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Artículos científicos

Satisfacción laboral en los maestros con algún grado de discapacidad en el sector educativo especial en México

*Job satisfaction in teachers with some degree of disability in the special
education sector in Mexico*

*Satisfação profissional em professores com algum grau de deficiência no setor
de educação especial no México*

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Resumen

El presente estudio permitió revisar la normativa vigente relacionada con la atención y aplicación de la educación especial dirigida por la Unesco, la cual permite evitar la discriminación, la segregación y las etiquetas como un punto de partida relevante para el derecho que se tiene como individuos. La inclusión social establece los derechos que tienen todas y todos en la recepción y el gozo de una educación con una calidad suficiente que propicie el máximo desarrollo de las potencialidades de la formación educativa especial en México. Sin embargo, los maestros de educación incluyente que colaboran con estudiantes con alguna discapacidad física, auditiva o mental algunas veces no cuentan con los recursos mínimos para desarrollar sus actividades laborales. Por eso, el objetivo principal de esta investigación fue analizar el grado de satisfacción y los factores emocionales de los maestros con algún tipo de discapacidad que presentan en su rol a favor de la instrucción especial en México. Para ello, en primer lugar, se desarrolló un trabajo exploratorio para acercarse al tema estudiado; luego se analizó el grado de satisfacción de los 251 maestros con alguna discapacidad que participaron. Los resultados demuestran la falta de comprensión de las autoridades escolares y la importancia de tener experiencia amplia frente a grupo. Por eso, se concluye que las principales causas que han limitado el desempeño de los docentes son las condiciones laborales y el aislamiento.

Palabras clave: educación especial, sector educativo, discapacidad, satisfacción.

Abstract

The study made it possible to review the current regulations related to the attention and application of special education directed by UNESCO, which allows avoiding discrimination, segregation and labels as a starting point relevant to the right that one has as individuals. Social inclusion establishes the rights that everyone has in receiving and enjoying an education with a sufficient quality that promotes the maximum development of the potential of special educational training in Mexico. Inclusive education teachers who collaborate with students with a physical, hearing or mental disability, even with various limitations in their environment, sometimes do not have the essential conditions to develop their work activities, so the main objective of this research is to

analyze the degree satisfaction and emotional factors of teachers with some type of disability that they present in their role in favor of special instruction in Mexico. This research is exploratory in the first instance because it allows increasing familiarity with the subject giving way to the descriptive one that allowed analyzing the degree of satisfaction of the 251 teachers with a disability who participated in the study. The results that were obtained argue the factors of importance such as the lack of understanding on the part of the school authorities and the importance of having sufficient experience in front of a group, for which it is concluded that the main causes that have limited the performance of the teachers are working conditions as well as isolation.

Keywords: Special education, educational sector, disability, satisfaction.

Resumo

O presente estudo permitiu-nos rever a regulamentação vigente relativa ao cuidado e aplicação da educação especial dirigida pela UNESCO, o que nos permite evitar a discriminação, a segregação e os rótulos como ponto de partida relevante para o direito que temos como indivíduos. A inclusão social estabelece os direitos que todos têm de receber e desfrutar de uma educação de qualidade suficiente que promova o máximo desenvolvimento do potencial da formação educacional especial no México. No entanto, os professores de educação inclusiva que colaboram com alunos com deficiência física, auditiva ou mental, por vezes, não dispõem dos recursos mínimos para desenvolver as suas atividades laborais. Portanto, o objetivo principal desta pesquisa foi analisar o grau de satisfação e os fatores emocionais dos professores com algum tipo de deficiência que apresentam em sua função em favor da instrução especial no México. Para isso, primeiramente, foi desenvolvido um trabalho exploratório para abordagem do tema estudado; Em seguida, foi analisado o grau de satisfação dos 251 professores com alguma deficiência participantes. Os resultados demonstram a falta de compreensão das autoridades escolares e a importância de se ter ampla experiência com o grupo. Portanto, conclui-se que as principais causas que têm limitado a atuação dos professores são as condições de trabalho e o isolamento.

Palavras-chave: educação especial, setor educacional, deficiência, satisfação.

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Introduction

Achieving inclusive development in special education for all people with disabilities in Mexico is a fundamental public policy issue. This effort dates back to the creation of the first special universities designed to serve deaf and blind people in 1915. At that time, the first institution was founded in the state of Guanajuato, which was responsible for working with children who faced mental situations. specials, which began the diversification of services for people with disabilities, and the National Autonomous University of Mexico assumed a crucial role in this task (Gimeno, 2000; Puigdemívol, 2000).

As established in the Official Gazette of the Federation (DOF) (2019), Mexico recognizes the obligation to provide educational services that are equitable and of high quality, especially for those who are part of groups and regions “with greater educational lag.” or who face situations of vulnerability due to specific circumstances of a socioeconomic, physical, mental nature, cultural identity, ethnic or national origin, immigration status or, related to aspects of gender, sexual preference or cultural practices.” In response to this need, regulations for special education in the country were promulgated with the objective of organizing, directing and optimizing the federal educational system. This regulation also focused on the crucial role of specialized teachers, whose job is to provide care to all citizens with special conditions, discipline or attention disorders, language difficulties, motor disabilities or visual deficiencies.

Indeed, special education teachers work with children who have special conditions and/or disabilities, so they must adapt their pedagogical approaches to their environment. However, for this to happen in the best way, it is essential that teachers have the essential resources for this purpose, since this not only benefits the students, but also sets a positive example for other professionals in this field. Therefore, according to Roque and Domínguez (2012), it is urgent that teaching staff assume the responsibility of forming collaborative groups with their specialized colleagues to guarantee effective implementation in the educational environment, since, in recent years, inclusive teaching It has become a fundamental norm in educational institutions.

This approach promotes an inclusive vision of society, where social belonging is valued and individual needs are met. In this way, both students – including those with special educational needs – and society as a whole benefit (Booth and Ainscow, 2002; Kennedy et al., 1997; Quinn and Degener, 2002; Ebersold, 2013).

Indeed, Conklin (2012) supports the idea that teachers can offer effective pedagogical support to students by using both theoretical and practical data that enrich their learning process.

To achieve this, however, it is essential that teachers find satisfaction in their work in the classroom, since – as various research points out – they are the ones who face the challenge of addressing and overcoming the obstacles that arise in relation to disability.

For example, Sagel (2022) analyzed the roles of autism resource teachers in Gironde, France. This study revealed that professional actions, attitudes, and tools can have a positive impact on the education of students with autism. By considering their special needs and selecting appropriate pedagogical approaches for these students, taking into account the educational environment, teachers can improve their understanding of autism and encourage teamwork in the educational setting. Additionally, the importance of relationships with families and peers was highlighted, as their active participation contributes to a more harmonious school environment and plays a fundamental role in the success of students with autism.

For all of the above, the objective of the research was to evaluate the level of satisfaction of teachers in charge of special education, since their actions can contribute to providing security to people with disabilities in their integration process into Mexican society. To this end, the study addressed the current regulations related to the care and implementation of special education, in accordance with UNESCO guidelines (1993, 1994). This seeks to prevent discrimination, segregation and labels, and serves as a fundamental starting point to guarantee the rights of each individual.

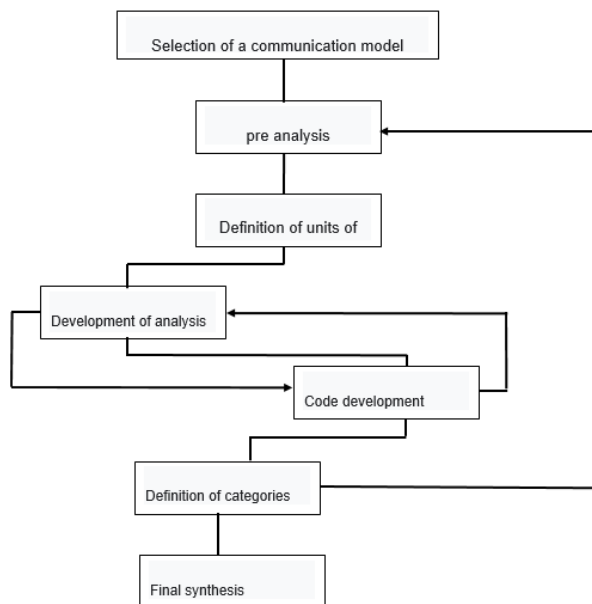
Methods and materials

There are two main approaches in social research: quantitative and qualitative. This study focused on the last of these, since the objective was to collect data to understand key aspects of the topic at hand. Specifically, the research had a descriptive scope because it sought to identify and specify significant properties related to teachers and their satisfaction, which were subjected to a detailed analysis.

The first stage of this research was exploratory, for which information was collected that was later interpreted through non-mathematical methods. The objective was to discover patterns and relationships within the data and then organize them according to the underlying theoretical structure, as can be seen in Figure 1. Various qualitative methods use this exploratory stage to address areas that have not yet been investigated in depth, which can lead to the development of new theories and the generation of innovative knowledge (Stern, 1980).

Regarding the temporal nature of this research, it was classified as synchronous, since it was carried out at a specific time. Furthermore, in relation to the evolution of the phenomenon under study, this research was considered cross-sectional, since the variables involved were measured at a single moment, without follow-up over time.

Figure 1. Research process



Source: Taken from Mayring (2000) and Serna (2001).

On the other hand, in this study grounded theory was used as a method, since it sought to build new knowledge. Glaser and Strauss (1967) proposed this theory, which is based on constant data collection. That is, as information is collected, a theory is developed that adjusts to the reality of the phenomenon studied. This methodology allows us to understand reality and express it theoretically.

To collect data, interviews were conducted with teachers that consisted of two parts. The first part included sociodemographic questions that served to describe the characteristics of the participants. The second part focused on open questions that addressed topics such as equity in treatment by teachers and administration, distribution of tasks between teachers and administrators, workload, workspace conditions, recognition for part of the superiors, the facilities, the classroom equipment, the stationery resources and the feeling of professional isolation, among other aspects.

The data collection instrument was validated by five experts in the field of education, who considered that the proposed questionnaire was relevant. A total of 251 teachers who teach in different special education contexts, such as resources for the hearing impaired, traveling tutoring for the visually impaired, and traveling tutoring for homeschooling people with autism, were interviewed. The sample was selected through non-probabilistic convenience sampling based on theoretical saturation.

For data analysis, NVivo 12 software was used. This allowed the coding and organization of data in a hierarchical structure, creating topologies and storing them in nodes. The study focused on identifying the attributes that form the categories through a recurring comparative technique, which sought to relate essential concepts with other texts to strengthen the fundamental theory. (Deland y Mc Dougall, 2013).

Results

From the data analysis stage, significant results were obtained that contributed to identifying trends and detecting oversaturation of the analyzed concepts. This allowed us to focus the search on the elements with theoretical saturation, that is, the questions that generated coincident answers among the teachers participating in the study, thus marking the end point of their analysis.

In relation to the sociodemographic variables of the participants, it is observed that the majority of special education teachers with disabilities are women, of which 33.2 % are under 29 years old and have a bachelor's degree. Likewise, half of the teachers are single and have less than 5 years of teaching experience. Most graduated from colleges and universities, and most work as full-time teachers, while approximately one-third hold administrative positions. These data indicate that the teaching staff in this field is mostly full-time.

Regarding the question “I feel dissatisfied with dealing with personnel who limit my academic work,” the participants used the term “frequency” to respond. This word produced notable results, especially among teachers with disabilities, who associated the frequency with which they experience obstacles in their teaching work in the field of special education, which is largely due—according to their perceptions—to the lack of understanding on the part of educational authorities.

Another word highlighted in the data analysis was “experience”, which the participants linked to the recurring situations they face when teaching their classes. Furthermore, the word

Figure 2. Cloud resulting from the study.

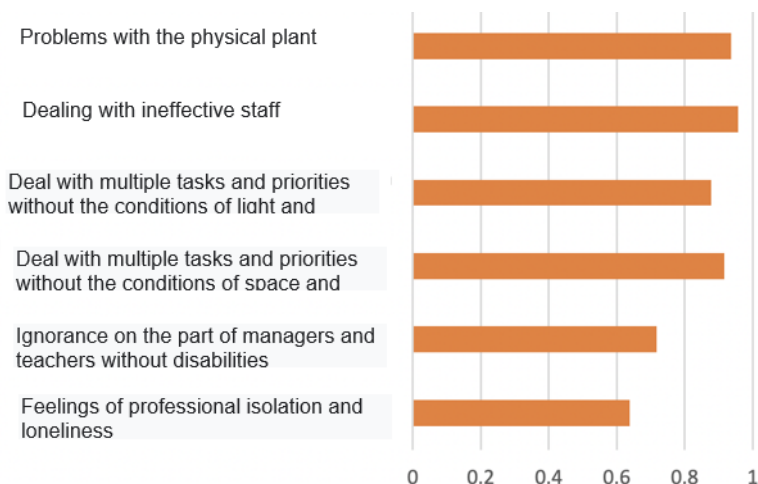


Based on the results obtained from the interviews carried out with teachers with disabilities who work in special education, it was identified that many of them reported having at least one of the following disabilities: visual, auditory, language, physical, severe mood and other significant obstacles. Through the analysis of the information collected, the following most frequent problems that these teachers face in their educational work were highlighted:

1. Dealing with ineffective staff.
2. Deal with multiple tasks and priorities without the conditions of space and domain.
3. Problems with the physical plant.
4. Deal with multiple tasks and priorities without light or sound conditions.
5. Ignorance on the part of managers and teachers without disabilities.
6. Feelings of professional isolation and loneliness.

Figure 3 shows the results obtained, as well as their impact on the study.

Figure 3. Frequency percentages for each problem



Source: Own elaboration with NVivo 12.

Regarding the approach made to the participants to know how the problems detected could be solved, the data in Table 1 is offered.

Table 1. Possible solutions proposed by teachers according to each axis.

Detected axis	Action 1	Action 2	Action 3
Feelings of professional isolation and loneliness	Attention and consideration	Training	Stimuli
Ignorance on the part of managers and teachers without disabilities	Training for teachers without disabilities	School inclusion	
Deal with multiple tasks and priorities without the conditions of space and domain	Adapt spaces	Adapt materials	
Deal with multiple tasks and priorities without light or sound conditions	Increase visible light	Add windows	
Dealing with ineffective staff	Training for teachers and staff without disabilities		
Problems with the physical plant	Hiring teachers	Teacher training	

Source: Own elaboration

Finally, it can be said that administrative work is a common practice in most schools in Mexico. At the basic level, special education teachers make up 61.8% of the teaching force, and

school size is determined by the total number of classes, which ranges between 13 and 24. In this context, classes are relatively large, and it is important to highlight that 74.5% of the special education teachers in the sample have adequate training.

Discussion

From the results obtained, several significant aspects can be identified. One of the most notable is the lack of knowledge and confusion in relation to disabilities, both on the part of teachers and family members, directors and educational personnel involved in therapeutic pedagogy. Furthermore, indifference and a lack of interest in the topic on the part of the respondents was observed, which translated into apathy, disinterest, and a lack of willingness to participate in the study. This attitude made it difficult to obtain valid information, which led to the need to ask indirect questions to obtain a clearer opinion.

Regarding the effectiveness of diversity attention measures, it was found that a small percentage of respondents do not agree with them. However, the improvement in the inclusion of administrative staff in the activities of the teaching-learning process stands out, which has helped to recognize needs and has allowed them to act as facilitators in the provision of the necessary equipment.

In relation to the need for changes in the educational model to address diversity, it is clear that improvements must focus on improving the working conditions of special education teachers. In this regard, it is worth highlighting that the satisfaction of these teachers is essential, since the results indicate that professional isolation and loneliness in their academic work are significant aspects. These findings are consistent with previous research, such as the study by Gómez (2017), which also points out the need to restructure the educational system to improve the quality, infrastructure, equipment and awareness of administrative staff who work with special education teachers. . Furthermore, it is essential to consider teacher training as a means to improve the profile of graduates.

Conclusions

The satisfaction of the special education teachers who participated in the study reveals significant areas of opportunity. For example, these teachers do not feel recognized, and experience a feeling of isolation and loneliness in their work. They argue that they are part of a circle of interaction that should be valued by society, and they feel limited in terms of the information provided by administrators.

For this reason, it can be concluded that in Mexico it is necessary to implement elements such as universal accessibility and design adequate spaces in special education institutions, both for the development of students and teachers. In this sense, the urgency of incorporating inclusion into the study plans and curricular design of all basic education schools is evident. Likewise, the equity and equal opportunity mechanisms must be reviewed and updated, following the guidelines of the educational model established by public policy. Finally, it is essential to propose disability legislation in Congress, endorsed by the government and supported by the information and advice necessary to carry out these proposals.

Future lines of research

Derived from this work, the following future lines of research can be pointed out:

1. Universal design of sites and equipment for the development of complete infrastructure, inclusive products and services.
2. Development in Mexico of accessible assistive technology and application of ergonomics as an important factor.
3. Inclusive economic development and growth to form an inclusive society.
4. Development of a work model for the generation of a new area of inclusive employment.
5. Training in basic education programs through continuous and inclusive training.

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