



Article

University Students' Views on the Challenges Faced by Students with Difficulties

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Abstract: Introduction: The pursuit of an inclusive university is rooted in the commitment to ensuring equal opportunities within the educational landscape. Over the years, the notion of “inclusion” has significantly evolved, becoming a central aspect of individual rights. This shift has led to the development of various models and guidelines to provide equitable treatment to all students. Objectives: This study aims to explore the perceptions of students regarding inclusive education at a university in the north of Spain. It seeks to understand the reasons behind these perceptions, providing insights into the effectiveness of the current inclusion strategies. Methods: We conducted an online survey distributed across various faculties at a university in the north of Spain, with participation from 519 students. The data collected from the survey were coded and subjected to statistical analysis using SPSS version 28 to generate descriptive and comparative statistics. Results: The findings reveal that 2.5% of the students have experienced discrimination at some point, with 2.9% attributing such discrimination to their peers. Furthermore, 25% of the respondents acknowledged the presence of discrimination initiated by the university itself. Despite these challenges, a significant majority (88.8%) recognize the importance of inclusive education. However, 43.4% of the participants noted that the attitudes of some faculty members towards inclusion were suboptimal. Additionally, 82.9% of the respondents believe in the necessity of enhancing collaboration within the entire educational community to foster better inclusion. Discussion and Conclusions: Overall, the students view the university as inclusive but identify a gap in the awareness and training necessary for achieving true equality. These findings indicate a need for heightened visibility of resources and the provision of further training and workshops. Although the response rate to the survey was relatively low, further research might benefit from engaging a broader spectrum of student voices, especially those from non-normative or divergent backgrounds, to deepen the understanding of inclusivity at the university.

Keywords: inclusion; university; equality; discrimination



Citation: de Azua, Sonia Ruiz, Naiara Ozamiz-Etxebarria, Maitane Picaza, Eneritz Jiménez-Etxebarria, and Nahia Idoiaga. 2024. University Students' Views on the Challenges Faced by Students with Difficulties. *Social Sciences* 13: 613. <https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci13110613>

Academic Editors: Patricia O'Brien and Nigel Parton

Received: 27 May 2024

Revised: 23 September 2024

Accepted: 8 November 2024

Published: 13 November 2024



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1. Introduction

1.1. History of Inclusive Education

Disability is defined by the WHO (World Health Organization) as a complex phenomenon that reflects an interaction of the characteristics of a human organism with the characteristics of the environment in which it lives, in this case, in the society in which it lives (Rodríguez 2004). Although the word disability has such a general definition, within this concept we can find (UPV/EHU 2023): deficiencies, problems that affect a structure

or a bodily function; activity limitations, difficulty performing an activity or task; and participation restrictions, difficulty in participating in vital problems.

Over time, new inclusive models have been created in society. These models allow making an assessment of the subject with disabilities, taking into account several factors. Among these models, we can find the organic model or “International Classification of Deficiencies, Disabilities and Handicaps” (ICIDH). In this model, we can have three characteristics to assess: deficiency, any loss or abnormality of a psychological, physiological, or anatomical structure or function; disability, any restriction or absence of the ability to perform an activity in the manner or within the range that is considered normal for a human being; and handicap, a disadvantageous situation for a determined individual, a consequence of a deficiency or a disability, which limits or prevents the performance of a role that is normal in their case (taking into account their age, sex, and socio-cultural factors) (Gómez 2012; Fernández-López et al. 2009). Taking into account the characteristics that create the organic model, ICIDH has been criticized, since it has a negative approach, is very individualistic, and with little focus on social aspects (Gómez 2012).

On the other hand, we have the biopsychosocial model or “International Classification of Disability and Health” (CIF). This model aims to assess a person’s health, considering bodily functions and structures, activity or activity limitation, and participation and restriction. Along with this, it divides the environmental and personal factors that affect the individual I (Fernández-López et al. 2009). Today, it is the most widely used model in all areas, since its objective is to provide a standardized, reliable, and cross-culturally applicable language, trying to describe human functioning and disability as important elements of health using a more positive language to do so than what we can find in the ICIDH model (Gómez 2012).

Taking into account the evolution that inclusion has had, the function or intention of the university is to create an inclusive environment, where students, whether there is a disability or not, have the opportunity to achieve the basic concepts for their educational development. Therefore, inclusion is the proposal for all to live together on an egalitarian basis, and an inclusive education, or in this case, an inclusive university, is the proposal for inclusion or equity in an educational or knowledge environment (García-Cano Torrico et al. 2017). For this, it is essential to take into account the cases that can be found in the educational environment and know what actions or actions must be taken to deal with them, thus instilling an egalitarian education and trying to move away from the limitations or disadvantages that the students may feel affected students.

Even though today the concept of inclusive education is better known, its development has not occurred spontaneously, but from a conceptual and sociopolitical evolution. In 1948, the UN (United Nations Organization), in article 26 of the “Universal Declaration of Human Rights”, made the first appearance of the concept of inclusion, where it stressed the right of each person to enjoy a quality education as the basis for a more just society. Later, UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), in the convention on the “Fight against Discrimination in the Sphere of Education”, committed to creating national policies that would guarantee the right to education and equal treatment for all people, in the year 1960.

Six years later, the UN, in the “International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights”, reiterated compliance with its previous declaration (1948), fulfilling and guaranteeing fundamental rights where the right to education is found. Following its evolution, in 1989, the UN, in the convention on the “Rights of the Child”, once again declared the right of the child to obtain an equitable education, and be able to exercise equal opportunities. One year after the UN made this declaration, UNESCO, in the world declaration on “Education for all”, agreed to universalize primary education and eliminate the level of illiteracy that existed at that time. Also, it insisted on making a greater effort to meet the basic learning needs of each student, expanding this concept in all countries (García-Cano Torrico et al. 2017).

UNESCO continued to reiterate its previous declaration in 1994, when in the “Salamanca Declaration of Principles, Policy and Practice for SEN (Special Educational Needs)” it promoted the objective of “Education for All” through new policies based on inclusive education. In this way, trying to recognise the need to train a school to serve all types of students, especially to be able to serve students with SEN in the same way (García-Cano Torrico et al. 2017).

There would be no further progress on inclusion until the year 2000, when once again the UN, in its “Millennium Declaration”, reaffirmed its commitment to ensuring that the concept of “Education for All” reached 2015 and the 8 development goals were defined. “Millennium Development” (García-Cano Torrico et al. 2017), which would be necessary and fundamental to guide towards the direction they wanted to take, includes the following (Research Guides at United Nations Dag Hammarskjöld Library [Internet] n.d.):

- Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger.
- Achieve universal primary education.
- Promote equality between the sexes and the empowerment of women.
- Reduce mortality of children under 5 years of age.
- Improve maternal health.
- Fight HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases.
- Guarantee the sustainability of the environment.
- Foster a global partnership for.

Despite all this progress in inclusion, it was not until 2006 that the UN, through the “International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities”, acted on the first legally binding instrument with the concept of Inclusive and Quality Education, where it was explained that inclusive education is a right that obliges the authorities to provide sufficient conditions for effective enjoyment (García-Cano Torrico et al. 2017).

From this statement, the concept of inclusive education (UPV/EHU 2019) went from being a guiding criterion to being a fundamental aspect, having a considerable impact on all educational policies. Taking this evolution into account, ET2020 (Education and Training 2020), in 2010, attempted to promote inclusive education, equity, and equality, moving away from discrimination and civic skills. Five years later, both the UN and UNESCO made contributions to inclusion. On the part of the UN, the “2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” appeared, where the 17 development goals came into force. Within this proposal, in the fourth objective, we can find a reference to the inclusive dimension, where it is highlighted: “Guarantee inclusive, equitable and quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all”.

On the other hand, UNESCO approved all the declarations of the different regions of the planet where their commitment to inclusive education is specified. Finally, concerning the evolution of an inclusive university, 7 years ago, that is, in 2016, in general comment No. 4 on the “International Convention on the Rights of the Person”, the first legally binding instrument appeared to contain a reference to the concept of inclusive and quality education (García-Cano Torrico et al. 2017).

1.2. Objectives

The objective of this work is to find the perspective on the approach to these disabilities at a university in northern Spain, taking into account the opinion of the students who belong to the university. For this, a survey has been prepared to find out the opinion of users, whether they have functional diversity or not. The main objective of this work is as follows:

- Know the perspective of students on inclusive education at a university in the north of Spain.

The secondary objectives would be the following:

- Assess the perceptions of inclusive education.
- Evaluate the differences in inclusive education perceptions between the students.
- Analyze institutional culture in terms of support for inclusion.
- Investigate knowledge and availability of resources for inclusive education.

- Identify the main barriers to the development of inclusive education.
- Gather suggestions for improving inclusion at the university.

2. Materials and Methods

This work is part of a research project of the Campus Bizia Lab (CBL) whose title is “Pilot study of students with difficulties in the faculties of education, medicine, psychology and engineering: reflecting on direct actions”. Both professors and administration staff from various UPV/EHU faculties (teaching, psychology, engineering, and medicine) as well as people from outside the university participated in this project. The main objective of this project is to find out the degree of inclusion of students with difficulties at a university in the north of Spain. This project consists of two phases: in the initial phase, the objective would be the detection of needs, and in the following phase, a proposal of actions.

2.1. Procedure

This project has received the approval of the ethics committee whose code is M10_2022_324 at time 008/2022 held on 20 September 2022. For the first phase of the study, it was decided to survey to find out the opinion of the students about the exclusion and integration in the university, be it the students or the workers of the same. The first part of the study was to know the degree of inclusion of students with difficulties. To this end, the possibility of responding was designed and offered to the students of the various grades.

2.2. Sample

The survey was completed by 519 students of any course enrolled in the degrees from teaching, psychology, medicine, and engineering. The sampling process involved selecting a diverse group of participants to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the inclusive education practices within the university. The justification for selecting these participants was based on the need to capture a broad spectrum of experiences and perspectives across different academic programs and stages of their university education. By including students from various fields of study and academic years, the survey aimed to reflect a wide range of opinions and experiences related to inclusive education. This approach helps to ensure that the findings are representative of the student body as a whole, providing valuable insights into the effectiveness and challenges of the current inclusive education practices of the university.

A total of 66.4% were answered by women and 33.1% by men, showing 0.4% non-binary people. Among the people who participated in the survey, the average age was 21.65, with a minimum age of 17 years and a maximum of 68. Analyzing the fields they were studying, the vast majority were primary school students (50%), accompanied by engineering (13.1%) and early childhood education (11.6%). More than 80% of the people who participated in the study were in their first and second year of university, 41.8% had completed 3–4 semesters at the university, and 40.1% 1–2 semesters.

2.3. Instruments

For this, an online survey has been designed based on a study on a university inclusive education questionnaire for the evaluation of university inclusive education (CEEIU). The instrument aims to find out how managers, professors, and university students understand and think about inclusive education at their universities and faculties. The instrument works simultaneously for the three groups of participants (De La Herrán Gascón et al. 2017).

The main objective of the CEEIU is to collect information on how inclusive education is perceived and implemented in a higher education institution. It seeks to identify areas of strength and areas in need of improvement to promote greater inclusion and equity at the university level.

The factors measured by the questionnaire are as follows:

- Perceptions of Inclusive Education.
- Institutional Culture in terms of support for inclusion.

- Questions about knowledge and availability of resources for inclusive education.
- Identification of the main barriers to the development of inclusive education.
- Suggestions on how to improve inclusion at the university.

The questionnaire includes multiple choice questions and a Likert scale ('Strongly disagree' to 'Strongly agree').

2.4. S Analysis

The answers of the people who answered the survey were collected in an Excel database. The answers were coded and categorized in numerical data to be able to be analyzed. Subsequently, a database was designed in the statistical program SPSS version 28. Descriptive and frequency analyses were carried out to analyze the results and the *chi-square* test to determine if there is a relationship between gender and the answers of the test.

3. Results

One of the main questions of the study was intended to find out from the very hands of people with functional diversity, vulnerable, or non-normative groups what their opinion was about the inclusion policies of the university. However, among the 519 people who responded to the survey, 2.5% had felt discriminated against at some point, while 97.5% did not feel any type of stigmatization. Within that discriminatory percentage, 0.4% had felt discriminated against by ethnicity; another 0.4% by religion; 1.2% felt a sense of stigmatization due to their origin; 0.3% by gender; 0.2% of the results were related to discrimination due to functional diversity, the same as in the case of psychiatric disorders; 0.8% felt discriminated against due to a vulnerable family situation; and finally, 1.3% of the people affected felt discriminated against for other reasons. Therefore, taking into account the percentage of people affected by discrimination and the diversity of reasons for which they feel stigmatized, many of them did not identify with only one group, but with more.

They answered a question about whom they have felt stigmatized by. Of the 519 responses, 18 people answered the question, of which 2.9% answered that the reason for this feeling came from their colleagues, and 1% stated that their feeling of stigmatization came from university workers, whether they are janitors or teachers. Finally, 0.2% answered that the stigmatization they noticed came from the university access policies.

After analyzing the responses about their feelings of stigma, they were asked about their thoughts about college, that is, if they believed that the university stigmatizes or discriminates against vulnerable/different/non-normative groups. Among the responses, 25% believed in the existence of this discrimination, while 75% disagreed. Among the 25%, 8.3% believed that the university stigmatizes in cases related to ethnicity; 6.9% in cases of religion; 7.3% believe that the university discriminates against people based on their origin; 7.1% think that it is because of gender; 14.2% believe that discrimination made by the university exists in cases of functional diversity; 8.3% in cases of psychological disorders; 6.5% feel that stigmatization arises in cases of vulnerable family situations; and 4.8% believe that the university discriminates against another type of vulnerable/non-normative group (See Table 1).

In the following question, the people who participated in the survey were asked to mention the services that the UPV/EHU university provided to the students who belonged to vulnerable/non-normative groups. Among all the possible answers, 70.1% of those surveyed could not mention any service. A total of 12.6% mentioned the psychological care services that the university provides to students and 8.9% commented on associations, UPV services, and counseling. Among other possible answers, 2.8% spoke about the possible tutorials that you can have with the teaching staff and 1.8% commented on the programs, workshops, and talks that the university provides on different topics that may be related to vulnerable students. Finally, 2% commented on the architectural barriers that the university has, such as a ramp or elevator, and 1.6% mentioned the scholarships and subsidies that the university provides for this type of student.

Table 1. Characteristic of the sample $N = 519$.

	Categories	N	%
Gender	Male	172	33.1%
	Female	345	66.4%
	Non-binary	2	0.4%
Degree	Teaching	360	69.4%
	Psychology	42	8.1%
	Medicine	21	4%
	Engineering	68	13.1%
	Other	28	5.4%
Time studying in the university	1st year	208	40.1%
	2nd year	217	41.8%
	3rd year	81	15.6%
	More time	13	2.6%
Do you feel stigmatized	Yes	13	2.5%
	No	503	96.9%
	No response	3	0.6%
Why do you feel stigmatized	Ethnicity	2	0.4%
	Religion	2	0.4%
	Origin	6	1.2%
	Gender	3	0.6%
	Functional diversity	1	0.2%
	Psychiatric disorder	1	0.2%
	Vulnerable family	4	0.8%
Other reasons	7	1.3%	
Thought about the existence of stigmatization	Yes	130	25%
	No	389	75%
Why do you think that there is stigmatization in the university	Ethnicity	43	8.3%
	Religion	36	6.9%
	Origin	38	7.3%
	Gender	37	7.1%
	Functional diversity	74	14.3%
	Psychiatric disorder	43	8.3%
	Vulnerable family	34	6.6%
	Other reasons	25	4.8%
No response	189	36.4%	

They were asked if they had ever used them and, if so, what service they had used. Among all the respondents, the vast majority had not used any service to date (91.9%). Even so, 2.1% have made or made use of psychological care services and 1.9% had been in associations, groups, or counseling. Among the highest percentages, 1.5% had ever used architectural barriers such as elevators, for example. Finally, 0.8% had used the “Egela” material and 0.6% had attended talks, programs, or workshops. Among the use of scholarships or subsidies, only 0.6% have made use of them.

Knowing if the respondents have made use of the services provided by the university, they were asked to see why they believe that people do not use them. Among the possible answers, 58.7% of those surveyed answered that they believed that these services were not used due to their ignorance of them. In addition, 29.9% of people think that it may be because of embarrassment or the insecurity of people who make little use of these services. Even so, 19.5% believe that the fear of the process and its repercussions may be one of the reasons why they do not use these aids and 1.2% believe that other reasons are the cause of the little use that is made of them.

Seeing and analyzing the percentages, we can deduce that the respondents have answered more than one possible response, which makes us think that there is not just one reason that limits the use of these services.

Later, they were asked 20 questions about university inclusion, the educational development and quality of teaching provided by the university, and the groups affected in the classroom—the first 17 questions with their sub-questions, with three possible answers (Yes, No, and No I know), while the last 3 questions with 4 different options (Not at all agree, Little agree, Quite agree, and Strongly agree).

In the first question (see Figure 1), 88.8% of the people surveyed think that inclusive education is a priority; however, 16% think that for the university it is a secondary issue. Along with this, 43.2% of the people believe that inclusive education is an issue of its own before university education, but 30% do not believe the same. Even so, the vast majority of those surveyed (91.9%) believe that inclusive education is a social right and 57.4% believe that it is an achievable utopia; however, 14.8% of the people believe that inclusive education can become a threat to academic excellence.

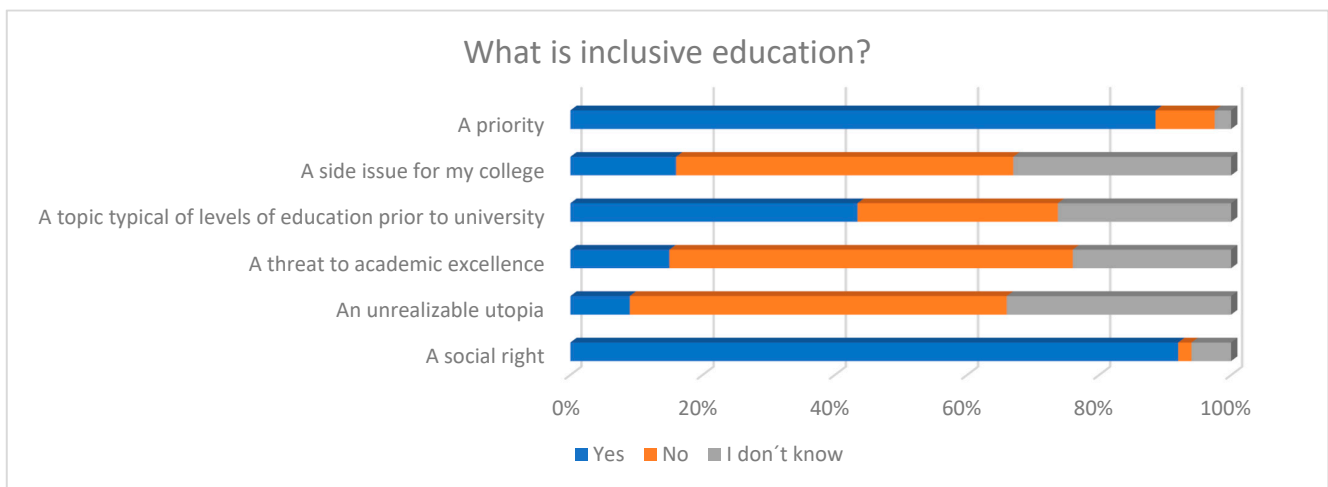


Figure 1. Responses related to inclusive education.

A higher percentage of women consider inclusive education to be a priority for them (83.1% men vs. 91.6% women; $\chi^2(2, N = 516) = 8.168, p = 0.017$), and a social right (86% men vs. 94.8% women; $\chi^2(2, N = 516) = 14.749, p < 0.001$).

In the second question (see Figure 2), 66.7% of those surveyed believe that the university stands out for its democratic communication and teamwork. In addition, 54.7% believe that the evaluation control of university work is also noteworthy. In general, in this question the answers are very positive; however, we could highlight that 28.1% of the answers deny that the university stands out for its educational innovation. Along with this, it must be said that many of the people who participated in this survey did not know what to answer to these questions. In addition, the proportion of the yes answers of the women are significantly higher than the men in the educational innovation option (37% men vs. 49.4% women; $\chi^2(2, N = 516) = 7.047, p = 0.029$).

Although 47.6% believe that the university stands out for cultivating the development of inclusive education, in the third question (see Figure 3), when it comes to finding out about the projects, training, developments... that the university is supporting, the vast majority of the respondents did not know what to answer, highlighting the 60.9% that we can find in the question of whether the university is supporting the processes to link workers with disabilities. Even so, 49.9% of the people are aware of the support that the university is giving to the development of inclusive education and 45.9% are also aware of the training that the university is giving to teachers on inclusive education. However, 89.2% of the people believe that inclusive education could be better developed if teachers were trained on the subject. More percentage of the women know that the university is favoring innovation projects or improvement of inclusive education (37.2% men vs. 49.1% women; $\chi^2(2, N = 516) = 6.920, p = 0.031$).

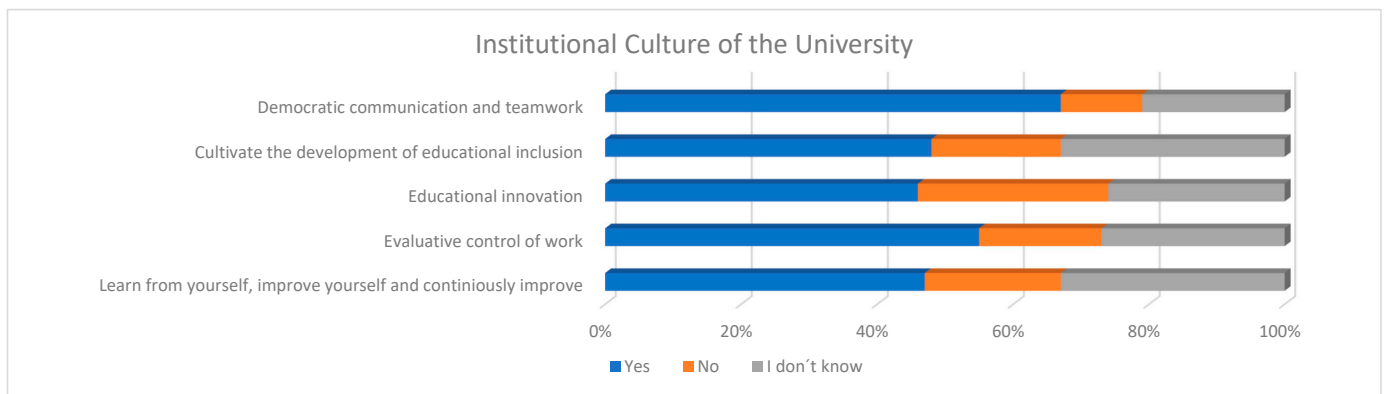


Figure 2. Responses related to the institutional culture of the university.

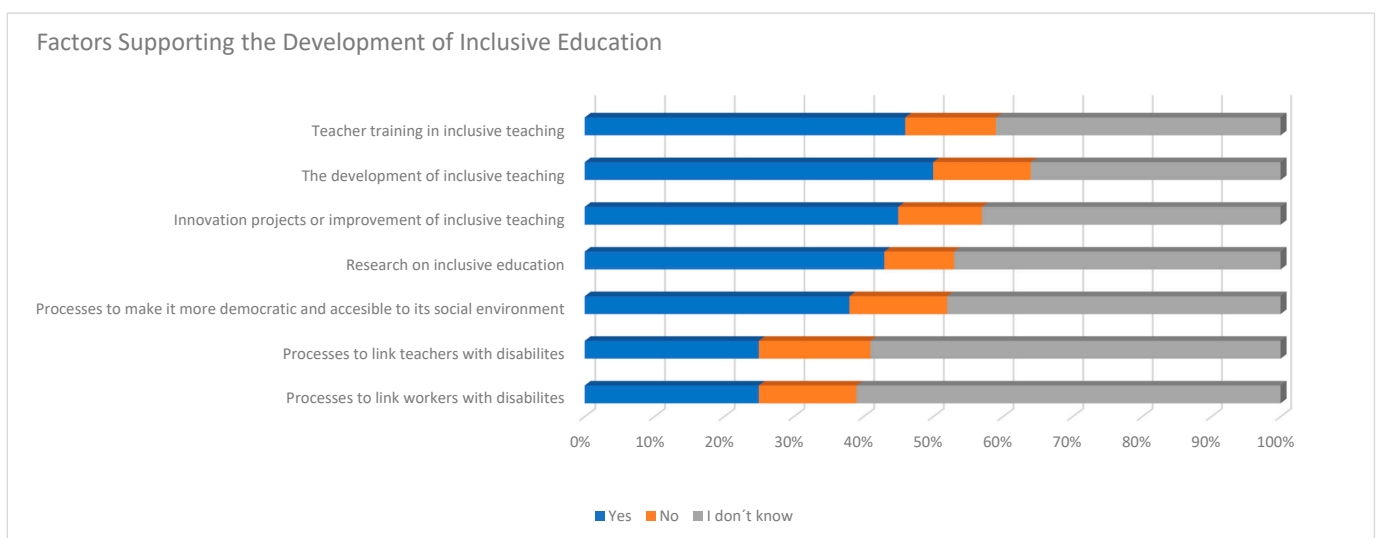


Figure 3. Responses related to the factors supporting the development of inclusive education.

Within the fourth question (see Figure 4), we could highlight that the vast majority of those surveyed believe that the university should create more training and projects for better performance in the development of inclusion. A total of 86.9% of the people believe that there should be more innovative projects for greater inclusive progress and 85.7% of those surveyed believe that in addition to greater teacher training, greater awareness of the subject is required in the student environment. The women believe that teacher training (80.8% men vs. 93.3% women; $\chi^2(2, N = 516) = 18.535, p < 0.001$), sensitization of students (69.2% men vs. 83.1% women; $\chi^2(2, N = 516) = 13.233, p < 0.001$), and research projects or promoting an inclusive culture (76.2% men vs. 90.4% women; $\chi^2(2, N = 516) = 21.966, p < 0.001$) could be further developed by the university. Men’s responses show greater ignorance about the actions to improve inclusive education.

In the fifth question (see Figure 5), 60.5% of the people believe that the quality of teaching is defined by the academic results of the students, while 53.9% believe that it is defined by the training that all university students have. However, when asked about the non-normative student, 18.5% of those surveyed believe that they hinder the teaching work and 17.3% believe that this type of student should have a less demanding evaluation to pass. Even so, 82.1% of those surveyed do not believe that non-normative students are going to be worse professionals and 64.5% believe that this type of student enriches classroom training. Along with this, 74.8% of the people believe that the situation of non-normative students shows a reality that must be addressed. There are not any significant differences by gender between the answers of the students in this question.

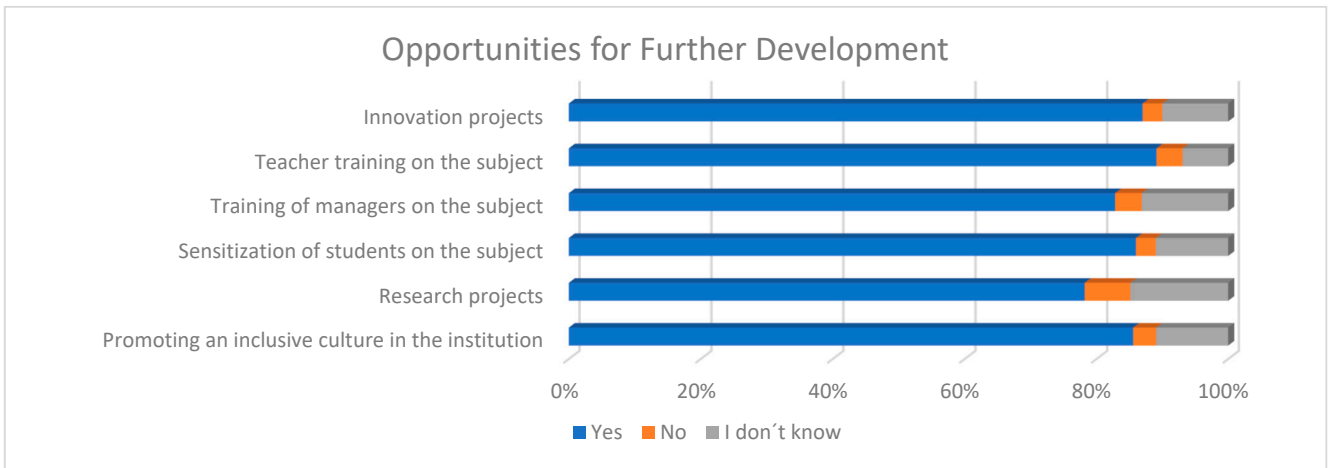


Figure 4. Responses related to opportunities for further development.

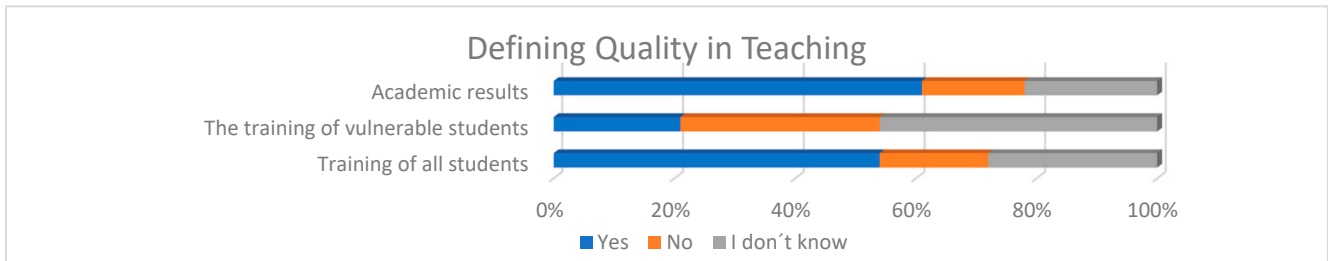


Figure 5. Responses related to defining quality in teaching.

Concerning this question (see Figure 6), when asking them about the case of non-vulnerable students not passing like the others, 36.4% of the respondents do not believe that the fault or responsibility lies with the teachers and 77.6% of the people believe that the university should have an answer in such a case. However, it should be noted that 35.5% could not say who would be responsible in such a case. There are differences in the opinions of women and of men. More percentage of women think that non-normative students do not make the teacher’s work difficult (46.5% men vs. 68.6% women; $\chi^2(2, N = 516) = 23.732, p < 0.001$), they will not be worse professional (70.3% men vs. 87.8% women; $\chi^2(2, N = 516) = 250.091, p < 0.001$), they will not harm the training (74.4% men vs. 89.8% women; $\chi^2(2, N = 516) = 21.619, p < 0.001$), and non-normative students enrich the training (47.7% men vs. 72.7% women; $\chi^2(2, N = 516) = 31.554, p < 0.001$).

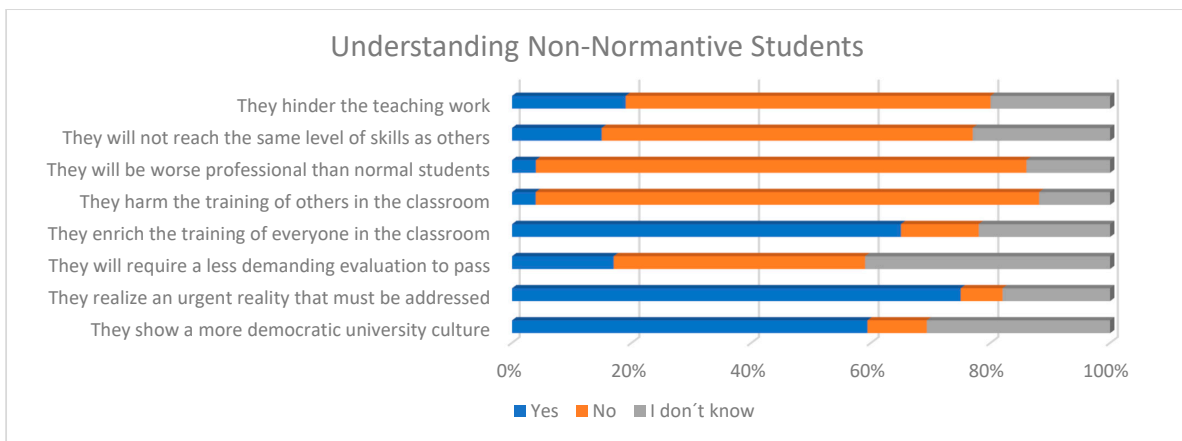


Figure 6. Understanding non-normative students.

In the seventh point regarding if vulnerable students do not pass like the others, the answer of 36% of the sample is that it is not the responsibility of the teacher, and 78% of the sample think that the university should consider an answer being differences in the responses of men and women (68.6% men vs. 82.3% women; $\chi^2(2, N = 516) = 12.370, p = 0.002$).

In the eighth question, 91.7% believe that support and help between students is essential for a prosperous university education (84.3% men vs. 95.3% women; $\chi^2(2, N = 516) = 18.394, p < 0.001$), and 89.8% believe that for a favorable university education, help is needed when it comes to trying to integrate students who require that help (81.4% men vs. 93.9% women; $\chi^2(2, N = 516) = 21.659, p < 0.001$). Therefore, in this question, we could highlight the commitment of those surveyed when it comes to creating an inclusive university environment, which can be seen reflected in the following question, since 89.4% believe that inclusive teaching should be normal at the university.

As we have already seen in the previous questions, in the tenth question, the majority of the respondents do not have a clear answer to the sub-questions. Even so, 38.7% of the people think that students without special needs help non-normative students if they need it and 43.7% believe that in the event of having a non-normative student in class, they resort to student collaboration (see Figure 7). More proportion of the women think that in the classes with persons with disabilities, collaborative work between students is used (34.3% men vs. 48.5% women; $\chi^2(2, N = 516) = 11.039, p = 0.004$); nevertheless, most of the sample unknown this date. However, even though students without special needs have to help non-normative students, 39.9% of those surveyed believe that there is a different or more appropriate methodology in case there is a student with special needs in the school classroom.

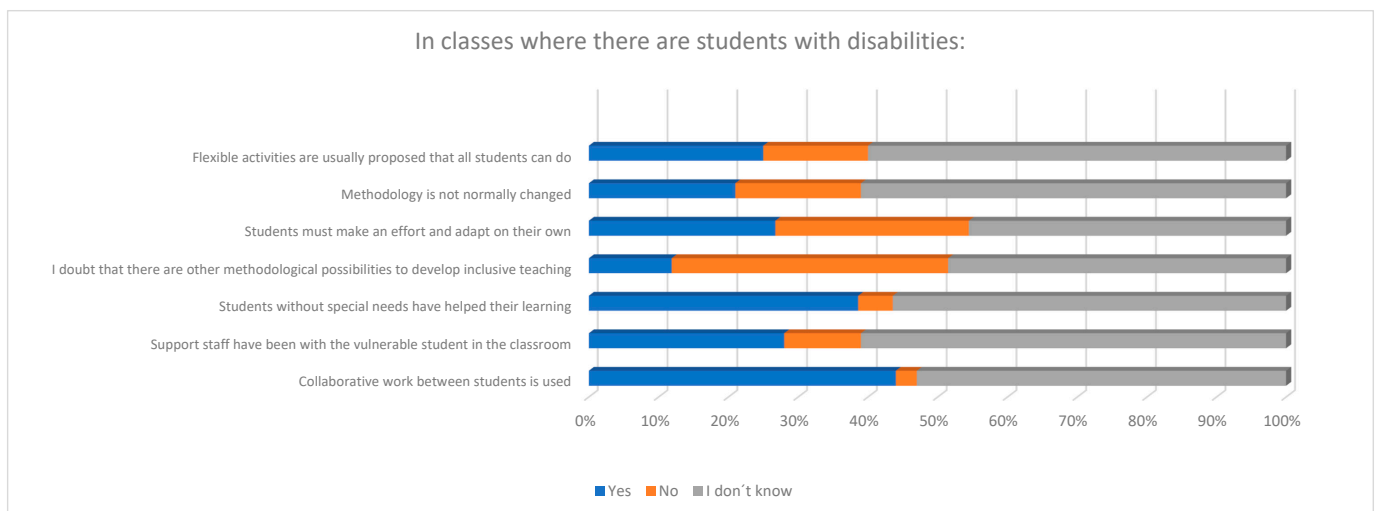


Figure 7. Responses in classes where there are students with disabilities.

In the next question (see Figure 8), 50.5% of those surveyed believe that the exclusive attitude that some people have is a major obstacle that prevents the development of inclusive teaching and 43.4% believe that the attitude of teachers is not adequate either. Even so, 54.1% of the people believe that the lack of training that teachers receive on the subject could be a determining factor when it comes to developing inclusive teaching. In addition, 47.2% believe that the teaching staff is not obtaining the necessary training for the good development of inclusive teaching and for its adequate progress. Therefore, more teacher training should be provided (89.2% believe that more teacher training is required for greater inclusive development). On the other hand, 56.1% believe that the evaluation systems that the university has are an obstacle to inclusive teaching; however, 23.7% believe that the academic requirement is not a limitation of inclusive development. Once again, we find differences between the beliefs of men and women in the poor didactic

training of teachers (37.8% men vs. 51.7% women; $\chi^2(2, N = 516) = 12.394, p = 0.002$), the little time allocated to the didactic training of teacher (43.6% men vs. 59.3% women; $\chi^2(2, N = 516) = 12.477, p = 0.002$), the exclusionary attitude of some students (41.2% men vs. 54.9% women; $\chi^2(2, N = 516) = 9.044, p = 0.011$), the evaluation systems (42.4% men vs. 62.8% women; $\chi^2(2, N = 516) = 21.984, p < 0.001$), and the lack of didactic resources (39.5% men vs. 54.4% women; $\chi^2(2, N = 516) = 10.214, p = 0.006$) or support staff (41.9% men vs. 57.2% women; $\chi^2(2, N = 516) = 11.523, p = 0.002$).

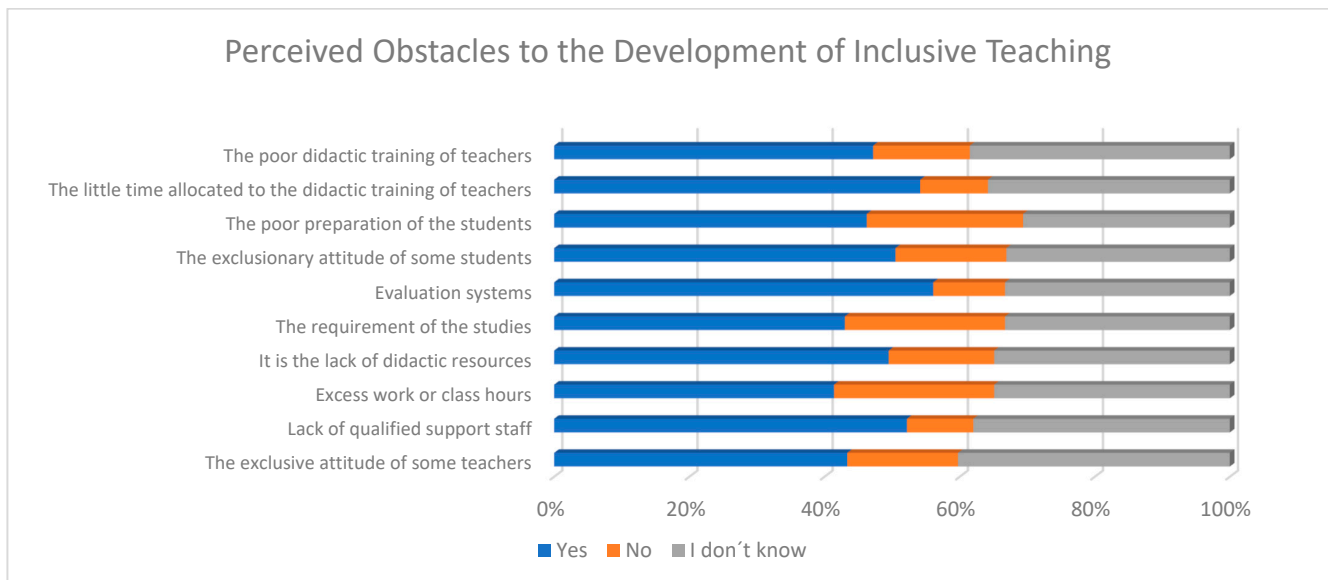


Figure 8. Perceived obstacles to the development of inclusive teaching.

In the next question (see Figure 9), when asked about the factors that should be strengthened for the development of adequate inclusive education, 84% of those surveyed believe that the participation and support of students is essential (previously, 85.7% of the people believed that it required a greater awareness of students for progress in inclusive teaching). Along with this, in addition to greater support from the student body, 82.9% believe that the collaboration of the entire educational community should be strengthened and, as previously mentioned, 82.7% of those surveyed believe that training must be strengthened by teachers on the subject. The perception of the women about this question is more affirmative and the men who show greater ignorance about this topic, and we find differences in the answers in the collaboration of the entire educational community (72.1% men vs. 88.1% women; $\chi^2(2, N = 516) = 27.100, p < 0.001$), training of teacher about inclusive education (73.8% men vs. 86.9% women; $\chi^2(2, N = 516) = 14.710, p < 0.001$), teamwork (70.3% men vs. 88.1% women; $\chi^2(2, N = 516) = 26.454, p < 0.001$), student participation (72.1% men vs. 89.8% women; $\chi^2(2, N = 516) = 31.804, p < 0.001$), and support teacher (65.1% men vs. 87.2% women; $\chi^2(2, N = 516) = 37.617, p < 0.001$).

From here, the following questions are more self-focused. A total of 59.7% showed that they were not aware of the good practice of inclusive education at our university, but 75.1% are prepared or committed to learning with the necessary support on the subject. Even so, the vast majority (42.8%) do not have the necessary time to learn about inclusive education, which makes this learning attempt more complicated. A total of 41% of those surveyed are prepared to be trained in the management of inclusive education; however, 30.4% are not willing to do so (see Figure 10).

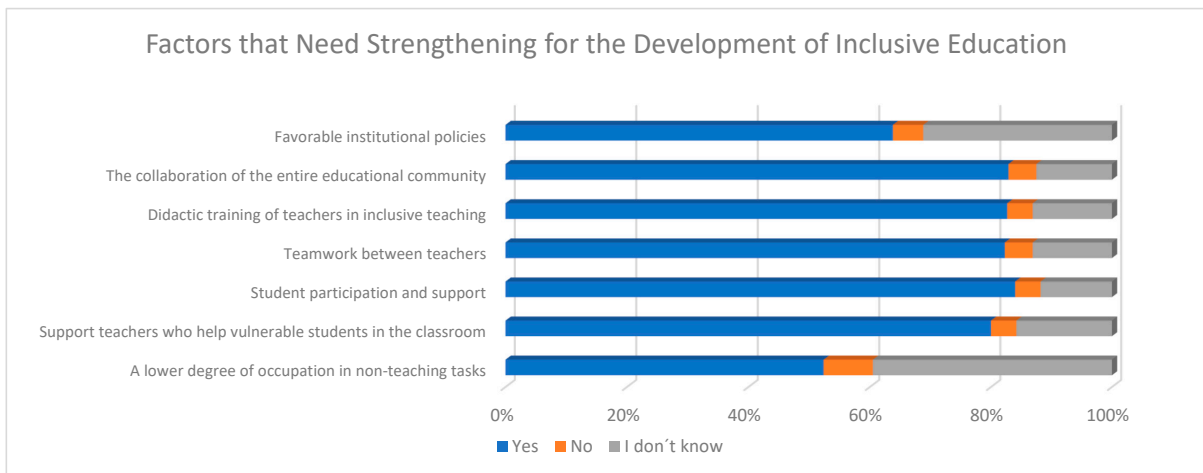


Figure 9. Factors that need strengthening for the development of inclusive education.

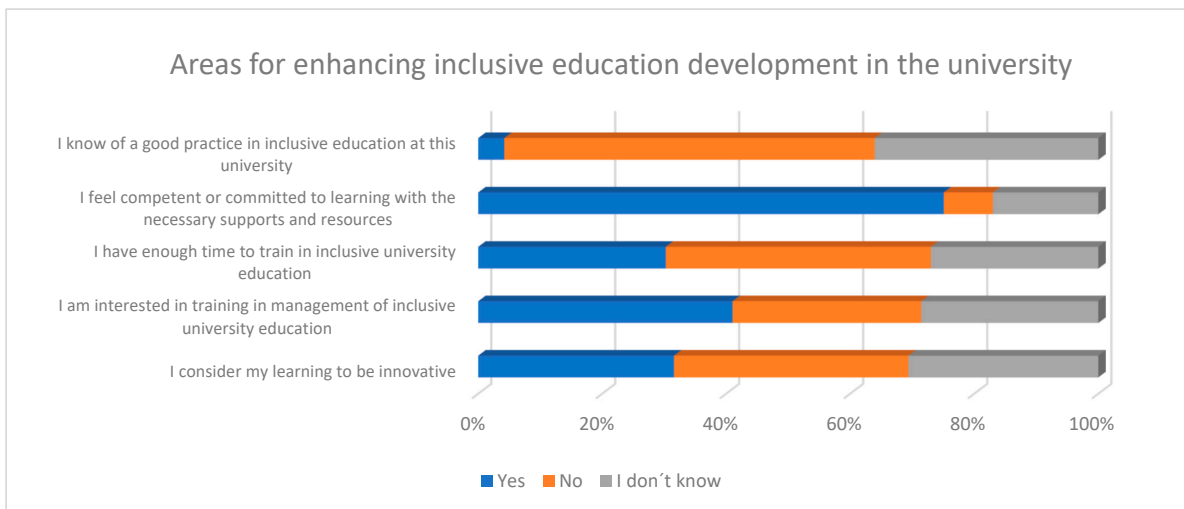


Figure 10. Areas for enhancing inclusive education development in the university.

In the last question of this section, when asked if they think their learning is innovative, there is not a percentage that stands out much from the rest; that is, there is enough similarity between the three possible answers. Even so, 37.8% of those surveyed do not think that their learning is innovative.

In the last three questions (see Figure 11), the answers are different from the previous ones (I strongly disagree, I slightly agree, I quite agree, and I strongly agree).

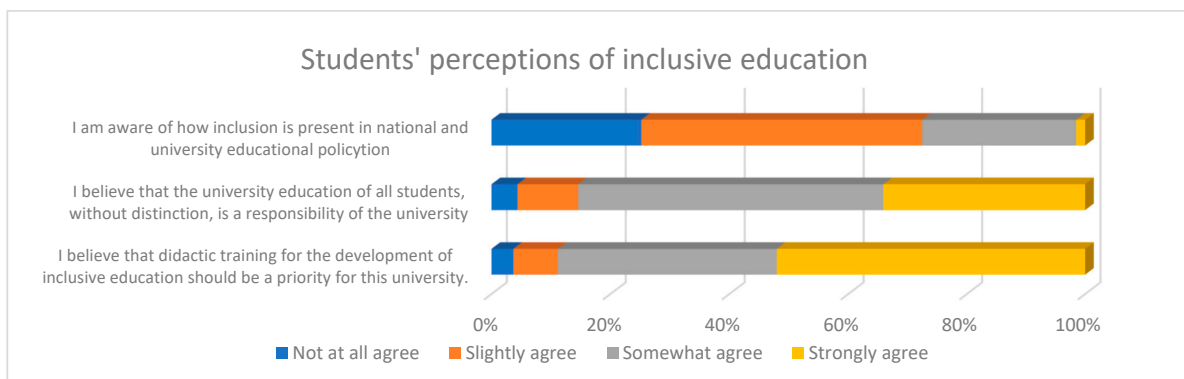


Figure 11. Students' perceptions of inclusive education.

In the first question of this section, 47.2% of those surveyed strongly disagree with their knowledge about national and university inclusive education, however, 26% strongly agree. In the following question, 51.3% of the people strongly agree that the university education of all students is the responsibility of the university, while 34.1% strongly agree. Finally, in the last question of this survey, 52% strongly agree that inclusive education is a priority at this university. In addition, we had already detected these data in the first question of the survey, where 88.8% of those surveyed believed that inclusive education was a priority. In the last question, we can find significant differences between men and women; a greater percentage of women strongly agree that didactic training for the development of inclusive education should be a priority for this university (36% men vs. 60% women; $\chi^2(2, N = 516) = 34.242, p < 0.001$).

4. Discussion

After analyzing the results and looking at the hypotheses we had, we can see that the number of non-normative/vulnerable students who responded to the survey is lower than expected (2.5% of those surveyed) and among the vulnerable group, only 0.2% of people felt discriminated against due to disability, which shows that they have not been the group that has experienced the most discrimination in this study. These results indicate that we have not reached people who feel discriminated against or non-normative groups and one of the challenges would be to increase the sample by trying to reach more vulnerable people and groups. Along with this, looking at the origin of this discrimination, 2.9% thought that its origin was in their classmates. In addition, 25% of those surveyed believed that the university stigmatizes vulnerable/non-normative students, a quite significant percentage. In addition, looking at other hypotheses and analyzing them with the results obtained, 70.1% did not know or did not mention any service provided by the UPV/EHU for vulnerable people and 91.9% had not used these services to date. This could indicate that there is still a great lack of knowledge about the university system regarding inclusive education and existing resources.

Even so, we can come to see that for the majority of those surveyed, inclusive education is a university priority (88.8%) and a social right that everyone has at the university (91.9%), whether they belong to a non-normative group or not. Despite having inclusive thinking and believing that the university stands out for its democratic communication and teamwork (66.7%), many of those surveyed believe that the inclusive work that the university would have to do would have to be greater than there is now, giving more training to teachers on inclusive teaching (89.2%) or making students more aware of the subject (85.7%). However, even believing that the university would have to take a step forward in inclusive teaching, a large number of people believe that the university is indeed supporting development (49.9%).

When it comes to talking about non-normative students, we can see that the responses of the respondents are quite positive towards them, since they believe that this type of student can enrich the classroom training (64.5%). Despite this, for a percentage of people, this type of student body can end up harming the dynamics of a class or they think that it should have a less demanding evaluation system since they believe that they will not reach the academic minimums required by the university. However, looking at the responses in general that have been received in the surveys, favoring inclusive teaching and raising awareness not only of the student body, but also of the university environment, this type of student body could reach the same academic levels; therefore, for the vast majority, the situation of non-regulatory students reveals a reality that must be addressed (74.8%).

After seeing and analyzing the difficulties that non-normative students may have in the university environment, the vast majority of people want or are willing to work as a team to be able to integrate them, either in a social or academic approach, which would help in a direct way to strengthen university inclusion through the aforementioned awareness raising of students. Even so, this action, for many of those surveyed, would have to be something within the norm in inclusive teaching; that is, it would have to be

something that should come out unconsciously. However, many of those surveyed do not feel sufficiently trained to take these actions forward (59.7%) but are willing to learn about the subject. Generally, women have a more positive view of inclusive education at the university and believe that it is easier to improve than men. Gender differences have also been found in the literature, being more positive among the females than the males (Romi and Leyser 2006).

To conclude with the survey, despite having quite notorious percentages in some answers, in some questions the respondents did not know what to answer, and the ignorance of the men about these topics is greater in the women. This may be because although those students today are more aware of the inclusive situation and have been more educated on this subject, the lack of knowledge about inclusion is still very noticeable, either due to the little training that is offered or to the education that each person has had. The different opinions and knowledge about inclusive education between men and women must be taken into account. Therefore, it could be interesting to act in groups that have less knowledge about it. In addition, the vast majority of people do not have or will not have had a non-normative partner in the classroom, which, in the event of having a student of this type in the classroom, can make the inexperience of many of them visible. In these cases, students may become uncertain of how to act, which may create a feeling of little training on the subject.

In an investigation that was carried out in Santiago de Chile on the inclusion of people with functional diversity in the university environment, they were able to see that 91.63% of those surveyed agreed that the university had to provide minimum means so that the non-normative students could be a participant in university life just like the rest. Among the most notable results, 92.85% of the people believe that students with special needs should have the same opportunities as the rest, and 78.57% believe that there should be easier channels between classmates to help this type of student. Finally, 64.28% express feeling prepared to interact with students with disabilities at the university, and 42.85% of those surveyed maintain that the objectives should be the same for all students. Even so, 21.42% think otherwise (Ocampo González 2012).

In another study also carried out in Chile, where the opinion of students with functional diversity was valued, it was observed that 19% of those surveyed were not happy with the level of service offered to them, specifically with scholarships or subsidies that they offer. Along with this, 40% of the students with functional diversity are not satisfied with access to university information, since it is difficult for them to access it. At the career level, 68% of those surveyed felt supported by the university; however, the remaining 32% did not feel supported. Among the students who felt supported, 54% stated that changes were made to the evaluation system. Regarding attitudinal aspects of students and teachers, 35% of those surveyed answered that students are sensitized to the subject, while in the case of teachers, 64% obtained. Even so, 11% of the students with functional diversity are not satisfied with the attention provided by teachers. Finally, 89% of those surveyed believe that they need a space to share their experiences, and 30% show that they have felt discriminated against at the university, very notorious values (Villafañe et al. 2016).

Looking at the results that our survey has had and comparing it with the research that was carried out in Chile, we can see that the results do not differ from each other. Despite this, the two surveys could not be analyzed in the same way, since many of the questions are very different from each other. Even so, making a general assessment of the results that have been obtained, we can see that today inclusion is having more importance in society, not only in the university field, so this inclusivism thought could be applied to any field. However, in the following study, we can see that despite the efforts made to spread inclusion, there are still aspects in which we should improve, since there is a percentage of people who still feel discriminated against.

Finally, it is important to highlight the inclusive mentality that university students in general have today; that is to say, despite the fact that in some survey responses they have not been remarkable, in many of the responses we can see the involvement that the

students have in the subject for creating a more egalitarian environment. Despite having this initiative or commitment, the vast majority indeed believe that changes should be made or aid should be included to reach that goal, since, seeing many of the opinions, the university falls short in some aspects of inclusive teaching, such as in teacher training. For this and more, in the second part of this project, the respondents were asked to propose ideas to improve this situation, since it is not only useful to know the situation in the university but also how to remedy it.

Looking at the most commented proposals and analyzing them with the responses in the survey, we can see that many ask for more psychological services for this type of student body. However, this service already exists at the university. However, its access is expensive due to demand or lack of knowledge. Therefore, it would be interesting for the university to prepare more talks or workshops about the services it has and how to access them. Also, for greater awareness of the students, a concept that has been much requested in the survey, it would not hurt to give talks about vulnerable groups, giving information about their illness or situation, the limits they may have, how it can harm a discriminatory university environment. . . Along with this, the university could encourage the creation of student groups or associations to improve the social and academic situation of non-normative students or any type of student. Despite the fact that there are infinite proposals to improve the inclusive situation, these ideas would be difficult to fulfill without the support of the university, since it has great services to disseminate information among all the students. Only with the collaboration of the students, it would be difficult to transmit the information throughout the faculty and would require more time to do so, so the collaboration of the university would be essential to disseminate the information.

Finally, analyzing the entire study carried out, we have seen that the involvement of non-normative students and, in general, of all the students, has been low, which is why it has been difficult to compare or carry out a more significant comparative analysis between the different vulnerable groups or even between the various participating faculties. Along with this, the scant information that has been found on university inclusion has also made the entire research process that was planned to be carried out difficult. For these reasons, when it comes to verifying the hypotheses, many of them could not be verified due to the small number of respondents or information, so more studies on the subject would be required to be able to assess more deeply about inclusion.

5. Conclusions

At the university in the north of Spain, inclusion is a priority among students. However, to this day, there are still people who feel stigmatized in the university environment, whether by students, lecturers, or even the institution itself.

Most students are not aware of the services that the university offers to raise awareness of vulnerable groups, be it support services or workshops on the subject. The training offered to both teachers and students is considered to be poor.

In addition, the lack of information and research on university inclusion, such as the low participation of students in the surveys, has hindered a more in-depth analysis of vulnerable or non-normative groups, so the results have been less significant than expected.

The perception of men and women about these topics is different and men have a lower interest in inclusive education and their development.

In the coming years, it would be appropriate to advance studies on university inclusion to reduce discrimination and create the best possible actions to foster an environment of equality and equity at the university.

Practical Implications

Improving awareness and access to services is crucial for better supporting vulnerable students. Enhancing communication about available services and promoting workshops and informational talks are essential steps. Moreno and Rodríguez (Moreno and Rodríguez 2022)

stress that improving accessibility is key to effective inclusion, and regular campaigns could help keep students informed about support services.

Investment in comprehensive training for both faculty and students on inclusive practices is also necessary. González and Fernández (2021), highlight that ongoing training helps overcome barriers and capitalize on opportunities for greater inclusivity.

Supporting student groups or associations focused on improving the situation of non-normative students can be highly effective. Pérez and Martínez (2023) suggest that such initiatives, with institutional backing, can significantly enhance the support environment for vulnerable students.

Moreover, more research is needed to understand the needs of these students and evaluate the effectiveness of inclusive practices. Pérez and Martínez emphasize that research is crucial for identifying areas for improvement and refining support services.

Finally, effective inclusion relies on collaboration between students and university administration. Moreno and Rodríguez (2022) argue that a collaborative approach is essential for creating an inclusive environment and promoting equity on campus.

Author Contributions: Conceptualization, N.O.-E., S.R.d.A. and M.P.; methodology, S.R.d.A.; investigation, S.R.d.A. and N.O.-E.; writing—original draft preparation, all the authors; writing—review and editing, all the authors. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Funding: This research received no external funding.

Institutional Review Board Statement: The study was conducted in accordance with the Declaration of Helsinki, and approved by CEISH UPV EHU (University of the Basque Country) (protocol code M10_2022_324 and date of approval 14 February 2023).

Informed Consent Statement: Informed consent was obtained from all the subjects involved in the study.

Data Availability Statement: The data are available by contacting the corresponding author.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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