Chapter 3
Strategies for Presuming Competence in the Inclusive School

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ABSTRACT

Inclusive education in the school context is a permanent challenge for teaching staff in educational centres. An essential aspect within this inclusive process is to guarantee the adequate training of teaching staff and to attend to all the educational demands and needs of the child and adolescent population with a disability in an individualized manner. The process of adaptation and psychosocial adjustment to a disease considered chronic, or in much more complex situations, as occurs with so-called rare diseases, is a daily challenge for the affected people and their families. One of the most relevant issues within this adaptation process is the role of academic education, as an element that favours or facilitates inclusive processes. Based on a model that aims to offer a global vision of the psychosocial adaptation process, where various factors and variables from different dimensions are integrated and where healthcare, educational and social professionals all intervene.

INTRODUCTION

The Inclusive Process in School Education

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) within its protective role recognizes various rights of the child and is directly linked to inclusive processes in personal, family, school, social, community and health areas (right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religious belief, right to an identity, right to an education, right to health and health services, right to care and special attention for children with disabilities, etc.). Furthermore article 24 reflected in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006) of the United Nations, emphasizes that people with disabilities have the

right to an education, ensuring an inclusive education system at all levels and advocating for personalized care, support and educational measures.

With the recognition of these rights combined with the educational legislation of each country, inclusive education feels even more valued and reinforced, where teachers are the cornerstone in terms of designing, planning and adopting the methodology, strategies and most appropriate educational actions to respond to the individual demands and needs of all students. Inclusion also largely integrates those individuals who, due to any circumstance, limitation, condition or situation, require greater attention or personalized educational dedication.

Within this approach, the concept of inclusive education is the key element of the entire process. In the words of Pérez Pérez and López Francés (2017), inclusive education involves the "creation and application of a group of learning strategies that respond to the diversity of the students and overcome the rigidity of the integration model" (p. 73). The educational response to diversity is characterized by taking into account multiple abilities, skills, abilities, limitations, potentialities, difficulties, learning styles, etc. from a personal, social and family perspective of each student in the educational context. In this way, diversity at all different levels of an educational system must serve a large number of children and adolescents who have learning problems, hearing or visual disabilities, motor limitations, mental disabilities, autism spectrum disorders, students with chronic and/or rare diseases, or other characteristics, among which are also the students of ethnic or religious minorities or of high intellectual capacity.

Nevertheless, teaching is subject to a constant review of educational practices at any educational level, where continuous training, the integration of new methodologies, reflection and self-assessment by the teaching staff allows a process of continuous improvement, facilitating the development of good practices. When developing and perfecting teaching work, a series of general principles must be integrated that favour diversity and inclusion (Villar Angulo & Alegre de la Rosa, 2010): originality versus labelling and classification; favour heterogeneous groups versus homogeneous groups; provide differentiated educational responses versus uniform responses; favour coeducation versus sexism…

Training Development of Inclusive Teachers

The process of training future teachers is a constant and laborious challenge for the higher education system due to its complexity and is a determining factor when we talk about offering an education based on quality and equity, and above all, based on rights. The Bologna Declaration (1999), a proposal by the European Union for the creation of an area called the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), established a new pedagogical reference framework, oriented towards university Competency-Based Learning. Based on this premise and starting from the fundamental concept of investing in a real inclusive school with quality criteria, the teacher training process in different educational stages becomes a priority. The key factor being that the permanent commitment to training must guarantee and respond in an adequate and personalized manner to the characteristics and needs of each child or adolescent within the educational system.

Later, the European Agency for the Development of the Education of Students with Special Educational Needs (2012), in their project "Teacher training for inclusive education" addressed the professional characteristics that future teachers in the field of inclusion should have in their daily teaching of students. Specifically, it identified all the essential skills, knowledge and understanding, attitudes and values, regardless of the subject, specialism, age range or the type of school they will teach in. Based on this project, an Inclusive Teacher Competency Profile was established, structured around four fundamental

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