

The invalid effort. Analysis of notions about humanity that trivialize the education of students with disabilities

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Abstract

Education for people with disabilities has become a priority in Mexico, where despite the abundance of inclusion policies, the percentage of population with disabilities attending school is minimal, not to mention the higher chances of dropout and the economic adversities they have to face. This research aims to understand the causes of their exclusion from elementary schools in the Mexican context. Through the analysis of interviews with subjects from three different categories of schools: public, special education and private, that receive students with disabilities, was found that notions of humanity and normality have implicit premises about functionality and economic utilitarianism, and that exists an unsustainable optimism about student achievement. This work reveals the influence of the utilitarian logic underlying the contractarian political tradition over education, and raise questions about its convenience in a human world, not exclusively rational and whose inhabitants are not permanently functional or ‘normal’.

L'istruzione per le persone con disabilità è diventata una priorità in Messico, dove nonostante l'abbondanza di politiche di inclusione, la percentuale di popolazione con disabilità che frequenta la scuola è minima, per non parlare delle maggiori possibilità di abbandono e delle avversità economiche che devono affrontare. Questa ricerca si propone di comprendere le cause della loro esclusione dalle scuole elementare e media nel contesto messicano. Attraverso l'analisi di interviste a soggetti di tre diverse categorie di scuole: pubbliche, speciali e private, che accolgono studenti con disabilità, è emerso che le nozioni di umanità e normalità hanno premesse implicite sulla funzionalità e sull'utilitarismo economico, e che esiste un insostenibile ottimismo sul rendimento scolastico degli studenti. Questa ricerca rivela l'influenza della logica utilitaristica soggiacente alla tradizione politica contrattualistica sull'educazione, e solleva interrogativi sulla sua convenienza in un mondo umano, non esclusivamente razionale e i cui abitanti non sono permanentemente funzionali o 'normali'.

Keywords: disability; inclusion; argumentation; human condition; contractual approach

Parole chiave: disabilità; inclusione; argomentazione; condizione umana; approccio contrattuale

1. Introduction

Social inclusion of people with disabilities (hereinafter PwD) is a matter of interest for modern nations, manifested in the policies they put into practice; their results vary depending on the context of each society and show different levels of consolidation according to the area in question; the educational sphere is determining since it constitutes a space for socialization and human development.

In Mexico educational inclusion policies encompass any official order mandated by current laws, the Secretary of Public Education (SEP), or private school initiatives that promote enrollment of students with disabilities (hereafter SwD); however there is a discrepancy between the institutional efforts made for the educational inclusion of PwD and the percentage of the population with disabilities enrolled in basic education schools; this panorama leads to the question: what are the causes of the educational marginalization of PwD, which prevent guaranteeing their right to education despite the continuous implementation of inclusive strategies in regular basic schools? Answering this question is critical to know whether these policies favor the academic development of SwD or whether they are political commitments impossible to fulfill. The present work is a contextualized interpretation of the Mexican case intending to illustrate the generalized problems of school inclusion in societies sharing cultural, and political characteristics with Mexico.

This research embraces two branches of philosophy, the political and the anthropological as well as sociological theories, to understand how social conceptions of humanity and normality influence relationships and development of the SwD and how are their experiences of inclusion in different educative placement (public/special/private). It aims to identify the elements that prevent the educational inclusion of PwD in regular elementary schools, and how they relate to each other according to educational actors who experienced inclusion processes in Zapopan, Mexico during 2019-2020; to this end, specific objectives were established:

1. To identify the conceptions about disability and experiences of educational inclusion in subjects of three types of schools, public, private, and special, where students with visual and intellectual disabilities are enrolled.
2. To observe the school life of SwD to understand the discrepancies between the ideal of policies and the reality experienced in schools.

Data were collected according to the conditions of the local context, meaning that criteria on the type of disability, school level, or the number of participants were not established arbitrarily, but instead, trying to organize the current conditions of local special education. Two different types of disability, visual and intellectual, were selected because the special educational offering is limited and disjointed, there are few special schools scattered in Zapopan, mostly elementary and few inclusive schools, focused on specific disabilities.

Observations were made in two out of three schools to describe interactions and educative strategies used by teachers, whereas interviews or focus groups were conducted in all three to obtain participant's beliefs about disability; the data collection was distributed as follows:

Special school: Focus group with 4 students and a teacher; 7 individual interviews among parents and teachers; observations in two primary grades (first and sixth grade) during a month. The special school operates as a civil association and depends financially on donations.

Private school-inclusive program: 11 individual interviews with teachers, parents, and regular students; observation in a group with 3 SwD, during a month; the school serves students with intellectual disabilities.

Regular public secondary with support services for inclusion: 5 interviews were carried out, two with teachers, two with mothers, and one with a visually impaired student. The Covid-19 pandemic prevented entrance to the school, making it impossible to observe daily social dynamics. The regular school has enrolled the visually impaired for nearly a decade.

Two blocks of hypotheses were proposed: one about the conceptions of humanity (H1) and another on the social model of disability (H2).

- *H1: The essentialist human conception denies fundamental characteristics of living beings (fragility, incompleteness, finiteness) and leads to a monolithic image that excludes those who embody them.*
- *H2: The radical approach of the social model of disability promotes educational practices of simulation affecting SwD learning.*

2. Disability in Mexico

In Mexico 6 million people have disabilities (INEGI, 2022); the National Institute of Statistics and Geography, INEGI, defines PwD as those “who have great difficulty or are unable to do at least one of the activities of daily living such as seeing, hearing, walking, remembering or concentrating, bathing, dressing or eating, speaking or communicating” (INEGI, 2021). Only 46.5% of the national population with disabilities between 3- and 29-years old attend school (INEGI, 2017, p. 47), while 45 out of every 100 people have primary education and 23 out of every 100 are illiterate (INEGI, 2017, p. 53).

The organization and maintenance of special teacher groups, Multiple Attention Centers (CAM), and the Support Service Units for Regular Education (USAER) are the strongest institutional resource for inclusion; their goal is to provide initial education to students with special needs to later integrate them in regular schools (SEP, 2006); nevertheless, their services are insufficient due to diversity of educational needs among SwD with different types of impairments, lack of collaboration in regular schools and limited resources.

According to the legal framework, inclusive education “fosters the integration of people with disabilities into regular basic education schools, through the application of specific methods, techniques and materials” (LGIPD, 2011, p. 2). Both Article 41 of the General Education Law (LGE) and Article 15 of the LGIPD distinguish between special and regular education and dictate that, in the event of wishing to switch to the regular modality, the necessary adjustments must be done to provide quality education. While Article 75 of the LGE establishes that denying service to PwD constitutes an infraction, Article 26 of the LGIPD decrees that SEP “will establish the criteria to determine the type of education to which a person with a disability could access, according to the degree of disability and based on the National Classification of Disabilities” (auth. trans), which is not available for public consultation, compromising the right to education of PwD, since, without it, it is impossible to determine the criteria of admissions for regular or special schools. Although Mexico has a legal framework that guarantees on paper the educational rights of PwD and dictates the requirements, the reality is far from the ideal it projects.

3. Research precedents

To establish a starting point I review works about educative contexts and placements for SwD in primary and secondary; in addition to pragmatic research, the theoretical work of Ahlberg centered on justice is used as a relevant precedent, since it addresses the education of PwD, as a matter of human development, appointing the use of the democratic education framework “is not suitably sensitive to the educational interests of profoundly cognitively disabled students as an investment issue” (Ahlberg, 2014, p. 165).

Sociability-focused studies identify elements impacting the educative development of PwD, among which stand out disability degree and specificities of bodily ‘impairment’, the influence of educational staff presence over students’ sociability, the benefit of “informal caring” from friends (Worth, 2013), or the need from severely disabled students of more time in separate spaces (Pierson & Howell, 2013). Other factors such as self-esteem, or type of disability are important; while self-confidence improves when the school fulfills a rehabilitative role,

for example by helping to overcome language difficulties (Wei & Marder 2012), students with non-visible disabilities are more accepted because lesser adaptations are needed in recreational activities (Adibsereshki & Salehpour, 2014).

Pedagogy studies maintain that special teachers circumvent official instructions to benefit SwD by providing more unauthorized assistance, they highlight the existence of negative attitudes from regular teachers (Malki & Einat, 2018). Comparative works have contrasted school dynamics with inclusion laws as that of Flores and García, (2016) or Downing and Peckham-Hardin (2007), concluding that regular peers become aware of disability and that a quality program should seek cohabitation with SwD and have high expectations of them.

Two trends in public policies research were found; the first, focused on strategies and educative resources used in regular classrooms; about it, Mexican research has made well-founded critics of special teaching teams (Flores & García, 2016), the lack of systematic evaluative processes, and the request to cover attention quotas even when inclusive work is unnecessary (Romero & García, 2013, p. 87); there are also the remarks that implement inclusive projects is difficult because these resolve political requirements instead of educative needs and that staff compels SwD to leave schools (Garnique & Gutiérrez, 2012).

The second trend highlights and questions the gaps between the legal framework and the effective inclusion of SwD in mainstream education; these works address the problem through documentary analysis (Kuntz, & Carter, 2019; Waisath et al., 2022; Jackson et al., 2022; Duncan et al., 2021); these discuss which is the best educative placement for SwD, finding a preference for regular school; however Kuntz & Carter, (2019), also found that despite being in regular contexts, SwD keeps receiving minimum academic instruction and more “electives o special courses” (p. 104).

Between this research and those integrating the second trend are differences: 1) while those carried out a documentary analysis, I intended to discover the causes of this discrepancy through empirical work, and 2) these investigations are interested in showing the benefits of regular school placement, while my work pays attention to the best context for SwD learning in the local conditions.

4. Problematic frameworks: disability models

There are three main historical disability models: the ancient (moral) model, (Olkin, 2002) which conceived PwD as incapable of contributing usefully to society, the medical model, which considered impairments as diseases (Velarde, 2012), and the social model, understanding PwD as individuals with impairments, oppressed by society (Velarde, 2012; Shakespeare, 2006). This work disregards the biopsychosocial model, embodied in The International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF), since it recognizes specific differences among individual needs (WHO, 2011. p. 22), instead of generalising them, which is optimal, but unlikely, because limited resources are allocated to meet specific individual needs; and on the other hand, I question the usefulness of an extremely detailed classification in school and because my analysis focuses on conceptions of the human condition.

According to Shakespeare, the social model distinguishes physical impairment (individual) from disability (public), and as Velarde (2012, p. 131), underlies that contributions from PwD to society depend on the social acceptance of their difference. However, the complexity of disability demands rethinking the convenience of the model because it “has generated a form of identity politics which has become inward-looking and separatist” (Shakespeare, 2006, p. 203); Shakespeare disapproves of the “forgetting of the impairment” and takes up the criticisms of Morris (1991), French (1993) and Crow (1992), about the model tending to neglect physical impairments with the false pretension that they do not influence daily life (Crow, in Shakespeare, 2006, p. 200).

Hence, this research adheres to Shakespeare's criticism, who sustains approaches of realism and critical disability studies are best suitable to reflect on disability issues, because they promote the acceptance of external reality by recognizing and attending "to the independent existence of bodies which sometimes hurt, regardless of what we may think or say about those bodies" (Shakespeare, 2014, p. 73).

Regarding exclusion study, this research dissociates itself from traditional approaches that take as the starting point the desire for domination of a social group (Allman, 2013), having sociology as a single theoretical ground. Karsz (2000) addresses the problem of exclusion connected to social construction, implying its solution is to deconstruct canons and beliefs, about hierarchies and social roles; his approach is problematic because it conceives the human condition as a consensual idea, instead as ontologically given, disregarding the bodily component, which ultimately limits individual human activity.

5. Method: Beliefs and arguments

The pragma-dialectical argumentation approach of van Eemeren et al. (2002), was used as a method of analysis following the next steps: 1) identifying discursive fragments expressing an opinion, these could be explicit when accompanied by phrases such as "I believe", or implicit if there aren't opinion markers, in which case, contextual information is used to determine "whether a statement can be analyzed as a standpoint or not" (Van Eemeren et al. 2002, p. 12); 2) searching premises sustaining the standpoints; the premises that support opinions may be factual statements or roughly conclusive statements whose validity can be tested; and 3) examining the validity of debatable arguments.

To evaluate the soundness of argumentation, one of the following possibilities was used: 1) if it is possible to schematize in propositional statements the argument, then we can infer the speaker is trying to demonstrate solid reasoning; 2) if the statements used are factual, then there is no need to explain them because they are evident; 3) if it is possible to identify the type of reasoning established between opinions and premises as causal, symptomatic or analogy based. For each type of reasoning, van Eemeren et al. (2002) proposes schemes and critical questions, as explained as follows:

- a) Argument scheme for the symptomatic relation:
"Y is true of X,
because: Z is true of X,
and: Z is symptomatic of Y".
"Aren't there also other non-Y's that have the characteristic Z?" (pp. 97-98)
- b) Argument scheme for analogy relation:
"Y is true of X,
because: Y is true of Z,
and: Z is comparable to X".
"Are there any significant differences between Z and X?" (p. 99)
- c) Argument scheme for a causal relation:
"Y is true of X,
because: Z is true of X,
and: Z leads to Y".
"Does Z always lead to Y?" (p. 101)

The argumentative schemes are presented according to the next symbology:

- Number: Opinion.
- Number with letter or decimal: Premises sustaining opinions.

- Numbers with a letter in parentheses and apostrophe: Implicit premises.

To understand the social relations of SwD and analyze humanity's conceptions underlying exclusion, was used a multidisciplinary perspective that combined the sociological (Berger & Luckmann, 1968; Goffman, 1963), and philosophical perspectives (Coreth, 1976; Gevaert, 2008; Laín, 1998; Agamben, 1998; Nussbaum, 2007). Interviews and observations were analyzed according to categories and subcategories derived from theoretical concepts:

- Philosophical anthropology – Futurition: *Plausible futurition*; *Nonplausible futurition*; *Expectations*.
- Symbolic interactionism, social constructionism – Disability as Identity: *Discrediting acts*; *Independent activities*; *False wise*; and *Compassion and pity*.
- Political philosophy – Obstacles and enablers: *Teacher's role*; *Differences between schools*; *Family and parents*; *Specialization*; *Inclusion programs and policies*; and *Diagnosis*.

6. Theory

This research argues that the social conception of disability is linked to the idea of *homo sacer* (Agamben, 1998) since it represents the individual who lost something that depreciates their life; PwD embodied this loss, first when occurs the deprivation of a bodily function, then when is displayed a loss of the social condition that would allow them to live unobstructed. Goffman uses the concept of stigma to define signs “especially effective in drawing attention to a debasing identity discrepancy, breaking up what would otherwise be a coherent overall picture, with a consequent reduction in our valuation of the individual” (Goffman, 1963, pp. 43-44); the stigma diminishes, before others, the human quality of the stigmatized, leading us to believe that stigmatized are not completely human, whereby we discriminate them, reducing their life quality (Goffman, 1963, p. 5).

Marginalization, thus, relies on the sovereign-*homo sacer* relation; whereas the sovereign decides over others' lives, *homo sacer* is a worthless life, “is the one concerning whom all men act as sovereigns” (Agamben, 1998, p. 110, auth. trans); this research assumes that people and institutions posit PwD as *homo-sacer*, insofar as decisions are made for them. The organizing principle of modern democracies is the session of human life to the sovereign power of the State (Agamben, 1998), based on the theoretical tradition of the social contract, from which the most widely accepted perspectives of justice are derived.

Nussbaum criticizes these justice perspectives, which are guided by principles of cooperation and abandonment of the state of nature in favor of the pursuit of common goals, because “the very logic of a contract for mutual advantage suggests that one would not include in the first place agents whose contribution to overall social well-being is likely to be dramatically lower than that of others” (Nussbaum, 2007, p. 20). Nussbaum underlies the inoperability of cooperation between individuals with different biological and social conditions arguing that a theory of justice should recognize the equality of citizens with impairments, accepting that it is a state obligation to provide the necessary care and aid for them (p. 88). Her counterproposal is “an approach that focuses on human capabilities, that is, what people are actually able to do and to be” according to “an intuitive idea of a life that is worthy of the dignity of the human being” (p. 70); it takes as a starting point “a conception of the person as a social animal, whose dignity does not derive entirely from an idealized rationality” (2007, p. 92); she reassumes “the Aristotelian/Marxian conception of the human being as a social and political being, who finds fulfillment in relations with others” (2007, p. 85), agreeing with the inter-personality approach defended by Gevaert, Coreth, and Laín.

Although modern philosophical anthropologies (Coreth, 1976; Gevaert, 2008) reject that the capacity of reasoning determines the human condition, “there is a long tradition that considers the person as the human being capable of thinking and acting consciously and deciding autonomously” (Gevaert, 2008, p. 61, auth. trans),

making it difficult to disseminate other virtues associated with emotions and dependence as humanly valuable. Corporeality establishes the conditions for human action by providing capabilities and imposing limitations, whereby is not possible to do everything one wishes, but only within the margins that the possibilities and determined forces of each person allow (Coreth, 1976, p. 209; Shakespeare 2014; Nussbaum, 2007; Laín 1998). As Coreth, Gevaert claims that the relationship of the individual with others determines their social place, that self-consciousness is oriented towards the outside of the individual and always appears accompanied by “concrete and real contact with people and things”; he maintains that “when the activity of the senses and the body is suspended, all human activity is suspended” (Gevaert, 2008, p. 81, auth. trans).

Laín argues that human conduct is “the intentional action of man in the world” executed through “psycho-physiological acts” (Laín, 1998, p. 157, auth. trans); he develops the concept of *Futurition*, the projection, and the impulse toward the future, and explains that the achievement of a project goes through moments that circumscribe it, the desire, the idea of oneself, the idea of the world, the imagination, the freedom, the effort, and the conclusion. Acknowledging the real conditions and demolishing the fictitious allows personal development; to act and fulfill objectives, accurate ideas of selfhood (the representation that each person has of themselves, considering their organic possibilities and abilities) and of the world (outside material reality) are essential (Laín, 1998)

This work sustains it is fundamental to recognize limitations in body structure or functions to reflect on three features of life quality of PwD: first, we must acknowledge is an obligation of society and state to secure the conditions that enable PwD to live worthily, admitting more resources are needed than in regular cases (Nussbaum, 2007); second, human condition and a dignify treating do not depend on proving rationality or the ability to act autonomously; third, interaction in the natural and social world is needed to live humanly.

The categories *Futurition* and *Disability as identity* express a similar relationship to sovereign-*homo sacer* because it displays ideas or experiences that allude to or ignore the desires and interests of PwD. Based on the concept of the discredited/discreditation (Goffman, 1963), the subcategory Discrediting includes practices of PwD that the interviewees consider inappropriate, while False Wise (derived from “the wise”, a name Goffman gives to non-stigmatized individuals accepted by stigmatized groups) designates a type of subject who has no relationship with PwD but formulates and share wrong explanations about.

The category *Obstacles and enablers* are grounded in the constructionism of Berger and Luckmann (1967), who explain that social roles are articulated via socialization, “the comprehensive and consistent induction of an individual into the objective world of a society or a sector of it” (1967, p. 150), through which subjects adopt the place socially attributed to them according to their biological and personal characteristics.

Concordant beliefs function as a “chorus” that repeats the meanings maintaining the social order, through which “the individual becomes what he is addressed as by his significant others” (Berger & Luckmann, 1967, p. 152); when these beliefs are distant from the individual reality, they become prejudices, producing deficient socialization (p. 185), sustained by a discrepancy between the personal beliefs and the way the stigma defines them; ultimately these beliefs determine human development opportunities for these individuals.

Beliefs about stigmatized individuals proceed from the notional recognition, “knowledge that has not been in touch with reality or that is too far from the complexity and concreteness of the real world” (Gevaert, 2008, p. 162, auth. trans), transmitted without been put into practice, producing “a certain detachment from concrete reality” (p. 163, auth. trans), its influence is critical because “the individual constructs his image of himself out of the same materials from which others first construct a social and personal identification of him” (Goffman, 1963, p. 106).

7. Analysis

Although most of the subcategories were sufficiently fed, here I will only refer to those that captured the greatest amount of information.

Subcategories *Plausible Futurition*, *Non-plausible Futurition*, and *Expectations* address projects that adults tutoring SwD consider affordable for them; bearing in mind the impairment of the person concerned, they evaluate the possibility of carrying out projects before undertaking them.

While few teachers maintain that certain disabilities impede the performance of some professions; others consider it important to weigh up whether it is useful to learn something if the adaptations needed are excessively exaggerated; therefore, limitations must be weighed to successfully achieve goals.

Teachers and mothers with advanced academic degrees are involved in short-term projects for the SwD; aware of the prejudices about disability (as they cannot be part of the workforce and the consumer economy, having to prove otherwise through certification), they encourage students to enroll in technical schools that will serve as job support in case they do not accomplish a university career; the main expectation is to make them “useful adults”, hoping this will enable them to live autonomously and enjoy social membership.

Adult expectations for SwD are higher when they refer to career projects, and lower when they refer to the trades enabling them to earn a living in the informal labor market. *Expectations* are connected to *Discrediting acts* since those who express higher expectations identify more discrediting behaviors; thus, special teachers, with higher expectations, correct discrediting behaviors, because they impede learning and socialization, and inform about discomfort. Special teachers believe their students can assume the social roles of their age and educational level insofar as they are treated such as, which implies correcting as much as necessary. This is observable also in the private school: monitors (assistant professors) have high expectations and correct discrediting behaviors, while regular teachers think SwD should attend a special school and learn a trade, instead of obtaining an academic degree.

Discrediting acts refer to SwD practices associated with their disability that affect their relationships and learning; three types were identified: stereotypies (repetitions of actions, words, or gestures, such as body rocking; special teachers identify and correct them because they understand their meaning and were trained to recognize them), invasive behaviors, and stereotypies.

Stereotypies are signs of discomfort, appearing during social isolation, restriction in movement, absence of stimulation, overstimulation, confrontation with new environments, presence of frustration-conflict, inactivity, or boredom (Sambraus, in Nuñez, 1999, p.87).

Invasive behaviors consist of the siege of other’s personal space due to the ignorance of limits in interaction, caused by the tolerance of adults who unsuccessfully mediate social rules (Berger & Luckmann, 1967); when people without disabilities present these behaviors, they are openly admonished and corrected, while the same behaviors are tolerated in SwD under the tacit justification that disability is sufficient punishment, ignoring that those behaviors are grounds for discrimination; therefore discrediting (Goffman, 1963) results from a contradiction: while in childhood discrediting behaviors are tolerated out of pity, in adulthood, they are neither tolerated, nor reprobated, but ignored as long as they do not bother a third party directly.

Stereotype designates a generalized image or idea, socially accepted and recognized as unalterable; in the case of blind people, these are activities arbitrarily “thought” for them, such as music practicing or street vending.

Some discrediting acts correspond to the virtual social identity, “the demands we make” for the stigmatized (Goffman, 1963, p. 2), constructed of “our stereotype of what a given type of individual should be” (p. 3). Since “what an individual is, or could be, derives from the place of his kind in the social structure” (Goffman, 1963, p. 112), then PwD becomes individuals before whom anyone acts as sovereign by not recognizing them as

equals, in terms of free will, since their choices are conditioned by disability, despite certain behaviors are fictitious, that is, created according to notional recognition (Gevaert, 2008).

As a counterpart, the *Independent activities* category indicates acts that credit PwD as functional citizens. Regular students consider it important for SwD to learn basic life skills, as they are more likely to be defrauded and not to achieve a complex professional career. On the contrary, a private teacher believes that the professional achievements of PwD have no more merit than the achievements of a non-disabled person:

I was watching a news report saying “the first teacher with Down syndrome” and it was a big deal, right? and I was happy to hear that, but it does not deserve more celebration than Fausto, or you, or, I do; it is an effort that everyone as human beings achieves, at the end the educational system has taught you to reward yourself for thinking; isn't it supposed to be what characterizes all of us human beings?

Although this interview fragment seems consistent, a deeper analysis reveals how a well-intentioned reflection is not completely true under certain biological conditions, as shown next.

Analysis

1. Being a teacher with Down syndrome has no more merit than being a teacher without Down syndrome.

1.1 Both can be teachers because they are human beings.

1.1.1 All human beings can think.

(1.1.1') (The ability to think is what enables someone to be a teacher)

According to van Eemeren et al. (2002), the argument draws an analogy:

Being able to think is true of a teacher having Down (Y is true of X).

Being able to think is true of a teacher without Down (Y is true of Z).

Being a teacher without Down is comparable to being a teacher with Down (X is comparable to Z).

Given this conclusion, we must consider whether there are significant differences between Z (being a teacher with Down Syndrome) and X (being a non-disabled teacher); the answer is that important differences exist between them, therefore we could not determine if they have the same merit since this reasoning supposes that both cases have similar conditions for becoming teachers just because they are human when actually, a person with Down syndrome requires special conditions to become a teacher: more help is needed as they have cognitive impairments that require therapies to achieve the progress that people without disabilities easily achieve; it is, therefore, legitimate to conclude that the effort made by the individual with Down is greater.

This work found there is a misperception that PwD can do the same things as non-disabled people in equal conditions, regardless of their impairment. A similar formulation underlies radical approaches to the social model of disability, assumed due to a lack of clear recognition of the difficulties that “normal” circumstances impose on PwD.

The primary problem is care for the handicapped. Speaking euphemistically of enabling them to live productive lives, when the services required exceed any possible products, conceals an issue which, understandably, no one wants to face. (Gauthier, in Nussbaum, 2007, p. 96)

This belief goes beyond individuality and pervades institutions and legal frameworks; inclusive education in public policies is established in “euphemistic” terms, without considering the costs involved and the absence of

a person responsible for it. According to Nussbaum, contractarian approaches do not resolve this situation because their principle is equal cooperation.

So even if we concede to the disability advocate that workers with impairments outside the “normal” range can be highly productive, it is unlikely that anyone could show that in general, their economic productivity offsets the costs of fully including them (Nussbaum, 2007, p. 118).

At Mexican public schools, a lack of material and human resources prevents real inclusion, improbable to supply since, according to the utilitarian perspective, is not profitable for the State. Such problems lead us to meet *Compassion and pity*, which raises as the best means to finance or perform education for SwD, greatly, due to the high costs of their care and the uncertainty about obtaining the desired results: namely, economically active, and independent citizens. Therefore, it must be assumed that their care is a social obligation and not a private problem because disability is a natural or accidental imposition, not a personal choice.

Special teachers argue pity obstructs the development of SwD because they appear in the direct solution of routine problems, a reasonable position considering that the goal of education is to build individuals able to solve problems by themselves, and also considering that “the stigmatized individual is likely to use his stigma for “secondary gains”, as an excuse for ill success that has come his way for other reasons” (Goffman, 1963, p. 10). A teacher explains that a volunteer believed it was her obligation to fit a student’s shoes:

The goal is the idea of changing it comes out of them, not that I have to tell them “If it hurts you, change it”. I want them to get the idea. “Are you going to leave it like this all morning? Poor thing is going to hurt him. What if he gets a blister?” And I tell them “Too bad!”. It’s just not something that doesn’t happen to any other kid. That’s my conflict, it’s like saying “They are blind and, they are going to get a blister, poor thing”. The rest of the children get blisters too, even wearing the right shoes, do you understand me? Obviously, you have to push the child to the limit, like any situation in life, they have to push you to the limit for you to do something about it. The thing is that when you push the child to the limit, you are taking care of them.

Analysis

1. You should not feel sorry for a natural situation faced by a blind child, such as having sore feet from unknowingly wearing their shoes on the wrong feet.

1.1 Children without disabilities also face natural situations without being pitied.

1.1.1 If others solve natural situations for children, then they are not aware of the cause that affects them.

1.1.1.1 Children learn when they are pushed to their limits under adult supervision and realize that they can solve problems on their own.

The special school is an association that depends heavily on donations and volunteer work, and whose financing dynamics interfere with classes. Volunteers usually enter the classrooms without permission to greet or play with students, and there are school demonstrations to promote donations that involve the entry of outsiders; to special teachers, it is hard to fight prejudices about disability, in a place where rules are flexible, and third parties intrude on their work by overprotecting the students from their daily tasks.

Although most elements identified in different categories have the potential to function as *Obstacles or enablers*, family, parents, and teacher training, are the most named agents affecting PwD’s learning. According to special teachers, parents instruct SwD in their first years and foster or discourage them from learning about and doing

new things; a visually impaired teacher recognizes the discrimination generated by family overprotection and its influence on PwD's fear of acting, while the assistant teacher criticizes parents delegate nursery tasks to them (which was further evidenced during the confinement due to covid 19), whose actual function is pedagogical.

But is more like a babysitter, to be like Minerva's babysitter, and in fact, she (Minerva's mom) did say it, right? "I'm going to pay you less because now I'm the monitor". I said "No ma'am", I said "You are the mother", I said, "I am the monitor, you are the mother, and... you are the one who, well you committed to working with her, right?" but yes, it was like... it was like saying "oh, you are not taking care of her, you are just sending me jobs, so I will lower your salary", (and) she did lower my salary.

Analysis

1. Minerva's mother assumes that the monitor's job is to babysit her.

1.1 She lowered her salary.

1.1.1a Minerva's mother says that by working from home she is the monitor.

(1.1.1a.1) (The monitor's job is to assist a student in learning)

(1.1.1a.1') (The monitor continues helping Minerva to learn)

(1.1.1a.1a.1'.1) (The monitor continues to accompany Minerva in learning)

(1.1.1a.1'.1') (If the monitor continues to do her job at teaching, then she should continue to be paid her full salary)

1.1.1a.2 The monitor working from home prevents her from caring for Minerva on a face-to-face basis.

(1.1.1a.2') (Co-presence is indispensable to care for someone, not to teach them)

(1.1.1a.2'.1) (The monitor's job is to assist Minerva with her learning, not to babysit her)

(1.1.1a.2'.1') (If the monitor does not take care of Minerva as her babysitter, she is not failing in her job)

(1.1.1a.2'.1'.1) (If there is no breach of contract, she should not have her salary reduced)

1.1.1b Because when working from home she does not take the bus and does not eat outside the home.

(1.1.1b') (By not taking the bus and eating at home she spends less)

Monitor's role is affected by the ambiguity about their functions, the undervaluation of caregiver's role, the dismissal of their authority as teachers, and labor precariousness as management of the private inclusion program does not guarantee fair working conditions; in this way, the rights of both teachers and students are ignored, because, a just society would take into consideration the presence and work of caregivers as they need recognition, economic assistance and job opportunities (Nussbaum, 2007, p. 100).

Regarding the topic of Specialization, there is no clarity among participants as to what is meant by this concept; while in some cases is understood as detailed and differentiated methods and context to teach more effectively, in others is associated with medical attention and deficiency, making it clear an accurate idea of special school is needed.

Finally, the *False wise* category served to determine relevant information on the influence of disability prejudices; a notable incident occurred outside the special school during a day trip, where a man accompanied by two children, who, when observing the blind students crossing a pedestrian bridge one behind the other, said to his companions, "the one in front is the smartest, then the others follow..."; but the formation order did not obey any criteria, such as intelligence. A blind student talked about discrimination due to the "false wisdom" of a teacher who had superficial contact with blind people and made impertinent comments:

He (the teacher) kind of mistreated me, [...] he gave us an activity and I asked him a series of questions, how I was going to do it and so on, and then he said to me: “What can you do?” Oh! because before that he told me “I know Lupita, Maribel, July”, who are people with visual impairment like me, [...] I mean, what have the other people done to you so you ask me what can I do [...], then he gave a whole, how can I say? speech to the children that if I put my head down it was because of my ear because I don't know what and... that I was very sensitive and that they couldn't hold my hand because they were going to overprotect me, something like that, right? I felt kind of weird because, my classmates in the afternoon were still kind enough to say “Look, here is such and such” or “Here is the other”, so it's as if he was saying “Leave her alone, leave her alone so that she can find out”, right? so I felt kind of bad.

Analysis

1. A teacher made me feel bad in the first class.
 - 1.1 He asked me what I knew or could do.
 - (1.1.1) (It does not make sense to ask this question in that context)
 - (1.1a.1') (To enroll in secondary it is a requirement to have skills and knowledge you learned in primary)
 - (1.1a.1'.1) (Secondary teachers should be aware of these skills and knowledge and their conditional character)
 - (1.1a.1'.1.1.1) (If I got into secondary it is because I have the skills and knowledge necessary to be there)
 - 1.1b He told me he knew other blind students.
 - (1.1b.1) (He might have had an unpleasant experience dealing with those students)
 - (1.1b.1') (A previous bad experience does not mean that a new one must be the same)
 - (1.1b.2) (He should know the things blind people can do)
 - 1.2 He gave an inappropriate speech about the visually impaired and how to treat them.
 - 1.2.1 He gave recommendations that instead of helping could affect me.
 - 1.2.1.1 Told my peers not to hold my hand because that would be overprotective.
 - 1.2.1.1.1 Such comments could discourage my peers from giving me the help needed.

8. Interpretation

Three hypotheses conducted this research; the first corresponds to the first block of hypotheses and the last two to the second block, which were stated at the beginning of this work. These are presented and analyzed next.

Hypothesis 1: People profess an essentialist conception of the human being as a universal subject that is expressed in a distancing and condescending treatment of PwD.

The analysis shows the existence of prejudices about disability, but also, a battle against them. Although more ambitious fieldwork would be needed to accept this hypothesis, there are indicators that it touches on a delicate human problem. Participants reveal prejudices about disability, which materialize in reduced expectations about SwD, whereas special teachers act against these prejudices by encouraging students to be independent and providing minimal assistance in routine tasks. Regular private teachers consider educating SwD is worthless, and they admit their lack of vocation and knowledge about disability.

Thus, it is possible to conclude that people take distance and give condescending treatment to PwD, which leads them to reduce their expectations about them, due to unawareness of disability and the internalization of the belief that being human means possessing a normal intellect and the physical capacity to be independent, which excludes subjects who embody fragility, incompleteness, and finiteness.

Hypothesis 2: The radical approach of the disability social model disregards the bodily impairment of the person, proposing an unsustainable optimism regarding the abilities and potencies of PwD.

The foundation of inclusive policies is the social model, whose optimism is assumed by the educational authority, which mandates the enrollment of SwD in regular schools, and by school management that decides to implement inclusive programs, without knowing the needs of students and teachers. The argumentative analysis shows the presence of this optimism in at least one discursive fragment, that establishes human condition allows professional fulfillment, something far from reality when we consider that possibilities of self-realization rely on external factors independent of personal volition since organic functions determine what subjects can do autonomously in the material world (Lain, 1998; Nussbaum 2007). Recognizing organic limits enables us to adjust conditions and provide the necessary for people to achieve what they wish and, that is attainable.

Hypothesis 3: The radical approach of the social model of disability favors simulation practices, in which PwD are accepted in regular schools, even when they cannot be provided with quality education, negatively affecting their intellectual development.

There is a naive benevolence since schools agree to enroll students who do not have the necessary knowledge to enter the requested school level; for teachers, it represents a conflict because they pass them even though they did not learn. The problem of educational inclusion of PwD does not lie in allowing them to attend regular schools or in reformulating laws but in the dissemination of the fictitious and prototypical conception of the human condition that leads the provision of services to PwD.

9. Conclusion

The education of PwD is tacitly perceived as an invalid effort, expressed in the trivialization of their teaching; regarding this, the following points are proposed as an outline of a viable solution attainable in the medium term.

1. Desist from inserting students who do not have the necessary knowledge in groups where their progress is not synchronous with that of the rest; the PwD must learn the knowledge corresponding to their ages, needs, or possibilities. This implies recognizing that there are important differences among disability types and their degrees and that the latter must be considered when placing students in a certain educational context always prioritizing that the conditions allow their educational and human development. This is an aspect that the present investigation found as a general result, both in the speeches of teachers and students, since visual disability results in less adverse conditions than in the case of moderate and severe intellectual disability, and that the necessary adaptations for their teaching are more manageable.
2. Assume that the purpose of special education is human development, through the appropriation of social and intellectual competencies instead of the elimination of sub-normality; that its aim is to provide adaptive skills and knowledge for various areas of daily life.
3. Promote socialization spaces between students with and without disabilities that favor their interaction, without emphasizing differences in intellectual development, but rather that showcase individual talents that can be manifested in alternative spaces to education, such as arts. Nussbaum argues that “it is highly desirable that public education should emphasize the importance of care work as a part of life for both men and women” (2007, p. 214).
4. Accept that disability imposes needs that the state must meet, since “the purpose of social cooperation is not to gain an advantage; it is to foster the dignity and well-being of each and every citizen” (Nussbaum, 2007, p. 202), in addition to the fact that the contributions made to others, “though they may be costly, are required by the very nature of our social commitment” (p. 202).

This work reveals the beliefs about disability and how SwD, socially depreciated individuals at an early stage, must prove that they can be as autonomous and productive as able-bodied people as if there were no sovereign state that theoretically allows them to leave the state of nature in which impairment means death and desolation. The most reasonable way to face this problem is to reject the essentialist conception of the human being and to accept that the access road to a dignified life is other than the faculty of reasoning and to act autonomously.

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