Revista Iberoamericana para la Investigación y el Desarrollo Educativo
ISSN 2007 - 7467

https://doi.org/10.23913/ride.v16i32.2920

Scientific articles

Sin datos no hay resultados: Indicadores de inclusión en las universidades públicas mexicanas

Without Data, There Are No Results: Inclusion Indicators in Mexican Public Universities

Sem dados não há resultados: Indicadores de inclusão em universidades públicas mexicanas

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Resumen

Esta investigación tuvo como objetivo identificar si las universidades públicas mexicanas emplean indicadores de inclusión tanto cuantitativos como cualitativos. Se realizó un estudio teórico de marcos de indicadores de organismos clave (extinto INEE, MEJOREDU, ANUIES y DGPPYEE-SEP). El análisis reveló que no existe una categoría específica de inclusión en los sistemas de indicadores nacionales. La inclusión se aborda de forma transversal al medir las características poblacionales del estudiantado, el contexto social y la infraestructura educativa; sin embargo, esta transversalidad es más notable en indicadores de educación básica que en los de educación superior. Esta diferencia se atribuye, posiblemente, a la autonomía universitaria, que faculta a las instituciones para construir sus propios programas e indicadores internos. Por ello, se diseñó un cuestionario con variables dicotómicas, solicitando evidencia documental sobre la existencia de indicadores de inclusión. El

instrumento se centró en evaluar la existencia de indicadores que midieran la equidad en admisión, la matrícula por grupos vulnerables, el impacto social de las acciones afirmativas y la transparencia de los resultados, entre otros. El instrumento se envió a través de la Plataforma Nacional de Transparencia, obteniendo una muestra de 223 universidades (68% de las IES públicas). Los resultados muestran que los indicadores universitarios son predominantemente cuantitativos y se centran en métricas de flujo (ingreso, egreso), lo que invisibiliza la diversidad y las vulnerabilidades. No obstante, se identificaron buenas prácticas e indicadores específicos en algunas IES que pueden servir como referentes para replicar o adaptar modelos de evaluación inclusiva en otros contextos universitarios.

Palabras clave: Educación superior, inclusión educativa, indicadores de inclusión, derecho a la educación.

Abstract

This research aimed to identify whether Mexican public universities utilize both quantitative and qualitative inclusion indicators. A **theoretical review** of indicator frameworks from key organizations (the defunct INEE, MEJOREDU, ANUIES, and DGPPYEE-SEP) was conducted. The analysis revealed that no specific category for inclusion exists within the national indicator systems. Inclusion is addressed **transversally** by measuring students' population characteristics, social context, and educational infrastructure; however, this **transversal** approach is more noticeable in basic education indicators than in higher education indicators. This difference is possibly attributed to university autonomy, which empowers institutions to develop their own programs and internal indicators. Therefore, a questionnaire with dichotomous variables was designed, requesting documentary evidence on the existence of inclusion indicators. The instrument focused on evaluating the existence of indicators that measure equity in admission, enrollment by vulnerable groups, the social impact of affirmative actions, and the transparency of results, among others. The instrument was sent through the National Transparency Platform, yielding a sample of 223 universities (68% of the public Higher Education Institutions). The results show that university indicators are predominantly quantitative and concentrate on flow metrics (entry, graduation), which **renders diversity and vulnerabilities invisible**. Nevertheless, good practices and specific indicators were identified in some **HEIs** that can serve as benchmarks to replicate or adapt inclusive evaluation models in other university contexts.

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ISSN 2007 - 7467

Keywords: Higher education, educational inclusion, inclusion indicators, right to education.

Resumo

Esta pesquisa teve como objetivo identificar se as universidades públicas mexicanas utilizam indicadores de inclusão tanto quantitativos quanto qualitativos. **Foi realizada uma revisão teórica dos referenciais de indicadores de organizações-chave** (os extintos INEE, MEJOREDU, ANUIES e DGPPYEE-SEP). A análise revelou que não existe uma categoria específica de inclusão nos sistemas nacionais de indicadores. A inclusão é abordada em todos os setores por meio da mensuração das características da população estudantil, do contexto social e da infraestrutura educacional; contudo, essa abordagem transversal é mais pronunciada nos indicadores da educação básica do que nos da educação superior. Essa diferença possivelmente se deve à autonomia universitária, que permite às instituições desenvolver seus próprios programas e indicadores internos. **Nesse contexto, foi elaborado um questionário** com variáveis dicotômicas, solicitando comprovação documental da existência de indicadores de inclusão. **O instrumento contemplou indicadores que avaliam** a equidade no ingresso, a matrícula de grupos vulneráveis, o impacto social das ações afirmativas e a transparência dos resultados, entre outros fatores. **O instrumento foi enviado** por meio da Plataforma Nacional de Transparência, resultando em uma amostra de 223 universidades (68% das instituições públicas de ensino superior). Os resultados mostram que os indicadores universitários são predominantemente quantitativos e focam em métricas de fluxo (ingresso, graduação), obscurecendo, assim, a diversidade e as vulnerabilidades. No entanto, boas práticas e indicadores específicos foram identificados em algumas instituições de ensino superior, os quais podem **servir de referência** para replicar ou adaptar modelos de avaliação inclusiva em outros contextos universitários.

Palavras-chave: Ensino superior, inclusão educacional, indicadores de inclusão, direito à educação.

Date Received: September 2025 **Date Accepted:** April 2026

Introduction

The objective of this research is to determine whether Mexican public universities have inclusion indicators, both quantitative and qualitative, that allow them to analyze and systematize the **educational goals of their student population**. This analysis is relevant because inclusion indicators are fundamental for evaluating the access and retention of vulnerable groups in higher education. To contextualize the study, a theoretical framework on the right to education in Mexico is presented, differentiating between basic education, which fosters personal autonomy, and higher education, which is geared toward **the pursuit of personal life goals**.

In this context, the research analyzes the public indicators generated by the now-defunct National Institute for Educational Evaluation (INEE), the National Commission for Continuous Improvement of Education (MEJOREDU), the National Association of Universities and Institutions of Higher Education (ANUIES), and the General Directorate of Educational Planning, Programming, and Statistics of the Ministry of Public Education (DGPPYEE-SEP). These indicators cover various dimensions, such as the training of school administrators and teachers, school supervision, the operation of school councils, educational outcomes, student access and trajectories, coverage, efficiency, school dropout rates, and the economic benefits associated with learning.

The analysis focuses on identifying which of these indicators can be considered specific to educational inclusion; that is, those that allow for the evaluation of access, retention, and success of vulnerable groups within the university system. This theoretical review is fundamental to determining whether Mexican public universities have adequate tools to measure and promote inclusion. The analysis also helps to understand why inclusion indicators at the university level can vary and why it is necessary to address them specifically.

The analysis reveals that the vast majority of the indicators generated by INEE and MEJOREDU focus on measuring basic education —understood as that which encompasses from preschool to high school or upper secondary level— and ANUIES and DGPPYEE-SEP measure university enrollment; therefore, there is an absence of inclusion indicators, since these last two institutions are limited to registering data on the entry and exit of students, **without addressing** the dimensions of inclusion.

The absence of a specific inclusion category in the national basic education indicators does not, in itself, imply a deficiency, since the issue is addressed **comprehensively** by measuring various components—a relevant approach given that inclusion transcends disability and affects multiple dimensions of the system. This is not the case with higher education indicators, which are limited to recording enrollment figures.

The second theoretical section of this research is crucial for analyzing the regulatory framework of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). This analysis focuses on institutional diversity, regional relevance (territorialization), and, fundamentally, university autonomy. This constitutionally enshrined power allows HEIs to define their own regulations, policies, and, consequently, their indicators. The existence of this autonomy justifies the methodological necessity of requesting information directly from each institution **to obtain a precise account** of their inclusion indicators.

Therefore, a questionnaire was designed for public higher education institutions to gather information on the presence of inclusion indicators, which was evaluated using a dichotomous variable, and documentary evidence was requested to support each of the answers provided.

The results allowed for an analysis of whether these institutions have internal evaluations, the type of evaluations carried out, the percentage of enrollment with some degree of disability or in situations of vulnerability, and whether these groups have been beneficiaries of affirmative action. In addition, the existence of indicators to analyze the admission processes, the increase in enrollment, and the impact of inclusive educational policies on the trajectory of students was identified. Finally, the mechanisms for publishing this information were explored.

The questionnaire was sent through the National Transparency Platform, obtaining a sample of 223 institutions, and **the findings indicate that** the reported indicators are of a quantitative nature and, as anticipated in the theoretical analysis, they focus on measuring the percentage of students admitted and those who drop out of their studies; however, good practices and specific indicators were also identified that can be considered as references to be replicated, **with adaptations appropriate to the characteristics and context of each institution**.

Development

The right to education in Mexico

The right to education in Mexico was established as a **fundamental right** enshrined in Article 3 of the Political Constitution of the United Mexican States (CPEUM) from the perspective of the Constituent Assembly of 1917, and was therefore established as a guarantee considering two elements necessary for its provision: 1. Freedom and 2. Secularism, and due to the historical moment of its promulgation, only primary education was considered compulsory (Political Constitution of the United Mexican States, 1917).

But, like most rights, the right to education required transformation to encompass new needs; this is what jurists call the principle of progressivity (SJF, 2015), **a core legal principle** to gradually extend the characteristics surrounding education, aiming to encompass diverse objectives linked to the development of the individual (Campos, 2016), but also of society (Geneyro, 2020).

Currently, Article 3 of the Mexican Constitution has been amended thirteen times. The most recent amendments, as of the date of this research, were published in December 2024, transforming both the administrative structure of education and the core characteristics of the teaching and learning process. It should be noted that the following levels of education exist in Mexico:

1. Early childhood education, which consists of preschool, primary and secondary education, which make up basic education; upper secondary education is also considered.
2. Higher education properly refers to universities, with their educational components such as bachelor's degrees, specializations, postgraduate degrees, master's degrees and doctorates.

Across all levels described above, education is considered compulsory, universal, inclusive, public, free, and secular. Furthermore, it must take into account the dignity of individuals, with a human rights approach and a focus on substantive equality (Casillas, 2019). In addition to Article 3 of the Mexican Constitution, there are two implementing laws necessary to realize the constitutional vision: the General Law of Education, enacted in September 2019

to regulate early childhood education, and the General Law of Higher Education, published in April 2021, which governs higher education.

Added to this are major international agendas that resonate in **a normative discourse on what the right to education entails** (Alfonzo & Cobos, 2017). This is because of the importance of education in building fairer societies, where the discourse is built from equity in terms of equalizing opportunities, enforceability which considers the mechanisms of social pressure to demand compliance, and justiciability as the rights of legal security to demand the materialization of this right before the courts (Mercedes Ruiz Muñoz, 2012).

Therefore, the right to education is a normative, political and social construct, in constant tension between legal frameworks, public policies and social realities, and although it is a declared right, it must be guaranteed, protected and demanded effectively so that it can translate into real learning opportunities for all people, without distinction.

In this context, education has evolved from a normative aspiration to a necessary instrument for achieving personal autonomy —from basic to upper secondary levels— and **for the pursuit of freely chosen life goals** —higher education. This is because basic and upper secondary education provide intellectual training so that individuals can **function effectively within society**, while university education develops the tools to realize a life plan in scientific, technological, or cultural aspects through specialized knowledge linked to various professions **that generate income through professional practice**.

Educational policy indicators

To materialize this normative, social and political discourse, public policies are implemented, which in turn have different programs to influence with concrete actions embodied in operating rules for each program, and this is developed using the **Logical Framework Methodology (LFM)**.

This methodology is recommended by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) to generate logical decisions in the face of specific problems, **structured into steps that can be adapted to each country's specific context** (SHCP, s/f; Darío Cardona, 2002).

For this research, the last step of the **LFM**, related to the development of indicators, is relevant, since they are a fundamental input to evaluate, measure and identify whether educational programs and models are achieving their objectives, whether enrollment is growing and in what diversity it is growing, or whether, on the contrary, it is decreasing.

Therefore, it is essential to focus on indicators, since, although educational institutions have programs and models that guide the teaching-learning process in their context, **the indicator occupies one of the final stages and thereby acquires special relevance**: it allows evaluating, measuring and collecting key information for decision-making and continuous improvement; it is essential to build a source of objective and reliable data that reflect the reality of the institution (Ortegón et al., 2015).

Education in Mexico has a bank of general indicators, divided into categories, developed by the INEE, **organized into the following categories**: CS - Social Context, AR - Agents and Resources of the System, AT - Access and Trajectory, PG - Educational Processes and School Management, and RE - Educational Results, generating approximately 77 indicators of a public nature, related to:

Table 1. INEE indicator summaries

Category	Category Description	Representative Indicator
CS - Social Context	Indicators that contextualize the educational environment, considering demographic, social and economic factors that affect access, retention and educational achievement.	Percentage of school-age population
AR - System Agents and Resources	Indicators on the characteristics of students, teachers and managers, as well as the physical, technological and financial resources of the education system.	Percentage of schools with computers for educational use
AT - Access and Trajectory	Indicators that evaluate the entry, retention, progress and graduation of students in the education system, including coverage, efficiency and school dropout.	Terminal efficiency rate
PG - Educational Processes and School Management	Indicators that reflect the internal organization of schools, their teaching structure and the size of school districts, especially in multigrade contexts.	Percentage of multigrade primary schools
RE - Educational Outcomes	Indicators that measure student learning and the economic and social benefits derived from education.	Level of educational achievement (PISA/ ELSEN/EXCALE)

Information from the National Institute for Educational Evaluation in Mexico (INEE), which can be found at https://www.inee.edu.mx/evaluaciones/panorama-educativo-de-mexico-isen/

Of the indicators generated by the now-defunct INEE, it is clear that there is no specific dimension or category dedicated exclusively to Educational Inclusion. However, the topic is addressed **transversally across all categories**, as the Social Context category includes elements that analyze the characteristics of the population and its environment as determining factors of equity. Additionally, the System Agents and Resources category incorporates the analysis of certain student characteristics (such as those related to vulnerability or **special educational needs (SEN)**) and the resources available to address diversity.

For their part, the indicators published by MEJOREDU (2020) aim to identify areas of opportunity at each educational level, and provide valuable information for evidence-based decision-making, strengthen accountability, and promote planning and evaluation of public policies in the education sector at the early childhood education level —preschool, primary and secondary, and upper secondary— **with limited references to higher education**.

Table 2. MEJOREDU indicator summaries

Category	Category Description	Representative Indicator
Students	Indicators that describe the demographic, linguistic and academic performance characteristics of students at different educational levels.	Approval rate
Administrators and Teachers	Indicators that show the academic and professional profile of teachers and principals of basic, upper secondary and higher education.	Profile of directors and teachers
Initial Teacher Training	Indicators on the characteristics of students in undergraduate programs for teacher training.	Profile of teacher training students
Schools	Indicators on the infrastructure, services, materials and organization of schools.	Percentage of schools with basic services
School Supervisors	Indicators on the structure and characteristics of school supervision in basic education.	Percentage of school supervisory districts with more than 20 schools
School Councils for Social Participation	Indicators on the installation and operation of School Councils as bodies for participation in school management.	Percentage of schools with a School Council installed or in session
Educational Outcomes	Indicators that measure the level of academic achievement, schooling, literacy, and **labor market outcomes associated with educational attainment**.	Percentage of 15-year-old students with low performance in PISA

Based on information from the National Commission for Continuous Improvement of Education (Mejoredu, 2020), which can be found at https://www.gob.mx/mejoredu/articulos/indicadores-nacionales-para-la-mejora-continua-de-la-educacion-en-mexico-2020-cifras-del-ciclo-escolar-2018-2019

The indicators published by MEJOREDU, **as with** the now-defunct INEE, are not organized into a specific inclusion category, but they address the issue indirectly through various dimensions. This is evident, for example, in the Student Characteristics category, where the description of linguistic factors (such as Spanish proficiency or the use of an indigenous language) allows for the identification of indicators of vulnerability or risk of exclusion. Similarly, the school classification based on **infrastructure** is directly related to inclusion, since aspects such as the existence of ramps, signage for people with visual impairments, or access to classrooms and other physical spaces (via elevators or ground-floor location) are essential to guarantee universal accessibility to educational centers.

Additionally, ANUIES generates statistics related to the university student population, particularly regarding enrollment and graduation rates, disaggregated by gender, and the **DGPPYEE-SEP has** specific indicators for the undergraduate level, including **intake rate**, school dropout rates, and coverage.

Table 3. Educational Indicators by Category and Source at the Higher Education Level

Category	Indicator	Source of the Indicator
CS - Social Context	Percentage of population aged 30 to 34 with at least a completed bachelor's degree	INEE
Students	**Attendance rate among students with the academic background to pursue secondary, upper secondary, or undergraduate education**	MEJOREDU
Managers and Teachers	Profile of directors and teachers of basic, upper secondary and higher education	MEJOREDU
School-based and non-school-based modalities	School-based and non-school-based modalities **Total intake rate** School dropout Coverage with and without postgraduate studies	SEP
Enrollment	**Intake and Graduation** disaggregated by gender	ANUIES
Enrollment	**Intake and Graduation** disaggregated by disability	ANUIES
Enrollment	**Intake and Graduation** disaggregated by speakers of indigenous languages	ANUIES

With information from the National Institute for Educational Evaluation in Mexico (INEE), which can be consulted at https://www.inee.edu.mx/evaluaciones/panorama-educativo-de-mexico-isen/, the National Commission for Continuous Improvement of Education (Mejoredu, 2020), which can be consulted at https://www.gob.mx/mejoredu/articulos/indicadores-nacionales-para-la-mejora-continua-de-la-educacion-en-mexico-2020-cifras-del-ciclo-escolar-2018-2019 , the National Association of Universities and Institutions of Higher Education, which can be consulted at https://www.anuies.mx/informacion-y-servicios/informacion-estadistica-de-educacion-superior/anuario-estadistico-de-educacion-superior , and information from DGPPYEE-SEP, which can be consulted at https://planeacion.sep.gob.mx/estadisticaeindicadores.aspx ,

This last series of indicators, being focused on university enrollment, does not address inclusion in a deep way or with a clear **transversal axis**, unlike the conceptual frameworks provided by the defunct INEE or MEJOREDU. A critical point is observed in the information from ANUIES, since, although the association declares that it has indicators on disability and students who speak indigenous languages, **upon accessing and downloading its database, this disaggregated information is not available**.

Therefore, higher education indicators focus on measuring the presence or absence of enrollment, concentrating on key metrics of student flow, such as: **entry, graduation, dropout, coverage, and overall enrollment growth or decline**.

The problem then arises when comparing the indicators of the different levels — basic or initial education and higher education — given that there is an institutional effort to monitor and evaluate the programs and policies in basic education, generating indicators that, in addition to identifying the results in terms of entry and exit, evaluate the type of population —indigenous, migrant, with disabilities— the infrastructure, teacher training, supervision, social participation, the social or contextual conditions of the students and above all, the complete educational trajectories —access, retention, dropout, **degree completion rate**— which allows for a comprehensive view.

But in higher education, specifically at the undergraduate level, not only are there fewer public indicators, but these indicators focus on identifying whether enrollment rises or falls and by what proportion—dropout rates, coverage, admission, and graduation—which means that monitoring and evaluation at the higher education level is limited and the quality of learning, academic infrastructure, conditions of equity and inclusion, among others, are not measured systematically.

This may be partly attributable to the fact that public universities in Mexico enjoy autonomy, in addition to being subdivided into different types of institutions, **such as** Federal, State, Technological, State Public Universities with Solidarity Support, Technological Institutes, Polytechnics, National Pedagogical University, Open and Distance University of Mexico, Intercultural, Public Normal Schools, Public Research Centers among other institutions.

This has led to a fragmentation of university information systems and the absence of a common framework of indicators that allows for the systematic evaluation of their performance, coverage, equity and quality, from key elements such as gender perspective, interculturality, inclusive education and the evaluation of learning.

This asymmetry in indicators constrains comparative analysis across institutions, regions or educational models, which represents a major obstacle for the design of public policies in higher education since without data that reflect what happens inside university campuses it is difficult to identify **whether programs are effective and suited to the needs of their students**.

University Autonomy and the Construction of Indicators

Higher education institutions in Mexico are geographically distributed throughout the country's 32 states and their respective municipalities, and their first division is into public and private institutions; however, when considering only public sector universities, a wide diversity of educational models, administrative structures and curricular approaches is observed. This variety responds to regional needs, called territorialization of higher education, which implies generating educational models that respond to certain **knowledge regions** (Shirokorad et al., 2022), considering regional development (Vasynova, 2022).

The above is so, since public universities in Mexico enjoy autonomy which allows each institution to design its own university policies, plans and academic programs, based on the particularities of its university community (Cueto Pérez, 2018), **which constitutes a normative power**, so that within a legal framework the Universities can materialize the vision of the federal or state government, **as applicable**, but adapting it to the educational environment in which it is located, **in addition to the academic freedom afforded to faculty**, which allows them to adapt the teaching model, the curriculum and the form of evaluation to transmit knowledge (SJF, 2017, 2018).

This autonomy, however, also implies the responsibility to generate indicators that evaluate the relevance, effectiveness and continuity of these programs, in line not only with the constitutional mandate (Chamber of Deputies of the H. Congress of the Union, 2019), but also with the regulatory legislation on higher education (Chamber of Deputies of the H. Congress of the Union, 2021).

In this sense, every educational program must have indicators that allow its monitoring and systematic evaluation. Furthermore, since these are institutions financed with public resources, they are obliged to make their institutional work transparent, clearly with an emphasis on accountability, but also so that citizens know the progress in the different axes that higher education demands: quality, equity, relevance and coverage (Chamber of Deputies of the H. Congress of the Union, 2025).

However, one of the major gaps in the field of indicators is the effective measurement of educational inclusion, since counting the number of students with disabilities who enter and graduate cannot be considered **a sufficient measure of inclusion**, but rather it must be expanded towards the construction of **metrics that provide deeper insight into** the characteristics of students in vulnerable situations, including people with disabilities, indigenous people, Afro-Mexicans, migrants, among other historically excluded groups.

This requires the development of both qualitative and quantitative indicators that identify not only the presence of students with disabilities in institutions, but also the structural barriers they face, the institutional conditions that enable or hinder their retention, the suitability of the educational model, the administrative structure, evaluation mechanisms, and the real impact of university inclusion policies. Without this comprehensive perspective, there is a risk of maintaining an **unsubstantiated inclusion discourse**, reproducing exclusionary practices under a seemingly inclusive narrative, and **leaving a key issue in the construction of a more equitable higher education system empirically unaddressed**.

Methodology

The methodological structure of this research was designed considering the theoretical section as a frame of reference for formulating the questionnaire (Hernández Sampieri et al., 2014). The study not only seeks to identify the existence of inclusion indicators (quantitative and qualitative) in Mexican public universities, but also **examines** their application and transparency. Specifically, it explored the existence of internal evaluations, the percentage of inclusive enrollment, the availability of indicators to measure the impact of the growth in such enrollment, the incorporation of equity indicators in admissions processes, and whether this information is published to guarantee the public's right to information.

Within the design of the questionnaire, examples were incorporated into each of the questions, with the purpose of guiding the institutions in the interpretation of concepts that, by their nature, could be broad, such as vulnerable groups, inclusion and affirmative actions. Adding these examples was intended to facilitate a shared understanding among the **entities subject to transparency obligations**, so that the answers would reflect a common basis of understanding and allow for greater homogeneity in the information collected, with the intention of reducing ambiguities in the answers, ensuring that the institutions interpreted the key concepts under similar frames of reference.

The questionnaire was sent through the National Transparency Platform (PNT), using the mechanism of **entities subject to transparency obligations**, which allowed the selection of higher education institutions by **federal state**, which receive public resources and have transparency obligations, taking into account autonomous universities, technological institutes, intercultural universities, technological universities, state universities, federal universities, polytechnic and pedagogical universities, reaching a total of 328 institutions.

Questionnaire:

1. Does the university have internal evaluations on the impact of affirmative action? (Example: increased enrollment of vulnerable groups). Please attach documentary evidence (link or PDF), indicating the article, page or paragraph.
2. Does the university have data on the percentage of current enrollment that corresponds to groups benefiting from affirmative action? Please attach documentary evidence (link or PDF), indicating the article, page or paragraph.
3. Does the university have indicators to measure the social impact of these actions? (Example: job placement of graduates from vulnerable groups). Describe the indicators and attach documentary evidence.
4. Does the university have indicators on the increase in enrollment of historically excluded groups (e.g., indigenous people, people with disabilities)? Specify the data collected (e.g., percentages, absolute numbers) and attach documentary evidence.
5. Does the university have equity indicators in its admissions processes? (Example: acceptance rate by vulnerable group). Please attach documentary evidence (link or PDF), indicating the article, page or paragraph.

6. Does the university have mechanisms in place to publish or share the results of these indicators? (Example: annual reports, web portal). Please attach documentary evidence (link or PDF), indicating the article, page or paragraph.

Since the questionnaire was structured to be answered using a dichotomous scale —**yes / no**—, each affirmative response was coded with a value of one (1), and each negative response with a value of zero (0).

This coding allowed for an initial quantitative analysis based on **descriptive statistics, specifically percentage calculation** (Vilalta J, 2016). This analysis facilitated a first approach to the general results regarding the existence of internal evaluations and indicators to measure the percentage of enrollment and its growth, especially in relation to the inclusion of people with disabilities, vulnerable groups, among others.

This initial quantitative measurement was complemented by a descriptive qualitative analysis of the documentary evidence attached by each university, which allowed not only verification of the existence of the reported elements, but also a deeper understanding of key aspects such as: the type of internal evaluations carried out, the procedure for calculating the percentage of enrollment, the institutional perspective on the impact of these actions, the way in which these results are published and the equity indicators, both to measure the increase in enrollment and to evaluate the admission processes.

Therefore, once the common elements of the collected evidence were identified, it was also subjected to a dichotomous scale to identify the presence or absence of the common element; this was applied to questions 1 and 2.

In contrast, questions 3, 4 and 5 were oriented towards the identification of indicators. For this purpose, the qualitative evidence was reviewed and indicators were extracted, not considering their frequency of appearance, but their ability to represent key dimensions of the phenomenon studied. The result is presented as **a consolidated set of indicators**.

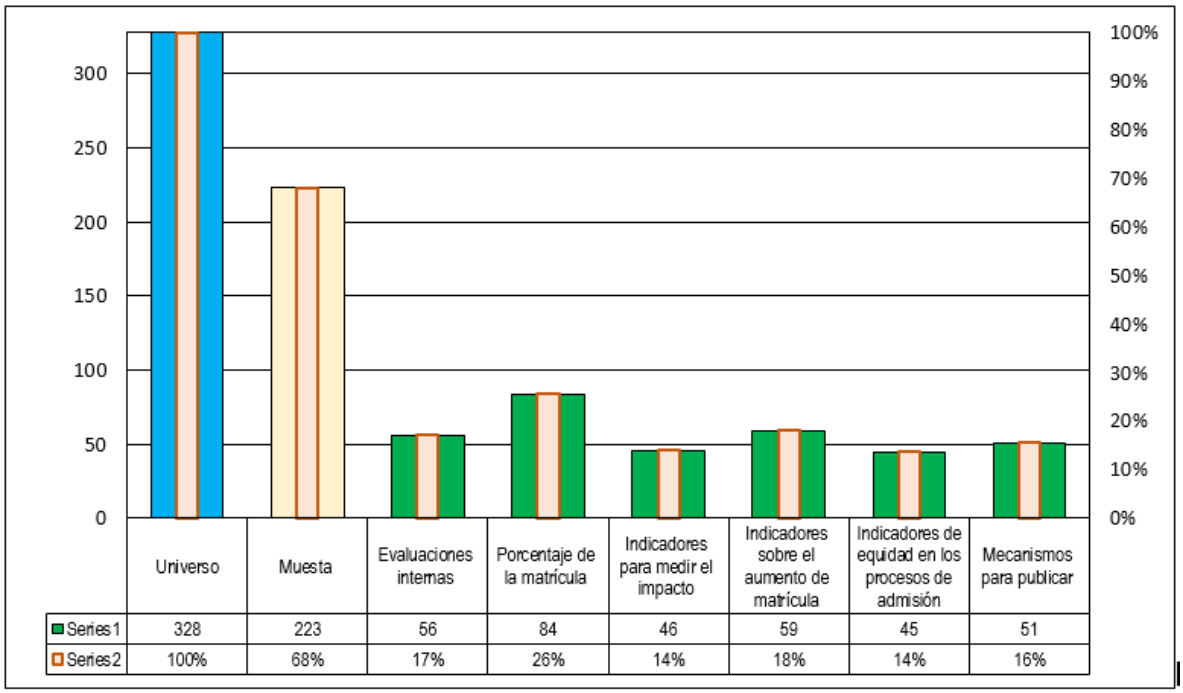
Regarding question 6, and given that each university uses **two or more dissemination channels, only the most frequently reported were retained for analysis**. Therefore, the results are presented by thematic blocks, respecting the order in which the questions of the questionnaire were formulated, and in each block the corresponding percentages will be shown, as well as the institutional practices identified through indicators,

with the objective of offering a comprehensive view of the current panorama in Mexican public universities regarding inclusion.

Results

From the **population** —328 public institutions— **223 valid responses** were obtained, **representing a response rate of 68%**. **Questionnaires were included in the analysis when they contained at least one complete response per item**, **accompanied by documentary evidence supporting the validation of the reported information**.

Figure 1. Universe and sample



Prepared by the author using information from questionnaires sent and collected through the National Transparency and Access to Information Platform

Based on the responses to **item 1, related to internal evaluation,** 56 public higher education institutions **reported having an internal evaluation system**. **Based on the documentation submitted by each institution**, **these internal evaluation systems were classified as follows**:

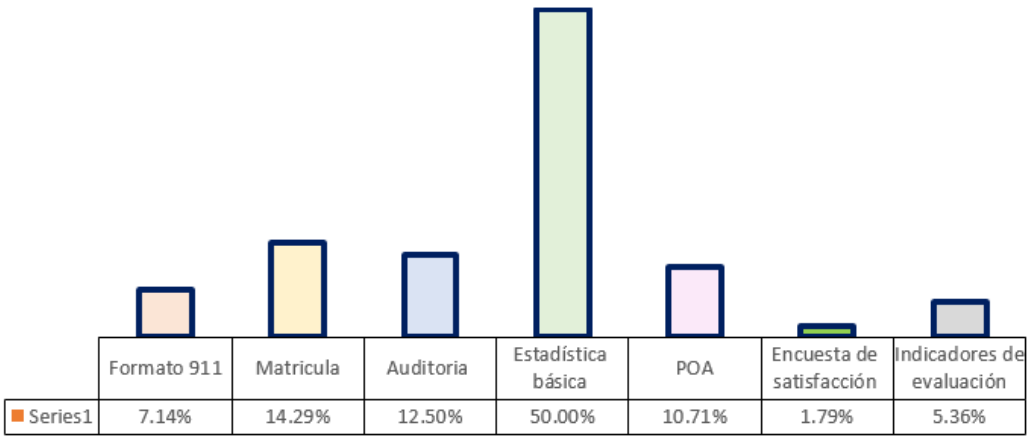
1. Format 911
2. Analysis by Registration
3. Internal or external audits

4. Basic Statistics
5. Annual Operating Programs (AOPs)
6. Satisfaction survey
7. Evaluation indicators

Form 911, Higher Education Statistics, was reported by 7.14% of responding institutions, **indicating that they use this instrument to record institutional information as part of their evaluation process**, which includes two categories related to vulnerable groups:

- Number of students who speak an indigenous language
- Number of students with disabilities

Figure 2. Percentage of internal evaluations



Prepared by the author using information from questionnaires sent and collected through the National Transparency and Access to Information Platform

Enrollment-based assessments were also reported in 14.29% of cases, **including data on student composition disaggregated by vulnerability status and indigenous background**. Additionally, 12.50% of institutions reported conducting internal and external audits **conducted by accrediting bodies**, highlighting audits of work climate, participation in the Higher Education Evaluation and Accreditation System (SEAES), institutional self-assessments under the criteria of the SEAES General Framework, incorporating **transversal**

dimensions such as social responsibility, gender equity, inclusion, innovation and interculturality, and quality management systems.

A larger percentage, 50% of the institutions, reported using **data drawn from** the Basic Statistics of Higher Education as part of their internal evaluation, which include reports from:

- Distribution of enrollment by program
- New students with a disability
- Students who speak an indigenous language
- Historical enrollment of recipients of scholarships for women in STEM

Some attached documents included lists and tracking tables of students with disabilities, which, because they contain personal data, cannot be made public; these records detail different categories of disability:

- Sensory: visual, auditory, and language
- Motor or physical
- Mental: intellectual, behavioral, and others
- Psychosocial
- Multiple
- Not specified or not determined

The institutions also documented, within the basic statistics, **the documentation of affirmative actions** related to:

- Scholarship programs
- Tutoring reports
- Psychological support services
- Accessibility analysis for people with disabilities

A smaller proportion (1.79%) of institutions also reported administering institutional questionnaires to students, with the aim of gathering information to assess the impact of these actions. These questionnaires include variables such as:

- Indigenous language speaker
- Disability (by type)

- Marital status (single, married, widowed, common-law union)
- Parental status (with or without children)

Additionally, **10.71% of institutions** indicated that they integrate statistics segmented by sex to evaluate the gender gap, especially in areas such as engineering, and considered institutional indicators associated with the results of their Annual Operating Programs (AOPs).

Regarding evaluation indicators, 5.36% of the institutions in the collected sample use:

Table 4. Internal evaluation indicators

Indicator	University
Students served in tutoring	Technological University of Hermosillo
Gender parity	Technological University of Hermosillo
Accessibility and inclusion index	Technological University of Hermosillo
Percentage of students with disabilities who receive academic and/or financial support	University of Sonora (UNISON)
Percentage of students from native and indigenous communities who receive academic and/or financial support	University of Sonora (UNISON)
Number of new infrastructure interventions for accessibility	University of Sonora (UNISON)
Percentage of applicants by marital status	Veracruzana University
Percentage of applicants by gender	Veracruzana University
Percentage of applicants who identify as Afro-Mexican	Veracruzana University
Percentage of applicants living in single-parent households	Veracruzana University
Percentage of applicants of indigenous descent	Veracruzana University
Percentage of applicants who speak an indigenous language	Veracruzana University
Percentage of applicants with disabilities	Veracruzana University
Percentage of LGBTTTIQ+ applicants	Veracruzana University
Percentage of students by gender identity	Veracruzana University
Percentage of students by sexual orientation	Veracruzana University
Percentage of students by ethnic identity	Veracruzana University
Percentage of students who speak an indigenous language	Veracruzana University
Percentage of students by self-perceived skin color	Veracruzana University
Percentage of sexual pressure exerted	Veracruzana University
Opinion on the right to abortion	Veracruzana University
Intimate partner violence	Veracruzana University
Violence on the part of the last partner	Veracruzana University
Percentage of bullying experienced at university	Veracruzana University
Types of stalker	Veracruzana University
Percentage of harassment complaints	Veracruzana University
Type of harassment in digital media	Veracruzana University
Discrimination in university spaces	Veracruzana University
Reasons for discrimination	Veracruzana University
Obstacles perceived through discrimination	Veracruzana University
Limitations due to disability in the institution	Veracruzana University
Hours spent on paid work	Veracruzana University
Hours spent on unpaid domestic work	Veracruzana University
Hours dedicated to unpaid community work	Veracruzana University
Hours spent studying	Veracruzana University

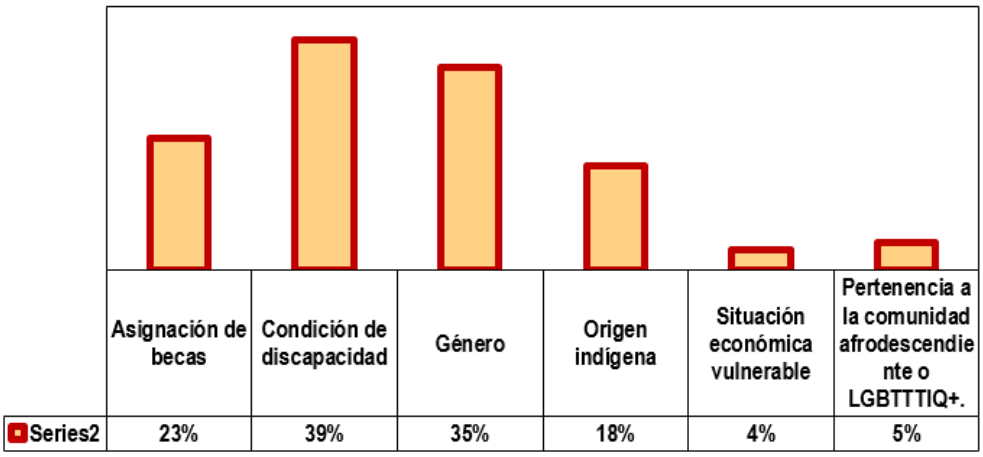
Revista Iberoamericana para la Investigación y el Desarrollo Educativo
ISSN 2007 - 7467

Indicator	University
Hours spent on leisure	Veracruzana University
Hours dedicated to sports	Veracruzana University
Hours spent resting	Veracruzana University

Prepared by the author using information from questionnaires sent and collected through the National Transparency and Access to Information Platform

Of the total responses received for the second item, **84 public higher education institutions reported having data to identify** the percentage of their enrollment belonging to groups benefiting from affirmative action.

Figure 3. Percentage of enrollment belonging to groups benefiting from affirmative action



Prepared by the author using information from questionnaires sent and collected through the National Transparency and Access to Information Platform

Among the most common criteria are:

1. Scholarship allocation
2. Disability condition
3. Gender
4. Indigenous origin
5. Vulnerable economic situation
6. Belonging to the Afro-descendant or LGBTTTIQ+ community

One of the most frequently reported mechanisms involves tracking enrollment by disability status (39%) and gender (35%); followed by enrollment disaggregated by institutional scholarship program (23%); indigenous community membership (14%); and, at 4% and 5% respectively, other vulnerability situations and Afro-descendant or LGBTTTIQ+ community membership.

Regarding the specific groups reported, the following were identified:

- **People with disabilities, including categories such as** visual, auditory, motor, intellectual, psychosocial, and multiple.
- Indigenous students, with records differentiated by native language.
- **Students in vulnerable socioeconomic situations: single mothers,** migrants, and victims recognized by state agencies.

Regarding items 3, 4, and 5 — all of which relate to indicators measuring social impact, enrollment growth among historically excluded groups, and equity in admission processes — the findings are grouped by indicator type and objective.

Table 5. Indicators for measuring social impact

Indicator	Purpose
Scholarships for women in engineering	Promoting gender equality in STEAM careers
Number of students with scholarships due to vulnerability	Measures educational access by economic or social condition
Number of students with disabilities	Historical tracking
Number of indigenous students served	Inclusion of indigenous peoples
Courses on gender equality	Measures awareness-raising actions
Students with special educational needs (SEN) served	Effective educational inclusion
Students completing a professional internship or social service requirement	Measures professional participation
Level of satisfaction with support services for students with disabilities	Evaluation of services for people with disabilities
Hierarchical level achieved	Placement in management positions
Percentage of awareness campaigns carried out	Evaluation of compliance with the AOP
Percentage of training sessions on equality and non-discrimination issues	Measures effective training
Percentage of graduates employed within 12 months	Measures early employability
Percentage of students who complete their studies	Graduation rate
Percentage of enrollment from vulnerable groups	Measures the proportion of students from excluded groups
Percentage of staff satisfied with inclusive climate	Measures workplace equality and gender perspective in accordance with standard NMX-R-025-SCFI-2015
Percentage of graduates compared to cohorts	Degree completion rate
School failure and dropout	Academic monitoring in tutoring
Job satisfaction and curriculum relevance	Professional performance evaluation
Follow-up with graduates (social impact)	Measures the contribution of graduates in their communities
Time to employment	Measurement by survey

Prepared by the author using information from questionnaires sent and collected through the National Transparency and Access to Information Platform

Based on the analysis of institutional responses and reviewed documents, **several quantitative indicators were identified for measuring** the social impact of higher education, particularly in relation to people with disabilities, women, indigenous students,

Afro-descendants**, and other historically excluded groups. The indicators are grouped into three categories: access and retention, institutional inclusion, and professionalization of graduates.**

Regarding access and retention, quantitative indicators are reported **measuring enrollment percentages for intake and graduation,** as well as the awarding of scholarships, students with disabilities, indigenous students served, failure and dropout rates, percentage of students who complete their studies, **and degree completion rate.**

Regarding institutional inclusion, the indicators reflect the awareness and training actions implemented. These include indicators that measure the percentage of awareness campaigns, staff training, and satisfaction with the climate of inclusion, in accordance with the provisions of the Mexican Standard NMX-R-025-SCFI-2015, **and student satisfaction with disability support services.**

Regarding professional placement **and graduate follow-up,** the identified indicators measure the percentage of graduates placed in the labor market in the first 12 months, the hierarchical level, **average time to employment,** the job satisfaction of graduates and the relevance of the curriculum.

Several indicators were also identified to measure **enrollment growth** among students belonging to historically excluded groups:

Table 6. Indicators on the increase in enrollment

Indicator	Purpose
Enrollment growth among vulnerable groups	Measures annual enrollment growth among students with disabilities and indigenous students
Disability by type (psychosocial, motor, visual)	Measures annual evolution by category
Historical record of students with disabilities	Enables comparative growth analysis
Enrollment disaggregated by linguistic diversity	**Identifies speakers of indigenous languages**
Number of Afro-descendant or LGBTTTIQ+ students	Renders social diversity visible
Percentage of admitted students with disabilities compared to applicants	Measures fairness in admission processes
Percentage of admitted students in vulnerable situations	Evaluates inclusion in admission processes
Percentage increase in enrollment	Measures annual impact of inclusion
Percentage of students with scholarships due to vulnerable condition	Links inclusion with support policies
Percentage of students with physical, visual, and intellectual disabilities	Measures disaggregated vulnerable enrollment
Percentage of indigenous students	Evaluates inclusion by ethnicity
Percentage of enrollment from indigenous communities	Reflects regional relevance

Prepared by the author using information from questionnaires sent and collected through the National Transparency and Access to Information Platform

The indicators focus primarily on quantitative aspects, measuring **enrollment percentages,** annual growth, distribution by type of disability **(psychosocial, motor, or visual),** as well as **the enrollment of indigenous students and** students with linguistic diversity. Universities report using historical records and **disability-disaggregated data** to conduct **comparative analyses** and identify **enrollment growth** trends among these groups.

As with the preceding category, the indicators used by universities regarding the admission process are quantitative, measuring the percentage of admitted students **disaggregated** by gender, disability status, vulnerability situation, or indigenous origin:

Table 7. Equity indicators in admission processes

Indicator	Purpose
Adaptation of facilities for students with disabilities	Evaluates compliance with inclusive infrastructure
Number of students with disabilities served	**Identifies institutional support during the school year**
Acceptance rate of female vs. male applicants	**Evaluates gender balance in pre-registrations**
Percentage of admitted students with disabilities compared to applicants with disabilities	**Measures equity of access for people with disabilities**
Percentage of admitted students in vulnerable situations	**Evaluates inclusion of students from vulnerable groups**
Percentage of students of indigenous origin compared to the total	Measures indigenous representativeness
Percentage of indigenous students receiving scholarships	Measures economic support for indigenous students
Percentage of indigenous and disabled students	**Measures equity by ethnic and physical condition**
Recording of vulnerable status at pre-registration	**Detects diversity through the admissions form**
Intake rate by gender and educational level	Measures coverage by gender at each level
Acceptance rate of vulnerable students	**Evaluates guaranteed access upon meeting minimum requirements**
Acceptance rate of students with specific conditions	**Enables equity analysis in admissions**

Prepared by the author using information from questionnaires sent and collected through the National Transparency and Access to Information Platform

One of the most common indicators is the acceptance rate of female vs. male applicants; specific indicators are also identified regarding **the admission of** applicants with disabilities and **those in** vulnerable situations.

Some indicators are recorded jointly—for instance, Indigenous students and students with disabilities—while in other cases, data is disaggregated to allow for a more detailed analysis of each group.

Others include whether these students receive scholarships; additionally, alongside percentages, acceptance and absorption rates are used by gender and educational level. To a lesser extent, the existence of indicators related to the retrofitting of spaces is reported.

However, there is a significant limitation regarding the nature of the indicators, as statistical approaches, or quantitative indicators, predominate, **without incorporating qualitative approaches that would capture** individual experiences, motivations for admission, **or the barriers faced by students.**

Finally, the item related to question 6, which deals with where all this **data are** published, is broken down to identify the most common sites used by universities to publicize this information:

- Rector's Report
- Institutional website
- Internal databases
- Transparency

Firstly, the rector's reports constitute a widely used mechanism; they are prepared quarterly, semi-annually, or annually, depending on the institution. As a second mechanism for publication, **institutional websites** are used; however, each university designs its website according to its administrative structure, so the location of the indicators may vary by **responsible unit, such as** planning, evaluation, **the rector's office, or** gender equality.

Information is also shared within universities via cloud services for administrative or auditing purposes, specifically those indicators that are part of the **AOP (Annual Operating Program),** which allow universities to systematize data related to institutional spending, program operations**, and** goal achievement. In this case, they are not always publicly available in their original form, but feed into the preparation of reports and institutional websites once **the data are standardized.**

Universities also publish their indicators on state or federal transparency platforms, such as the National Transparency Portal (PNT) or official sites linked to local laws as public information related to the statistics generated by **entities subject to transparency obligations. Additionally,** some institutions report publishing **their data** on specialized **platforms** such as the Educational Information and Management System (SIGED) and the SEP's Form 911 Capture System.

Findings

The findings emerge from a comparison between the theoretical framework and the results obtained through the methodology; in this sense, the **theoretical framework underscores** the importance of **indicators capable of systematizing the analysis** of educational policies at their different levels.

For the case study, focused on higher education and particularly on public universities, each institution constructs its own indicators and most of these are quantitative in nature and, although they **enable measurement of** characteristics and conditions of students in vulnerable situations —such as disability, **indigenous identity, migrant status, single motherhood, or economic need**—, universities tend to use **general gender-based indicators, from which they subsequently disaggregate by vulnerable group.**

This means that, although there are indicators that address the social impact, such as those related to failing grades, school dropout, or job placement, **these indicators are applied to the student population as a whole;** consequently, they do not distinguish the particular conditions of students with disabilities, who face additional barriers to accessing and remaining in work environments that, in many cases, are not designed to be inclusive.

Therefore, although the indicators exist, their homogeneous application places students with and without disabilities at the same level of analysis, **which renders structural inequalities invisible** that require differentiated attention. Another relevant characteristic is the marked prevalence of quantitative indicators. In the case study, only one qualitative indicator was found: an open question aimed at **investigating the reasons behind student withdrawal among students with disabilities.** This finding highlights the need to incorporate more qualitative indicators **that comprehensively capture the trajectories and experiences of students in vulnerable situations.**

Additionally, **the fragmentation of the platforms on which** universities publish this information was identified as **a concern, since no centralized repository compiles best practices or relevant indicators for monitoring, evaluating, and identifying inclusion actions within the teaching and learning process,** and this is especially relevant given that, although universities have academic freedom, **it is essential to ensure that students requiring inclusion are effectively supported through concrete, evaluable actions — both quantitative and qualitative.**

Regarding the population and the sample, although the sample **may appear** highly representative —223 universities, equivalent to 68% of the public HEIs and **entities subject to transparency obligations** to which the questionnaire was sent—, **this picture changes** when the results are disaggregated, since only those institutions that presented documentary evidence were taken into account for the analysis.

For example, the highest percentage corresponds to universities that **provided documentation evidencing how they measure enrollment percentages,** with a total of 84 institutions, **representing** only 26% of the sample. In contrast, **indicators related to impact measurement and admission processes show even lower rates, with only 45 to 46 institutions providing evidence — equivalent to just 14% of the total sample. This finding reveals** a significant gap between the number of **participating** institutions and those **with systematized, documented mechanisms for evaluating** their inclusion policies and processes.

Discussion

The initial premise of this research is grounded in the importance of indicators as a fundamental tool for evaluating and improving the educational function of public institutions, particularly universities. Therefore, when these institutions design, apply, and interpret indicators, they not only measure the achievement of their goals but also **generate insights for rethinking and improving** their educational, administrative, and institutional processes. Thus, indicators should not be understood solely as mechanisms for obtaining data, but as instruments for the transformation of education.

Regarding indicators of educational inclusion, **these acquire particular significance, given that historically, disability has been a marginalized issue on the public agenda,** which meant that many people were excluded from full access to fundamental rights (Castro Coria & Gómez Monge, 2021; López Munguía & Castro Coria, 2022). Higher education, in particular, became an institutional barrier in itself, since it has a specific characteristic: **students are considered autonomous agents by virtue of their adulthood, and parental involvement in the support process is no longer expected.** However, disability does not disappear in adulthood; on the contrary, it accompanies the individual and can be visible or invisible, as is the case with neurodivergence.

In Mexico, **research highlights how support models for students with disabilities** in higher education **have been instrumental in shifting the educational paradigm. Studies show that without changes to the institutional model, education itself undergoes no meaningful transformation** (Espinosa Enríquez, 2022). Furthermore, research indicates that **the absence of indicators capable of precisely measuring physical and attitudinal barriers hinders the evaluation of the effectiveness of inclusion-oriented actions** (Fraijo Figueroa et al., 2022).

Other studies have focused on the perception of the student community in Mexico, especially regarding the culture of inclusion, and while **a moderate inclusion index has been reported** in universities, **a growing favorable perception of the importance of addressing diversity has also been identified.** In addition, as areas of opportunity, the need to strengthen **institutional ties with students' families** and to design specific strategies to consolidate more inclusive environments has been highlighted (Piña Domínguez et al., 2022; Sainz Palafox et al., 2022).

Regarding vocational guidance, evidence shows that students — and particularly those with disabilities — **rarely seek out counselors or psychologists** as support figures during the process. This is due to a lack of strategies adapted to diversity, as students with disabilities themselves do not perceive a connection between their needs and the available vocational support (López González et al., 2022).

Finally, **case studies conducted at** the University of Sonora and the Autonomous University of San Luis Potosí **examine** the experiences of students with disabilities, and **the findings underscore serious limitations for students' professional development, stemming both from structural barriers within the educational system and from inadequate institutional preparedness to address diversity** (Cuevas Ríos et al., 2022). **Among the critical aspects highlighted are** the self-perception of disability in relation to the social environment, curricular obstacles, **and** the limited involvement of teachers in **learning processes** (Mendoza Saucedo & Méndez Pineda, 2022).

Conclusion

This research made it possible to identify the type of evaluation of educational policies aimed at the inclusion of vulnerable groups carried out by public universities in Mexico. Although these evaluations are diverse and respond to the particular needs of each institution and their monitoring and control systems, **they nonetheless enable the monitoring of inclusion policies.** As a result, it was identified that only a very small percentage of these evaluations are linked to specific indicators, since, in general terms, institutions tend to resort to formats and basic statistical analyses to identify the presence or absence of students based on variables **such as enrollment distribution by program, new student intake, indigenous identity, and scholarship eligibility based on conditions of vulnerability.**

These types of evaluations are integrated into the Annual Operating Programs (AOPs), which implies a link with the analysis of institutional spending and the actions carried out. It was also evident that public universities concentrate data on the percentage of enrollment corresponding to vulnerable groups, disaggregated by type of disability (sensory, motor, mental, psychosocial or multiple), indigenous language, as well as by socioeconomic and family characteristics (marital status, number of children), and this data is typically housed in admission systems and **internal databases managed by student records offices.**

A relevant finding was the identification of indicators that seek to measure equity in admission processes, the increase in enrollment, and the social impact of inclusive policies on the student trajectory. **The findings indicate that quantitative indicators predominate.** These measure, in percentage terms, the presence or absence of students in vulnerable situations, and are linked to broader indicators on student outcomes — including **degree completion rate,** academic level attained, time to employment, job satisfaction, and the relevance of the field of study.

Some specific indicators include the degree of satisfaction with special attention, courses on gender equity, the number of students with accessibility needs receiving support services, and **the provision of accessible and adequate educational spaces,** aimed at promoting retention and facilitating the graduation of these students.

However, these results still represent a limited proportion of the total number of public institutions in the country. **The analysis employed a dichotomous variable**

complemented by a qualitative approach, based on the examination of supporting documentation submitted by each institution. Data were collected through a questionnaire distributed via the National Transparency Platform, yielding a sample of 223 universities across the 32 federal states.

Future lines of research

As a future line of research, it is considered appropriate to submit formal requests — through the Transparency and Access to Information framework — to the same HEIs, seeking exclusively qualitative data regarding their inclusion indicators.

The above aims to address the construction and validation of qualitative indicators that allow the analysis not only of the presence of students in vulnerable situations in higher education, but also their trajectories, experiences and perceptions about the inclusive policies implemented by universities, which would complement the predominant quantitative approach with a more comprehensive and contextualized perspective — one that **renders visible** the barriers to and facilitators of inclusion within university settings.

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