master's and doctorate) levels; the data even suggests that the numbers have increased in the last years. However, can we say that university education is inclusive? Are the required support means and resources being provided to obtain full inclusion at university? Is universal accessibility and thus a university education is guaranteed for all the people?

In order to answer these questions, and until we reach the conclusions we will make a review of reality that will make us realize the challenges that we must overcome at every level in order to secure this right. We will structure our research in the following sections:

1. We will present the main regulations in the areas of education, university, and disability to verify that they are not adapted to the ICRPD and therefore do not respond to the social model of disabilities. In addition, the disconnection between them offers us a legislative picture with a watertight regulation that is difficult to connect in some cases, which results in a lack of legal security for the students with disabilities.
2. The acknowledgment of the right to an inclusive education exists, but there is no legal definition, which forces us to offer the essential parameters to guarantee the right to university education and teaching of all students, including those students with disabilities and other specific educational support needs.
3. We will set forth the main deficiencies and problems in the Spanish educational system that hinder a true inclusive university education.
4. Finally, in the conclusions we will set out the challenges that shall be undertaken at all levels and by all the implied agents in order to descend from the desideratum and the catalogue of intentions to the facts that would allow the full inclusion and the real and effective participation of all people in the society.

LEGISLATIVE OUTLOOK

Connection of the education legislation, university legislation, and disabilities. The first reality we face is that in order to approach the inclusive university education we have to conjugate three regulatory aspects: education legislation, university legislation, and disability legislation.

As presented in the Introduction, from the ICRPD is unquestionable that the right to education is a fundamental right of all people and therefore of the persons with disabilities and which materializes in the right to an inclusive education.

However, the development of the university and education legislation has not been aligned with the evolution and implementation of the social model evolution and implantation of the social model of disability.

In particular, the Universities Act 6/2001, dated 21 of December, written in accordance with Organic Law 4/2007, dated 12 of April, establishes in its Twenty-Fourth Additional Provision, the framework under which the inclusion of the persons with disabilities in the universities shall be developed:

1. The universities shall guarantee equal opportunities for the students and other members of the university community with disabilities, prohibiting any form of discrimination and establishing positive action measures intended to ensure their full and effective participation within the scope of the university.
2. The disabled students and other members of the university community will not be directly or indirectly discriminated because of their disability in terms of access, admittance, permanence, and exercise of their academic or other degrees they may have.
3. The universities will promote actions to make sure all members of the university community with special or particular needs associated to their disability have the means, support, and resources that will ensure real and effective equal opportunities in relation to the other members of the university community. (BOE, 2001, p. 53).

University Statutes--the universities' autonomic legislation--have been drafted based on this pre-ICRPD regulation and, even when there is a general acknowledgment it does not succeed in becoming a reality for students with disabilities. It is right with no contents and, most importantly, comprises rules that do not articulate clearly defined action areas, administrative and management competences, or the protocols to be applied equally in all the Spanish universities.

The third regulatory block to consider is the educational one. Thus, Organic Law 2/2006 dated 3 of May on Education (BOE, 2006), reformed by Organic Law 8/2013 dated 9 of December for the improvement of education quality (BOE, December 10, 2013), is applicable to the university education, which is part of the Spanish education system (art. 3, par. 2, j) and, therefore, "they will adapt to the student body with specific educational support needs. Said adaptation will guarantee the access, permanence, and progression of these students in the education system" (BOE, 2006, Article 3, Par. 8). There is no doubt that university education, although it is regulated by its specific rules, by being part of the education system, must include all the students who access it by responding, among others, to the general principle of equity so...

...it guarantees equal opportunities for the full development of the personality through education, educational inclusion, equal rights and opportunities that help overcome any discrimination, and universal accessibility to education; and so it acts as a compensating element of personal, cultural, economic, and social inequalities, with special attention to those arising from disability (BOE, 2006, Article 1.b.).

Article 71 is also applicable by regulating the student body with specific educational support needs, according to which:

It is the Education Administrations obligation to ensure availability of the required resources so that the students who require an education that is different from the ordinary, by reason of their special educational needs, specific learning difficulties, ADHD, high intellectual capacity, entering the educational system late, or personal or academic conditions, may reach maximum possible development of their personal abilities and, in any case, the general objectives established for the entire student body (BOE, 2006, Article 71, Par. 2).

In conclusion and to finalize this section, the fact that so many rules need to come together to guarantee the same right to inclusive education to students with disabilities and other specific educational support needs in every Spanish university, already places us in a situation of legal insecurity, confusion for the parties intervening (student body, families, faculty, counselors...) and, in some cases, of flagrant discrimination by reason of disability.

WHAT IS INCLUSIVE EDUCATION? BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF ITS CONTENTS

None of the regulations mentioned above defines inclusive education, and this is yet another fact to take into account since in spite of the legal status of the right to an education of the persons with disabilities, there is legal vacuum in terms of its contents. It is true that regulations cannot impose a pedagogical model, but they must play their part in contributing the "ought to be" to society to which both Public (state, autonomic, and local) and Private Administrations, in other words, the society at large must answer.

It is for that reason that at the time of defining what inclusive education is, we find another obstacle for his implementation, because if we focus on doctrine, the analysis of bibliography, etc., we discover that although it is a very common term and it is customary to hear about it in different political, professional and educational forums, it is a concept that, because of its dilemmatic nature (Dyson & Milward, 2000) leads to dispersion and confusion, mainly with respect to the term integration, with this conceptual disorder reaching even the education professionals, as demonstrated by the results obtained in Medina-García's (2017) research.

This lack of coherence and consensus regarding inclusive education assumes that some theoreticians and authors (Elboj, Puigdellivol, Soler, & Valls, 2002; Nilholm, 2006; Parrilla, 2002) defend an anarchical position before this situation and argue the suitability that there is no concrete definition, but that each educational community may define what is inclusive education based on their idiosyncrasy. For us, this proposition is nonviable for several reasons:

- It entails bad practices, grouped under erroneous ideas or concepts that are opposite to the inclusion commands.
- This subjectivity and relativity deprive inclusive education of a scientific character and rigor.
- It causes situations of legal and social inequality and insecurity, since different levels of inclusion are established, based on the treatment or conception of each center.

This way, we advocate for the urgency and need to establish a determination and common conceptual clarification for all on what is inclusive education and we propose what has been proposed by Medina-García (2017), given the holistic character of his proposal, because he understands that:

Inclusive education is a pedagogical and ethical process, oriented to the achievement of a fair social structure, which entails offering all people without distinction, an equitable educational treatment that is adapted to their diverse personal characteristics, thus acting, according to the right to an education (p. 127).

Said definition is built upon three basic and interrelated pillars. In the first place, it understands inclusive education as a pedagogical and ethical process, since the primary target is to work on the educative phenomenon entirely, with the ultimate intention that it resonates in a social model of Human Rights. On the other hand, it is based on the person and the ethics, since it is not enough to transmit knowledge, but it is essential to promote a doctrinal and ideological a change, in relation to our conception of diversity and people with disabilities. And, finally it does not forget that beyond pedagogy, ethics, and the person, it is about guaranteeing a fundamental right: the right to education, a right that implicitly contains the right to inclusive education.

PEDAGOGICAL SHORTCOMINGS AND PROBLEMS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN THE UNIVERSITY

Following with the primary target of this university education system analysis and diagnosis work aimed at identifying the challenges in the attainment of an inclusive university education, it is essential to recognize the obstacles we find for the implementation of inclusive education in the University. We took as a starting point the questions previously posed in this work, such as the absence of a coherent legal mechanism or the difficulties to advance toward a conceptual clarification or delimitation on the matter. So next we will make an analysis on the barriers that prevent the fulfilment of this right in the university setting.

The irregularity of the educational transit to university studies for students with disabilities. We must start with the first step which is admission to the University. Education laws set forth how change must be effected in all stages of education, except in the university one. Assuming access of students with disabilities to higher studies, an added difficulty originated by misinformation, disorientation, prejudice and fear. Issues that lead the students to a situation of learned defenselessness and comfort zone that means, many times, that a great number of students with disabilities or other specific educational support needs, find in professional training the least defective and safest alternative to continue their training, turning this academic option into a loop that cannot be interrupted. This circumstance added to the legal vacuum and lack of specific actions, translates on many occasions into the academic abandonment of these students with disabilities or the settling for a professional qualification lower than their real possibilities.

In this sense we find in the first place, a regulation of the legislation that is quite insufficient, because in terms students with disabilities and change of educational stage, the Organic Law on Education, LOE (BOE, 2006) and the Organic Law on for the Improvement of Educational Quality, LOMCE (BOE, 2013)

only approach two very concrete aspects: the need to adapt evaluations and secure resources for the attainment of the foreseen goals. The text contained in article 3.1 is an example of the above: “The education system is organized in stages, terms, degrees, courses, and levels of education so that it assures the transition between such and, in each case, within each one of them” (BOE, 2006).

Concretely in the Autonomous Community of Andalusia, where we come from, we have extracted some ideas from the Andalusian Education Act (LEA) 17/2007, dated 10 of December, (Official Gazette of the Board of Andalusia [BOJA], 2007) that can be interpreted in relation to the transit for students with disabilities. This is the case of article 5. c) of the Act’s objectives that posits that “the effective equality of opportunities, the conditions that enable their learning and exercise, and the educational inclusion of all the groups of people that can have difficulties in the access and permanence in the education system must be guaranteed.” And article 175.1.) Cooperation with Andalusian universities: “The education Administration and the Andalusian universities will cooperate in those aspects that contribute to the improvement of the education system and, mainly, in the following (...) c) Access of the student body to higher education.”

If on the contrary we focus on the regulations in matters of disability, concretely in the ICRPD (UNO, 2006) we can find the following:

- **Article 24.5 establishes that:** “States Parties shall ensure that persons with disabilities are able to access general higher education (...) without discrimination and on an equal basis with others.”
- **Article 24.2.d):** “Persons with disabilities receive the support required, within the general education system, to facilitate their effective education.”
- **And Article 24.2.e):** “Effective individualized support measures are provided in environments that maximize academic and social development, consistent with the goal of full inclusion.”

Specifically, the report of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, dated September 2, 2016, analyzes the state of the art and expresses the need to make effective transitions, which entails receiving support so as to ensure an adequate transit from school learning to higher education and their incorporation in the workplace.

On the other hand, the Legislative Royal Decree 1/2013, dated 29 of November, approving the Consolidated Text of the General Act on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and their Social Inclusion (BOE, 2013), orders the following:

- **Article 18.2:** It is the education administrations who are responsible for ensuring an inclusive education system at all educational levels (...), paying attention to the diversity of educational needs of the disabled student body, by regulating the support means and reasonable adjustments for the attention of those who need a special attention in terms of learning or inclusion.

But, what is the opinion of the different theoreticians on this subject? For Calvo and Manteca (2016) the change of educational stage means for the students a change of school, of group, of classmates, and even of environmental context, and all these factors have the potential to interfere with the teaching and learning process that, although dynamic and evolutionary, requires a continuity, a coherent progress,

and no ruptures. Consequently, transit between stages is considered a fundamental and important phenomenon for most of our students because during this process a series of changes take place in the context where their daily life will evolve (Valls, 2003), as well as facing the existing divisions in the education system: different schools, different curricula, in sum, professional cultures that must know each other to integrate (Gimeno-Sacristan, 1996). These issues raised by the bibliographical development on transit, are not foreign to the access to the university setting, in which Dorio, Figuera, and Torrado (2001: 705-710) notice that:

The transition to the University is a complex process that entails multiple and significant personal and vital changes for the students (...) The effect of these changes, which are produced largely by the discontinuity in educational settings between the subsystems of secondary and university training, is currently increased by the sense of misinformation or set of stereotypes regarding university life, not always well justified.

If we add to these general opinions--that reveal the importance of the development of an adequate transit between stages-- the special circumstances of students with disabilities, we obtain the following considerations of the associative movement. As suggested by CERMI (2010), it is important to promote coordination of the faculty teaching at different levels and the suitable psycho-pedagogic counseling aimed at facilitating transit of the students with disabilities between the different education stages.

Ultimately, based on the analysis of the regulations, we can infer that very scarce guidelines are set forth for the articulation of this process. And on the other hand, the doctrine reveals the importance of this educational period with special incidence on the students with disabilities. So that the lack of guidance absence or procedures that mark a protocol to ensures success in this change of stages, causes the students with disabilities to live this stage with instability and uncertainty, thus generating a low academic performance, reasons for academic abandonment, or the making of decisions contrary to their vocational or professional orientation. This is the rationale for the existence of a deficit in this educational transit that prevents education inclusion to be guaranteed in university higher education.

ADAPTATION OF FACULTY TRAINING

Another one of the questions that acts as a barrier for the inclusion in university higher education is the scarce and insufficient training of the faculty. The education practice has been traditionally considered as the application of a series of routines aimed at "normal" students, so that most of the professors do not feel prepared to take care of the "special" students. The main cause for this to happen is the insufficient knowledge of the faculty, who quite to the contrary of what happens in most of the cases, should take advantage of the existence of these students as an opportunity for improvement and innovation in their teaching activity, as a search for alternatives and new forms of teaching, that are to benefit the entire group (Cardona & Chiner, 2006).

It is for that reason that when we talk about the teaching practice, we should understand that this practice entails, and by all means supposes, the appropriate attention to diversity. But the truth is that reality offers us a different conception and very different results, especially when that reality revolves around the university setting, whose tradition and professional culture has an idiosyncrasy and foothold

that is difficult to modify, pointing, among other things, to the way in which they commonly refer to the “teaching hours” as opposed to the valued research work.

Faced with this situation, there is evidence of the need and importance of developing training competences in the higher education faculty that will help them in their performance of tasks and functions that are adapted to the education reality (Sánchez Palomino, 2009; Tortosa & Alvarez, 2009).

We will start with the opinions expressed by professors and students with disabilities in the University to establish what the competences that shall be initiated among professors are in order to obtain an inclusive education at the university stage.

In general terms, from the research by Redruello, Quesada, Aguilera, and de Andrés (2014), only 25% of students consider that the faculty is sufficiently prepared to teach students with disabilities and have any knowledge on special educational needs. And 61% of students with disabilities consider that the faculty needs specific training. Therefore, the answers obtained clearly show that the students have a negative opinion on the faculty’s training to take care of special educational needs.

Following with the study of these authors, as far as the adaptations, the data show quite interesting results. Indeed, 89% of students responded that they required of some type of adaptation in the methodology and/or evaluation. In terms of adaptations in the evaluation they propose: continuous evaluation, time extensions, test model and format, oral examinations, use of technological material. From the qualitative analysis, several observations came up referred to the fact that not always they manage to have these adaptations due to the lack of time and they are dependent on the “good will” or availability of the professors. Regarding adaptations, we consider that, after all, we are talking about non-significant adaptations, just the mere access to the curriculum, which should not be any major difficulty or conflict. Nevertheless, we go beyond, because we understand that the presence of students with disabilities in some specific program, by reason of disabilities and the curricular characteristics of the program (as an example, let’s think of a student with a physical disability and a program related to physical activity and sports), shall have significant curricular adaptations that involve the elimination of some objective, content, or evaluation criteria, so as to guarantee equal opportunities.

If we mention the faculty’s situation in terms of methodological adaptations, Martínez Segura (2011) says that an appropriate training for college professors with students with disabilities must contemplate experience in curricular adaptations and practice in new methodologies; however, it has been found that most professors do not know how to make methodological adaptations of their courses for students with disabilities (Rosell & Bars, 2005) and that this lack of preparation impacts negatively on their teaching practice, thus experiencing some level of discontent, discomfort, and insecurity because of the presence of students with disabilities in their classrooms, something that is aligned with the data contributed by Gómez-Restrepo, Rodríguez, Padilla and Avella-García (2009), and by Rosell and Bars (2005). When asking the professors who have never had a student with disabilities in their classroom (42.3%) about the possibility of feeling uncomfortable/insecure before an experience of this type, 30.77% responded that they did not know how they would feel, 10.0% said that they would

feel uncomfortable/insecure, and 59.23% responded that they would not have these feelings. These data matches the answers regarding the need for a specific training to take care of diversity in the classroom, since more than half of the PDI (66.23%) considers that this training would be necessary versus 12.79% that states that they do not need it (May, 2012).

After this analysis, the need to develop information, training, organization, and planning programs to take care of the educational needs of students with disabilities is evident. Understanding that this increase in actions produces positive results in the teaching-learning processes and becomes an element of special importance so that the professors do not ignore these students that they perceive as an added load to their work (Redruello et al., 2014).

In general terms, one of the most important competences that a professor must assume is being able to place the student in optimal learning situations for the development of their potentialities and for that, he or she must have prior theoretical and practical knowledge on disabilities (Sánchez Palomino, 2009). Although recent investigations, such as the one by Medina-García (2017) note that in order to implement inclusion of students with disabilities in the education system, it is not enough to know about disabilities, because it is insufficient and does not guarantee said inclusion. On the contrary, it posits that in order to guarantee inclusion, it is essential and fundamental to have knowledge about inclusion so as to implement it.

Another aspect to consider is the offer of consolidated support services, with stable budgets, that provide a cross-sectional and multidisciplinary attention and are in charge of impelling accessibility measures, providing technical assistance or educational counseling, among other actions. Because the presence of students with disabilities in the classrooms can mean a revulsive that makes the education system evolve towards better quality levels. In this respect, Bermúdez, Rodríguez, and Martín (2002) speak of a quality school for all, adapting it to the person throughout their life.

Personally, we are conscious that work is being done through different projects to increase the presence of students with disabilities in universities with in-person methodologies, so that if the goals of these actions are met, the trend will be for a greater presence of students with disabilities along time. What causes that this training imperative will become essential in some years. Based on the above, the college professor must by all means have a cross-sectional training on the topic of disabilities and, of course, inclusion, so that, first, he or she is able to fight the existing biases regarding students with disabilities and the inclusion model. And second, offer the tools that will contribute security in their professional development. Then, until a suitable professional qualification is not obtained, the problems will be solved temporarily or, what is worse, the right to an inclusive education will be violated.

Finally, and going back to the title of this section, to give attention to diversity in the university, the professional profile of professors shall include the following competences (Fernandez-Batanero, 2011):

1. Commitment and positive attitude towards diversity.
2. Educational planning considering the differences.
3. Educational mediation to meet the objectives.
4. Formative evaluation to improve the students' learning.

Ultimately, and concluding with Fernandez-Batanero's (2011) ideas, we can say that the education of the entire university student body and faculty training to favor attention to diversity is a way to obtain a better education for all and better professionals who hold justice, equity and, absolute guarantee of a fundamental right, such as the right to an inclusive education as their goals.

CURRICULAR DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION: DESIGN FOR ALL

One of the basic instruments at the time of thinking about how to turn into reality the inclusion is through the approach, design, and development of the curriculum; but as expressed by Echeita (2008), this can become a barrier that hinders belonging, participation, and equality of learning opportunities. In this sense, López-López (2012) states that the curriculum can be found among the didactic barriers impeding the construction of an inclusive education.

Therefore, university curricula must be modified in their design, development, and implementation in two ways. On the one hand, to pay attention to diversity according to the rules of inclusive education; and on the other hand, to incorporate the issues contained in the Curricular Design for All.

The process of change and improvement of the education system whose epicenter is the inclusion model, implies inevitably change in the curriculum as one of the basic organization strategies to respond to the needs of all students and for that, it proposes that this must be open and dynamic based on the needs, and flexible to social, methodological, and structural changes. A curriculum that guarantees the development of the competences required to develop in the current society. Which allows to change from a standard curriculum which is fragmented curriculum into subjects, to a diversified, interdisciplinary, and functional curriculum. Diversified, because we know that each student learns differently, so it is necessary to cause changes and variations in it. Interdisciplinary, thematic curriculum that adapts better than traditional practices, so that when the content of the curriculum is organized interdisciplinary it is more significant and stimulates the students more. In the same way, we need a functional curriculum that emphasizes preparation for life and not only for the different academic stages, since the notion of functionality implies the usefulness of something or for something.

Paying attention to this sense of usefulness and curricular functionality is the orientation of the White Paper on Design for All at the University (ONCE Foundation & Institute for the Aging and Social Services, 2006), by taking into account that the environments built (spaces, products, and services) are designed by people, to be used by people, so the need for the professionals who will be directly involved in the construction of such environments to be trained is clear, so they can generate effective solutions to the current integration problems.

Thus, taking into account, also, that a large number of these professionals will be trained at universities, the introduction of the basic concepts of Design for All in the curricula of university study programs ensures that in the future these concepts will be a part of all projects related to human activity, thus complying with the Council of Europe Resolution (2001) on this matter, as well as ensuring equal opportunities.

But, what do we mean when we talk about Design for All? It is a useful tool to make accessible environments that would allow the individual development of all people. It focuses its activity in the search for design solutions so that all the people, regardless of age, gender, physical, psychic, and sensorial abilities or of culture, can use the spaces, products, and services of their environment and, at the same time, participate in the construction of it.

So that the objectives sought for with the incorporation of these issues in the university curricula are the following:

1. Raise awareness in university students regarding the need to create environments that respect human diversity, including the university surroundings themselves.
2. To equip the future professionals that will take part in the design of the surroundings with a tool that would allow them to deal with the accessibility issues of their projects.
3. To develop research lines related to the Design for All in the different scopes of academic knowledge.
4. To define the curricular contents so that each university is able to develop the inclusion method in their training programs autonomously and most effectively.

In other words, the main goal is for all study programs to include in their curricula the knowledge pertaining to the Design for All concept, so that equal opportunities are guaranteed for people with disabilities. Therefore, if we start off from the conception of education as the essential tool to promote social change, there is no doubt that there is no better way to achieve the desired social model than from the modification of curricular design, development, and implementation.

CONCLUSIONS

At this point and after noting the problems and failures of the university education system, the challenges we must face in order to achieve an inclusive university education can be summed up in the following conclusions:

In view of the legislative issues analyzed, it is urgent to remove the existing regulatory gap and to activate the updating of legislation in accordance with the ICRPD and the Consolidated Text of the General Act on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (BOE, December 3, 2013). It is simply a matter of adapting the current legal system to the ICRPD. Likewise, all educational, university and disability standards must be connected, as must the public administrations involved, at the state and regional levels, with the aim of guaranteeing the same right to education throughout the national territory and with equal content for all students in Spanish universities.

As we proposed at the beginning of this work and after its development, the need to establish a common and consensual definition of inclusive education, which serves as a starting point for its implementation, is confirmed. This conceptual consensus is fundamental to provide practical and scientific rigor to this process that is configured as an essential element of social and legal justice.

Finally, once we identify the main deficiencies and the most relevant problems of the Spanish education system to achieve a true inclusive university education, we link them with challenges

that are pending for the Public Administration and society in general. Among these challenges, we emphasize as a priority, to promote the training of university teachers in matters of inclusion and disability, linked to the quality of their skills and professional development and to modify the curriculum development and implementation in accordance with the precepts of inclusive education, as well as the Design for All People.

276/5000 In conclusion, the lack of training and information on the agents involved, the lack of support and educational resources and up-to-date university standards place us in the face of challenges that must be tackled transversally to achieve real inclusive university education.

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