

## Methodological strategies used by teachers in students with multiple disabilities

By

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### Abstract

Multiple disability in the educational context, although it is a recurring theme worldwide, still lacks information in the training processes that allows more individualization of teaching and where the student manages to use what has been learned as a meaningful experience; Hence the need for scientific research to support this. Mainly the purpose of the research work was to determine the methodological strategies used by teachers in the course of teaching - learning of students with the case mentioned in the Don Bosco Salesian Technical College in Quito, Ecuador. The sample was taken intentionally and was made up of 15 teachers from this institution. The qualitative, descriptive and field approach was used. Likewise, the tool used for the investigation of information was the survey. Among so many results obtained, it was evident that the most used methodological strategies are communicational and evaluative; in the first group, bimodal, assisted communication, supported by graphics, boards, technological tools and lip reading stand out; while in the second group prevail written, oral, procedural or process-focused evaluation, participation in games, tests, questionnaires. The research revealed that teachers to carry out an inclusive and individualized education with these students need several strategies given the disabilities they present and the severity of them.

**Keywords:** Learning process, teaching process, disabled, teaching strategy, individualized teaching, inclusive education.

### Introduction

Education in Ecuador is a responsibility of the State and is regulated in its different educational and political legislations, public, fiscal, municipal and private schools will be governed by the guidelines established in the national curriculum, although this can be complemented "consistent with the geographical, cultural and linguistic diversity of the country and respect for the rights of communities, peoples and nations" (Agreement No. MINEDUC-MINEDUC-2021-00027-A, p.1).

The foregoing also extends to persons with special information needs, in this regard as expressed in the Organic Law on Disabilities in section III, article. 27 This is reaffirmed when it states that: Citizens with disabilities may enter, stay and study in general or higher education, and may also transfer to special education institutions or INS. formal education institutions (Ministry of Education of Ecuador, 2021).

Under the same reasoning Pazmiño, M. (2021) makes an analysis of how education has evolved for individuals with different abilities in Ecuador and highlights three terms that

summarize the training policy developed by the country's educational system, the first is "inclusive education", the second "educational inclusion" and the third "special education" (p. 5).

Each of them is related to the other and range from a general conception to a very particular one because they start from valuing the equity of individuals with different abilities in terms of education can be integrated into the educational units, then once integrated, seeks an active participation of all regardless of their condition and finally or as an intermediate link of the second, Always leave the option of going to a more specialized institution to receive knowledge.

In correspondence with what was addressed, the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Bachelet, M. (2019) stated in the sessions of the UN Human Rights Council that:

Inclusive education is not just about placing differently abled learners in regular schools and adapting them to standard requirements. The purpose is to include systems, educational methodologies and facilities to ensure students participate holistically.

The above, reveals the inclusive model in Modern Education that aims to incorporate all students in the same educational context, based on respect for diversity, although without ceasing to individualize teaching to ensure that learning is meaningful; since the significant lasts, stimulates personal creation based on interests, aspirations and motivations.

Together with this model, contemporary trends in teaching have identified that both teachers and students must maintain an active and participatory two-way relationship, since both learn from each other. But it falls on the teacher as the maximum director and facilitator of the process to provide tools, methodologies that promote the cognitive and creative independence of the student inside and outside the class.

In this sense, the National Curriculum of the Ministry of Education of Ecuador is a guide, because it not only recognizes the importance of projecting and using appropriate strategies and resources in the educational field, it also recommends that they must guarantee that students and teachers actively participate in the construction of knowledge, (2016) something from which the student with multiple disabilities is not exempt who also needs greater accompaniment and individualized attention in their training.

According to the United Nations (2008) it refers to differentiated capacity as: "the presence in a human being of two or more differences of physical, sensory, emotional, intellectual and / or mental type". However, says Luna, G. (2021) in his master's thesis that in Ecuador multiple disability is not assumed as a single condition but as individual disorders; which influences the learning processes of these people and their development in daily life. (p.2)

Proof of this is found in the Don Bosco Technical College where its enrollment has students with multiple disabilities, in which it has been found that their academic performance has presented low grades. In addition, the competences and indicators have not been achieved as established in the planning, this context represents a problem that affects the knowledge that students can acquire for their integral development in society. This has led the directive to promote different aspects of research looking for possible causes to provide a solution. Among them, the approach to the educational methodologies used by educators to conduct educational development.

Taking into account the above, it was determined as an objective of this study to identify the methodological guidelines applied by educators in the process of educational formation of students with multiple disabilities at the Don Bosco Salesian Technical College in Quito, Ecuador.

## **Background**

In the bibliographic review carried out to shape the state of the art on the subject investigated, it was possible to appreciate that the scientific inquiries carried out have revealed essential criteria that contribute to the process of holistic training of the students, with emphasis on people with multiple disabilities. Among them González-Rojas, Y. and Triana-Fierro, D., carry out a systematic review in which they highlight key concepts for the education of people with disabilities (2018) such as: educational equity, differentiated educational capacities and students with disabilities. In the same way, they point to the factors that can determine the attitude of teachers towards the education of students with different educational abilities, expressing that the educator is an essential entity in the inclusive educational process and therefore his attitude is the fundamental aspect in the process of academic training.

In this same sense, Garrad et al., (2019); and Gualdrón, L., & Caballero, L. (2018) agree that teacher attitudes are the main indicator of successful student inclusion. On the other hand, Sevilla, D., Martín, M., & Jenaro, C. (2018) note that the training processes of teachers who work with disabled people must be taken into account, because they basically establish the professionalism and attitude they will assume in teaching. While Saloviita, (2019) considers them vital not only during the formative development but before starting it. But it is Colaciuri, J. (2022) who makes a contribution that should not be lost sight of in educators who carry out an educational process with people who have multiple disabilities and is the fact of:

The perspective on different abilities in the community is very small and lower than expected among professionals dealing with people with disabilities, and this lack of knowledge is associated with negative criteria and stigmatizing conviction. Given this scenario, teachers need very clear educational goals and a pedagogical mastery capable of discerning individual and collective learning styles that provide awakening the responsible performance of the activity in the student (Alemán et al., 2018), this means, motivate them to develop meaningful learning, skills and habits for a better development of personal abilities.

The authors analyzed show that a starting point for successful inclusion is the predisposition that teachers have to assume the different strategies because it more or less depends on this or the expiration of the proposed objectives and the total contribution of individuals with different abilities. In this regard, Ochoa, A. (2019), who also speaks of educational inclusion, also says that this should promote the integration of the family and the cooperation of individuals with different disabilities, in this way, it is necessary to promote participation in educational institutions that promote "skills, knowledge and attitudes that leave access dialogue and partnership". In people with SEN this is essential to establish a calm and safe environment that contributes to the assimilation of content (p.186).

Likewise, Aguiar, G. et al. (2020) recommend that family participation should stop having a role of clientele to a performance of human beings involved with the education they dream for their children, something that corresponds to propitiate to the school and the teacher in their role as educational guide. That is why the importance of the different strategies that in the methodological order can be used in the educational context to guarantee the above.

In that line Allaico - Bermejo, W. & Aldas- Arcos, H. They state that in these methodological strategies "the (2021) objective is to encourage cooperation and interrelation with the people around them, strengthen them and develop their skills through the use of appropriate materials for the classroom and the presence of the teacher in all the activities offered" (P-401). Criteria that correspond to what Saloviita, (2019) states: "Although overall progress in inclusive education is linked to the development of cultural values, the promise of greater inclusion in schools goes hand in hand with adequate accessibility of tools. s." These authors focus on analyzing methodological strategies for students with disabilities, from teacher improvement and relevant educational resources where the differences and learning rhythms of each student are taken into account (Omaña, E. and Alzolar, N., 2017, p 106). However, Moposita, P. It addresses the strategies used by teachers with educational needs that are included in the regular educational system which allows to establish the bases of general education and from a critical analysis to elaborate didactic guides to teach the classes being the main tool of the (2015) educator for the educational development.

In another order of ideas the authors such as Macías, D. approach in their scientific inquiries to types of strategies such as didactics and direct their analysis to the influences they have on the integral development of students with multiple disabilities, the author of this article being able to conclude that it is necessary to incorporate the strategies in a planned manner and considering the characteristics of the student to promote confidence in themselves (Pp-17-19).(2021)

Other researchers such as Alvarado, M. (2016); Cuts, A. and Garcia, G. (2017); Mayorga, J. & Sánchez, D. (2019); Felix, M. (2019) and (Unite, 2020) They expose actions, methodological tools that can be used in the context of the class that serve to motivate, socialize and promote cognitive skills and abilities within the training process how: the game, the plastic arts, the reading, technology Computing, teaching materials, puppets, music and dance.

Barzola, T. (2021) makes an approach to how people with disabilities feel little stimulated in teaching due to false beliefs of teachers and the malpractice of poorly contextualized strategies, affirms that in the classrooms the weaknesses, the human, personal, social behavior, conditions that children possess and the support provided by the family should be valued, before applying any pedagogical instrument.

As a culmination of the analysis, Fortuny, R. and Sanahuja, J. (2020) reveal that teachers involved in the educational development of children and young people with disabilities use some strategies in a limited way such as:

Use models in environments that you think understandable, clarify the concept of metaphors or sentences, generalizethe topics used in class, activate different learning and assessment options (not only from tests or oral corrections).

On the other hand, they show that teachers make excessive use of verbal language so they recommend that teachers should be trained not only in the specificities of the etiology of disability, whatever it may be, but in theoretical and practical principles of an inclusive pedagogy, and in the variation of educational methodologies to be used.

## **Methodology**

As a complement to the methodology used , a succession of steps was established that favored the fulfillment of the proposed objective.

First, an exploration of bibliography from different reliable sources, contained in theses, dissertations, scientific articles and books, was made. Likewise, the search tools were used, preparation of bibliographic records which favored the conformation of the conceptual framework in relation to the theme.

Regarding the collection of information, it focused on the use of a tool for collecting information and data, the survey, which allowed to establish a diagnosis and description of the educational methodologies applied by teachers for the educational work of students with different capacities, then the data collection with the survey was carried out an analysis, that is, the information that was obtained both in the fieldwork and in the instrument, to generate the investigative conclusions.

The development of this research took into account the qualitative approach and the scope of it was descriptive, since empirical and theoretical strategies were used for the exploration of educational development, identifying the educational methods used by teachers in classes with people with multiple disabilities.

To this end, a sample of 15 teachers belonging to the population of the institution was taken from a non-probabilistic intentional sampling.

## **Results**

The results as a final action of the investigative process, allowed to reveal all the data obtained through the research tool and the field work, in this way the results presented below were collected.

When instructing teachers to mark the strategies they most used in educational development, 100% of the surveyed population referred to communicational, evaluative strategies and promotion of meaningful learning, expressing that they are those that fit the context and characteristics of the different disabilities that are assumed in the institution, including:

- ✓ Autism Spectrum Disorder associated with Oppositional Defiant Disorder and ADHD.
- ✓ ADHD – Gastrointestinal disease.
- ✓ Mild visual impairment associated with dyslexia (learning difficulty)
- ✓ Motor disability associated with mild intellectual disability.
- ✓ Hearing impairment associated with borderline intellectual disability.

Communication strategies are assisted communication, which do not require support material, implement bimodal communication, lip reading, then assisted communication, which uses some type of external support through graphics, boards, pictographic notebooks, technological tools (Piccioni, A. 2019, p-30).

As for the evaluative strategies, flexibility is necessary in the activities, they are usually used, procedures and individualized instruments adapted to the characteristics of the student according to their need and in addition to the written and oral evaluation are used, inspection of the activities of the students, organization of their free time, activities, conversations, assessment processual, process-focused evaluations, as well as testimonies, tests, questionnaires (Educrea, 2022).

Regarding meaningful learning, they are those actions that allow the student to learn in pleasant ways and that knowledge lasts over time, includes activities such as: teamwork, uses of own and daily experiences, narration of anecdotes, games with pedagogical material (Gómez, N. 2012).

With respect to question 2 related to concrete examples of each of the strategies used according to the groups they used most (communicational, evaluative and meaningful learning), educators indicate that among the evaluative strategies they use: games, with emphasis on oral, written and corporal expression. Also guided and self-explanatory observation. In the case of communication, assisted and bimodal communication, implementation of pictograms and graphics stand out. And in the meaningful learning mostly develop activities related to their own experiences, outdoor and group activities involving families.

Likewise, question 3 allowed to correlate the previous answers of why these were the strategies most used by them in educational development, obtaining the following:

15 educators use communication strategies, because communication is a fundamental part of the knowledge in the different disabilities presented by adolescents and young people who receive classes and also favors that other methodological strategies can be used seeking integral training. In addition, they suggest that to communicate with the student effectively, it is about attracting attention with a soft touch, communicating when you observe us, speaking to the same height as the individual, giving importance to clarity and light to facilitate lip reading, not using long words and implementing key phrases, FM systems.

On the other hand, they refer to the need to use evaluation strategies because they allow an integral way to detect if the purposes given in the educational development have been achieved by the student and also contribute to rethinking new ways for the control of the assimilation of the contents and how they influence their daily lives. In addition, it is valid to recognize that those they use today are accepted by students and their families because they are implemented offering opportunities to review the subject to be evaluated, granting enough time for the delivery of activities and providing advice in a timely manner for it to be developed, clarifying doubts, but mostly completing assignments in the classroom with accompaniment. Finally, the educational methodologies to promote learning and meaningful, it was found that 100% of teachers use them looking for what they have learned to last over time and have value of use in the social tasks that the student must assume, as well as to achieve higher goals once the proposals are achieved.

This was possible after analyzing the data obtained, noting with 80% of teachers indicated that the methodical strategies of education and training of students with multiple disabilities should be executed individually because the aspects that are verified vary from student to student. To a lesser extent, 20% state that the combination and its most severe manifestation of the disabilities suffered by the student must be taken into account, so that the methodological strategies are effective in the educational process with them.

Regarding the didactic resources implemented to promote meaningful learning, teachers in 70% expressed that they use didactic and educational games, visual didactic material, films, graphics, sound media, but that it is the game that provides the most meaning in students.

On the other hand, 80% of teachers said that, despite having methodological strategies according to the context, they needed to implement tools that were not only more innovative,

but motivating that ensure quality learning, in which the family and social environment is more linked as a natural process, which will allow a higher adaptive level to these students and that their inclusion in daily tasks is less traumatic and with lasting learning.

Within the process of achieving teaching-learning, it was obtained as a result that teachers 100% considered that the methodological strategies used are in accordance with the needs of the students, also indicate that the knowledge taught has been achieved, reaching the expected skills.

Regarding institutional training, teachers mostly expressed that they are always required to update themselves in terms of the methodological strategies to be implemented for students with multiple disabilities, due to the changing states and the diversity of needs they present to have the tool at the time of making an approach.

## **Discussion and conclusions**

One of the aspects to be considered as an important element in the educational context is the approach to education with an inclusive vision and moreso when it comes to diversity. In that sense in Burgosconecta and the magazine Unir expose on their websites:

It is essential to change the perspective of discrimination by race, social class, gender, sexual orientation, some functional diversity, or even by superior capacity (Burgosconecta, 2021).

Classrooms are the perfect place to talk about diversity because they are like a small community reflecting different personalities. Here teachers face the challenge of communicating knowledge that there are differences between people, but all have equal opportunities (Unir, 2022).

The latter gains strength in the words of Iza (2020) when she states that: "educating necessarily implies approaching the student, knowledge of his essence of life and of course accompaniment in his growth and development" (p.12).

From this logic, the concept of inclusive school offers the possibility of treating diversity not as a limitation but as special individual characteristics with adaptive levels in learning, gradual. In educational contexts where managers have associated one or more disabilities, such as students with multiple disabilities, educational intervention requires special preparation, it is suggested as a starting point the characterization of the student to know him before applying any strategy or planning, this process being as integral as possible and far away of all dogmatism and traditionalism. Likewise, the teacher must get rid of any feeling of pity or excessive severity and appeal to creativity, patience and infinite love since more than transmitting knowledge must promote habits of confidence, security and self-esteem.

Therefore, the educational methodologies used by educators in the conduct of learning of students with different abilities, imply a necessary aspect, since they are implemented to facilitate, improve, promote significant knowledge and according to criteria of Rodríguez-García, A. and Arias-Gago, A. (2020) "They must be chosen and adapted in a structured way according to the content and characteristics of the learners, which generate the development of comprehension skills that lead to meaningful learning" (p.148).

Therefore, what is pursued with the use of educational methodologies in students with different abilities, is to provide human beings with an education of excellence, which allows through communicational, evaluative tools and promotion of meaningful learning the integral development of the student so that he creates independence before the multiple disability he has.

Another essential aspect that must be taken into account is the training and permanent improvement of teachers so that they are nourished by the latest trends to teach, know new characteristics and manifestations of primary and secondary disabilities of students and that they insert active methodologies into the educational process in correspondence with Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs).

Finally, the suggestions given by Espinoza et al. (2022) are assumed when they state that in the environment of education for human beings with different abilities, changes are necessary from the government to provide free access to individuals with disabilities. As a community we must have specialized and regular educational institutions with different levels of educational support to ensure the continuous development of education and thus support families in the educational process (p-14).

All this requires the creation of more personalized educational resources based on the methodological strategies with which we are working that cover the learning capacity, that are functional, didactic, simple and where there is an interaction with the educational and family environment.

## **Conclusions**

After having carried out an exhaustive research that includes both the bibliographic review and the fieldwork, in the study that is entitled methodological strategies used by teachers in students with multiple disabilities, it is necessary that the proposed objective was achieved, in the first place, the strategies that teachers use most frequently in the classroom to teach were identified, obtaining that the communicational, evaluative and promotion of meaningful learning are the most usual since they are adequately related to the context and solve the existing needs in terms of learning that is presented in the institution.

It was also possible to determine as a reflective point that teachers require a variety of strategies to effectively serve students with different abilities, which is why another aspect to take into account is the implementation of innovative tools based on the improvement and permanent training of teachers.

Finally, the systematic accompaniment of the family and the multidisciplinary team is required, as well as the inclusion of these strategies in daily work to favor significant and lasting learning.

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