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Access4all

Laboratory for Policies and Practices of Social Development in Higher Education

Good practices for equity and inclusion in Higher Education

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Foreword

Marcella Turner-Cmuchal
European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education

The United Nations (UN) estimates that there are currently over a billion people with disabilities worldwide. This means that over 15% of the world's population (80 million in Europe) is living with some form of disability (WHO, 2016). A conservative estimate states that 10% of the European population has some form of disability and between 2%–18% of the total school population has some form of recognised temporary or permanent educational need (European Agency, 2016).

These numbers clearly demonstrate that inclusion is not an issue for just a few.

The European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education is an independent organisation that acts as a platform for collaboration for the ministries of education in its member countries. Its mission is to help member countries improve all learners' achievement at all levels of inclusive lifelong learning. An important step in this collaboration on inclusion across European countries was defining a clear position on inclusive education systems. All Agency member countries have a shared ultimate vision for inclusive education systems:

... that all learners of any age are provided with meaningful, high-quality educational opportunities in their local community, alongside their friends and peers (European Agency, 2015a, p. 1).

Inclusion in education:

- is understood to concern a far wider range of learners vulnerable to exclusion than those identified as having disabilities or special educational needs;
- involves a curriculum for all that considers academic and social learning; curriculum goals and implementation should reflect this dual focus;
- is a process and not a state; educators will always need to move their work forward to enable the learning and participation of all learners.

If this is accepted for school education, it must also be available in higher education.

Access to education is a human right. This is most clearly stated in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities – CRPD (UN, 2006), which has been signed by 160 and ratified by 166 countries worldwide. Its Optional Protocol, which establishes an individual complaints mechanism from individuals or groups who claim their rights under the Conven-

tion have been violated, has been signed by 92 and ratified by 90 countries.
With this mechanism, the CRPD is a key driving force for change in the area. The Convention emphasises:

- the obligation to 'provide accessible information to persons with disabilities' (Article 4);
- the need for 'the design, development, production and distribution of accessible information and communications technologies' (ICT) (Article 9);
- the right to education 'without discrimination and on the basis of equal opportunity' for persons with disabilities and 'an inclusive education system at all levels and lifelong learning' (Article 24).

Article 24 is also specifically relevant for higher education. It states that:

States Parties shall ensure that persons with disabilities are able to access general tertiary education, vocational training, ***adult education and lifelong learning without discrimination and on an equal basis with others****. To this end, States Parties shall ensure that reasonable accommodation is provided to persons with disabilities* (UN, 2006).

These aims are further supported by the Bologna Process and here specifically by the Working Group on Social Dimension, the European Commission's Communication on Supporting growth and jobs – an agenda for the modernisation of Europe's higher education systems (2011) and the UN Sustainable Development Goals for 2030. Of the latter, Goal 4 on Education aims to 'by 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education … for the vulnerable, including people with disabilities' (UN, 2015). This is in line with the Europe 2020 Strategy, which aims to increase the share of the population aged 30–34 having completed tertiary education to at least 40% (European Commission, no date).
Numerous policies support equity in education on a European level. For example, the Council Conclusions: Support of the implementation of the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 specifically call for the support of:

… relevant initiatives aiming to ensure that persons with disabilities have access to quality education and training on an equal basis with others, so as to increase their knowledge, skills and qualifications in order to promote their mobility and employability (Council of the European Union, 2011, p. 5).

Through two specific strategic objectives, the Strategic Framework – Education and Training 2020 (ET 2020) also works to promote equity, social cohesion and active citizenship:

- Strategic objective 2: 'Improving the quality and efficiency of education and training'
- Strategic objective 3: 'Promoting equity, social cohesion and active citizenship' (European Commission, no date).

ICT is increasingly seen as a major tool in meeting individual learning needs. However, people with disabilities are at risk of being doubly disadvantaged if their access to appropriate ICT is not supported. They can become one of the main groups experiencing the growing digital divide.

ICT opens up a multitude of educational and life opportunities for people with disabilities and/or special needs. However, it also increases the danger of denying them these opportunities if the ICT is not:

- developed to be accessible and using universal design principles;
- available for those who need to access it;
- implemented in a way that it ties into learning processes.

This has also been recognised at European level and policies across sectors support access to appropriate ICTs.

Published six months prior to the CRPD, the Ministerial Declaration 'ICT for an Inclusive Society' calls to:

Enhance eAccessibility and usability by … Facilitating accessibility and usability of ICT products and services for all, with a special focus on people with disabilities, such that this will benefit everyone. This should be achieved by accessible digital content on all platforms, interoperable assistive technologies, and mainstreaming inclusive design and design for all in the development of ICT products and services (Council of Ministers, 2006, p. 3)

The Council Conclusions on Accessible Information Society (Council of the European Union, 2009a) also support the need for a design for all approach.

The Council Conclusions on Accessible Information Society (ibid.), on Post i-2010 Strategy (Council of the European Union, 2009b) and on Digital Agenda for Europe (Council of the European Union, 2010) stress ICT's importance and the ability to use ICT in all areas of life, including education, employment and the cultural and social environment.

With Opening up Education, the European Commission (2013) published its agenda to foster new ways of learning with the use of ICT and digital content. In this agenda, it states that:

… wider use of new technology and open educational resources can contribute to alleviating costs for educational institutions and for students, especially among disadvantaged groups. This equity impact requires, however, sustained investment in educational infrastructures and human resources (p. 3).

In addition to access to higher education and access to ICT in general, one must also consider the accessibility of information provided. Accessible information is understood as information provided in formats that allow every user and learner to access content 'on an equal basis with others' (UN, 2006, Article 9). Accessible information is ideally information that:

- *allows all users and learners to easily orientate themselves within the content; and*
- *can be effectively perceived and understood by different perception channels, such as using eyes and/or ears and/or fingers* (European Agency, 2015b, p. 8).

The key arguments for providing accessible information are:
- Access to information is a human right included in the CRPD.
- Providing accessible information has the potential to create synergies, which may equally benefit people with disabilities and special needs, the ageing population as well as all members of society.

This demonstrates how change towards more inclusive education in general, and inclusive higher education in particular, can happen. Top-down efforts through national and organisational policies on inclusion, to which employees on all levels must commit and are given the resources needed to implement them, can meet bottom-up efforts in which individual staff members in learning institutions become more aware of where there is exclusion and take ownership of the efforts to create inclusion.
The above excerpts from international and European policy highlight that inclusion in and access to education is a human right. The question is not if there needs to be inclusion in education in general and in higher education specifically, but how to effectively and successfully achieve this. One example was given on how inclusion in higher education can be fostered.

The Access4All conference aimed to promote systematic evaluation of institutional policies and good practices developed by higher education organisations in Europe and beyond, in order to foster the educational and social inclusion of under-represented groups, as well as of non-traditional learners. The conference addressed one of the most important features of the Erasmus+ programme: 'promoting equity and inclusion by facilitating the access to participants with disadvantaged backgrounds and fewer opportunities compared to their peers' (European Commission, 2017, p. 9). The conference promoted this through international comparison and case analysis provided by researchers and experts from six European countries: Finland, Italy, Portugal, Romania, Spain and the United Kingdom.
This publication brings together the inputs presented by scholars who took part in the conference, on behalf of 22 higher education institutions worldwide.

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Fostering good practices for vulnerable students in higher education: suggestions from Italy

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Keywords: Equity, Inclusion, Good Practices, Higher Education, Non-traditional Students

Facing diversity in higher education

The positive advantages of diversity on the higher education environment have been documented by a number of research. Drawing on people with different skills and experiences not only enhances ability in problem solving, but also improves learning more than when it occurs among homogeneous and more uniform groups (Gorard, 2006). Investigation shows that students who interact with peers from different socio-economic and cultural backgrounds develop more positive personal and academic self-esteem, graduate earlier and better, acquire leadership competences and higher commitment towards community engagement, as well as prove to be less exposed to stereotypes and prejudice biases (Bowl, Bathmaker, 2016; Bowman, 2011; Engberg, Hurtado, 2011; Espenshade, Radford, 2009; Fabricius, Preisler, 2015; Hurtado, Deangelo, 2012).

Nevertheless, face to the apparent benefits of diversity, current attempts to widen and reinforce higher education participation still deal with a number of challenges. Even though European governments repeatedly committed to the goals of increasing graduation rates and fostering diversity in higher education, the constant lack of financial support, combined with unfavourable demographic patterns, prevents them to reach such ambitious objectives (Guri-Rosenblit, Sebková, 2007; Huisman, van Vught, 2009). Consequently, universities still tend to be open to students that are likely to succeed from the outset more than those that are affected by economic, social or cultural drawbacks, so evading the duty of providing fair opportunities to all on an equity bases. Official national statements about the significance of adopting equity policies that would favour the enrolment of students from less traditional social and economic backgrounds are not followed by the implementation of congruent financial measures (Codling, Meek, 2006; Hazelkorn, 2008). University administrations emphasise that supporting non-traditional students is more expensive as, on the one hand, it entails more help and tutoring than traditional students and, on the other, non-traditional students are more at risk in terms of early leaving rates, which in turn affect universities ability to get funded. As a consequence, more economic funds would be required to guarantee that higher education institutions can promote effective actions in order to ensure access, retention, and com-

pletion of disadvantaged students (Reichert, 2010; Teichler, 2008; Van Vught, 2009).

Beyond the financial issue, the aim of widening diversity of the students' profile raises several additional questions. Diversity cannot be assumed as desirable per se, nor we can't take for granted that everyone see it as an advantage from the educational point of view, unless it is assumed and communicated as an intentional goal. Diversity can usually raise tensions and conflicts, as welcoming and accommodating non-traditional students implies a purposeful effort to tackle socio-economical, cultural and linguistic hindrances (Gale et al., 2010; Booth, Ainscow, 2011). Hence, it only becomes a desirable condition when it is considered as a value shared throughout the academic community. Furthermore, in an academic world dominated by the mantra of excellence, many universities are predictably afraid that expanding the share of non-traditional students would lower their overall academic scores and, consequently, jeopardise the ability of enrolling high potential students, who are commonly attracted by the good reputation apparently secured by the ranking systems so popular nowadays. Accordingly, universities are currently trapped in a double bind, as European and national policies, on the one hand regularly emphasise the need for widening access of citizens to higher education by increasing the number of non-traditional students enrolled, on the other are putting growing pressure on ranking and performance as the only way of justifying resources governments have been investing in higher education (Archer, 2007).

This trend concerns as well the increasing population of mature students, which represents a relevant portion of non-traditional learners currently attending university studies. The demographic decline of young population leads to intensify competition among higher education institutions to secure enrolment of the decreasing number of students and, at the same time, encourages to consider mature students as a promising market segment that could balance for the drop of younger learners (Crozier et al., 2007; Wilcox et al., 2005). The need for ongoing training and reskill in an increasingly dynamic work environment concurs to focus attention of universities on the same direction, through the development of post-graduate degrees and lifelong learning programs. However, higher education institutions conceived for young students struggle to adapt to the needs of mature students, which are considerably different in terms of time, personal drives, professional goals, learning abilities, and work time balance. Systematic enrolment of mature students requires considerable re-working from universities in terms of course organisation and flexible timetable, as well as an extensive review of existing teaching programmes and the adoption of alternative learning methods. As a consequence, even though mature students are seen as a crucial opportunity for higher education institutions involved in consolidating and expanding the population of learners, so far this vision has not been really implemented. Consequently, its impact on actual academic practices in European universities is still limited.

The limits of good practices

Beyond the challenges connected to the widening of participation to higher education of specific social, cultural or age groups, previous experiences from universities engaged in promoting diversity programmes show that focusing just on increasing the enrolment rates of disadvantaged students is not enough to achieve the goal of improving the inclusiveness of the overall academic environment (Archer et al., 2005; Ball, 2016). Although keeping the doors open is important, increasing the retention rate of vulnerable students is pivotal to warrant that they would be able to successfully manage and complete their educational path. Educational gaps are the by-product of the wider socio-economic circumstances that affect the students' context. Therefore, the objective of attaining more fair and open equitable conditions in higher education is strictly linked to the investment provided by EU and national governments in the public system of education as a whole. What many non-traditional groups of students have in common is a lack of confidence (often inherited from the family environment) in the way instruction can boost cultural capital and, consequently, multiply personal and professional opportunities, defying feelings of worthlessness and self-fulfilling prophecies of failure. However expensive could be the effort of providing support to vulnerable students, we have to bear in mind that costs of exclusion need also to be calculated in terms of negative implications the drop-out phenomenon has both at the socioeconomic and personal level, as it simultaneously hinders the ability to produce national wealth as well as individual wellbeing (Altbach, 2009; Deem, Brehony, 2005). This entails calling into question the common view of non-traditional students as subjects suffering from some deficit that they should overcome. Seeing students as "defective" in some way is the main reason of their difficulties in university environment. It diverts attention from barriers they face in all aspects of higher education settings and organisation and prevents identifying the real cause of exclusionary pressures that impede non-traditional students to access and succeed in academic paths. Therefore, adopting inclusive policies in higher education cannot be based merely on special programs addressed to meet the needs of specific students' groups, but requires embracing an overall strategy for inclusion involving the entire university body and warranting that policies have a real effect on the way disadvantaged students are perceived and treated (Brennan, Naidoo, 2008; Gidley et al., 2010). It implies that unambiguous statements about inclusion are incorporated in universities' strategic planning, ensuring project management that provide clear directions about the process to be implemented at all institutional and community levels. Such process links to all relevant aspects in terms of practices aimed at achieving more equity not only for the target students, but also for all learners, encompassing a number of objectives related to the way limited enrolment rules are managed, curricula shaped, teaching and learning strategies developed, and access to services provided. If inclusion involves challenging the way education reproduces socioeconomic and cultural inequalities, enabling the access of specific group has

to be associated with systematic questioning about the values that universities implicitly or overtly adopt in pursuing their everyday practices.

Non-traditional students are vulnerable especially because they don't own the same cultural capital as their peers. They miss vital information about what higher education implies and how they can have access to it. Moreover, even when access can be secured, the risks and costs of participation of vulnerable learners to higher education are greater compared to the other students. Even small critical situations can produce a deep impact on their ability to cope with the requirements of the academic career, as they face a system not devised to accommodate their needs but, on the contrary, conceived having in mind typical young, male, and white students belonging to the upper and middle class (Read et al., 2003; Wylie, 2005). Consequently, the urge to widen participation in order to support economic growth and sustainability of universities is insufficient to guarantee the entrenchment of the inclusive process into higher education institutions, unless it will be connected to clear-cut aspiration and commitment towards achieving social justice for all learners.

The Italian framework for good practices in higher education

Similar to other European countries, from the start of the Bologna process (the so-called 3+2 reform) the number of students coming from disadvantaged social backgrounds enrolled in higher education in Italy has increased, in parallel with the multiplication of curricula offered, which nearly doubled from 2001 to 2003 (Geuna, Muscio, 2008). Ten years later (2013), 74% of first-level graduates were the first in their families to get a degree (Cammelli, Gasperoni, 2015). Correspondingly, the percentage of non-traditional students increased from 20% in 2004 to 26% out of the total in 2013. However, during the following years Italian universities lost an average of 20% of first-year students, while rules overseeing the allocation of public funds to universities have been considerably transformed, putting more pressure on higher education institutions to compete for enrolling more of the decreasing population of students. Beyond the widespread demographic decline that affects many European countries, other elements that contribute to this situation in Italy are the ongoing economic crisis, which hinders families' ability to shoulder the costs of university education, and the worsening of graduates' employment opportunities. This combination of factors, as well as the lack of effective student support policies, explains why Italy (together with Hungary and Poland) is still one of the least successful countries in terms of academic completion, with a 46% rate compared to the 80% of Denmark. In summary, shorter courses promoted by reform that aimed to expand the population of students attending higher education were able to increase enrolment only in the very first years, while drop-out rates are still relevant spite the many initiatives undertaken at the national and local level. Research shows that cultural capital possessed by the students' family is the main factor associated with the decision of enrolling in uni-

versity. More precisely, children from parents that own only compulsory schooling are less likely to enrol in higher education (Checchi et al. 2008; Contini, Scagni, 2013). Family incomes also have a role on the decision of students, but only in the lowest tail of the distribution. Therefore, the influence of cultural (and sometimes also financial) limitations produces disaffection of vulnerable children from higher education, generating long-term disinvestment in human capital that in turn reinforces the transmission of marginalised conditions from one generation to the other, especially in students from lower social classes or migration background (Aina et al., 2011; Azzolini, Barone, 2013). This trend cannot be inverted simply through reforms aimed to transform higher education by redesigning curricula and courses. The Bologna process proved to be able to provide access, but not retention of disadvantaged learners. As a consequence, we need to acknowledge that "although the Italian university system has virtually no entry barriers, tuition fees are low and there are a large number of public universities, which, in principle, should give the same opportunities to children regardless of family background, the inequalities emerge both in the university attendance and in the likelihood of withdrawal" (Aina, 2013). Family cultural and economic context still overcomes such positive features of Italian universities, contradicting the recurring narrative of equity and fair opportunities usually recalled in official statements. Additionally, students from lower social classes or with a migration background are systematically directed to enrol at vocational or technical high schools, so excluding them from the possibility to attend higher education. Hence, measures as adopting a more flexible and comprehensive high school system, as well as reducing financial gap by ensuring that credit would be equally available to different income groups, are mandatory in order to guarantee that good practices aimed at fostering inclusion in higher education in Italy could be effective and sustainable, especially in the long run.

Good practices in Italy: a few examples

Good practices addressed to ease the access, retention, and completion of higher education of vulnerable students in Italy are traditionally based on a model of inclusion that focuses essentially on learners with disabilities (Dovigo, 2016). Special schools were abolished in Italy by the end of Seventies, so paving the way to the admission of disabled students to higher education. Even though law extended disabled students' rights to higher education from 2000, it took a while until they were actually considered ordinary members of the academic environment. Today, disability services are available in every Italian university. Situation about other vulnerable groups in terms of gender, socioeconomic conditions, learning difficulties, ethnic background, and so on is more complex, as provisions are connected to specific programs that each institution fosters on the basis of the strategic plan adopted. As a consequence, with the exception of services for disabled students, inclusive policies are spread in an unsystematic way in Italian universities, depending on available resources, re-

search interests, and institutional sensitivity to issues raised by students' pressure groups that advocate for more provisions.

Below we examine a set of good practices implemented by the universities of Bergamo and Trento, which are representative of the programs promoted nowadays in Italy by higher education institutions to encourage vulnerable students to attend university. For each practice, we will identify the target group and offer a short description of the main features.

- Educational counselling: it is meant to deliver assistance to students with disability and learning disabilities during their course of study by providing individual guidance and designing personalized learning programmes. The external educational counsellor supports students individually to lay out together specialized plans (IEP, PDP) and identify the best study method for each student.
- Peer tutoring services: the student tutor supports disabled students within their course of study by helping disabled students to get classes and booking places in the classroom, retrieving course material (if the disabled student was unable to attend classes due to health reasons), and mediating with teachers to individualise exam contents and procedures.
- Top 10 students: the program aims to exonerate by paying taxes and university fees up to 10% of students enrolled in bachelor and master degrees. Students have to comply with the required qualifications with regard to the academic track and family income. Students can also benefit from the additional financial support guaranteed by law.
- Two cards for transsexual or transgender students: while in the process to obtain legal reassignment of sex (with modification of the identification documents), transsexual or transgender students can be uncomfortable with the clear contrast between their appearance and their name when, for example, they are called out during exams. Consequently, the university provides students with two cards, one with the original name, the other with the new name.
- Asylum seekers to university project: given the high number of asylum seekers received and recognised in Trentino, in 2015 the University has involved the National Department of Health and Social Solidarity and local organizations, including the Opera Universitaria, to cooperate on developing housing and scholarships for young recipients. The Department selected some asylum seekers who participate to the project on the basis of specific competence criteria (prior qualifications) and merit (level of adhesion to the project).
- Tackling gender disparities: the project offers basic training at the bachelor level on gender issues to provide knowledge of contemporary discourses on gender. It also promotes specific post-graduate education courses, tackles gender inequalities, analyses critical issues for a gendered redefinition of the disciplines, and promotes awards and/or scholarships on equal opportunities and gender studies.
- Trust counsellor: following the issue of the code of conduct against sexual harassment and regulation for prevention and protection of workers against mobbing, the university hired a trust counsellor. The counsellor listens to and protects people who have reported to be a victim of harassment

and/or mobbing, and provides information and training about the various forms of mobbing and sexual harassment.

- Parenting support: started up as a pilot project in 2014/15, the project aims both to strengthen already existing services (such as the university nursery school) and to introduce specific measures in support of parenthood for the student population with children, by designing a system of services and benefits in connection to the economic situation of parenting students.

Conclusions

Good practices we presented above are aimed to widen participation of non-traditional students to higher education, focusing on specific needs and groups. Even though since their implementation these practices have proven to be effective and sustainable over time, they also pose some specific questions as universities attempt to further expanding their ability to support projects about equity and inclusion of vulnerable learners.

Firstly, as we observed, structural factors related to the socio-economic conditions and, above all, family cultural capital of students have a deep impact on their ability to enrol, and especially, carry on academic career, as the level of resiliency of non-traditional learners tends to be lower in comparison with other students. Consequently, the impact of good practices on vulnerable students can be reduced by the influence of such factors.

Secondly, investigation shows that good practices are not easily transferable from one academic context to the other. Even though they demonstrated to be effective in a specific environment, different conditions on the local level commonly preclude from using a “copy and paste” approach when adopting practices that successfully worked elsewhere. Hence, adaptations are usually required to meet the specific requirements of each university setting in terms of norms, organisation, culture, and targeted population.

However, such challenges should not prevent from promoting good practices aimed at improving inclusion in EU universities. To this, mutual understanding and collaboration among higher education institutions are pivotal in order to ensure that the goal of a more fair and equitable university access, retention, and completion rate of vulnerable students could be achieved in the next few years.

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Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona: good practices for equity and inclusion in Higher Education.

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Keywords: Good practices, Vulnerable groups, Higher education, Equity, Inclusion.

Introduction

The students' diversity is a fact in the current context of Higher Education. Many times, this diversity implies the emergence of multiples shapes and situations of exclusion and vulnerability that needed be considered and addressed by Higher Education Institutions. According to Castro, Rodríguez-Gómez and Gairín (2016), factors explaining exclusion in Higher Education can be classified into two main dimensions: intrinsic (i.e., personal characteristics and family situation) and extrinsic (i.e., institutional features and public policies).

Within this framework, higher educational institutions are developing programmes and actions of social commitment where equality, equal opportunities, social and cultural diversity, cooperation for development, etc. are established as the parameters for the action. These programmes and actions are understood as good practices for equity and inclusion of vulnerable groups in Higher Education and for supporting the social development in Higher Education.

Multiples activities, programmes, initiatives have been developed from Spanish universities related to vulnerable groups. However, it is worth noting that most of these actions have been focused on disability and gender equality as the key axes for supporting vulnerable groups (Fernández, 2013), although other criteria such as cultural diversity, social, economic and family situation burst in emergent and emergence initiatives and practices addressed to support groups at risk of exclusion in the Spanish Higher Education context.

In recent years, Spanish national policies have been aimed at facilitating and widening access by creating quotas or specific mechanisms for specific groups. Thus, for example, the document University Strategy 2015 (Ministerio de Educación, 2010), which explicit some of the priority lines for the Spanish university Between 2010 and 2015, highlights that one of the main challenges of the Spanish University is to "wide and facilitate public access to higher education"(Ministry of education, 2010, p. 16).

The Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB) is the reference context of this work. The Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB) is a generalist campus-based University, hosting

43.000 students. The UAB plays a leading role in scientific research and the wide range of disciplines represented promotes a multidisciplinary approach. One of the main goals of the UAB is to improve the situation of groups that may be disadvantaged for reasons of their sex, disability or economic or social situation.

This scenario requires the analysis and visualization of these vulnerable groups through the analysis of all those good practices addressed to support them. In accordance with this action line, this work aims to analyse and visualize some of the good practices that UAB is developing for equity and inclusion of vulnerable groups in order to support their access, retention, graduation and transition to work-life within the framework of the project Acces4all "Laboratory for Policies and Practices of Social Development in Higher Education", a project Erasmus+ funded by European Union.

The identification process of UAB good practices

Within the framework of this European project and in order to analyse all those good practices for equity and inclusion in Higher Education, a template was created as the instrument for working, collecting and sharing the good practice and more specifically, as a self-evaluation tool for identifying good practices.

The template considers different criteria for selecting the good practices. On the one hand, formal criteria such as access to information, timeframe, number of students, scalability, transferability, assessment, and contact. On the other hand, content criteria based on social justice principles of Nelson and Creagh (2013) (see self-determination, rights, access, equity and participation), and others such as collaboration, student satisfaction and student wellbeing.

In order to apply this self-evaluation tool, UAB working group's starting point was to determine which vulnerability criteria would be our referent for selecting and analysing the good practices. In other words, which vulnerable groups would be our referent or target groups.

The working group agreed a total of four vulnerability criteria that led to select eight initiatives and actions focused on four specific vulnerable groups. These criteria were: disability and educational needs (low educational level); social and economic situation (lower income in emergency situation); cultural diversity (foreign students); social commitment and development cooperation.

As it has said before, according to these criteria, a total of eight UAB good practices for equity and inclusion in higher education were analysed.

Regarding disability and educational needs criteria three were the analysed good practices: *PIUNE, Psychoeducational advising unit (UAP)* and the *Tutorial action plans (P.A.T.*).

Regarding social and economic situation two were the analysed good practices: *Finestreta* programme and *Itaca* programme.

Regarding cultural diversity two were the analysed actions under the same good practice: *Social and linguistic support* programme that identifies two interesting actions. The first one

Community Connecta programme and the second one *Ajudam* programme.
Finally, regarding the social commitment and development cooperation criteria, one was the analysed good practice: *The Autonomous Solidarity Foundation* (FAS).
All these programmes and actions have constituted the bank of good practices of the Autonomous University of Barcelona although these are only a representation of other good practices that currently are also being developed.
It is worth highlighting that all these good practices are closely interconnected; that is, some of the services, who develop and apply these good practices, work in collaboration. This is the example of UAP that works together PIUNE and FAS for developing common and complementary actions for supporting UAB students' access, retention, graduation and transition to work-life.
Likewise, it is worth saying that although some practices have a long tradition in the UAB such as PIUNE (active since 1993) or Itaca programme (active since 2009), to name a few; others emerge in front of the new social and economic situations. This is the case of Finestreta programme that is active since 2013, a programme that was implemented within the framework of the package of measures taken by UAB to support students with lower income at risk to drop out their studies.

UAB good practices. A general appraisal

The analysis of these good practices that constitute the UAB bank of good practices allows identifying the main characteristics of each one of those.
A general appraisal of these good practices shows how each one aims to work for making possible that university students can successfully access and remain at the university, finish their studies and go to work-life.
Within the framework of good practices addressed to students with disability and educational needs, three initiatives have been analysed, each one with its own characteristics but sharing common objectives: to guarantee the inclusion and participation of students with disability and educational needs in the university; to promote equal opportunities of these students; to personalized attention for knowing and offering solutions; to design action plans (services and resources) for answering needs for inclusion of students with disability and educational needs in the university and removing barriers for inclusion, participation and academic development (e.g. architectural, methodological, attitudinal, communicative barriers), and to provide personalized and direct attention to these students.
This is the case of PIUNE, the support unit for supporting the inclusion of students with disability and special educational needs (SEN). For achieving above mentioned objectives, PIUNE provides university community with training, information and expert's psychopedagogical advice, guidance and support for students and teachers, curricular adaptations, provision of technical, personal and material supports and resources, among others.

UAP, as the psychopedagogical advising unit for providing support to the ongoing learning process of students at the UAB, works along different action lines to cover learning and guidance needs in educational, social, professional and vocational areas, and to offer an entire series of activities that provide students with tools for their comprehensive learning process. It is possible through training activities, peer-tutoring programme, or gender programmes to prevent and avoid situations of gender inequality, discrimination and violence among the student community at the university, chats, awareness raising workshops and exhibitions are carried out, to give a few.

P.A.T., the last good practice that has been analysed under the umbrella of disability and educational needs, emerges from institution's need of organising all those activities for students' attention, as a unique plan for the phases of access, progress and graduation. It is characterized by being designed by each university centres according to their studies and in order to support and advise activities addressed to UAB students' taking decisions process about their adaptation to high studies at the initial and progress phases of studies; election of subjects and for the design of the academic curriculum; improvement of academic success therefore overcoming all those encountered barriers to subjects' demands; labour integration and transition to work-life; or permanence in studies of third cycle.

The two initiatives that have been analysed under the umbrella of good practices addressed to answer social and economic situations share common objectives like supporting and helping students for facing their studies and responding their basic needs, and to answer emergent unexpected social and economic situations.

This is the example of Finestreta programme that supports students with lower income and in emergency situations through grants related to the provision of a collaboration with the UAB; tuition assistance for those credits for the first time during the academic year; grants exemption from charges associated with the economic default of registration; aid connected with an internship; or to consider other funding committee.

Many times, these practices require starting to work during previous educational levels like high schools. It is the case of Itaca programme, a social and educational programme addressed to students of third academic year of compulsory secondary education in order to encourage them to continue their education once they finish the compulsory education. During one month, a range of students between 400 and 450 stay at UAB. During this period time, they develop activities and live the university under the supervision of university students as volunteer tutors.

The social and linguistic support programme is the action that is developed under the umbrella of cultural diversity criteria that aims to support foreign students in the UAB and to connect students with international background in order to enhance the exchange of knowledge, learn languages, and offer support to socialization. Under the umbrella of this programme two complementary actions are developed. These are the Community Connecta programme and the Ajudam programme. If the first one develops activities, services and resources for getting to know the language and culture, lan-

guage exchanges, and informal language practice (e.g. welcome activities, exchange programme Coordinators, tandem plan) and organises Catalan and Spanish courses adapted to students' individual needs for helping with language-learning; the second one facilitates the linguistic and cultural integration of international students to the university community while promoting the internationalization of local students at home.

As the last UAB good practice, under the umbrella of social commitment and development cooperation, the Autonomous Solidarity Foundation (FAS), the entity that contributes to satisfying special educational needs and achieving full integration of the groups whose equal opportunities in access to higher education are not guaranteed, especially people with disabilities, promoting the involvement of the university and its members; contributes to overall human training of students in the values of solidarity, tolerance, harmonious coexistence, liberty and justice; promotes volunteering and active solidarity initiatives among the university community; acts as a connection point between the university and society on social action topics, coordinating and collaborating with volunteering and social development organisations and institutions that have common objectives. In this way, FAS develops main actions such as counselling and technical assistance to University Community in the event of vulnerability situations; social responsibility; students' observatory (students' active participation); solidarity action and cooperation; or guiding of good practices of university cooperation for development.

Conclusions

As it has been said before, all those analysed good practices for equity and inclusion in Higher Education that constitutes the bank of good practices of the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona work in collaboration for achieving the same aim: to make possible that university students can successfully access and remain at the university, finish their studies and go to work-life within the framework of equitable and inclusive higher educational institutions.

All these analysed good practices are transferable to other contexts and represent the challenges that the current higher educational contexts and institutions are in front of.

In accordance with this context, two challenging questions emerge here. The first one is how can higher education institutions develop further good practices about equity and inclusion? The second one is how could collaboration among European higher education institutions improve good practices about equity and inclusion?

The answer to these questions is not easy although according to our reflection, and in the light of the results of these analyzed good practices, it is proved that collaboration and interactions among people and institutions increase the innovation rate, so it seems clear that if we are able to create a strong community of practitioners and policy makers interested in promoting inclusion in Higher Education, we will have the chance of developing more good and effective practices for inclusion.

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Promoting good practices for equity and inclusion in portuguese Higher Education: a comprehensive approach at the national and institutional level

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Keywords: Inclusion; Higher Education; Equity; Good practices.

General description of the context

The universal access of all people to higher education (HE), despite their socio-economical background, religion, ethnicity, gender or disability is a goal that has been gaining an increasing importance on a national and international level.
In Portugal, the issue of students with special educational needs (SEN) or in need of social support was first addressed at the level of basic and secondary education. With the improvement of the support measures and policies, a growing number of otherwise excluded students has been able to access higher education, which poses a series of new challenges to the Higher Education Institutions (HEI).

Especially since the 80's, the government has been producing regulations and laws in order to provide equal opportunities in access to higher education by students with special needs and disabilities. These general guidelines and regulations are the starting point, but much is expected from the HEIs to ensure a proper reception and specially the success of disadvantaged students in HE.
In the Polytechnic Institute of Leiria, a multidisciplinary team tries to assess and provide solutions for every identified case of disadvantage. Social Action Services, Student Support Services, a center of resources for digital inclusion and a research unit focused on inclusion, all reveal the commitment of the institution with the success of all students.
In respect to the availability of resources, the libraries are equipped with the WindowsEyes screen reader, allowing blind students access to all available information, with full control of the content. Through the libraries it is also possible to access the Open Library for Higher Education (BAES), which has a collection of over 3,000 titles in braille, audio and full text.
The Distance Education Unit uses the latest information technologies to provide any student access to all learning resources in IPLeiria.
The school year of 2012/2013 was the thematic year "IPL (+) Inclusive". This project aimed to encourage the implementation of a global policy of inclusion in all areas of action of the Institute and the surrounding community. The initiative is the result of over 10 years of institutional investment in the area

of accessibility and emphasizes the inclusion of diversity as an opportunity for personal and collective enrichment.
A selected number of good practices in the area of equity and inclusion will be presented and discussed next. As a result of the many years of dedication to the theme of inclusion in IPLeiria, many others could be addressed, but these five stood out as the most innovative and relevant.

Activities and instruments description

Good Practice: Educational Programme to Financial Literacy
Objectives: Understand the financial literacy level of the IPLeiria students; Improve financial knowledge on IPLeiria student community to:
- ensure a more appropriate choice of financial products and services.
- Raise awareness to the importance of saving
- Reduce dropout rates in IPLeiria
- Associate financial education to citizenship values and social responsibility

Good Practice: FASE® - Social Student Support Fund
Objectives: Support students from economically disadvantaged groups; Combat early school leaving and promoting success at school; Contribute to the consolidation of the educational path and strengthen academic and professional qualifications of students.

Good Practice: Production of support materials and use of the different support products for blind students
Objectives: Enable blind students to participate in society, particularly in the area of training in basic computer skills; Assess and provide advice about the types of equipment or products and their way of use; Support and train teachers in the use of supportive products and developing affordable materials.

Good Practice: Supporting higher education students with specific learning difficulties: dyslexia, dysorthographia, dysgraphia
Objectives: Psychological assessment of specific learning difficulties; Psychopedagogical intervention with higher education students.

Good Practice: Supporting group for higher education students with specific learning difficulties: dyslexia, dysorthographia, dysgraphia
Objectives: Psychological assessment of specific learning difficulties; Psychological and Psychopedagogical intervention with higher education students.

Results Achieved

Good Practice: Educational Programme to Financial Literacy
Results: At the end of the seminars, we ask students to fill a satisfaction questionnaire.

The results obtained show that students perceived that: the seminar was useful; after the participation in the seminar, students will change their behavior in relation to money management; the seminar improved their knowledge; what they learned in the seminar has application in their job; the participation on the seminar was important to their professional and personal development; the seminar met the expectations; they would recommend the seminar to other students.
Financial inclusion is an important part of personal wellbeing. Students that are not financially included and have problems with money will not be well integrated in the University in terms of their psychological, social, physical and academic life.

Good Practice: FASE® - Social Student Support Fund
Results: Annually, and since 2012, the Social Services promote the FASE® assessment through the development of an Analysis Report, on which the final goal is to achieve key indicators to evaluate the program, analyse the most relevant data for the calendar year referred to and compare them with those of previous years. FASE® is also valued by its users (students enrolled) from 2014, through an assessment survey, available online. The results, gathered from the survey are then compiled into a report. FASE® relevance is demonstrated by student responses, when asked to summarize their experience in the program.
The recognition of its importance and the students' identification with the program, has significantly contributed to increase financing available for its operation.
In 2014, faced with an increase in tuition fees, Students' Associations representing all students, voted for the increase of the FASE®'s funding in 1% more at the General Council.

Good Practice: Production of support materials and use of the different support products for blind students
Results: The project allowed the demystification of the visual disability along the whole academic community, transforming the Polytechnic Institute of Leiria in an open educational institution that respects the difference and equity of their students. The project contributed to the inclusion of blind students, since they have access to all the documents provided by teachers in the proper format according to their capabilities. The project positively influences students, as it allows them to be in possession of all the information according to their capabilities and in addition their full inclusion in all academic and social activity.

Good Practice: Supporting higher education students with specific learning difficulties: dyslexia, dysorthographia, dysgraphia
Results: There is no formal assessment of the project. However, the testimonies received and reported by the students during the sessions reveal the great impact of the project on their daily lives, especially in their academic achievements. To attain a higher level of success it would be necessary to implement specific laws that regulate strategies and make available support for students with special needs in general and specific learning difficulties in particular. It is also important to im-

prove teachers, staff and students training in special needs area.

Good Practice: Supporting group for higher education students with specific learning difficulties: dyslexia, dysorthographia, dysgraphia
Results: There is no formal assessment of the project. However, the testimonies received and reported by the students during the sessions reveal the great impact of the project on their daily lives, especially in their academic achievements. The psychological and psychopedagogical support intends to help students to create alternative responses to multifaceted problems related to specific learning difficulties, namely in personal and academic nature. By optimising different resources of personal, emotional, behavioural and social sources the self-perception of wellbeing is maximised.

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Good practices for ensuring access and equity in Higher Education

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Introduction

The European Commission funded Access4All project (A4A), involving six European countries including, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Finland, Romania and the UK, focuses on the challenges of providing greater access to higher education to participants from a wide range of under-represented groups. This paper looks at the evidence from the UK and outlines some of the range of national policies and practices for ensuring a wider participation of students from a range of backgrounds and also how to enable their success at university. Institutional practices are then explored at one university in England and three 'good practices' in particular are discussed in detail, namely 'Access to Bristol', the 'Student Navigation Network: peer mentoring scheme' and the 'Foundation programme in Arts and Humanities'. A template was created for collecting and sharing good practices within the A4A project and consists of formal and content-related criteria chosen for identifying good practices as well as information on factors required for the successful and sustainable implementation of good practices and in addition the challenges that may constrain its implementation. The 'good practices' at the University of Bristol will be discussed using this template and will focus on key aspects such as: timeframe and number of students; scalability and transferability and evaluation as well as the social justice principles identified such as collaboration, student satisfaction and student wellbeing.

The UK Higher Education System

The UK has around 160 higher education institutions and is ostensibly publicly funded although increasingly it relies on private finance, particularly student fees. Since the introduction of tuition fees following the Teaching and Higher Education Act 1998, these have steadily increased and following the Browne Review in 2010, fees were raised to £9,000 a year starting from 2012 in England. The other countries in the United Kingdom have different approaches with a no fees policy in Scotland and lower fees in both Wales and Northern Ireland. There was a concern that the increasing costs of higher education might deter applicants and so there has been commitment to ensuring increasing participation rates and including a wider group of participants from under-represented groups.

Widening participation into higher education of under-represented groups was a significant aim of New Labour gov-

ernments from 1997-2010 and assumed a high priority with significant policy programmes, funded organisations and activities. Widening participation was a key aspect of the 2003 White Paper The future of HE, which led to the 2004 HE Act. The Act introduced student fees, extended student bursaries and set up a new Office for Fair Access (OFFA). Significant funding was made available for new initiatives, including HEFCE's Aim Higher Programme, which operated with 42 area partnerships (142 universities and 800 schools) across England to encourage and support the participation of students from lower socio-economic backgrounds. There have been questions about the success of changes (Harrison, 2011) and of the underlying discourses of widening participation focused on "diversity" and "choice" (Archer, 2007). Harrison (2011) concludes that whilst there have been modest improvement in widening participation of those from state funded schools and from lower socio-economic backgrounds, this improvement has not been seen at the Russell Group, the prestigious group of top UK universities, thus continuing a system that produces "entrenched privilege" (p. 464).

The Coalition Government 2010-2015 (Conservative and Liberal Democrats) and the current Conservative Government made strident policy changes in relation to HE and this appears set to continue. Students at the heart of the system (2011) saw student fees increase to £9,000 per annum (payable after graduation when a salary of £21,000 is reached), substantial bursaries for students from low socio-economic groups, increased funding for OFFA and increased emphasis on institutional access agreements – where institutions set out their strategies to widen participation. Much of what might be seen as the gains for those students from lower socio-economic groups in the availability of grants and bursaries is being taken away by the policies of the current UK Government.

OFFA's Strategic plan 2015-2020 highlights key underrepresented and disadvantaged groups, which include: students from low socio-economic backgrounds and disadvantaged neighbourhoods, disabled students, students from some minority ethnic groups and care leavers (i.e. those who have been in the care of local authorities). Only some minority ethnic groups are included as others are successful in gaining entry and achieving success in HE. OFFA highlights improvements that have been made in increasing access to HE for students from low socio-economic backgrounds and emphasises the 60% increase in participation of 18 years olds, resulting in 18% participation in 2014. There is, however, recognition of continuing inequities, with students from more advantaged backgrounds being two and a half times more likely to enter HE and seven times more likely to enter universities with the highest entry requirements, pointing to the entrenched privilege mentioned above. This also holds for Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) students whose participation increased to 20.2% in 2013/14 but who are not well represented in highly selective institutions. The Government wants to double the percentage of people from disadvantaged backgrounds entering higher education by 2020, compared to 2009, and increase the number of Black and Ethnic Minority (BME) students going into higher education by 20% by 2020.

The University of Bristol and Widening Participation to Under-represented Groups

The University of Bristol is a highly selective, research-intensive, elite university. It is a 'high tariff' institution requiring very high entry grades for admission. It enrols a relatively low proportion of undergraduate students from under-represented and disadvantaged groups. In particular, as with other highly selective institutions, there are low proportions of students from low socio-economic backgrounds and BME students. In terms of BME students, the proportion is lower than for comparator institutions. The University is very keen to achieve a more diverse student community and has significant plans in place to achieve this, which are detailed in the Access Agreement provided to the Office for Fair Access (OFFA). A main focus of the Access agreement is the development of strategies to encourage undergraduate applications from low-performing institutions. The majority of the university's undergraduates are from predominantly more privileged backgrounds with a high proportion from private schools, though the percentage of students from state schools has been increasing. Bristol is unusual in that, in spite of being a prosperous city, the child poverty rate in the city if 25% and in the economically disadvantaged area of South Bristol is 44%. In addition, BME pupils and those with English as an alternative language underperform at all levels of education. The main thrust of access/widening participation strategies is, therefore, on supporting those from such deprived communities to consider higher education, ideally at an elite university such as Bristol.

Evaluation of 'Good Practices' at the University of Bristol

The University of Bristol engages in a wide variety of policies and practices in order to increase participation of under-represented groups. As part of the Access Agreement and the strategy to widen participation the University of Bristol invests approximately 31.2% of its additional fee income in access measures to include; financial support for students from low income backgrounds and a comprehensive programme of activities to support outreach, retention and progression of students from under-represented groups. For the academic year 2016-17, the university will spend £2.5 million pounds on outreach activities, £1 million pounds on student success and progression activities and £10.3 million pounds on a student finance package. The student recruitment team plan a wide range of outreach activities, including, Open Days, School and College Events, HE talks and workshops and Summer Schools. There is also a Widening Participation Student Support team and a dedicated advisor for Mature and Part-time students as well as a range of Disability Services for students requiring help with disabilities. From the range of policies and practices, I will outline and evaluate three, which represent activities both to increase the participation of students from under-represented groups and also ensure their success within the university.

1. Access to Bristol

Timeframe and Students

Access to Bristol began in 2005 and provides local students with an unprecedented opportunity to experience life at the University, gaining access to its academic expertise and facilities. The scheme is designed as a curriculum enrichment opportunity for students taking A-levels or equivalent (qualifications required for university entry). Students attend a series of sessions, including a variety of subjects within Sciences, Social Science and Arts and Humanities. Each session is designed to give students an idea of what it is like to study at the University, working with academics and current students who can offer advice and guidance about higher education and their chosen area of study. There is no qualification obtained at the end of the scheme but the aim is to enable students to attain higher grades that will give them the entry requirements for university. A ceremony is held at the University of Bristol to mark those who have successfully completed the Access to Bristol sessions. In 2015/16 Access to Bristol contained 23 subject streams (7 of which took place twice through the year), each of which required 6 two-hour academic taster sessions delivered by academic staff. In 2015/16 a total of 628 students completed the Access to Bristol programme. Students came from 68 different state schools/colleges across the local area.

Scalability and Transferability

Access to Bristol can incorporate a growing number of disciplinary areas across the university. It has grown significantly in scale since it began in 2005 and now operates two cohorts of participants every year. There is scope, therefore, to increase the programme. The model of taster sessions offered within Access to Bristol can also be done at a more ad hoc, local level such as other initiatives like 'Insight into Bristol' and also offering tailored talks for local schools. Similar programme are already running in many universities in the UK.

Evaluation

Pre and Post evaluation questionnaires are given to the students for all courses. There is evidence that participation has influenced the likelihood of participants applying to university. On the questionnaires for 2015/16, 98% of participants agreed/strongly agreed that they were planning to go on to university and 95% believed that they would enjoy studying at the university. There is also evidence that participants enjoyed the Access to Bristol scheme, with 96% agreeing/strongly agreeing that they enjoyed it and they liked the teaching with 97% saying that their subject leaders were enthusiastic about their subject and 93% that sessions were well prepared and well structured.

Applications to the university from participants are also monitored to measure progress in admissions from students from

under-represented groups. This data also informs the Access Agreement for the University and is used for the National Office for Fair Access (OFFA) monitoring returns.

Student Satisfaction and Student Wellbeing

The post event questionnaire provides evidence of student satisfaction and shows many positive statements from students who took part in the Scheme. Some quotes include:
“The Scheme was highly informative and most enjoyable, playing an important role in my decision to choose the university; the care and attention shown to each applicant has really made this university stand out” (Access to Bristol Student).

“Brilliant, well worth it. The scheme really gives you an insight to what it will be like at university; it helped me understand what I want to do” (Access to Bristol Student).

There is evidence that the course has provided a knowledge and skills base for the students but also increased their confidence in aiming for university study. In the 2015/16 cohort, 83 % of participants said that they felt more confident about going to university than before participating in the scheme. There were 71% who had made new friends. There were 81% who said that participating in the scheme had helped them to see their subject in a new light.

2. Student Navigation Network: Peer mentoring scheme

The peer mentoring scheme is part of the Student Navigation Network whose aim is to provide academic and pastoral support for students in their transition to university. The objectives of peer mentoring are as follows:

1. To foster a positive and inclusive atmosphere, improve their experience and encourage a sense of belonging.
2. To match mentors to new students from the time of students’ first arrival at the University and throughout the first year
3. To provide personal and professional development opportunities for students acting a s peer mentors

Timeframe and Students

New first year students are invited to take part in the scheme through a written communication, which includes a copy of the guide from the Student Navigation Network team once they have received their letter offering them a place. Non-traditional students are targeted with a further, follow up email to encourage these students in particular to take this up, although the scheme is open to everyone. Students wishing to take part and work with a mentor are asked to complete a short online form in early September. A welcome event is then held to introduce the scheme and for students to ask questions. Mentors (those providing the support) and Mentees

(those receiving support) are then matched. Mentors are all studying for postgraduate degrees. Mentors receive training and some have had specific training in particular areas, for example disabilities such as Aspergers syndrome and then work with students with particular needs.

The aim is to match mentors and mentees in September each year so that new first year students can receive support even before they arrive. This year, a new Welcome event was set up in a single evening, rather than several day-time meetings, split by faculty. Approximately 600 students attended this year. Once the link has been established, it is up to the Mentor and Mentee how often they meet up and how they stay in touch, although mentors are guided to make contact once a week until at least Christmas. Topics are up to the Mentee although this can include information on university life, advice on how to get around, where things are, social clubs and activities and tips on exams, coursework and study skills. In particular, the scheme aims for the Mentee to talk.

The scheme began in 2006 with a small pilot in the faculty of Social Sciences and Law. Since then it has expanded every year and in 2013/14 the scheme was extended to all first year students in the university. In 2015/16 1503 first year undergraduate students opted to have a peer mentor. This is 28% of the first year population. At least 338 (24%) were international students. From non-traditional groups of those who were known to be UK students (58%), the scheme worked with 181 students from ethnic minorities (11% increase), 114 students from low participation neighbourhoods, 45 students with a disability (18% decrease), and 28 mature students (although there were 62 mature students overall).

In addition, although not a widening participation (non-traditional student) measure used in the University's Access Agreement, students with no parental history of HE have also been identified. 247 students with no parental history of HE participated in the programme (69% increase). These students may require additional support in their transition to the University of Bristol due to having no parental experience of HE to draw on.

Scalability and Transferability

It has been scaled up from a small initial pilot in one school in one faculty in 2006 to a university-wide scheme for all first year student and numbers have increased year on year. The scheme is currently being considered for doctoral students in the university through the Bristol Doctoral College. Most UK universities have a similar kind of scheme and there is also a regional network for peer support that shares good practice (although not specifically focused on students from under-represented groups).

Evaluation

The peer mentoring scheme is evaluated every year through an online survey of the Mentees and Mentors, usually in Feb-

ruary. The survey results are then compared year on year since 2010/11. The survey results show that the scheme has grown consistently in popularity since its inception. In 2010/11 199 mentees participated in the scheme, in 2014/15 this was 933 and for 2015/16 this figure is 1503. This represents a 58% increase from 2014/15. The scheme is widely taken up by students from all six faculties (Arts, Biomedical Sciences, Engineering, Health Sciences, Science, Social Sciences and Law) with most uptake in Science and Social Sciences (342, 391). Number of contacts in 2015/16 ranged from 1(55), 2-3 times (113), 4-7 times (95), 8 times or more (18). 17 students did not meet their mentor.

Student Satisfaction and Student Wellbeing

The most recent evaluation report states that 84% of Mentees in 2015/16 felt that peer mentoring had improved their student experience. The more contact Mentors and Mentees had, the greater the benefit reported. In addition, for some students, just one contact improved their student experience 'to a great extent'. The following quotes illustrate this:

'Increased my enjoyment of the subject and helped me settle into university life.'

'Made me feel more confident and excited as we discussed all of my concerns and thoughts out starting Uni and moving to a new city etc'.

'Very comforting to receive a friendly email in amongst so many other computer generated ones from university, UCAS and funding places)'

'Really helped to not be nervous, helped me plan out what I would need to bring from my country, what I'd need to do, how to go about it and just made the initial days of uni very easy'

'Starting uni initially seemed less daunting. I was also able to meet up with my peer mentor during the mature student welcome events.'

The evaluation report details that following topics have been covered in peer mentoring sessions:

- Talking about social aspects of university life
- Settling into University life
- Study skills
- Exam/revision skills
- Understanding other aspects of university
- Accommodation issues
- Talking about personal issues
- Researching/planning coursework
- Understanding how my department works
- Other course issues
- Finding other sources of support
- Financial issues

3. The Foundation Programme in Arts and Humanities

The Foundation Year in Arts and Humanities is aimed at participants aged 17 or over 70 – or any age in between – and who come from any ethnic, educational, professional or social background. It is concerned not with what students have done in the past, or their prior attainments, but in what they have the potential to achieve in the future. The Foundation Year aims to equip them with the knowledge and skills to bridge their potential future study at undergraduate level.

Throughout the course students are introduced to a range of study skills that are essential for studying the arts and humanities at undergraduate level. Students also receive a broad introduction to each of the subjects covered by the course and how these have developed over time. By examining specifically what it means to be human, now and in the past, students look back over 2,500 years examining how the society we inhabit and the culture we share has been shaped by ideas, historical events, and works of art.

The course is one year full-time and involves two days per week at the university, including six hours of contact time and a minimum of 10 hours independent study. The course involves compulsory and optional units. Students are introduced to a wide range of assessment on different courses including; exams, essays, presentations and portfolio of work.

Applicants who complete the course satisfactorily are guaranteed a place on an undergraduate degree within the University Faculty of Arts and Humanities. Participants who achieve an overall average of at least 40% will have passed the course and will receive a Certificate in the Arts and Humanities. However, in order to progress onto an undergraduate programme, a higher level of achievement is required as follows:

- An overall average of 60% or above;
- An overall average of 50% or above and at least one unit mark of 60% or above;
- An overall average of 40% or above, subject to a progression review meeting

Timeframe and Students

The first cohort of students began in 2013 and in 2013/14, 24 students (89%) successfully completed the year. 20 are now in full-time undergraduate education: 19 at Bristol; 1 at Leeds. 2 also went on to study part-time elsewhere. From the 2014/15 cohort, 17 are studying at Bristol, and three have taken up places elsewhere, including at University College London and Kings College London. Students are achieving highly on the Bristol degrees, with some getting marks in the 70s and 80s on their first year units. The programme has been successful in recruiting diverse, talented and motivated students. There is an intake of between 25 and 30 students per year. Of 27 people on the course in 2014/15, 90% did not have A-Level qualifications. 72% were mature, 34% were local, 38% from low participation neighbourhoods, 20% had a disability and 20% were from BME groups. 78% of students had a household income of under £25k.

Scalability and Transferability

It is possible that this model could be expanded to include other Faculties within the university. This model can be utilised in different universities. It is perhaps more suited to the disciplines within Arts and Humanities. It could also be transferrable to non-University contexts (e.g. delivery in a prison or via a MOOC).

Evaluation

One of the chief measures of success has been the number of students who have progressed to degrees: 58 to degrees at the University of Bristol and 7 to degrees elsewhere. It may also be possible to have longitudinal studies, which track student outcomes beyond completion of their degree programme. The programme is evaluated yearly by its External Examiner, and is fully built into the university normal Quality Assurance structures.

Student Satisfaction and Student Wellbeing

There is substantial evidence from students about their positive experience of the course and how it has benefitted them.

'The best, and most surprising thing about the course was the lectures that hadn't initially appealed to me turning out to be really interesting. The variety of subjects on offer, the teaching style and the very different viewpoints of my fellow students made me look at things from varying perspectives. I think about issues much more critically now.' (Student)

One student talks about how they are on first name terms with the tutors and that "there's a real sense that we are learning together."
There is substantial evidence for how the course has helped to improve student academic skills and understanding as well as their psychological wellbeing as their confidence is increased.
One student says "I've been surprised by how easy the transition to being a student has been. I'm definitely a fish in water with a new lease of life…I feel that a person should follow their dreams. You're never too old!"

Conclusions

The University of Bristol remains a highly selective, elite university and there is a lot of work still to do to raise the number of under-represented groups within the institution. However, there are a lot of successful initiatives already in place as has been discussed here that aim to increase the participation of under-represented groups through access initiatives like 'Access to Bristol' and new Programmes targeted specifically at non-traditional entry students such as 'The Foundation Programme in Arts and Humanities'. There are also schemes operating such as the 'Peer Mentoring Scheme' within the univer-

sity to ensure a successful experience for all students as well as those from under-represented groups. Although, there are challenges in all of these areas, it is intended that the University will become a more diverse institution and will be a welcoming and supportive place for students from all backgrounds.

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Good practices for improving access, retention and success in Higher Education

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Introduction

In this paper, we will first present the evaluation criteria and template developed for identifying, collecting, and sharing good practices for improving access, retention, and success in higher education for vulnerable collectives and non-traditional learners. After that, we will present good practices collected at the University of Jyväskylä. The study has been conducted as a part of the Access4All project (2017) funded by European Union's Erasmus+ programme. The aim of this specific project task was to create clear criteria for identifying and evaluating good practices and methods, materials, and a platform for collecting and disseminating them. Platform was named as a bank of good practices. The bank of good practices is targeted to all people and institutions interested and involved in developing accessibility in higher education, who wish both to learn and evaluate other institution´s good practices and share and dispose their own practices under evaluation. In this project's context, practice refers to performing habitually or customarily a specific technique, method, process, activity, policy or strategy. To be a good practice, a practice has to serve the desired purpose better than the average practice. Good practice differs from the best practices in the sense that is a common practice that works, something that is actually practised, while the best practice is something that surpasses all others in excellence but may not be yet very commonly practised.

The criteria and template for identifying and collecting good practices were created in collaboration with the project partners but led by the University of Jyväskylä. The criteria was created based on a review of models such as Social Justice principles (Nelson & Creagh, 2013) and each partner's expertise on these issues. After the partner in charge of coordinating this task had created a first draft of criteria and template, suggestions were provided by the other partners. The first version of the template was then tested by each partner by describing one of their institutional practice using the template. Analysing the first good practices collected in one project meeting led to further improvements of the template and evaluation criteria. After final revisions were made, good practices were collected from both project partner higher educational institutions and from external collaborators. At the moment of writing this paper, a total of 54 practices from Finland, Italy, Romania, Portugal, Spain, and the UK have been collected and presented at the Access4All (2017) project webpage.

The template created for collecting and sharing good practices consists of a description of a general information to be collected on good practices. After that, it draws attention to formal and content-related criteria chosen for identifying good practices. In addition to this, it gathers information of success factors required for the successful and sustainable implementation of good practices as well as the challenges that may constrain its implementation. Table 1 presents the information collected by using the template

GENERAL INFORMATION	A. FORMAL EVALUATION CRITERIA
Title	**A1. ACCESS TO INFORMATION**
Key words	**A2. TIMEFRAME** *(initial, intermediate or advanced level of maturity)*
Objectives	**A3. NUMBER OF STUDENTS**
Phase of studies (*Access, Retain, Graduation, Transition to work-life)*	**A4. SCALABILITY**
Type of degree (*Bachelor's, Graduate, Master's)*	**A5. TRANSFERABILITY**
Level *(International, National, Institutional, Faculty, Group, Individual)*	**A6. ASSESSMENT** *(User evaluation, Self-evaluation, Peer evaluation, External expert evaluation)*
Name of the institution	**A7. CONTACT**
Location	
Target group/s	
Stakeholders involved	
Description of the organisational process	
B. CONTENT EVALUATION CRITERIA	**C. FINAL REFLECTIONS**
B1. SOCIAL JUSTICE PRINCIPLES *(Self-determination, Rights, Access, Equity, Participation)*	**Success factors**
B2. COLLABORATION	**Sustainability**
B3. STUDENT SATISFACTION	**Challenges**
B4. STUDENT WELLBEING	

Table 1. Template for collecting, evaluating, and sharing good practices in equitable access, retention, and success for higher education

General information collected consists of a title, keywords and from two to three main objectives of the good practice. Next, a person filling out the template was asked to name phases of studies, types of degrees and levels that the practice applied. In addition to documenting the name of the institution, city and country, specific target groups and stakeholders involved were asked. Finally, a general information included a description of the organisational process.

For formal selection criteria (A), the first criteria, (A1), "Access to information" was used to identify whether the information about the practice was publicly available. The second formal criteria (A2), "Timeframe", in turn, intended to find out not only since when the practice had been in use but also its maturity level and whether there was evidence of its duration in the long run. Criteria (A3), "Number of students", was used, in addition to documenting the number of students involved, to evaluate if the number was representative considering the target group. (A4), "Scalability", referred to whether the good practice had been or could potentially be both scaled up and practiced in a wider scale, and scaled down, e.g., from larger to smaller institutions. In (A5) "Transferability", attention was paid on its potential to be transferred and applied to different target groups, institutions, and societies. We also asked if there were some practices that this initiative was developed from or has inspired to. In (A6), "Assessment", focus was on how the practice had been evaluated and how its impact had been measured. Finally, in (A7), "Contact", we asked

who could be contacted so as to seek support and networks for implementing the practice.

In (B), "Content evaluation criteria", Nelson's and Greagh's (2013) Social Justice Principles were used as a first criterion (B1). In this section, we used both numeric ratings (1 = very weakly, 2 = weakly, 3 = well, 4 = very well) and an open space for justifying the rating. This section was divided into five following subcategories and questions:

- B1.1. Self-determination: Have students participated to its (a) design, (b) enactment and (c) evaluation? Is it possible to make informed decisions about the participation?
- B1.2. Rights: Are all participants treated with dignity and respect? How have their individual cultural, social and knowledge systems been recognised and valued?
- B1.3. Access: Has an active and impartial access to the resources (e.g., curriculum, learning, academic, social, cultural, support, and financial resources) been provided?
- B1.4. Equity: Does it openly demystify and decode dominant university cultures, processes, expectations and language for differently prepared cohorts?
- B1.5. Participation: Has it led to socially inclusive practices? Does it increase students' sense of belonging and connectedness?

Criterion (B2), "Collaboration", was added to the evaluation to find out if there had been collaboration between various stakeholders and if the practice increased this collaboration. We were also interested in (B3), "Student satisfaction", i.e., what the student perception of this initiative was and if there was evidence of their satisfaction, and in (B3), "Student wellbeing', i.e., how the practice influenced students' psychological, social, academic, and physical wellbeing and what kind of evidence there was on the improved student wellbeing.

There were also three following final reflections in the evaluation template.

- Success factors: What are the factors required for the successful implementation?
- Sustainability: What is needed for the practice to sustain? What resources are required? How it contributes to environmental, economic or social sustainability?
- Challenges: What are the constraints identified? How easy the practice is to learn and implement?

The evaluation template can be filled out by the people involved in the implementation. Information can also be gathered through an interview conducted with the people involved. The set criterion serves as a self-evaluation tool for identifying good practices. Before publishing a good practice, however, it has to go through an expert evaluation, i.e. is evaluated and accepted as a good practice by experts of this areas such as university staff members, policymakers, and student union representatives). When published, it is also exposed to peer evaluation.

Good practices at the University of Jyväskylä

The six good practices selected at the University of Jyväskylä (2017) aimed to give both an overall picture and different perspectives of the work that has been conducted at the univer-

sity in collaboration with various internal and external stakeholders. Information was collected either by asking people in charge of the practice to fill up the template or by interviewing them. Also different documents were used as a support materials for collecting information of the practices.

First practice, *Accessible education at the University of Jyväskylä* (2017) is university's strategy aiming at ensuring equal opportunities to learning and participation for all university members at the institutional level. It applies to all types of degrees and phases of studies starting from the access to the transition to work-life, and also work at the university. The strategy is targeted to everyone but particularly to community members with a disability, learning difficulty, ageing people, cultural or linguistic minorities or other personal characteristics or permanent or temporary situations requiring additional support.

Second, *Goodie operating model* (2017) aims at supporting student overall wellbeing and learning engagement. It applies all phases of studies at the stage of retain and graduation at the institutional level. The model is targeted to all university students meeting problems or challenges in their university life. Third, *Student Compass* (2017) offers guided online interventions promoting students' psychological wellbeing. Its main objectives are student wellbeing, prevention of problems, and development of wellbeing skills to be utilized during studying, in work and future life. It is applied on the institutional level to students at all degrees and in relation to retain, graduation, and transition to work-life. Fourth, gender equity in traditionally male-dominant subjects relates to equal study opportunities at the Faculty of Information Technology (2017) for both (or all) genders and transforming ways of thinking about IT. Actions apply from access to transition to work life in all types of degrees at the faculty level.

Fifth, University sports (2017) aims at providing all students and staff guidance and opportunities to do physical exercise thus supporting both physical and psychosocial wellbeing. It operates on a national level and applies to all university students and personnel. Sixth, Finnish student health service (2017) provides general, mental and oral health care services for students and promotes student health. It also aims to get students to assume responsibility for their own health (e.g., healthy lifestyles and physical exercise, relationships with other people). It is targeted to all university students except doctoral students during their studies. The Finnish Student Health Service is a nationwide service consisting of mental health professionals (psychiatrists, psychologists), general health professionals (doctors, nurses, counsellors, physiotherapist), and oral health professionals (doctors, nurses).

The following subsections present these practices from the point of view of formal and content evaluation criteria (see Table 1). After this, some final reflections are provided.

Formal evaluation criteria

Timeframe and number of students

In relation to formal evaluation criteria A4 Timeframe (see Table 1), Accessible education strategy (2017) has been vigent since Rector's decision, 24th of June 2014. Its maturity level is thus yet initial but arrangements have been made to assure its implementation and continuity in a long run, for example, by distributing of responsibilities between different stakeholders. In the case there is either a permanent or temporal need, all applicants and students at the University of Jyväskylä can apply for individual arrangements from University Services. Recommendations have been made to approximately 100 applicants and 50 students per academic year (Criteria A3, Number of students). Although the number is not high in comparison to student body of approximately 15 000 students, everyone has an equal right to apply for these arrangements.

Goodie operating model's (2017) maturity level for Finnish students is intermediate and for international students, initial. The practice was piloted with Finnish students during years 2011-2013 and from year 2013, it has worked as an established practice. Since year 2015, there has been a pilot phase for international students. Goodie wellbeing activities for Finnish students are based on 72 trained staff members in 19 departments thus covering nearly all university departments. Between 2013-2016 from the student body of 15 000, 1017 students have found their way to Goodie guidance. Piloting the Student Compass (2017) started, in turn, in Spring and the research in Autumn 2012. In 2013 the Student Compass was available for all students at JYU (Maturity level: intermediate). Between 2013-2016 there have been 2600 loggings to an online system and 231 students have met a coach in face-to-face sessions.

While the first three practices described are still relatively recent practices, *gender equity in traditionally male-dominant subjects* seems to be at more advanced maturity level. It has been more usual to have women highly represented in Faculty of Information Technology since 1970', especially in the Computer Science and Information Systems department. Since the definition of a broad faculty mission (approx. 5 years), more systematic work has been made in highlighting the importance of different and complementary perspectives in IT from all individuals representing both (or all) genders. Particularly in Masters' studies, there is a relatively high percentage (around 30 %) of female students in comparison to both earlier years at the faculty and in comparison with IT faculties in other universities. The department of Mathematical Information Technology continues, however, to be more male dominated than Computer Science and Information Systems department. For example, having more female coders is a relatively new phenomenon.

University sports (2017) has been working nearly 45 years. For example, a free sport course for students had existed nearly since the beginning of its existence. Based on the Master's theses (yet unpublished), the most active users at the university are from the Faculty of Sport Science (approx. 80 % of their students participate) and the least active users are from the IT faculty (approx. 29 % of students). The percentage of users in other faculties is around 50-60%. Finally, *Finnish Stu-*

dent Health Service (2017) has been functioning for 60 years. In recent decades, its services have become diverse. Also more attention is given to prevention and health instead of focusing on illnesses. More responsibility is given to nurses. Also digital tools are growingly used. All around 12 000 university students (not including doctoral students) are under these services. General and oral health services are frequently used by the students. Mental health services are used by the small percentage of students but this number appears to have increased in recent years.

Scalability and transferability

In relation to scalability (see A4, Table 1) and transferability (A5, Table 1), in *Accessible education* (2017) model, arrangements are already scaled up at the institutional level and scaled down at the level of individual units and people. Individual study arrangements have been further developed based on the practices at the University of Turku (Finland). Their transfer has thus already proved possible. Principles apply to all types of individual needs and can be thus applied to different types of target groups as long as a statement from an expert assessing individual´s needs are provided.

Goodie operating model (2017) has already been scaled up to include not only Finnish students but also international students. Scalability may be successful as long as the networking and collaboration with various stakeholders will be lively. The model could be used in any HE institution in order to develop low threshold counselling at department level. It requires relatively little resources as agency is given to university teachers and students themselves instead of external stakeholders.

University sports (2017) has been scaled up to offer some services for polytechnics (JAMK and Humak) in the city. Target groups are already wide: students, staff members, people with varying ages, varying sizes and varying health conditions, etc. participate. Based on international exchanges, there may be cultural differences obstructing the transfer. For example, in some countries university sport may be more focused on professional sport than student and staff wellbeing. Activities may also be more expensive, fixed and closed.

Student Compass's (2017) self-guided independently used online program could be easily scaled up or down. Regarding guided online ACT intervention (Assessment Crisis intervention Trauma treatment), it is recommendable to organize the coach support in work community or locally. Student Compass guided online ACT intervention may be transferred to other universities and be utilized by young adults in general in various communities and societies.

Practices related to *gender equity in traditionally male-dominant subjects* could be scaled up or down. The same principles of valuing differences can be applied to any issues related to equity. There may be, however, a need to better model these practices and be more systematic so as to assure the scalability and transferability. At this moment, practices are still more based on general culture and natural ways of working providing all participants with autonomy, and trusting that they consider gender equality aspects in their individ-

ual practices. These practices reflect societal values related to gender equity and equity in general.

There has been discussion of extending *Student Health Service* (2017) to cover Polytechnics. Transfer to similar higher education institutions such as polytechnics is seen as relatively easy. When considering transfer to other societies, some issues should be considered. For example, it is important to assure that the nurses are highly educated, as they are given lots of responsibility. Divisions in work and hierarchies between doctors and nurses may also obstruct this working model. The work is based on collaboration and trust between different professionals. There is a need to view health holistically from various perspectives. In some societies, doctors are very specialized in one area, general health care perspective may be more difficult to obtain. In some cultures focus on prevention instead of curing may also be challenging. And finally, society's welfare services may differ from Finland (KELA, the Finnish Centre for Pensions is a mayor funder of these services).

Assessment

In relation to assessment (Criterion A6, see Table 1) of *Accessible education* (2017), all university community members can report of accessibility challenges through an online form. The execution plan and actions taken are presented on the university webpage and can be openly commented by anyone. The actions taken are also reported each year to the university heads and student association. Also Equality Committee evaluates accessibility as a part of their equality planning. Within the limits of data privacy laws, quantitative and qualitative information is gathered on applicants' and students' wishes and needs to further develop the work. Also surveys are used to gather information. For example, there is a student survey every second year and Equality survey in approximately every 3 years.

In relation to *Goodie operational model* (2017), the developers have documented student feedback and Goodie adviser reports to be analysed for quality assurance. In Student Compass (2017), the feedback from the students who participate coach sessions is gathered by online questionnaire. Statistics of student access and retention are used to evaluate the gender balance within the faculty of IT (see e.g., University of Jyväskylä Equality plan, 2017). Also past projects such as *Understanding and Providing a Developmental Approach to Technology project* (UPDATE, 2017) have provided evaluation data. In addition to this, student surveys provide data.

University sports (2017) gathers feedback in many ways. There is, for example, a wide notice board where users can leave their messages. Messages written in one week's time are photographed and saved for the analysis. Feedback is also provided by means of surveys, and for example, in a Facebook. Student association has also organized theme weeks for expressing complains or providing positive feedback. Participants in the sport course write their learning diaries and also provide general feedback at the end of the course. *Student Health Service* (2017) is evaluated, for example, by a satisfac-

tion survey, online feedback, an electronic emoji-quick response tool. In addition to this, students in the Student Health Service board have organized surveys for students such as The Finnish Student Health Survey (2015).

Content evaluation criteria

Social justice principles

From the perspective of Social justice principles (see Table 1, see also Nelson & Creagh, 2013) and self-determination (B1.1), in Accessible education (2017) model, applicants and students are responsible of informing possible barriers and of applying for individual arrangements. When applying for these arrangements, group discussions are hold with the student, teacher, accessibility coordinator, and, if needed, with external experts. Student association and disabled students have been represented in with work group developing the proposal since the beginning. At the final phase of the resolution, student association and different university units could comment the proposal from their perspectives. In Goodie operational model (2017), students have not actively participated in program design but research results and students´ feedback has been taken into account in design, enactment and evaluation. The psychology students have actively participated in designing, enactment and evaluation of the Student Compass (2017). Students, and especially female students, are also actively involved at the Faculty of IT (2017), for example, through students' subject associations. At University sports (2017), activities are designed, enacted and evaluated in close collaboration with students (student association, subject associations, individual students…). In Student Health Services (2017), student board members actively bring students concerns on the table.

In Accessible education (2017) strategy, all individuals are provided rights (B1.2, see Table 1, see also Nelson & Creagh, 2013) of applying for individual arrangements based on an expert statement. Discussions related to them are confidential. In Goodie operational model (2017), actions plans for students are tailored to meet their individual circumstances by listening to their responses and issues. Piloting the English version of Student Compass (2017) was executed by a group of international students from various backgrounds in order to gather their views. The faculty of IT's (2017) approach highlighting everyone's individual traits instead of categorizing people based on their gender or other characteristics, can be viewed to respect everyone's rights. Students are also encouraged to participate in sport activities at the University Sports (2017) no matter what their background or skill level is. In Student Health Services (2017), information is provided in English and services are extended to foreign students as well. Training is also provided to professionals so as to be able to respect individual's fundamental rights.

These practices also seem to considers the access (B1.3, see Table 1, see also Nelson & Creagh, 2013) to information and services. Information is made available on webpages and social media (Finnish and English) and information sessions are provided for students. Accessible education model (2017) consid-

ers the access for personal, social, physical, and virtual learning environments. Practices and environments are also developed respecting the principles of Design for All (2017). For example, Student Compass (2017) is available online anytime for all students at JYU. At the University sports (2017) and Student Health Services (2017), services and activities are economical and even free of charge. Technological tools (e.g., text phone) are used to communicate with students with hearing or visual challenges. This communication is also sometimes facilitated by interpreters.

In relation to equity (B1.4, see Table 1, see also Nelson & Creagh, 2013), Accessible education (2017) strategy is based on the Non-Discrimination Act (20.1.2004/21) obliging authorities to alter particularly those circumstances that prevent the realisation of equality. While gender equity is supported at the Faculty of IT (2017), there seems to be gender-based preferences. For example, women tend to focus more on teaching, management, cognitive science and user-centeredness. There are more men focusing on coding. While breaking the traditional role divisions is encouraged, it is also possible that, for example, different cultures between two faculty departments influence individual's thinking and choices. At University sports (2017), the wide variety of activities enables equal participation for all. In Student Health Services (2017), questions regarding rights and equity are dealt in training for professionals. For example, there was a training considering people with transgender.

In relation to participation (B1.5, see Table 1, see also Nelson & Creagh, 2013), in Accessible education (2017) model, students have an active part in identifying their personal needs. Goodie activities (2017) have helped not only individual students but also affected the social environment by raising the awareness of responsibilities and possibilities to enhance student wellbeing. Student Compass (2017) intervention helps the student to find his/her own motivation and goals, which may increase the engagement in studies and belongingness in community. At the Faculty of IT (2017), students, and especially female students, participate actively, for example, through students' subject associations. There may be, however, a need to support male students in their social relations. Women seem to have stronger social networks than male students. This can be one factor also explaining why female students often advance better in their studies than male students. At University sports (2017), everyone is encouraged to participate; everyone is helped to find an activity suitable for them. Students from the IT faculty (seemingly less active University sport users) have been invited to test new pages for wellbeing so as to contribute to this work from their perspective. One part of Student Health Services (2017), are group activities (e.g., massage groups, conversational groups, weight control support groups, relaxation group activities, a group for students having eating disorders). Together with other possibilities to participate, these groups can increase students' sense of belonging and connectedness.

Collaboration

Networking and collaboration (Criterion B2, see Table 1) between various internal and external stakeholders characterizes all these practices. Some of the internal stakeholders are

- applicants, students, student ambassadors, University student services, University Services, University space services, heads of units or Deans, Faculties and departments, University teachers and other staff members, Personal study Plan Counsellors, University sport, Department for communication, Student association, and University subject associations.

External stakeholders entail, e.g.,

- Student Union, City of Jyväskylä (e.g., health and social services), public employment services, Finnish students' sport association, Finnish sport associations, ex-students (alumni), and experts in the fields represented by the university.

University Services are in charge for the planning, communication, guideline creation and overall support needed to implement accessibility, as well as for the coordination and evaluation of the activity. They work in collaboration with faculties and departments or other university units. Applicants and students inform about possible barriers and apply individual arrangements through University Services. Work is also done in collaboration with regional (Educational organizations, NGOs,), national (e.g., HEIs, NGOs, GOs) and international partners (e.g., student and disability organizations such as Nordic Network of Disability Coordinators NNDC, 2017; Inclusive Higher Education (ESOK) project 2006-2011).

One example of the collaboration between various stakeholders is a Health working group consisting of Student Health Service, University sport, Pastoral care, and student members. Finnish Student Health Service and University sports also aim at identifying services for physically more passive students. University Sports had also been collaborating with Student association in training of sport tutors for each faculty. Student Health Service as well as University Language Center inform students of Student Compass. Its online program is developed together with University IT-services. Goodie wellbeing advisors also utilize and recommend Student Compass and the online exercises. Student Health Service units also collaborate in each city. Students can, for example, use services from other city, if there is no such a service available in hometown.

Student satisfaction and wellbeing

Evaluations on student satisfaction (Criterion B3, Table 1) and wellbeing (Criterion B4, Table 1) on Accessible education (2017) indicate that these practices have increased both students' and staff members' awareness related to accessibility issues. The increased awareness can be seen on increased contacts made, new initiatives and development projects. Students also appear satisfied with the Goodie operational model (2017). According to feedback from the students (n=59), 95% of respondents found guidance useful (got the help needed), 44% found Goodies very good in giving new viewpoints to clear up their situation, and 35 % found them good. Further,

98% of respondents experienced that they were heard in their situation and 90% found it easy to meet Goodies and found the service easily accessible. Students have also reported that Goodie operational model enables searching for help in an early stage and makes approaching Goodies easy as they are near the student community and conversations are kept as confidential. Information on the evaluations will be available in university webpages soon in both Finnish and English.

Based on online questionnaires on students who participate Coach sessions in Student Compass (2017), participants have been satisfied with them. Participants' satisfaction with the program has been 7.8 (on a scale 1-10). Further, self-evaluations show that Student Compass increases wellbeing and satisfaction with life also some time after the interventions. The results were maintained at the 12-month follow-up. Student Compass intervention helps students, for example, to reduce stress and symptoms of depression. (See Räsänen et al., 2016.) Based on student surveys, gender equity is not viewed as problematic by students at the faculty of IT (2017). When it comes to psychological and social wellbeing, based on overall observations, male students may require more support than female students.

Based on feedback provided by students on the sport course organized by the University Sports (2017), students value experiences obtained during it. They perceive that the climate is open and permissive. It has helped some students to get rid of negative opinions about sports. Activities are seen to promote physical and psychological wellbeing and satisfaction. Foreign students have also commented that these activities have provided opportunities for social life.

Based on the feedback received by Student Health Service (2017), approximately 70 % of respondents would recommend these services to others. Services and care is generally perceived positively. Negative feedback is most commonly related to long waiting time. Student Health Service (2017) can be viewed as an important contributor to students' psychological, social, academic and physical wellbeing. For example, students can get help with their anxieties, stress, economical problems, pressure, life skills (sleeping and eating habits), heavy drinking, hectic life rhythm and good social life. (See The Finnish Student Health Survey, 2015.)

Final reflections

Success factors, sustainability, and possible challenges.

As a summary of the success factors related to these practices (see Table 1), the following factors can be identified:

- national and international legal support (e.g., Act on Equality between Women and Men 609/1986; EU Directive 2016/2102/EU, EN 301549 Accessibility requirements suitable for public procurement of ICT products and services in Europe);
- cultural and societal support;
- support from the direction and university strategies;

- collaboration, networking, participation, and engagement of various entities and individuals;
- university community's shared vision and values;
- higher education research and research and research-based solutions;
- the quality, high professionality, and positive attitudes of the staff working with accessibility issues; and
- an ambient of trust and overall satisfaction.

Developing campus, facilities, IT systems, services, guidance and knowhow based on Design for All/Universal design, fosters social sustainability. Social sustainability is also promoted, for example, by Goodie training including information on learning difficulties and university accessibility policy. Maintaining and developing wellbeing and health are also economically and socially beneficial both for the individual and for the society. Student Compass, from its part, is cost-effective, easily accessible for any student anytime and anyplace, it saves time and reduces need to travel. Online interventions require, however, IT infrastructure, development and maintenance.

Time is needed to implement these practices. Improving accessibility in all its dimensions is a long-term work. Due to economical limitations, it may not always be possible to realize immediately all petitions related to it. There is also a need for entities and staff who coordinate, develop, maintain, provide information, support and training, as well as evaluate these practices. Projects related to these practices have enabled working with these issues in a more systematic manner. The challenge is how to sustain these practices after the project funding. There needs to be readiness to change and constantly develop oneself and the organization, based on changes in the society. One example of changes is the rapid digitalization of societies.

As an example of possible challenges (see Table 1) on Accessible education (2017) , on one hand, there is a need for experts in accessibility issues in all types of planning (e.g., physical, pedagogical or technological environments). Implementation may be challenging if not enough information and expertise is available. On the other hand, instead of having only few experts of these issues, it would be also important to assure that accessibility would be generally considered, for example, in teacher training and architectural studies so that all important stakeholders would have sufficient information on these issues and they would be taken into account in a natural manner. There is also a risk that in group discussions for individual arrangements, student´s voice is not respected. As a critic to this practice, it does not appear as completely inclusive as students may perceive that special arrangements are for special need students, which can be stigmatizing (cf. Wray, 2013; Waterfield & West, 2005).

One challenge at the University Sports (2017) continues to be how to motivate people with negative perceptions of physical exercise. Student Health Service model as it is known now is a result of 60 years of development supported by the welfare state model. Finnish society, Finnish social security and health services is going through structural changes which may affect its autonomy and economical support. Savings may put

the quality and quantity of services in danger. There seems also to be a growing need for services such as mental health services and even support for basic life skills.
All in all, maintaining relationships with all stakeholders is challenging. The current tendency of increasing work efficiency may also obstruct working with these issues. Further, evaluating the effectiveness (whether these practices improve students' wellbeing and success in studies) requires longitudinal studies.

Concluding words

Based on the good practices collected in Access4All project (2017) so far, evaluation criteria developed, appeared as a useful tool for identifying, sharing, and comparing good practices for access, retention, and success in higher education. We argue that it is important to evaluate practices from various perspectives. For example, although a number of students (Criterion A3, see Table 1) using the service may help to evaluate its success from the quantitative perspective, each individual's rights for support should be considered no matter how many students take advantage of the service.
At least some practices involve and affect many stakeholders. Providing equal opportunities as the method and the aim when planning and creating the practice has been an arena of disputes and various interpretations. So even thinking of applying the practices in new contexts (A4, Transferability) seems challenging without further background information of the sociocultural context where the practice would be transferred. In this sense, self-evaluation of possible transfer serves only as initial reflections to be confirmed if transferred into other context. On the other hand, questions on transfer can be seen as the essence of broadening the access "to challenge thinking about dominant cultures and ways of knowing in higher education institutions" as in Social Justice framework (Nelson & Creagh, 2013 106). Likewise, scaling up (A5) the services is dependent on the availability of resources such as time, money, personnel, working spaces, information, and training.
Finally, when comparing practices at the University of Jyväskylä, some general characteristics of these practices seem to be:

- the focus on overall (psychological, social, academic, physical) wellbeing;
- networking and collaboration with various internal and external stakeholders;
- Services provided by the state/municipality for students (e.g., interprets, subsidies, discounts);
- no high hierarchies between different groups (e.g., students, university staff, doctors, nurses…), relations based on trust more than on control;
- students have relatively high degrees of self-determination, participation, and their voice is heard;
- connection with the principles of universal design, inclusiveness and equity; and
- piloting new practices before implementing them in a larger scale.

In our view, these characteristics reflect wider Finnish societal context, societal model, underlying values, support systems, and ways of dealing with issues related to equal opportunities for all thus making the transfer of these practices to other contexts as an interesting challenge to be considered.

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Good practices for equity and inclusion in Higher Education in Romania

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Keywords: Inclusion; Higher education; Equity; Good practices

General description of the context

Equity is a concept that is considered to be a priority to all governments and aims at developing equitable systems that will ensure that the „outcomes of education and training are independent of socio-economic background and other factors that lead to educational disadvantage and that treatment reflects individuals' specific learning needs." (European Commission, 2006, p.2)
Despite the currents initiatives taken at international level, current strategies and programmes have not been sufficient to meet the needs of children and youth who are vulnerable to marginalization or exclusion (UNESCO, 2005).

This is also the case of Romania where the risk of poverty and social exclusion fell from 45.9% in 2007 to 40.3% in the latest years according to Eurostat data. Despite this significant progress, Romania is still among the countries with the highest rate of risk of poverty and social exclusion in Europe, almost twice as high as the EU average.
The statistics made available by the Romanian National Institute of Statistics, as seen in the table presented below, show the number of students with disabilities that have access to higher education is gradually rising, but the percentage is fairly low, of about 0,07% of the total number of students.

	Students with disabilities				
Year	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009 -2010
Total students with disabilities	378	455	587	665	691
Percentage of total number of students (%)	0,04%	0.05%	0.05%	0,06%	0.07%

Table 1 Participation of youth with disabilities, universities qualification process

As for the inequalities between the distributions of students at bachelor level by place of origin the statistics show that the number of students coming from urban areas is three times higher than those coming from rural areas. (See table 2)

	Total	% public universities	% private universities
Urban	395475	75,26	76,84
Rural	127089	24,74	23,16

Table 2 Distribution of students at bachelor level by place of origin

Activities and instruments description

While analyzing the good practices available at national level when it comes to the equity and inclusion we considered necessary to identify target groups in order to better underline the necessity of a clearer strategic plan for inclusion. Therefore, we identified 7 categories such as:

- Orphan students by both parents;
- Students with financial problems;
- Students with medical problems;
- Students with visual impairment and dyslexia;
- Roma students;
- Students with remarkable learning outcome, with excellent research and professional activities, social activities, cultural and organizational activities;
- Students/citizens from tertiary UE`s states which want to study in Romanian.

Starting from the seven categories identifies above we look into the practices of two of the most important university at national level, the University of Bucharest and West University of Timisoara. After a closer examination eight examples of activities that aim at supporting disadvantages students were chosen to be presented as good practices. Those eight good practices and their aims are presented below.

Social aid scholarships

✓ Aim: to ensure financial support for students coming from social disadvantaged backgrounds. They will receive an amount of 80 euro (300 lei)with the condition that the student has fulfilled with his/her student's duties(attended university courses). The social aid scholarships are allocated based on the average monthly net income.

Occasional social aid scholarship

✓ Aim: to provide students whose family haven't obtained in the last three months an average income per month/ per family member less than 75% of the minimum national wage; maternity grant is assured to student or students whose wife has no income and consists it of a scholarship for childbirth and motherhood and a grant to purchase clothing newborn baby students; may be granted the scholarships in case of death of student's family member.

You vs. Stereotype

✓ Aim:to deliver of real information about the vulnerable groups, by setting meeting with people from vulnerable groups

Assistive technology Lab

✓ Aim:Help students to receive the education they need, also integrating them, making the place more accessible and helping teachers to create new and accessible ways of evolution and teaching depending on the type of special need the students have.

Special places for Roma students at Bachelor level

✓ Aim: To assure the access of Roma students to Bachelor Studies and help to continue policies and practices of social and educational integration of Roma people

Pedagogical Integration and Support Center

✓ Aim: Help students to receive the education they need, also integrating them, making the place more accessible and helping teachers to create new and accessible ways of evolution and teaching depending on the type of special need the students have.

Excellency scholarships

✓ Aim: to continue to motivate students to learn and be involved in academic activities. Students with a good activity towards all the years in University, research and professional activities, social activities, cultural and organizational activities are granted a scholarship of 120 euro.

Special scholarships for Olympics (only for the 1st at Bachelor`s degree)

✓ Aim: to assure the access of good students at a decent living in a big city and to continue to motivate them to learn and assure them their appreciation. West University of Timisoara grant annually a different amount of scholarships for students in the 1st year of Bachelor`s Degree which in their 12th grade have been on one of the first three students at a national Olympic or had participated at any international phase of Olympics, from the funds of university.

Preparatory year for learning Romanian language

✓ Aim: to help foreign students integrate in Romania`s system of HE and to have access at different opportunities of study. Helps them learn Romanian language and makes easier their social skills for the future.

Results achieved, materials developed

Social aid scholarships

✓ Results: this scholarship helps ensure financial support to students coming from social disadvantaged groups so that they could pay for their accommodation and otherexpenditure. It also have an impact on long term because the students that benefited from this aid tend not to drop out their course.

Occasional social aid scholarship

✓ Results: this scholarshiphelps ensure students social and financial support for occasional problems that stu-

dents encounter during their studies and it also have an impact on long term because the students that benefited from this aid tend not to drop out their course.

You vs. Stereotype

✓ Results: The project was evaluated as a success, the feedback was a positive one. At the end of the project a small group of people at the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences knew more about vulnerable groups, met vulnerable groups' people and for a whole week had the attention on what it really means a vulnerable group in Romania.

Assistive technology Lab

✓ Results: It was a good opportunity for blind students to have access to study conditions similar to those of sighted students by using equipment and assistive creation that are available in six centers. This project is going to be implementing in other centers, such as public libraries can provide access to a relative large number of people, not just those involved in university studies.

Special places for Roma students at Bachelor level

✓ Results: The Ministry of Education grants annually a number of places specifically for Roma students. This national policy is translated at institutional level by granting for each field of studies according a certain amount of places designated for Roma that want to access Bachelor studies.

Pedagogical Integration and Support Center

✓ Results: The social and environmental sustainability is easy to observe because this center not only that helps students with disabilities to graduate and to be present at their classes but also helps their families and teachers. Due to this kind of centers students with disabilities have a better chance in HE.

Excellency scholarships

✓ Results: The scholarships had a positive impact on students making them more implicated in university`s activities, more mature and motivated. This impact has been measured through the number of files that fulfill the criteria each year and are submitted at the Committee. In the selection criteria are not mentioned race, age, or ethnicity.

Special scholarships for Olympics (only for the 1st at Bachelor`s degree)

✓ Results: All students that have won different school competitions have the right to be accepted at any national university they apply for and they are exempted from paying the admission tax and university fees.

Preparatory year for learning Romanian language

✓ Results: This preparatory year for foreign students helps them to integrate in Romania`s system of HE and to have access at different opportunities of study. Helps them learn Romanian language and makes easier their social skills for the future.

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The Spanish version of the teacher efficacy for inclusive practice scale (TEIP-e): a tool to measure competence for teaching in inclusive settings

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Keywords: Teacher Efficacy for Inclusive Practice (TEIP) scale; Spanish version; preservice teachers; diversity; inclusion

Introduction

There is little doubt that the movement towards inclusion has made enormous impact on education systems and schools worldwide (UNESCO, 2007). While initially focusing on providing for students with disabilities in mainstream schools, inclusion now encompasses a much broader definition that refers to all students who may have been historically marginalized from meaningful education, who come from varied multicultural and multidiverse backgrounds or who are at risk of not achieving their full potential (Forlin, 2013). This educational trend has been encouraged internationally as a positive means of enhancing students' overall development and functioning and basically means giving access and bringing support services, when necessary, to all. Inclusion requires generalist teachers to be able to cater to the needs of the most diverse student population academically, socially, and culturally, responsibility that has impacted the task of teachers more than anything.

In this context, the need for all teachers to develop inclusive pedagogies has become increasingly urgent. This professional requisite is contained in standards for teaching (e.g. Ministry of Education and Science, 2007), but often it is inconsistently and ineffectively addressed in teacher education programs (Malinen et al., 2013; Specht et al., 2016). In practice, it is unclear how successful these programs are (Sleeter, 2001) or how many of them substantively address the need (Zeichner, 2003). In this sense, much research suggests that teachers are not well prepared to teach in today diverse classrooms and usually show serious instructional concerns related to their ability to design and deliver effective instruction for diverse learners in inclusive settings (Chiner & Cardona, 2012; Scott, Vitale, & Masten 1998).

In the field of teacher education for diversity and inclusion some researchers have explored the construct of teacher self-efficacy (e.g., Loreman, Sharma, & Forlin, 2013; Malinen et al., 2013; Park et al., 2016). Teachers' self-efficacy beliefs are commonly examined through the theoretical lens of Bandura's social cognitive theory (1977). It can be understood as an ex-

pression of confidence that one's actions may lead to success and mastery over oneself having a positive influence on others. According to Bandura (2007), self-efficacy is not something that teachers possess, but something that teachers believe they can do. All these studies have provided support for the factor structure of the TEIP (Teacher Efficacy for Inclusive Practice) as a tool to measure competence for teaching in inclusive settings and equity for all revealing that the TEIP scale is essentially unidimensional with one dominant latent factor and three specific factors representing unique aspects of the general factor of teacher self-efficacy to teach inclusively: Efficacy in Using Inclusive Instruction (EII), Efficacy in Collaboration (EC), and Efficacy in Managing Behavior (EMB).

Despite the relevance and potential of these studies, the validation of the TEIP for inclusive practices in non-English speaking countries remains an important issue. To date there is not a Spanish version ready to use with Spanish-speaking preservice teacher populations. An international study on this topic is important, relevant, and timely because teacher self-efficacy for inclusive practice has been found that it is an international construct understood equally well through different languages and cultures. In line with the above, the purpose of the present study was (1) to provide evidence of the psychometric properties (internal consistency, construct and convergent validity) of the TEIP-e designed within the framework of a research project 'Teacher Training for Diversity and Inclusion: A Preliminary Comparative Analysis' conducted at the University of Alicante, Alicante, Spain, in collaboration with the Institute of Community Integration, University of Minnesota, Twin Cities, Minneapolis, and (2) to have a tool to measure competence for teaching in inclusive classrooms. Further, we aimed to examine the factor structure of the TEIP-e, but also look for its potential invariance across program major and sex. As part of the study, the TEIP was translated into Spanish, and adapted to the Spanish socio-cultural context.

Method

Participants

The sample of this study included 503 student teachers (representing 70.68% of the cohort) enrolled in coursework in a university of the Valencian Community of approximately 24 625 students. A method of recruiting a convenience sample was used with special emphasis on the objective that students from Early Childhood and Elementary Education in their third and fourth year of the program would be included in the study. More than 70% of the student teachers in both programs, present in the classroom on the day the survey was administered, participated voluntarily in the study. Ninety-eight percent of the respondents were Spanish, and 2% of other nationalities, including British, Dutch, Italian, Romanian, Chinese, Latin American, Moroccan, and Filipino. The age distribution of the participants was homogeneous with a mean of

22.19 years old (SD = 3.68, range 20-52) for the total sample. Nineteen percent (19.40%) were male and 80.60% female. The majority of participants (97%) were full-time students.

Instrumentation

The *Teacher Efficacy for Inclusive Practices* (TEIP) scale developed by Sharma, Loreman, & Forlin (2012), translated into Spanish and adapted to the Spanish context (TEIP-e), was used in the study. The original TEIP scale consists of 20 questions examining different aspects of self-efficacy for preparedness to teach in inclusive settings. Questions that include issues relating to assessment, classroom management, instruction, working with others, and professional issues are answered using a six-point Likert scale of *Strongly Disagree* (1) to *Strongly Agree* (6). A higher score indicates more positive feelings toward self-efficacy specific to teaching in inclusive environments. The scale showed evidence of high validity and reliability (alpha = .89 for the entire scale; .93, .85, and .85 for each factor, respectively) (Loreman, Sharma, & Forlin, 2013).

Procedure

Sampling was conducted in the second semester of the academic year 2015-2016. As a prerequisite to completing the survey, the students were given a working definition of diversity (Queensborough Community College, n.d.). This stated that diversity should be taken to mean 'Understanding that each individual is unique, and recognizing individual differences and its educational effects based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical abilities, learning ability and learning styles, religious beliefs, political beliefs, or other ideologies.' They were also given a definition of inclusion stating that it is the process by which 'mainstream schools accommodate a full diversity of students.' The participants answered the questionnaires during class time after gaining permission of the Dean's Faculty of Education and instructors. The questionnaire took 15-20 minutes to complete.

Data analysis

Statistical analyses were conducted using SPSS version 23.0. A descriptive analysis was run using means, standard deviations, and percentages. Internal consistency of the scale items and its subscales were examined using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. To check construct validity, a factor analysis of the main components with Varimax rotation was performed as this was less dependent on the sample and, as such, more reproducible. This type of analysis allowed us to explore the dimensionality of the Spanish version of the TEIP scale. Convergent validity was assessed using Pearson correlation coefficient with other measures such as (a) teacher program mission, (b) program opportunities for teacher competence development on

diversity and inclusion, and (c) self-confidence on preparedness to teach in inclusive classrooms.

Results and conclusion

The TEIP-e (Table 1) demonstrated high internal consistency displaying Cronbach alpha coefficients higher than those reported in previous studies (> .90) (Park et al., 2016; Sharma et al., 2012; Savolainen et al., 2012).

Table 1
Teacher Efficacy for Inclusive Practice scale (Spanish and English versions)

1. *Sé hacer uso de una variedad de estrategias de evaluación (e.g., evaluación de portafolio, modificar/adaptar pruebas de evaluación, evaluación basada en el logro, etc.)* [I can use a variety of assessment strategies (for example, portfolio assessment, modified tests, performance-based assessment, etc.).]
2. *Soy capaz de proporcionar explicaciones alternativas o ejemplos al alumnado que no entienda lo explicado.* [I am able to provide an alternate explanation or example when students are confused.]
3. *Soy capaz de diseñar tareas de aprendizaje adaptadas a las necesidades individuales del alumnado con discapacidad u otras necesidades de apoyo.* [I am confident in designing learning tasks so that the individual needs of students with disabilities are accommodated.]
4. *Sé estimar con precisión lo que el alumnado haya entendido de lo explicado*. [I can accurately gauge student comprehension of what I have taught.]
5. *Puedo proporcionar desafíos apropiados a los estudiantes muy capaces*. [I can provide appropriate challenges for very capable students.]
6. *Confío en mi capacidad de hacer que los alumnos trabajen juntos en pareja o en pequeños grupos*. [I am confident in my ability to get students to work together in pairs or in small groups.]
7. *Confío en mi capacidad para prevenir el comportamiento disruptivo en el aula antes de que ocurra*. [I am confident in my ability to prevent disruptive behavior in the classroom before it occurs.]
8. *Puedo controlar el comportamiento disruptivo en el aula*. [I can control disruptive behavior in the classroom.]
9. *Soy capaz de apaciguar al estudiante perturbador o ruidoso*. [I am able to calm a student who is disruptive or noisy.]
10. *Soy capaz de hacer cumplir las reglas y normas de clase*. [I am able to get children to follow classroom rules.]
11. *Confío en mi habilidad de tratar con estudiantes físicamente agresivos*. [I am confident when dealing with students who are physically aggressive.]
12. *Sé cómo hacer explícitas mis expectativas sobre el comportamiento de los estudiantes.* [I can make my expectations clear about student behavior.]
13. *Sé orientar a las familias para que ayuden a sus hijos a rendir bien en la escuela*. [I can assist families in helping their children do well in school.]
14. *Puedo mejorar el aprendizaje del alumnado que experimenta dificultades*. [I can improve the learning of a student who is failing.]
15. *Soy capaz de trabajar de forma conjunta con otros profesionales (e.g., profesores de apoyo, ayudantes) para atender al alumnado con discapacidad u otras necesidades de apoyo en el aula*. [I am able to work jointly with other professionals and staff (*e.g.*, aides, other teachers) to teach students with disabilities in the classroom.]
16. *Confío en mi capacidad para involucrar a las familias en las actividades escolares de sus hijos con discapacidad u otras necesidades de apoyo*. [I am confident in my ability to get parents involved in school activities of their children with disabilities.]
17. *Puedo hacer que los padres se sientan cómodos cuando acudan a la escuela*. [I can make parents feel comfortable coming to school.]
18. *Puedo colaborar con otros profesionales (e.g., maestros de apoyo itinerante) en el diseño de adaptaciones para alumnos con discapacidad*. [I can collaborate with other professionals (*e.g.*, itinerant teachers or speech pathologists) in designing educational plans for students with disabilities.]
19. *Soy capaz de informar a otros acerca de las leyes y políticas relativas a la inclusión del alumnado con discapacidad u otras necesidades de apoyo*. [I am confident in informing others who know little about laws and policies relating to the inclusion of students with disabilities.]
20. *Sé adaptar la evaluación contemplada en el diseño curricular base o del centro para que el alumnado con cualquier tipo de discapacidad pueda ser evaluado de forma justa.* [I am confident in adapting school-wide or state-wide assessment so that students with all disabilities can be assessed.]

Note. In the present study, Item 1 was excluded after a preliminary test for data fit so 19 items were retained for the exploratory factor analysis. The word disability has been used in a more general sense as synonymous of special educational support needs.

A factorial analysis of principal components (Varimax rotation) produced a general latent factor with three dimensions (Efficacy in Managing Behavior, Efficacy in Collaboration, and Efficacy in Using Inclusive Instruction) that accounted for more than 60% of the common variance (see Table 2).

Table 2

Rotated component matrix of the TEIP-e factorial analysis of principal components

Whole sample	Factor I	Factor II	Factor III
Efficacy in Managing Classroom Behavior (EMB)			
9. *Soy capaz de apaciguar al estudiante perturbador o ruidoso.*	.795		
11. *Confío en mi habilidad de tratar con estudiantes físicamente agresivos.*	.764		
8. *Puedo controlar el comportamiento disruptivo en el aula.*	.759		
10. *Soy capaz de hacer cumplir las reglas y normas de clase.*	.744		
7. *Confío en mi capacidad para prevenir el comportamiento disruptivo en el aula antes de que ocurra.*	.698		
12. *Sé cómo hacer explícitas mis expectativas sobre el comportamiento de mis estudiantes.*	.592		
Efficacy in Collaboration (EC)			
15. *Soy capaz de trabajar de forma conjunta con otros profesionales para atender al alumnado con discapacidad u otras necesidades de apoyo en el aula.*		.787	
16. *Confío en mi capacidad para involucrar a las familias en las actividades escolares de sus hijos con discapacidad u otras necesidades de apoyo.*		.787	
18. *Puedo colaborar con otros profesionales en el diseño de adaptaciones para alumnos con discapacidad.*		.760	
17. *Puedo hacer que los padres se sientan cómodos cuando acudan a la escuela.*		.706	
13. *Sé orientar a las familias para que ayuden a sus hijos a rendir bien en la escuela.*		.564	
19. *Soy capaz de informar a otros acerca de las leyes y políticas relativas a la inclusión del alumnado con discapacidad u otras necesidades de apoyo.*		.507	
Efficacy in Using Inclusive Instruction (EII)			
3. *Soy capaz de diseñar tareas de aprendizaje adaptadas a las necesidades individuales del alumnado con discapacidad u otras necesidades de apoyo.*			.745
4. *Sé estimar con precisión lo que el alumnado haya entendido de lo explicado.*			.715
2. *Soy capaz de proporcionar explicaciones alternativas o ejemplos al alumnado que no entienda lo explicado.*			.651
5. *Puedo proporcionar desafíos apropiados a los estudiantes muy capaces.*			.650
6. *Confío en mi capacidad de hacer que los alumnos trabajen juntos en pareja o en pequeños grupos.*			.607
20. *Sé adaptar la evaluación contemplada en el diseño curricular base o del centro para que el alumnado con cualquier tipo de discapacidad pueda ser evaluado de forma justa.*			.555
14. *Puedo mejorar el aprendizaje del alumnado que experimenta dificultades.*			.458

This factor solution was invariant through program major and gender suggesting that the results confirm the model's consistency contributing, therefore, to its construct validity. Further analyses yielded positive and significant correlations (ranged between .23 and .57) of previously unexplored relationships between the TEIP-e subscales and the characteristics of the teacher education program (e.g., teacher program mission, program opportunities for teacher competence development on diversity and inclusion, and self-confidence on preparedness to teach in inclusive classrooms).

The results of the study indicate that the TEIP-e is a reliable and valid measure of teacher perception of self-efficacy to teach in inclusive classrooms and presents adequate evidence for potential use with Spanish preservice teacher populations. This enables us to consider the TEIP-e as a useful tool for teacher efficacy studies on inclusion in Spanish contexts. In spite of the fact that the psychometric results obtained from the TEIP-e are promising, we should continue to be cautious and consider the limitations inherent in the study: (1) this study is specific to a particular teacher education program and the sample cannot be considered as representative of other programs in the same or other Spanish speaking countries; and (2) the results are based on self-reported data usually associated with social desirability of the responses. Future research should control this effect by conducting more longitudinal, observational, and qualitative studies. In conclusion, our findings are valuable for the field of equity and inclusion. We recommend the use of the TEIP-e for assessing educators' efficacy for inclusive teaching not only in early and elementary but in secondary and postsecondary education with the corresponding adaptations.

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The final degree project as an opportunity in the initial teacher training for the inclusive education

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Keywords: Final degree project, Inclusion, Student voice, Formative proposal.

General description of the context, objectives

In this paper we present a formative proposal that it is framed in the development of the final degree project (FDP). We understand it as an opportunity in training for inclusive education. We stop to analyze the main phases of development, activities and strategies of reflection carried out. We exemplify the formative proposal through the case of a student of early childhood education degree of the University of Cantabria (Spain). We will present the main impacts of this proposal in her initial training for inclusive education.

At the International Conference of UNESCO, the need to review and improve initial teacher training for inclusive education was emphasized. We point out as Rouse (2010) the need to develop the responsibility and teacher competence to make the learning activities accessible to all students.

The changes made in the initial teachers training by the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) are presented as an opportunity for improvement. Among them, we highlight the incorporation of FDP (Reynolds and Thompson, 2011) as an opportunity to develop the ability to design, develop and asses inclusive educational proposals in future teachers (Echeita and Perez, 2010). As Todd, Smith & Bannister (2006) point out, the FDP offers space and time for students to put into dialogue the knowledge acquired in the different subjects. This avoids presenting the contents of inclusive education separate from those of other subjects.

At the University of Cantabria (Spain), the degree of early childhood and primary education includes the development and defense of a Final Degree Project (FDP) that student must develop in the last year of their studies (6 credits). In the case exemplified, the student carried out the design, development and evaluation of an experience of peer tutoring in a early childhood class (22 students of 4 years old) for literacy learning in a public school in Cantabria during 2015-2016 academic year.

It should be noted that the classroom is organized into working groups of student, except for two of them who have difficulties in learning, which are located in adjacent teacher space.

In short, the formative proposal of FDP described is based on: the principles of inclusive education (Ainscow & Miles, 2008); the theoretical and methodological approaches of the EHEA; and the student voice movement in the co-curriculum construction (Bovill, Cook-Sather & Felten, 2011). While we aim to achieve the following objectives:

- Develop an ethical commitment according with the principles of justice, equality, democracy and social and educational inclusion.
- Analysis of educational practice throught the keys of inclusive education.
- Incorporate and implement the knowledge of in the design, development and assessment of educational experiences designed accessible to all students, including those with learning difficulties.

Activities and instruments description

The FDP starts when the student identifies and defines its educational interest linked to the classroom where it develops its practices. To do this, it becomes a participant observer of the educational activity for 3 weeks. With the field notes taken during observations, the student prepares a teacher dairy which reflects on the main actions, activities, strategies and methodology from the characteristics of inclusive education. After this process, the first working seminar with the director of the FDP is developed for the purpose to reflect, analyze and negotiate about the main observations. These include: the difficulties to design learning activities for all students; the contradiction to situate the students in groups but choose individual educational activities; or the situation of students with more difficulties tin the class activity. This dialogue takes student to define their interest. In the exemplified case the implementation of cooperative learning experience (peer tutoring). Once identified the object of the FDP, the process of design, development and evaluation of the experience begins. To do so, they carry out the following activities:

1. Working Seminars (Seale, Nind, Tilley & Chapman, 2015) with the director of the FDP. This strategy was different purpose depending of each experience.

a. Design of experience. Three seminars were carried out for the purpose to research, discuss and, in a deliberative process of decisions making, define the phases of experience based on the principles of inclusive education. To do this, students have conducted a process of reading literature, analysis and definition of dilemmas presented in previous experiences. In the case exemplified, we can highlight the following dilemmas: the selection and creation of couples of peer tutoring to meet the criteria of heterogeneity and the designing of the training process accessible to all students.

b. Development of the experience (8 weeks). Due to the educational activity is carried out in a complex social space, it is frequently that some dilemmas arise in the development of a experience. These became the object of reflection and redefinition through a dialogical process between students, teacher and director. Among the main dilemmas of ex-

ample we find: excessive directivity teacher during the activity class or difficulties of some students to offer and reclaim help.

c. Assessment of experience (1 week). Students must design the assessment process which it has three focus: the design and development of the experience; the student learning through a self-evaluation of students and evaluation by teachers; and a self-assessment of their role as teacher development experience. Continuing its role as protagonist, they must design different assessment instruments. This student chose: questionnaire, field notes and an interview with the teacher.

2. Coordination meetings with the classroom teacher. During this process of development the FDP, student should have weekly meetings with the classroom teacher in order to constitute a group of teachers (Graden and Bauer, 2001). In them, they analyzed collaboratively the actions and processes carried out according to the principles of the inclusive education.

3. Elaboration of a report and public defense of the FDP. Finally, students write the report on the experience and presented in a public ceremony the main features and conclusions.

Results achieved, materials developed

The formative proposal of FDP described is presented as an opportunity for initial training for inclusive education, where future teachers incorporate their professional development educational strategies in order to create communities where all students are accepted, recognized and found the necessary support for their learning.

Firstly, this formative proposal offers a space to students to plan, develop and asses experiences according to the principles of the inclusive education (Echeita & Perez, 2010). This proposal goes beyond traditional educational activities of the university which restrict student action to the design (without the possibility to develop), and students is faced to the complexity and diverse of the learning activity.

Secondly, this formative proposal allow student during their FDP to develop a protagonist role in their training process and begin to build their own knowledge based on experience (Bovill, Cook-Sather & Felten, 2011).

Thirdly, we find the opportunity that students incorporate processes and strategies according with inclusive education: (1) through observation and elaboration of the teacher diary, students analyze educational processes and design inclusive pedagogical alternatives allowing them to make use of strategies and knowledge acquired during the degree. (2) The FDP is an academic work that relates different contexts (faculty of education and school) for this it offers students the opportunity to work with professionals of different profiles forming a group of teachers who collaboratively facing the development of inclusive practices (Graden and Bauer, 2001). This team work is characterized by dialogue, reflection and shared decision making. (3) Due to the FDP is developed according with inclusive education principles, students develop educational experiences aimed at all students (Rouse, 2010) where chil-

dren are valued, recognized and respected paying special attention to those who have been traditionally excluded. Consequently, the proposal of FDP should be designed according with a common curriculum where the necessary supports are offered to all students to avoided to reduced the curriculum for students with difficulties.

Finally, the formative proposal concludes with the elaboration of a report and public defense of the experience. This is an opportunity in order to students reflect about the main dilemmas and educational strategies implemented in the process of design, development and assess. This report becomes in a good practice guide.

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Università accessibile a studenti con disabilità sensoriale: le difficoltà dei disabili visivi nello studio della matematica

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Keywords: Didattica inclusiva, Università accessibile, Disabilità visiva, Tecnologie educative, Matematica accessibile.

Descrizione generale della ricerca, obiettivi e sfondo teorico.

La presente ricerca intende analizzare l'accessibilità del linguaggio della matematica per gli studenti universitari con disabilità visiva. Si tratta di un linguaggio complesso e difficile da tradurre con i comuni programmi di sintesi vocale. Inoltre i software creati appositamente per trascriverlo presentano diverse criticità.
Per i disabili visivi è semplice accedere a generici contenuti testuali digitali grazie a strumenti come screen readers e programmi d'ingrandimento (AA.VV. 1999; Caldwell et al., 2008; Carella, 2009; Carruba, 2014; D'Aloisi, 2009). Anche immagini e video sono accessibili tramite audiodescrizione e descrizione testuale (Arma, 2007; Clark, 2001; Zirone, 2008).
Le discipline scientifiche però, in particolare la matematica, richiedono accorgimenti differenti (Liberali, 2010). Gli screen readers, come ad esempio Jaws, non sono sempre compatibili con il linguaggio matematico oltre ad essere spesso a pagamento (Artico, 2010).
Anche la trascrizione di tale linguaggio in braille presenta problemi di fruizione (Artico, 1998): è possibile scrivere una formula in modo sequenziale ma diventa problematico esplorarla mentre la si scrive perché le mani sono impegnate nella lettura.
Inoltre i supporti e le periferiche vocali e braille leggono il testo matematico linearmente come una semplice successione di caratteri, ma esso si compone talvolta di più passaggi e utilizza numerosi simboli attribuendo significato alla loro posizione e dimensione: si pensi alle frazioni o agli indici di radici. Non basta dunque rendere una formula lineare trasformandola in sequenza di caratteri della stessa dimensione.
La matematica presenta problemi soprattutto nei livelli complessi affrontati all'università. La scarsa accessibilità di questa disciplina e delle materie scientifiche per i disabili visivi (Corsi, 2008) incide anche sulla scelta del loro percorso universitario, penalizzando alcuni corsi di laurea. Solo nel 2012 si registra il primo italiano non vedente laureato in Ingegneria[1].
Nell'immagine sottostante un esempio della complessità della matematica: un argomento di Analisi matematica affrontato all'università e difficilmente accessibile con comuni supporti informatici:

$$dI = \frac{dM\ r^2}{2}\ ;\ dM = \rho\pi\, r^2\, dx\ ;\ r = \frac{R}{h}\, x$$

$$I = \frac{\rho\pi}{2}\int_0^h \frac{R^4}{h^4}\, x^4\, dx = \frac{\rho\pi R^4}{2h^4}\,\frac{h^5}{5} = \frac{3M}{\cancel{\pi}\ \cancel{R^2}\ \cancel{\rho}}\,\frac{\cancel{\pi} R^{\cancel{4}\,2}}{2\ \cancel{h^4}}\,\frac{\cancel{h^5}}{5} = \frac{3}{10} MR^2$$

Imm. 1: Momento di inerzia del cono, dimostrazione matematica.

Ma anche la frazione seguente potrebbe creare problemi:

$$\frac{X + 1}{X - 1}$$

La sintesi vocale leggerà: x più uno fratto x meno uno (Bracco, 2014) ma un non vedente potrebbe trascrivere:

$$\frac{X + 1}{X} - 1$$

E altre varianti sono possibili. Associare un testo alternativo a una formula matematica non è sempre una soluzione. Una lettura umana può aiutare, ma se la formula è lunga l'ascoltatore potrebbe dimenticarne l'inizio. Questa modalità presenta poi la notazione sequenziale, che non fa esplorare il testo nella sua globalità.

Gli strumenti elettronici creati per trascrivere il linguaggio matematico non risolvono tutti i problemi. Alcuni programmi di scrittura traducono il testo matematico in forma sequenziale, usando una sintassi impegnativa e risultando ostici (Artico, 1998; Fogarolo, 2006).

Altri software trascrivono simboli complessi (come statistiche o matrici) e riescono a sviluppare algoritmi, manipolare matrici e molto altro, ma sono a pagamento e ciò li penalizza in termini di accessibilità rispetto ai programmi gratuiti. Alcuni di questi prodotti sono molto elaborati (ad esempio LAMBDA) e non riconoscono solo le sequenze di caratteri ma anche i blocchi che costituiscono la struttura del testo permettendo di manipolarli (Fogarolo, 2004)[2].

Altri programmi sono invece gratuiti e anche ottimi per le loro funzionalità poichè traducono il testo in braille e voce, ma sono sperimentati fino al biennio delle scuole superiori e non ancora nel triennio o all'università[3].

Metodologia e risultati

Dopo l'analisi dello stato dell'arte è stata somministrata un'intervista a disabiliti visivi laureati o iscritti a corsi di laurea di tipo scientifico. L'intervista intende approfondire le problematiche legate all'accessibilità dei contenuti matematici considerando quelli trasmessi a lezione, quelli cartacei e quelli digitali, per individuarne le principali criticità.

Essa si compone di tre parti: la prima presenta domande preliminari (età, ipovisione /cecità, corso di laurea); la seconda verifica le competenze informatiche (uso computer e ausili di supporto); la terza riguarda la matematica (come avviene lo studio su cartaceo, in digitale, a lezione).
I dati emersi mostrano che gli intervistati, con ottime competenze digitali (la maggior parte usa Jaws o Zoom Text), non ricevono particolari aiuti durante il percorso universitario.
Per quanto riguarda le lezioni in aula, alcuni le registrano per riascoltarle a casa e memorizzarle meglio, avvalendosi anche degli appunti dettati da qualche compagno. Ma è una soluzione impegnativa e spesso tali appunti non sono esaustivi e corretti.
Alcuni ipovedenti usano un binocolo in classe, ma perdono la visione d'insieme della lavagna e non capiscono ad esempio in quale ordine sono scritte le formule matematiche. Questa pratica rende difficile prendere al contempo appunti.
Alcuni corsi forniscono *note takers*, studenti normodotati che prendono appunti al posto del disabile visivo. E' importante che i *note takers* abbiano buona conoscenza della materia seguita, ma spesso provengono da altri corsi di laurea e i loro appunti risultano imprecisi o sbagliati.
Gli intervistati sottolineano che lunghe formule e calcoli complessi (in materie come Fisica, Analisi numerica, Probabilità) sono contenuti difficili da seguire in aula: essi compensano potenziando memoria e udito.
Gli insegnanti adottano pochi accorgimenti per l'accessibilità. Su richiesta dello studente si limitano a ripetere a voce ciò che scrivono alla lavagna o che proiettano, ma talvolta se ne dimenticano. È importante usare attentamente il linguaggio: anche il gesto di indicare qualcosa con la mano se non accompagnato dalla voce, è penalizzante.
Lezioni impegnative diventano quelle in cui i professori non danno preventivamente appunti o non seguono il canovaccio di un testo preciso. Perciò su richiesta dello studente, alcuni docenti forniscono in anticipo i loro appunti o il testo della lezione permettendo allo studente di orientarsi meglio. Ciò facilita la comprensione a patto che la lezione si attenga poi ai materiali forniti.
Relativamente ai contenuti cartacei per alcuni la fruizione è agevolata dai centri che forniscono libri parlati: si occupano della lettura di libri e della descrizione delle immagini presenti in essi, fornendo registrazioni di audiolibri. Sono spesso gli stessi studenti a contattare autonomamente questi servizi.
Per gli ipovedenti la fruizione dei testi avviene con lenti d'ingrandimento che però impediscono la visione d'insieme. Questa viene ricostruita mentalmente, ma non è un'azione semplice se la quantità di simboli e passaggi da memorizzare è considerevole; il carico cognitivo richiesto aumenta rispetto a quello richiesto a un normodotato.
Anche i contenuti digitali presentano criticità: la lettura di formule nelle slide è difficile se sono rappresentate da immagini non leggibili con Jaws; allora è frequente ricorrere a persone vedenti come supporto alla lettura.
Gli ipovedenti accedono allo schermo con ingranditori, perdendo però la visione d'insieme (Coppa, De Santis, 1998).
I docenti non usano software per la scrittura della matematica tramite computer. Alcuni studenti dichiarano invece di

conoscere questi programmi e segnalano risorse come MatLab e MathType. Sono però soluzioni individuate in autonomia e non segnalate dai docenti.
Gli intervistati sottolineano anche che non è facile comunicare le proprie difficoltà all'insegnante: si prova disagio ad esporre i propri problemi. Il docente a maggior ragione dev'essere collaborativo e prendere l'iniziativa: il dialogo con l'insegnante è risultato la soluzione più apprezzata per migliorare l'accessibilità. Esso però dovrebbe collegarsi a una serie di azioni più solide, preventivamente pianificate dagli atenei.
Quel che è emerso è che attualmente l'accessibilità si ottiene soprattutto grazie all'iniziativa personale degli studenti e alla loro tenacia. Essi vengono certamente seguiti dall'università e sono soddisfatti del loro percorso. Ringraziano il compagno disponibile, il docente che ha sensibilizzato i colleghi, gli impiegati attenti. Ma spesso sono aiuti occasionali, individuati al momento, che non fanno parte dell'organizzazione sistematica dell'università. Su questo si dovrebbe riflettere per individuare soluzioni durature, puntando al potenziamento dei servizi e a una maggiore formazione dei docenti e delle figure coinvolte.

Note

1 Il Dott. Renzo DelCont (Università di Trieste): ha collaborato anche a questa ricerca rispondendo all'intervista. Cfr.: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2zejEjf-0Ro.

2 Tra i linguaggi sequenziali: TeX e il markup LaTeX, BlindMath (http://www.sinapsi.unina.it/blindmath) e MathML (https://www.w3.org/Math). Tra quelli a pagamento MATLAB (http://it.mathworks.com/) e LAMBDA (http://www.lambdaproject.org/it/).
3 Ad esempio BrailleMat del CISAD con sede all'Istituto Cavazza di Bologna (http://www.cavazza.it/?q=it/node/275).

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Tecnologie, disabilità e accessibilità in università. Individuazione e diffusione di nuove tecnologie per il diritto allo studio di studenti con disabilità e DSA, nell'ottica dell'accessibilità, della personalizzazione e dell'inclusione

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Keywords: ICT, Disabilità, Università, Accessibilità, Inclusione.

Descrizione generale della ricerca

L'Università di Torino ha promosso a partire dall'anno accademico 2013/2014 un progetto di ricerca dal titolo *Tecnologie, Disabilità e Accessibilità in Università. Individuazione e diffusione di nuove tecnologie per il diritto allo studio di studenti con disabilità e DSA, nell'ottica dell'accessibilità, della personalizzazione e dell'inclusione* che coinvolge le cattedre di Pedagogia Speciale e di Matematica ed ha, tra gli obiettivi di carattere prevalentemente pedagogico, il sostegno agli studenti nella scelta dell'ausilio più idoneo alle esigenze di studio universitario.

Il mondo della tecnologia è un settore in tumultuosa trasformazione, che provoca incessanti modificazioni in ogni contesto, al punto da poter affermare che la tecnologia è la cifra della nostra stessa evoluzione, l'orizzonte in cui l'umano si riscrive continuamente. Un forte impulso ai principi di uguaglianza delle opportunità, di cittadinanza attiva e di inclusione per giovani e adulti con bisogni educativi speciali proviene, in particolare, dallo sviluppo esponenziale e inesauribile delle Tecnologie della Comunicazione e dell'Informazione. L'uso delle tecnologie informatiche in ambito universitario, impiegate per incoraggiare e sostenere gli studi di giovani con disabilità e con disturbi specifici dell'apprendimento è un tema stimolante e meritevole di approfondimento nei risvolti scientifici, formativi, sociali. Le necessità degli studenti universitari sono infatti complesse e differenti da quelle che si incontrano nella scuola primaria e secondaria e, finora, le università hanno sviluppato un'esperienza ancora poco estesa sul tema. Va tenuto presente, inoltre, che lo studente universitario con difficoltà è portatore di un'esperienza pluriennale e può collaborare nella ricerca degli strumenti più adatti ai suoi studi.

L'evoluzione tecnologica in ambito universitario, se da una parte evidenzia gli sforzi compiuti per favorire un sempre migliore adattamento del giovane all'ambiente accademico -attraverso l'individuazione dell'ausilio appropriato alle esigenze del singolo - dall'altra testimonia i traguardi progressivi in vista dell'adattamento dell'ambiente alle esigenze di studio e di inclusione del giovane. I concetti e i termini di accessibilità

sono sempre più ricorrenti anche in università - ai fini della messa a disposizione e della progettazione di prodotti, servizi e spazi - per indicare una attenzione sensibile alle esigenze degli studenti più fragili e, indirettamente, la qualificazione dell'offerta formativa per tutti. Non a caso, gli esperti di educazione a livello europeo si sono impegnati nella definizione, nell'analisi e nella individuazione di azioni proprio nell'area delle tecnologie e, contemporaneamente, nell'area dell'inclusione, dell' "innovazione e della sicurezza sociale" (intesa, quest'ultima, come idea dello "stare bene" sociale), nella prospettiva della non discriminazione, della garanzia dei diritti e della promozione della persona (HORIZON 2020, European Commission, 2013).

Le dimensioni multiple ed espansive dell'impiego delle ICT in università aprono orizzonti di ricerca attinenti alla conoscenza tecnica delle potenzialità operative e formative dei prodotti messi a disposizione (hardware e software), ma anche questioni di carattere psico-pedagogico, legate al rapporto tra lo studente e il dispositivo (es.: trasformazione, così da renderli immediatamente fruibili, di testi universitari contenenti formule; scelta del prodotto più adeguato ed efficace; processo di reciproco adattamento tra studente e dispositivo; inserimento dello strumento tecnologico compensativo all'interno di un più ampio processo di identificazione e di implementazione di strategie e di competenze compensative; altro).

L'esperienza accumulata ha portato alla convinzione che è indispensabile considerare tutti gli aspetti del rapporto studente-prodotto tecnologico: oltre a quelli squisitamente tecnici, anche quelli pedagogici, didattici e socio-relazionali, che concorrono all'individuazione del supporto più adatto al singolo o a gruppi di studenti, attuali e potenziali, di Ateneo.

Per tali motivi uno dei primi obiettivi del progetto mira a realizzare una procedura che consenta un assessment delle competenze tecnologiche dello studente con disabilità/DSA, ovvero la valutazione dei suoi bisogni di studio e di formazione nei termini delle ICT che li soddisfano.

Metodologia

Il Progetto EUSTAT ha sviluppato concetti e materiali mirati al potenziamento delle persone fragili ed ha proposto un modello di procedura per l'individuazione e la scelta dell'ausilio che si basa sui processi di *counselling*. Molte realtà nazionali – Fondazione Don Gnocchi, i Centri di Consulenza Tiflodidattica della Biblioteca Italiana per Ciechi Regina Margherita, l'Istituto dei Ciechi di Milano, la società Sistech SRL di Bergamo, il Progetto Yeah, tra i tanti – hanno adottato la modalità del colloquio individuale ai fini dell'orientamento nella scelta della ICT più idonea al soggetto e, esplicitamente interpellati sul tema, sottolineano l'impossibilità di standardizzare tale procedura, poiché ritengono costituirebbe un ostacolo alla personalizzazione della scelta dell'ausilio. Il rapporto diretto tra lo specialista competente e il soggetto fragile, in alcuni casi la conoscenza anche dei suoi familiari e del contesto in cui l'ausilio verrà utilizzato, sembrano essere sia le strategie preferite in letteratura, sia quelle più diffuse nella pratica.

In ambito universitario tale funzione rientra nel dominio di azione del personale tecnico-amministrativo del Servizio Studenti Disabili/Sportello DSA che, dato il profilo professionale che lo caratterizza, può non possedere competenze specifiche nell'ambito delle tecnologie informatiche a sostegno della fragilità. Per questo motivo, pur nella consapevolezza delle pratiche diffuse negli ambienti esperti, la ricercatrice coinvolta nell'area pedagogica del progetto ha ritenuto opportuno strutturare un *protocollo per la valutazione delle competenze tecnologiche della persona con disabilità/DSA* con l'intento che diventi lo strumento che promuove e favorisce la conoscenza delle competenze tecnologiche e delle esigenze formative degli studenti universitari con BES.

Si è pensato di strutturare un questionario le cui domande rappresentano il canovaccio su cui il personale tecnico amministrativo potrà impostare i colloqui, sia di conoscenza sia di sostegno agli studenti durante il loro iter formativo. E' questo infatti il primo *step* da raggiungere per proporre in seguito l'ausilio adeguato al profilo della persona.

Le domande che compongono il protocollo sono state individuate grazie al confronto con gli esperti dei centri citati, ed in seguito sono state proposte ad un gruppo di giovani universitari con disabilità e DSA (20 con disabilità visiva, 5 con disabilità motoria, 5 con DSA). Il proficuo dibattito intercorso ha portato alla modifica di alcuni *items* e all'introduzione di quesiti su aspetti che non erano stati precedentemente valutati. Si precisa che la somministrazione del protocollo può avvenire solo nell'ambito di un colloquio individuale e non esaurisce la conoscenza della persona.

Risultati

I risultati raggiunti nel primo anno del progetto di ricerca, tra cui la realizzazione del *protocollo per la valutazione delle competenze tecnologiche della persona con disabilità/DSA* sono stati diffusi a livello nazionale e internazionale sia attraverso alcune pubblicazioni (Farinella A., 2015; Armano T., Capietto A., Illengo M., Murru N., Rossini R., 2015; tra le altre) sia mediante la partecipazione a convegni e seminari (Convegno SIREM 2014; Convegno SIPeS 2015; Convegno CNUDD 2016).

Parte del secondo anno del progetto di ricerca è stato dedicato alla validazione e all'implementazione del protocollo, attività che ha coinvolto 40 studenti con disabilità visiva e 30 studenti con DSA frequentanti differenti corsi di laurea afferenti all'Unito. Se inizialmente il reclutamento degli studenti ai fini della collaborazione al progetto di ricerca si era basato sulle conoscenze dirette della ricercatrice – la *call* lanciata sul sito dell'Ateneo non aveva infatti dato alcun esito -, in questa fase la diffusione dei primi risultati e il passaparola tra gli studenti ha determinato la candidatura volontaria di molti di loro. Il processo di validazione del protocollo ha comportato la realizzazione di colloqui individuali con gli studenti che hanno consentito l'implementazione dello strumento.

Con l'avvio dell'anno accademico 2016/2017 il protocollo verrà utilizzato durante i colloqui conoscitivi con i futuri studenti con disabilità/DSA dell'ateneo torinese. In questa occasione il personale tecnico amministrativo verrà affiancato dalla ricercatrice in un processo di training all'uso dello stru-

mento. L'obiettivo è che l'utilizzo del protocollo diventi gradualmente una prassi di lavoro dei dipendenti del Servizio Studenti Disabili/Sportello DSA.
Inoltre, l'Università del Piemonte Orientale ha esplicitato il suo interesse all'utilizzo del protocollo e a partire dalla seconda metà di settembre 2016 la ricercatrice affiancherà anche il personale di quell'ateneo accompagnandolo alla conoscenza e all'uso coretto dello strumento.

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Towards inclusion and equity: some reflections on the European Higher Education system

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Keywords: Inclusion, Equity, Higher Education, Europe.

General description on research questions and objectives

Achieving inclusion and equity constitutes two of the main aspirations in European higher education systems, becoming a societal imperative (European Commission, 2010a, Red Eurydice, 2011).

Overall, it is possible to affirm that a democratic society is based on the principle that the right for education should be ensured for all the students, especially for those who are in a disadvantaged situation (Ainscow et al., 2013). Therefore, personal and social circumstances, as socioeconomic status, gender, race or ethnicity, age or disabilities, among others, should not affect active participation in the opportunities that higher education provides. Furthermore, the social dimension has become progressively important as the need to reflect the social diversity at university, ensuring that all students, regardless of their social and economic conditions, have the opportunity to access, participate and, ultimately, succeed at college (Red Eurydice, 2011). Since the beginning of the Bologna Process in 1999 and through its development, the social dimension has been recognized as a key component in relation to equity and social justice in higher education (Dovigo, 2016).

Many initiatives and programs implemented in higher education by the European Commission (Bohonnek et al., 2010) and member states, were guided towards achieving these goals and developing a wide range of measures and policies. Achieving an increasing participation is as well one of the main goals of the Europe 2020 Strategy: 40% of population aged 30-34 should have a higher education qualification (or equivalent) by year 2020 (European Commission, 2010, p. 9). At the same time, the ALFA III Programme 2007–2013) and the EUROSTUDENT Project can be mentioned as examples of initiatives that aim to combine efforts to produce relevant and comparable updated information about the social dimension in higher education. These initiatives also show how the international collaboration of stakeholders works in creating networks and synergies between universities around the world.

However, the debate remains in how to increase equity and inclusion for students from under-represented or disadvantaged groups while improving the quality and relevance of higher education (Acedo, Ferrer & Pàmies, 2009). The advent of a knowledge-based society, internationalization and globaliza-

tion, and the requirements from a more and more diverse society shapes the debate. Therefore, the challenge is to overcome all forms of exclusion in higher education not only showing improvements in indicators and figures, from a statistical point of view, but also with furthering efforts to convey students to be prepared for participating in diverse social and work contexts.

Assuming that the quality of education includes both citizenship condition, meaning critical-thinking students who participate in decisions concerning society, as well as the development of inclusive universities, the main question is *How higher education systems can ensure inclusion and equity while achieving the purpose of quality education*?

In this regard, this paper presents and critically analyses two selected assumptions among many other possible theoretical analysis and/or practical approaches. To begin with, at the macro level the need to combine local and global actions when addressing inclusion and equity is examined. Subsequently, at the meso level the need to develop and strengthen institutional structures supporting college experience for all students, with special focus on those from disadvantaged backgrounds, is considered. It is understood that both of them influence the micro level, meaning person level trajectories in higher education. However, in this opportunity we focused on the macro and meso level intentionally to highlight the central role of policies and institutions in achieving inclusive higher education systems.

For this reason, as a closing thought it is emphasized that the principles of inclusion and equity are not incompatible with achieving educational quality, but critical for their accomplishment. In this regard, this paper is based upon a significant selection and analysis of theoretical contributions. From the authors' point of view, those previous research illustrate the main arguments related to equity and inclusion mentioned in the assumptions. The ultimate goal is far from giving closing answers, by contrast, is to stimulate discussion between academics and practitioners in the subject matter.

Theoretical framework

According to the UNESCO *Policy Guidelines on Inclusion in Education* (2009), inclusion is seen "as a process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all children, youth and adults through increasing participation in learning, cultures and communities, and reducing and eliminating exclusion within and from education (pp. 8-9). Thus, in this document a central proposition in relation to inclusive education is developed: inclusion and quality are reciprocal. This means that the access to the education and quality are linked and mutually reinforcing and, at the same time, quality and equity are central to ensuring inclusive education (p. 10).

Based on this principle, in this section two assumptions that critically analyze the possibilities of inclusion and equity in achieving educational quality and the remaining challenges are presented.

Assumption nº1. Combining local and global actions to achieve inclusion and equity

Ensure citizen status in higher education from the inclusion and equity approach involves training students with skills and abilities to perform and fully participate in an increasingly global and international society (Whiteford, Shah & Nair, 2013). As other regions across the world, Europe is characterized by its diversity and currently goes through certain demographic changes that enormously impacts on educational systems (Prats & Raventós, 2005). This situation shows the need to define new criteria for defining "disadvantaged students" in higher education, taking into account this is a complex and multidimensional phenomenon that affects different social groups. Classic inequality indicators (gender, socioeconomic status and area of residence) are still important, but current contextual conditions and social factors have changed families and students´ situation in the region. In this regard, economic crisis, armed conflict and displacement of refugees, as well as the effects of an increased academic mobility, are creating new circumstances in our universities.

Moreover, diversity is not limited to students but also affects faculty and the institution, as well as the relationship between higher education systems and society as a whole (Sebastian & Scharager, 2007). It is a fact that more and more diverse students are reaching higher education, however, it seems higher education systems and universities are not totally prepared for this: "while many countries acknowledge that there are different challenges regarding disadvantaged student groups, few have developed concrete policy priorities, strategies, targets and measures" (Eurydice, 2014, p. 21) that are a priority to eliminate discrimination.

As a consequence, a combination of a policy approach, reflected in legislation, and specific measures, according to the needs of groups identified as vulnerable, seems to be the priority when it comes to combining local and global actions.

Assumption nº2. Provide supporting structures for all the students, as an essential requirement of inclusive universities development

Promoting inclusive universities involves not only overcoming institutional barriers, that have been widely identified in the scientific literature, but also creating structures in order to support all the students through their academic pathways in college.

In their study Biewer et al. (2015), for example, have shown that in some European countries institutional structures did not always provide adequate resources for young adults with disabilities in relation to their inclusion and educational success. They also pointed out that, even though there is a clear policy towards inclusion in compulsory education, institutional measures in the school system did not guide the individual trajectories towards inclusion. By contrast, students relied on strong social resources in the cases analyzed (p. 288).

The development of university students support structures that are not only limited to financial or academic support, but also consider the whole college student experience is essential.

For this purpose, it seems critical to have a rigorous and appropriate methodology that considers several and complex strategies. At the same time, those strategies based on an organizational perspective are mainly significant.

On this assumption, several international studies show that the same universities have begun to introduce changes and modifications in order to promote inclusion and equity related especially to the achievement and educational outcomes. Although these strategies are related to the social, political, cultural and economic context in which they are, they must also be connected with internal institutional forces and relate to both curriculum development and institutional organizational frameworks. Thus, the support structures organized to promote inclusion could involve a wide range of different service professionals, approaches and working methods in order to impact upon inclusive education (EADSNE, 2009). The creation, or modernization, of student services as counselling, guidance, information about the programs and universities, alternative access paths and new teaching methods, could be mentioned as examples in this regard.

Conclusions

The brief analysis presented in this paper suggests that a commitment with inclusion and equity in higher education requires furthering efforts, networks and active participation from several stakeholders.

First, there is a need to develop both global and local policies in preparing students for the diversity and for a demanding global workforce. At the same time, universities need to plan for institutional support for all the students promoting an environment that allows them realize their potential.

Recent international studies have suggested that students who are excluded from higher education opportunities are more likely to be exposed to certain levels of vulnerability. Thus, inclusion and equity constitute fundamental guarantees for the full exercise of the right to education and are essential for achieving quality universities.

Inclusion is understood as a process and a project, one which requires the active participation of individuals and society as a whole, but also have practical implications such as new public policies, social networks and multi-agency cooperation among stakeholders. As mentioned, the role of governments in shaping public policy is essential, as well as designing, implementing and assessing institutional strategies to ensure widening opportunities to access, persist and success to higher education.

Inclusion as a strategy to reduce inequality is linked to equity of access, participation, success, progress and educational achievement in higher education. It aims to reflect within the university a similar racial, cultural and sexual diversity that is expressed in society. Therefore, inclusion involves realize real possibilities of access, retention and educational achievement for all students and especially for those who are in a disadvantaged situation.

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Good practices on inclusive access to the Higher Education in Chile. Experience of the Unesco chair on inclusion in Higher Education

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Keywords: Inclusion, Equity, Access, Higher Education.

Introduction

In the last century, Chile has achieved important advances in educational coverage based on the proclamation of different laws, among which are Compulsory Primary and Secondary Education, promulgated in 1992 and 2003 respectively, which ensured free and compulsory school education for the entire population. Regarding tertiary education, however, there are still issues, especially those related to quality and equity, that prevent Chilean education to meet the needs of its inhabitants.

In fact, even though the official story is that in Chile the expansion of Higher Education over the last 30 years has allowed the enrollment to rise from 200,000 to over a million of young people, (SIES, 2014) -mostly coming from traditionally excluded groups from the most prestigious Chilean universities. (See Figure 1), this vision hides serious problems of inequity and forced- exclusion of the most talented and vulnerable students of the country. Lately, this reality has caused great social upheaval in the country.

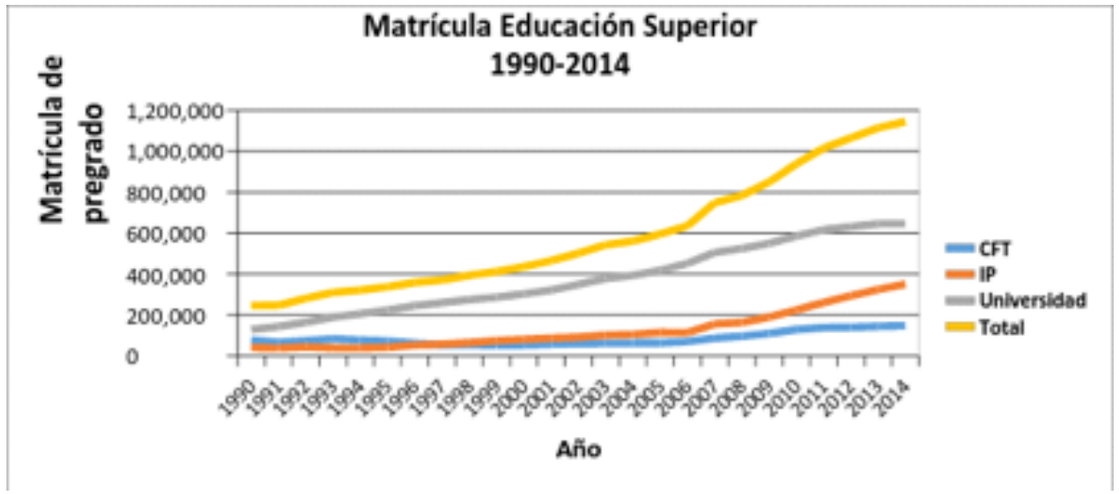

Figure 1

Source: SIES 2014

Admission into the Higher Education in Chile is based on a single University Selection Test (Prueba de Selección Única, PSU) that, for us, reproduces a socioeconomic system of strong differences between social groups. Those who can prepare for the PSU are the students from economically robust sectors, while economically vulnerable students lack good

school preparation nor can they prepare for the test, most of the time being left outside of the university system the students of high academic talent.

We believe that only by integrating the entire population through a system of equal opportunities to enter the educational system Chile can move towards being a developed country. For that, our starting point is that talents are equally distributed in all social classes, ethnicities and cultures. The detection of these talents must not depend solely, according to the authors of this article, on a single university selection test, but on the detection of those students who have a better school trajectory in the context in which they live.

In this context, the UNESCO Chair on Inclusion in Higher Education fosters an integrated system of research, training, information and documentation in the field of Inclusion in Higher University Education. Since its birth nine years ago, this Chair has designed, implemented and evaluated programs and instruments which encourage the access to universities of deserving students from socially and economically vulnerable contexts: the UNESCO propaedeutic and the School Grades Ranking, both currently impacting the educational policies.

Below, some inclusion programs and systems implemented by Chilean universities in the last 25 years to foster the enrollment of academically outstanding students who come from a background of poverty in Chile will be presented.

- Bonus

Between 1992 and 2004, the University of Santiago de Chile (USACH) recognized the school trajectory of the students whose performance was in the top 15% of their establishments. Thus, it was granted a bonus of 5% to the weighted score obtained from between the PSU and the high-school grades. This benefit meant that students who were on waiting lists for access to college increased their score and were finally selected. In the 12 years of its application, 15,191 students enrolled in the University using this pathway, of which 10,000 would not have entered had it not been for the 30-35 extra points the bonus meant for them. The result of this measure is appreciated by checking the retention rate of these students, 81.1%, compared to 75.1%, the retention of the non-top 15% students admitted to college.

- Scholarships for Academic Excellence

In 2006 the Ministry of Education (MINEDUC) creates the Scholarship for Academic Excellence (BEA), a scholarship that for the first time considers the performance of students in their four high-school years, regardless of their results obtained in the PSU. The BEA is aimed at students from first to fourth income quintiles, within the 10% of the best school performances among high-school graduates for each establishment, from the same year as the postulation. They must also come from municipal, subsidized and delegated administration schools.

- UNESCO Propaedeutic case

Since 2007 USACH took a new step in the recognition of a student academic performance within his context by offering special admission quota in the Bachelor of Science and Humanities program to top 5% graduates coming from extremely vulnerable establishments, and who have passed a preparatory course or "propaedeutic" sponsored by UNESCO. This model has shown that high-school's senior year isn't too late to offer the students the education of excellence they should have received during primary, middle and high-school. This model has shown good results (Koljatic & Silva, n.d.) (Gil & Del Canto Ramírez, 2012), which has enabled its expansion, with due adaptations, to another 15 universities: Cardenal Silva Henriquez (2009), Alberto Hurtado (2009), Tecnológica Metropolitana (2010), Metropolitana Ciencias de la Educación (2010), Católica del Norte, Coquimbo campus (2010) and Antofagasta campus (2013), Tarapacá (2011), Antofagasta (2011), Católica de Temuco (2011), Viña del Mar (2012), Los Lagos, Puerto Montt campus (2012), Austral, Coihaique campus (2012), Católica de la Santísima Concepción (2013), Valparaíso (2013), Técnica Federico Santa María (2013) and Magallanes (2013). Today the network of UNESCO propaedeutic offer 1,093 seats. Obviously none of the results of the Bonus experience nor the propaedeutic have restricted range since none of the students would be admitted only with the PSU and NEM.

Recognition of talent as the best evaluated student in his own context has been growing: in 2011 the Faculty of Engineering at UC created the Talento e Inclusión (T&I) program through which are admitted students which belong to the top 10% of their School Grades Ranking, left in waiting lists; T&I grew in five years to 46 academic programs. Likewise, the University of Chile has the Educational Equity Priority Entry System (SIPPE) since 2011, which in 2013 generated 300 spots for students from municipal schools; and the Diego Portales University, with their Equity Program, created in 2012, provide special vacancies for students with academic talent. The inclusion models of universities suffer no range constraint, because obviously the beneficiaries would not have entered only with the PSU and NEM (High School Grades).

- School Grades Ranking

The score associated to High-school Grades Ranking was designed and implemented between 2010 and 2011 in the Catholic University Silva Henríquez. Considering the qualifications of different establishments are not comparable, a linear function that assigns the highest grades of each establishment a score equal to 850 points and the average score of establishing equal to 500 points was created. To avoid creating a dehumanizing competition among students of the same establishment for the highest score, the 850 points are assigned to the average of the highest marks of the previous three years. The maxi-

mum and mean scores for each establishment are sufficiently stable over time.

Thus, the score-ranking (a) is the only academic background available for all high-school students in Chile, regardless of their socioeconomic status, ethnicity and culture where they were born; (b) increases as the grades of applicants move away from the average value of its establishment and approach the highest grades, so "inflating" the grades will inevitably hurt the next generations; (c) does not encourage high-school tactical changes, because they would have uncertain consequences; (d) discourages arbitrary expulsion of children and youth with special educational needs and instead promotes their integration; (e) does not consider the relative position of the students so as not to encourage individualism; (f) is calculated only for students Top 50%.

In 2013 a ranking score inspired by the former guidelines was adopted by the 33 member universities of the Unique Admission System (SUA).

Conclusion

The initiatives presented here have been demonstrating over the years the importance of opening the Chilean university system to a new university selection based on a new paradigm in which who enters college is not the one who gets the better score on a single test of university selection, but also those students who perform better in their school context, whatever that is.

To meet the educational needs of a society is an imperative for a social human and fair development. "No educational goal should be considered successful unless it has been achieved for all." These words from the World Education Forum 2015 are a goal to which these initiatives aspire, and we strongly believe that they could to end social education injustices in our country.

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Accessible and inclusive education: Italian academic commitment to change universities

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Keywords: Accessible education; Disability; Inclusiveness; Commitment; Easy-to-read.

General research's description, objectives and theoretical framework

Starting from the Convention on Rights for Persons with Disabilities, our research seeks to outline the accessibility of academic settings and language for all students. Although the aforementioned Convention ratifies (article 24) that "States Parties shall ensure an inclusive education system at all levels and lifelong learning"– in order to realize the right of persons with disabilities to be educated "without discrimination and on the basis of equal opportunity", not all the Italian universities can state being inclusive and promoting the accessibility for *disabled*[2] students.

For this reason, we are researching the Italian academic *commitment* (Santi & Ghedin, 2012) towards inclusiveness (italics our), focusing our attention on the universities of the region Lazio. The main purpose is proposing solution which could make the university an inclusive environment, because – following the 2002 Madrid Declaration – we believe "that education system ensures personal development and social inclusion to make children and young people as independent as possible" (Caldin & Friso, 2016: 35, our own translation). This is obviously very important to ensure an independent life in all kind of situations and contexts.

Inclusion seems therefore to be the correct path to be followed in order to reduce distance between people and prevent phenomena of exclusion, even though sometimes the research of inclusion creates itself events of macro/micro-exclusion (D'Alessio, 2013). Hence, the solution is rethinking academic settings – and more generally education and social system – from a new point of view and not from a 'medicalized' one. Disability Studies' perspective (and more specifically Disability Studies in Education and the Independent Living Movement) seems to be the right path to an inclusive education, since it perceives disability not in the person but in the society and in the way society is constructed.

Moreover, Disability Studies in Education postulates the idea of building a priori the context in a way that it can be enjoyed by all students, because of the possibility to meet disabled people or all that part of population identified as *Special Educational Needs*[3].

Here fits our research that aims to a) outline the current situation about accessibility of the academic settings and language used in the Italian university and b) propose solutions to make university an inclusive environment.

Methodology

Our research started in July 2016 and is oriented by the quali-quantitative methodological approach, as we perceive people with disability as *experts* about *their condition* (Gardou, 2006). Therefore, we want to give voice to disabled students' desires and not only anymore their needs (Medeghini & al., 2013; Medeghini, 2015). We also want to know what academic professionals – first of all professors – and non-disabled students think about disability and social inclusiveness as well as about the possibility to make university inclusive. For these reasons, our research uses as survey instruments: a) the interview to disabled students; b) the observation of academic settings (classrooms, laboratories, offices and libraries); c) the observation of the academic language–having in mind the easy-to-read language, which is accessible also to people with intellectual impairment and is therefore accessible to students with dyslexia or with attention difficulties as well as to students who don't have Italian as mother tongue; d) the Questionnaire of the Italian Academic Commitment towards Inclusiveness (Italian IAI: Impegno Accademico Italiano per l'Inclusività), (Guerini, Bocci, 2016), for the dean's delegates for the disability and e) the Questionnaire of the Accessibility and Inclusion of the Academic Setting and Language (Italian AICLA: Accessibilità e Inclusione dei Contesti e dei Linguaggi Accademici), (Guerini, Bocci, 2016), for students, professors, secretaries, interpreters of LIS (Lingua Italiana dei Segni: Italian Sign Language) and assistants for blind students.

In the construction of both the questionnaires, we referred to the Index for Inclusion (Booth and Ainscow, 2011) and the ACISD (Italian: Autovalutazione delle Capacità Inclusiva dei Servizi per la Disabilità), (Medeghini & al., 2013). Both the AICLA and the IAI are web-based perceptive questionnaires and written in the easy-to-read language in order to be answered by everyone. We decided to focus the attention on the accessibility to information, because it is generally not taken in account or not much as it happens with the physical accessibility.

Specifically, the AICLA questionnaire evaluates the level of accessibility and inclusion of the universities perceived by students, professors and TAB (Italian: Tecnico Amministrativo Bibliotecario) professionals. The IAI questionnaire shall be indeed answered by the professors of the National Academic Conference of the Dean's Delegates for the Disability. Therefore, we can compare the Italian academic commitment to inclusiveness – gauged by IAI – with what emerges from the AICLA.

Regarding the procedural level, at the moment, the research is in the try-out phase and involved 94 individuals: 45 students, 9 PhD students, 8 professors and 32 persons who attended the last two TFA (Tirocinio Formativo Attivo) cicles. The questionnaires have been administered from July to September via

web through an elaboration made with Google Forms and using the easy-to-read language.

Results

Concerning the results, in this paper we show only those of the AICLA questionnaire. We unexpectedly observed that the 94% of interviewees are strongly agree with the statement: "Inclusion affects everybody, not only disabled persons" (as figure 1 shows).

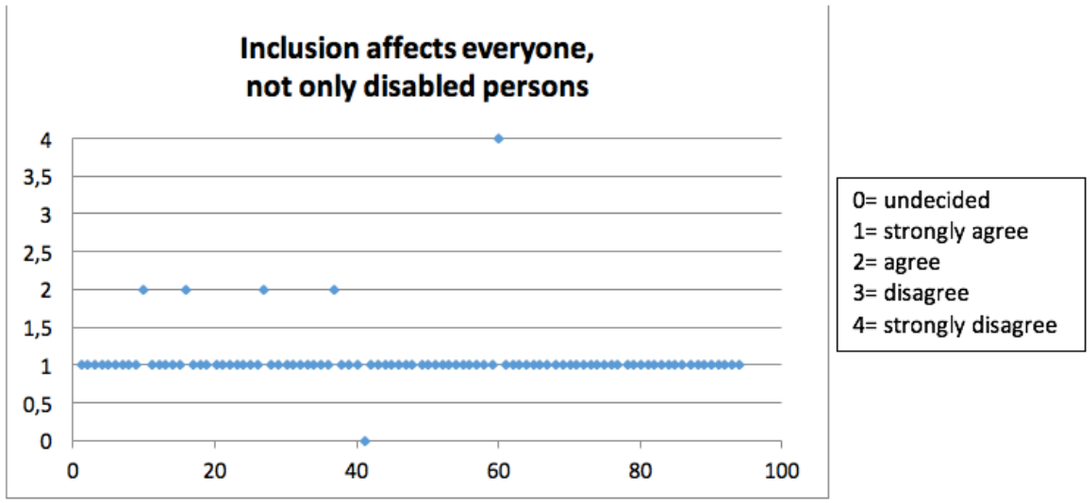

Figure 1 Inclusion affects everyone, not only disabled persons

Nonetheless, only the 55% (and not still the 94%) of interviewees are strongly disagree with the statement: "Disability belongs to the person" (see figure 2).

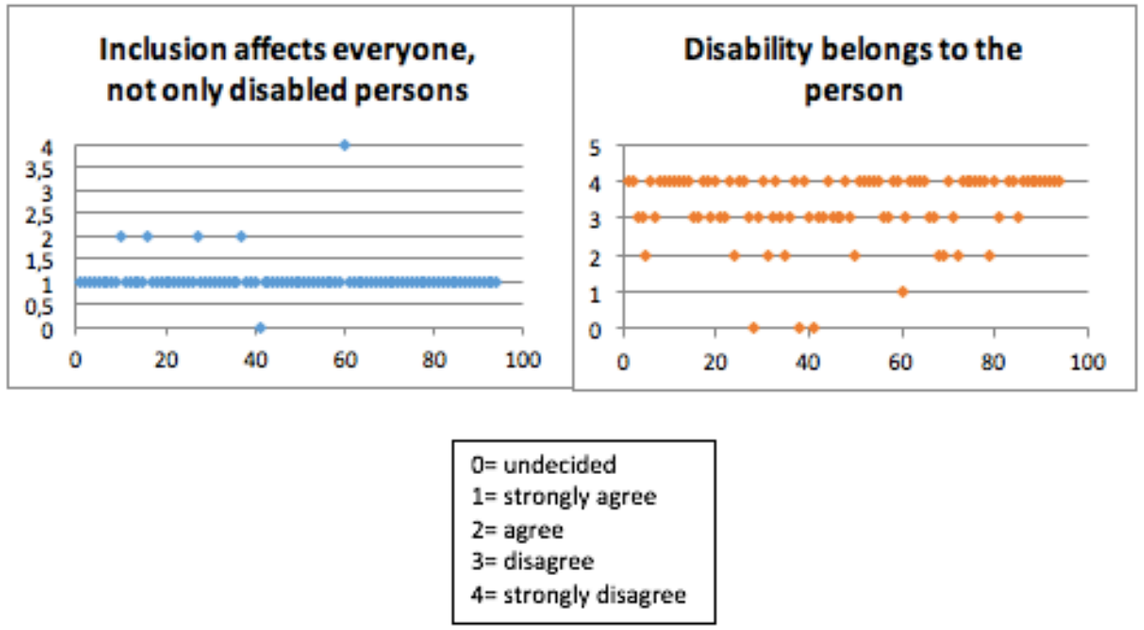

Figure 2 Comparison between "Inclusion affects everyone, not only disabled persons" and "Disability belongs to the person"

At the same time, as shown in the figure 3, half of the interviewees think that accessibility has to be adjusted to people's need. According to us, this discrepancy in the results is due to the fact that the majority of the interviewees are students and specifically students of the Department of Education. Thanks to their studies, they conceptualized inclusion as something that affects everybody but they still perceive inclusion as something to do and not to get. In other words, from the try-out phase emerges a still medicalized conceptualization of inclusion that is also perceived as something regarding only the disability.

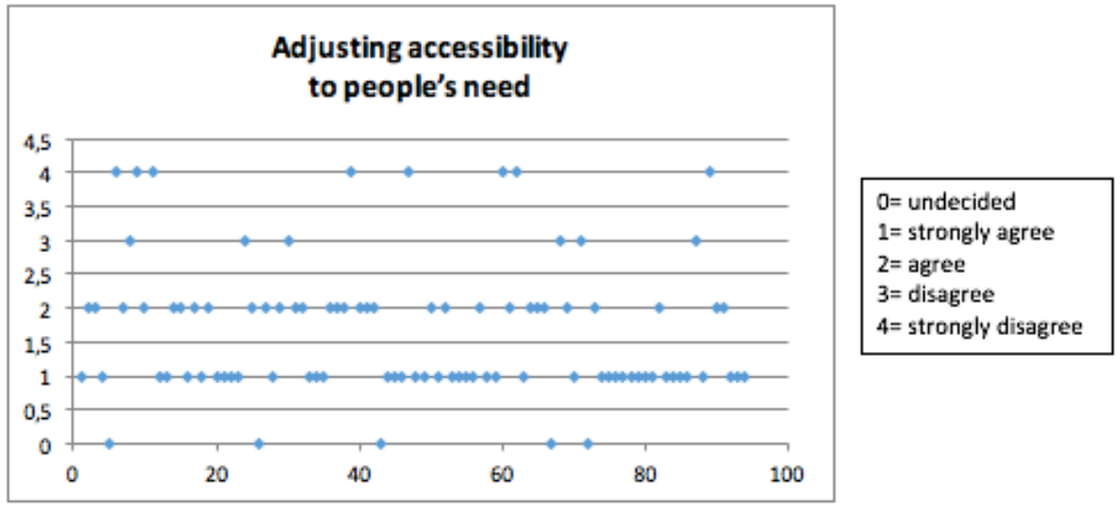

Figure 3 Adjusting accessibility to people's need

This value is also visible in the practise of the academic context, where we expect to find by the observation important services and supports for disabled students who have to register for the disabled students' office in order to get the service and support they need. Following Disability Studies' perspective, this is a kind of barrier to participation and creates a micro-exclusion phenomenon. We therefore propose to make a priori accessible – and then inclusive – the academic environment and the language used in.

To get this purpose, we decided to use the AICLA and the IAI through which we expect to know how accessibility and inclusiveness are and how people indeed perceive them. Moreover, the participation of non-disabled students – as well as those of professors and secretaries – shall outline problems to be solved (what people think about disability and inclusiveness for example) in order to construct an inclusive academic university and more generally an inclusive society.

Furthermore, universities can gain inclusiveness by listening the disabled students' desires. During the interviews, disabled students will take the floor and use their speech "to say something different from what the hegemonic culture affirms" (Bocci, 2015: 170, our own translation). At the same time, processes of empowerment and the self-advocacy will emerge in the research's participants. For this reason, we particularly appreciate the fact that almost all the interviewees are strongly agree with the statement: "Listening to disabled persons to improve accessibility" (as figure 4 shows).

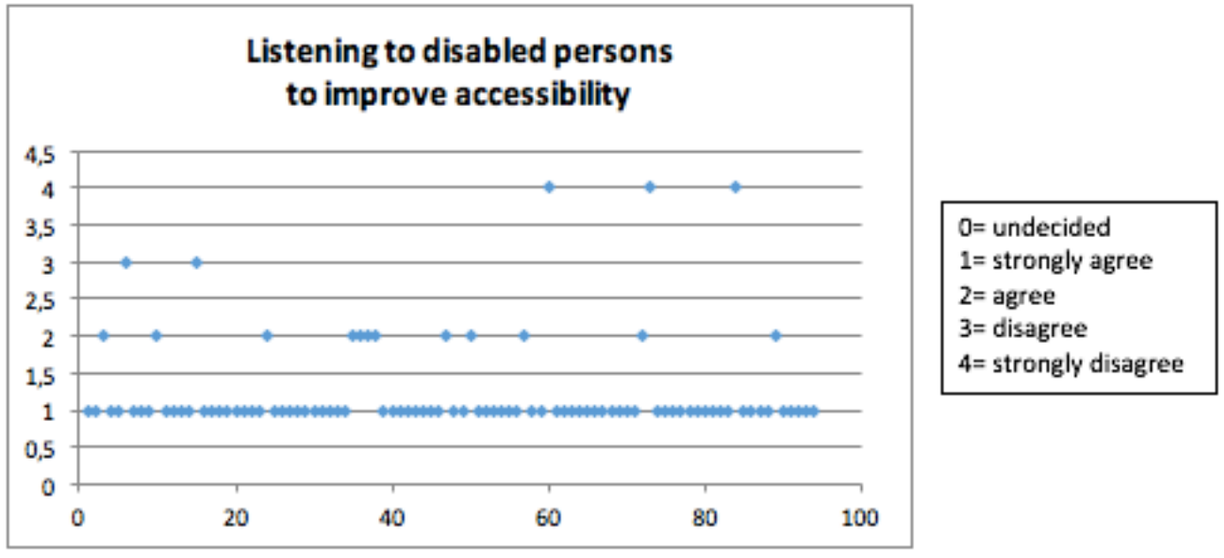

Figure 4 Listening to disabled persons to improve accessibility

Notes

1 This paper is a four-handed work, written by Ines Guerini and Fabio Bocci. Just to publication's aims we underline that

Fabio Bocci has written the theoretical section, Ines Guerini has written the methodological section and they together have written the Results as well as the References.

2 Referring to our theoretical framework and to the purposes of this work, we deliberately use disabled students and not students with disability.

3 We use italics to underline our opposite position to the categorial use of SEN that we consider a form of labelling.

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A framework for the design, development and evaluation of widening participation activities in UK Higher Education

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Keywords: Widening participation, Evaluation, Bourdieu

Description and Theoretical Framework

Increasing the participation of social groups currently under-represented in higher education has been high on the UK policy agenda since the election of the 'New Labour' government in 1997 and continues to be a priority for successive governments. Currently, Universities in England wishing to charge a higher fee are required to produce Access Agreements which are submitted to the Office for Fair Access (OFFA). These set out the measures universities will take to encourage and support a more diverse student group, including financial support, outreach work with schools and colleges, additional support while students are studying and on graduation.

The need to evaluate the impact of Widening Participation (WP) interventions is now a policy priority as considerable amounts of funding has been channelled into these initiatives. Recent HEFCE data (2010; 2014) have shown a steady increase in the rate of progression to HE of under-represented groups however it is not possible to make direct links between these macro-level changes and specific local activity. However, as yet, there is no agreement on what might constitute an effective approach to evaluation and how this might relate to theoretical insights in the field. (Gorard and Smith , 2006).

The NERUPI[1] framework was developed to provide a theoretical underpinning for the design, development and evaluation of widening participation activities. Drawing largely on the work of Pierre Bourdieu, it provides a basis for designing interventions to develop social and academic capital and increase the capacity of groups under-represented in Higher Education (HE) to negotiate the challenges of the academic environment. Actively rejecting a 'deficit' model to explain low participation it does recognise that the transformative process of 'becoming' a student is more challenging for those without a cultural tradition of HE study. The Framework sets out to encapsulate this transformative process of operationalising capitals, capacities and practices that students need to develop into a set of learning outcomes organised under overarching aims. The framework is designed to be accessible to policy makers, academics, practitioners and non-specialists alike.

Based on a structure of broad aims and learning outcomes the NERUPI Framework was designed and implemented within an HE context. It was created by integrating a top-down theo-

retical analysis of the aims of the University WP intervention programme, with a bottom-up analysis of how the design and delivery of activities and events meet specific objectives, in terms of the realisation of these broader aims.

Although focussed on developing student capacity it is underpinned by the recognition that cultural change within HE is essential if WP initiatives are to be successful. Bourdieu's notions of capital and habitus differ from other 'social capital' formulations, recognising the differences in status and power within an unequal social system and how institutions such as universities reproduce these. Drawing specifically on his exposition of how capitals operate in relation to education, Bourdieu makes a distinction between intellectual capital (subject expertise), academic capital (understanding of rules and customs within the academy) and social capital (social connections). Whitty, Hayton and Tang (2015).

These capitals are well-developed in financially secure, upper and middle class families with access to good schools a tradition of university study (embedded choosers) and less so in families with lower incomes, restricted educational choice and with less experience of further study (contingent choosers). (Ball et al, 2002).

Social and academic capital

Although many students from lower socioeconomic groups have aspirations to progress to HE they can 'have less developed capacities to realise them' (Appadurai, 2004; Bok, 2010: 176);.These understandings have informed development of our *Progression Curriculum*, (Paczuska, 2002) which addresses the first two aims in the Framework:

(1) 'Develop students' knowledge and awareness of the benefits of higher education and graduate employment.'

(2) 'Develop students' capacity to navigate Higher Education and graduate employment sectors and make informed choices'.

Habitus

The next strand of the Framework is concerned with student identity and the experience of HE. It is theoretically underpinned by Bourdieu's concept of habitus, and informed by research investigating how sociocultural factors shape perspectives and student experience (e.g. Archer et al., 2003; Bathmaker et al., 2013; Reay et al., 2009). In terms of identity and habitus our interventions aim to support students in finding and inhabiting a 'third space' (Ingram and Abrahams, 2013) rather than expecting them to adopt the cultural values and attitudes of the academy. Its inclusion also opens a space for institutional reflection and discussion to challenge normative views and attitudes. As a result our third aim is to:

(3) 'Develop students' confidence and resilience to negotiate the challenge of university life and graduate progression.'

Educational and Skills Capital

Our fourth aim is concerned with skills development and builds on Bourdieu's taxonomy through the notion of 'Skills Capital' which we formulate as:

(4) 'Develop students' study skills and capacity for academic attainment and successful graduate progression.'

The final strand of the Framework is related to the knowledge curriculum, and is concerned with developing students 'Intellectual Capital' through the extension and contextualisation of subject knowledge:

(5) 'Develop students' understanding by contextualising subject knowledge.'

Methods

Objectives relating to the five overarching aims were developed for widening participation activities for each broad age group in the UK education system (Levels 0 (primary school) up to Level 4 (entrance to university). For example, the first aim is to 'Develop students' knowledge and awareness of the benefits of higher education and graduate employment.' The objective at Level 0 (primary school children aged 10 and 11) is that widening participation outreach activities should 'Enable students to experience a positive introduction to Higher Education and the University of Bath campus'. At this age we are primarily interested in ensuring that these young students have a positive introduction to a university. These objectives are then further refined to include 'Find out more about Higher Education' and 'Explore the University campus'. Our evaluation materials are designed to measure whether or not our activities have met these objectives. The programme of activities for older students at Level 2 (14 to 16 years) has the same overarching aims, but the objectives are more challenging. For this age group the top level objective is to 'Explore academic, social, economic and personal benefits of progressing to Higher Education'. The refined objectives then include: Discover academic and social benefits of Higher Education; Understand economic benefits of Higher Education and career opportunities for graduates; Explore benefits of Higher Education in terms of personal development and cultural enrichment; Discover study and research opportunities at the University of Bath.

This process was completed for all age groups and all five overarching aims resulting in a Framework summarising objectives for a programme of widening participation interventions.

The Framework was initially developed and tested at one university. The first step was to determine which objective or objectives were being met by each of the widening participation activities. Once this was established the evaluation materials were designed to measure the objectives set. A single widening participation activity does not necessarily meet all objectives for each age group. For example an activity may be designed to build students' confidence and resilience (the third

'Habitus' aim) or an activity may be subject focussed and aim to develop knowledge of a particular subject and show how that subject knowledge can be applied in other contexts and settings (the fifth *Intellectual Capital* aim).

Results

We have found the Framework to be an extremely useful tool in our work. It allows us to see at a glance the range of objectives our programme embraces. It has aided the design of our programme clearly identifying areas that are well developed and those that need further attention. The Framework provides a common vocabulary which facilitates discussion between all stakeholders including practitioners, managers, academics, schools and colleges and other university staff. It also provides a strong foundation for our evaluation work as our materials are designed to measure the objectives set.

In order to test its wider application a consortium of universities has been working together to trial the Framework and assess its capacity to encompass a wider range of interventions. When the NERUPI partner universities began to test the Framework at their institutions a protracted process was envisaged with potential revisions to the Framework itself. However, it soon became apparent that substantive changes were not necessary as the Framework is sufficiently flexible to encompass a variety of outreach activities, in a range of universities working with different age groups and characteristics. The underpinning theoretical base has proved robust and the broad aims and objectives for each age group remain unchanged providing a foundation for development of specific learning outcomes for individual activities. Partners are now working together to extend the Framework to Level 5 (on a university course) and Level 6 (the transition into employment).

This evaluation framework enables a more strategic approach to the planning, delivery and evaluation of WP interventions and provides a basis for clear objectives for interventions at five levels, corresponding with students' academic journey. It also provides a rich source of data to inform practice, develop institutional reflexivity, improve monitoring and evaluation and contribute to theoretical understandings within the field.

Notes

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First analysis on the construction of an inter-institutional inclusion project and the features of exclusion in higher learning in Latin America

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Keywords: Inclusion, Exclusion, Higher learning, Interinstitutional project.

Introduction

Affirmative Action policies are now a significant part of the political agenda of Brazil, within in the sense of democratizing access to higher learning in the country, representing an option made for the inclusion of groups that have historically been denied access to university. In addition to the debates and the different institutional formats and arrangements that have appeared throughout the years, more recently there has been intense empirical and theoretical debate due to the pressure of non-governmental organizations, other political sectors tied to social movements, and also sectors of the government itself, for the compliance with the social and racial quotas in public universities that were regulated by a law passed in 2012.

Initially, it must be mentioned that the 2012 Higher Education Census showed a clear growth in access to higher education, with percentages reaching up to 12.8%. These 7 million students enrolled in degree courses in Brazil results throughout 31,866 courses, offered by 304 public institutions and 2112 private institutions. It is clear that this expansion of higher education has occurred due to private initiatives, such as ProUni and FIES - two governmental scholarship programs with tax benefits.

Given this scenario, what we see is that public policies made up of provisions, measures and procedures that translate the political orientation of the Government that regulates public activities related to public interest tasks, have a tendency to vary according to the level of diversification of the economy and society, with the nature of the political regime, and with the level of participation and action of the different social players.

However, public education policies are something recent in Brazil, which begun with the creation of the Ministry of Education (and Health) - in the 1930s. Since 1988, they are guided by the principles of universal and equal access, present in the Brazilian Constitution enacted in that year. The current legal instrument that outlines the structure and operation of the educational system in Brazil is the so-called the National Education Guidelines and Framework Law (*Lei de Diretrizes e Bases da Educação Nacional*) - Number 9394/96 - that con-

tains the proposition for the 'decade of education' (which would last until 2006). As it did not meet its purposes, a strategic plan was passed in 2014, after much debate. The National Education Plan, passed in 2014, has 20 goals to be fulfilled until 2024; the expansion of higher education is contained in Item 12: "increase the gross enrollment rate in higher education to fifty percent (50%) and the net rate to thirty-three percent (33%) of the population aged eighteen (18) to twenty-four (24), ensuring quality offerings and expansion to, at least, forty percent (40%) of the new enrollments in the public sector."

What led to such a goal as this one described in the National Education Plan? Despite the regulation of social and racial quotas, what are the academic difficulties faced by these students in the universities? Is there any other country in Latin America that, despite the implementation of public actions, still has the same dropout and course failure rates for higher education? Given this scenario, the fact that public policies materialize through the concrete actions of social subjects in their institutional arrangements led two Brazilian universities (UNESP and UFOP) to the Call for the Acacia Project (2015-2018). This Erasmus project is the result of a comparative study by 14 universities in 11 Latin American countries and its purpose was to empower the primary players (students and professors), starting by the training of the faculty which, by means of technological and computational resources, will be able to empower the students, offering accessible content in an equitable manner to these students.

Methodology

The methodology and theoretical basis of this project is the Theory of Social Change described by Cohen (1970). This theory discusses the condition of certain social institutions, or society itself as a whole, remaining in a state of relative stability (static) or transforming themselves (dynamic), in particular relating educational practices. The authors that support this approach diverge as to the comprehensiveness of the social changes, who makes such changes, their speed, if the change is directive or cyclical, linear or multi-linear, or spiraled. Initially seen as a social theory, Sociology and Anthropology scholars debated the concepts regarding the theoretical "key" that would explain this social progress (Sztompka, 1998, p. 62-70). The term "progress" corresponded to industrial development, the specialization of the organization of labor, technological improvement, and the population growth experienced at that time. Although there was a loss of credit to the classic evolutionist ideals, the debates on evolution continued, now seeking to "attenuate" the positive feature attributed to the "material and technological progress" of modern times (Sztompka, 1998, p. 201-203), thus appearing neoevolucionism. It proposes a multi-linear assessment, questioning the directivity of the rigid stages of social evolution upheld by the classic evolutionists. Society would be made up by several social elements such as culture, economy, technology, the art of war, religiousness, politics, family structure, and each part is relatively independent of one another. In sum, a certain sector may suffer abrupt changes throughout a few decades, while

others may remain relatively "static" during that same period, with few changes. The conditions of certain structures could (there is more use of probabilities) cause effects to the political system, but it would not be the determining factor of change for all other remaining structures. Within this debate, we can outline the position presented by Talcott Parsons (Sztompka, 1998, p. 210-215) and his concern regarding the dualism between adaptation/differentiation. To this sociologist, the difference regarding classic evolutionists is in seeing evolution as a multi-linear process, taking society as something made up by subsystems that will have different moments of differentiation. In this sense, the method of implementation of the Acacia Project in these countries results from the identification of three common concepts between the participating institutions, namely: affection, accessibility, and innovation. These guiding principles are then implemented in a pilot project in three universities in Colombia, Nicaragua, and Peru through an organizational structure called CADEP - *Centro de Apoyo y Desarrollo Profesional* (Center for Professional Support and Development).

Results

The first results indicate some specificities, in particular in the other 11 institutions in which these pilot centers were not installed. In this work, the analysis result from the initial implementation process of the Acacia Project at a public university in the State of São Paulo, in which there is no anticipation of installation of the CADEPs

The Affirmative Action programs had already produced their effects of ensuring access to groups of students from public school and some performance reviews showed the success of these students, indicating "educational resilience" This is the student's ability to obtain academic and social success despite being exposed to personal and social hardship. Amongst the possible explanations, the *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1992) of underprivileged students, that are well trained to deal with unfavorable situations, stands out, as is this a valuable quality in the competitive environment of a research university, which is not always shared with middle class colleagues, who are generally spared from any adversities by their families.

Also noted amongst indigenous students from other Latin American countries, this feature is being promoted by forming a multidisciplinary team that diagnoses and directs the students coming from this type of access to higher learning (such as the CADEPs in the Acacia Project), demonstrating the relevance of the first results of this project. Specifically, in this case, blind and deaf students can now rely on a group of professors from different areas of knowledge that help them in the quest for solutions related to the difficulties in academic performance. These two groups were chosen precisely due to the organizational and hierarchical condition of UNESP that allowed for the team of sociologists, educators, physics, mathematicians, and information technicians to form a work group for a differentiated training of professors given the two aforementioned groups, historically excluded from higher learning.

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Development and evaluation of the platform INCLUYE: a curricular adaptation with technology, like proposal for the correct inclusion with students with visual impairment in the class of statistics II

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Keywords: Curricular adaptation, Visually impaired student, Inclusion in the classroom, Tiflotechnology.

General description of the context

In Mexico various educational institutions have proposed implement an inclusive education, that assures equal opportunities for their students in function of their individual needs but still there is a long way to go in this field because the efforts in the institutions has just focused in the needs outside the classroom, they have modified the educational installations and just in some cases in good educational practices, being the student forced to adapt the educational system, limiting his/her opportunities to participate and learn.

In the case of the University Center of Economics and Administration (CUCEA) of the University of Guadalajara, they have provided some infrastructure solutions for people with disabilities but currently there is poor technological or curricular adaptations for the visually impaired students, that allows have the proper conditions for the teaching / learning of these students, hence it is important generate resources centered to the technology.

In this search of achieving significant learning in the students with visually impaired in the CUCEA and start a process of investigation-action it will be shown the results obtained in a case study with a visually impaired student by applying the indivial curricular adaptations created like a support for the learning of the Inferential Statistics in the topic hypothesis proof in the class of Statistics II. Looking the sensitivity of the teaching community due to the problema of inclusion and the research in this educational field.

Even when only are registered three students with visually impaired in CUCEA, it is very important provide a school with quality to these students with equality of conditions which with no questions will pass if the curriculum, the contents, the methodologies and teaching strategies and evaluation systems are defined and are configured in a proper manner (Arnaiz, (2000).

Theoretical framework

It is important to note that the word inclusion not always leads to guarantee a favorable environment for a student with disability. Zuñiga (2012), since the formal work that has been made in the educational field has not obtained permeate at all the educational leves. According to the (UNESCO 2014), in this "inclusion" perspective, curiously it is excluded the medium and high levels of education, because the studies have focused mainly in the basic education system. Leaving a fewer opportunities to confront a degree with significant learning in these students.

According to Zambrano (2015) The attention to the educational needs of the students requires the utilization of resources to give an answer to the diversity of appropriate experiences and with this achieve the development of the abilities outline on the general objectives of the stage.

Adapt these resources will suppose:

- Arrange the sufficient didactical resources and appropriate to the needs of the students.
- Create and prepare materials that for its specificity and originality are not in the market.
- Utilize sufficient furniture and appropriate for all ages and physical & sensorial characteristics of the students in general with the needs of special education in particular.
- Incorporate as much resources that will be utilize for any student..

By going through curricular adaptations and building activities immediately we think in the author Villoslada (2011) and her doctoral thesis where she proposes the social constructivism of Vigotsky offers an answer from the point of view of the linguistics much more adapt to the reality and the characteristics of the learner with visual deficiency in the instructional design is consider also the flow that considera también la corriente que promotes the multi-sensorial didactics since this is one of the fields that is moving forward more quickly, when it comes to the didactics of students with visually impaired in the teaching and learning of the sciences; this is about more of a innovative form of teaching and learning experimental sciences. (Soler, 1998), and that initially, was thought for the blind students and visually impaired students.

According to Villoslada (2011) we can summarize the multisensorial didactics like a method that consist in utilize all the possible senses to capture the information of the means and to interrelate the data obtained with in order to produce complete and significant. learning material.

Objectives

The objective of this research is focused in evaluate the pertinent facts of these curricular adaptations to:

I. Analyze the inclusion problems for visually impaired students in CUCEA.

II. Select the materials and design the proper resources for the learning of statistics in a specific proof of hypothesis for the visually impaired or blind students.

III. Incorporate the technology for teaching Statistics to a student with for visually impaired or blind students.

IV. Describe the impact that was obtained by the usage of a learning object supported in technological resources for visually impaired or blind students.

V. Evaluate if the student is capable to use the procedures of the Inferential Statistics in a way that can organize, describe and subject to a hypothesis contrast of the data obtained in the context of economic-administrative for a better decision making.

To confront the necessity of a process of the efficient learning inclusion it is very important generate transformations not just adjustments in the infrastructure, but genera areas that allows get along with those students with any difficulty; Foster the creation of institutional educational projects for the develop of didactic materials and the usage of software helping direct the activities of learning in the process of inclusion.

Activities and instruments description (methodology)

The methodology used is the qualitative type, being investigation-action emancipatory method (Murillo, 2011); since this method is closely linked with the transformation of the organization and educational practice, but also with the organization and social practice.

- Inclusion problem was studied by gathering the results of the research that contributes to provide evidence that guide us to a correct inclusion.
- Investigated and tested the designed technologies for the visually impaired people.
- Made interviews to the student Sarai to know her medical records and also her academic background, knowing her writing abilities in Braille and the usage of computer, calculator and software.

- Performed software testing and calculator to analyze the benefits of them.

- Developed curricular adaptations (based on the constructivism), building a support platform to group information and activities (Figure 1 Logo), make testing of the INCLUYE platform, validating the software functions such us the use of the mouse, and the buttons recognition (Figure 2 buttons). Also making testing in the INCLUYE platform for audio functions and programs opening like EXCEL and AMIS.

Figure 1. Logo

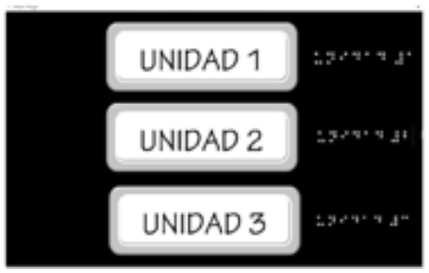

Figure 2. Buttons

Initial testing was done with the complete usage of the INCLUYE platform.
(Figure 3. Initial testing)

Figure 3. Initial testing

- Initial activities were performed in EXCEL
- First testing was done with the usage of audio books using the INCLUYE platform and AMIS program.
- Give the first partial test using the INCLUYE platform and the AMIS and EXCEL programs.
- Printing testing was done in Braille by using the INCLUYE platform.

Then it is shown some activities included in INCLUYE:

Preliminary Activity

In this activity you will get familiar with the usage of an external keyboard, recognizing the distributions of the EXCEL. (Figure 1. Keyboard Marked in Braille)

Preliminary Activity	Objective	Technology used
Get familiar with the keyboard (Numeric and alphanumeric) for the usage of Excel.	Recognize the keyboard distribution for the usage of basic operations and functions in Excel, and also get familiar with the didactic environment of the screen.	Excel, Windows eye numeric keyboard and marked in Braille.

Esta columna es la columna A. En esta columna escribe los números pares del 2 al 10	Esta columna es la columna B. En esta columna escribe los números impares del 1 al 10
2	1
4	3
6	5
8	7
10	9

Figure 1 – Keyboard Marked in Braille

Activity 1 Selection of technological tools for the arithmetical calculations.

In this activity you will consider operative aspects of the formulas: arithmetic median and standard deviation, (remembering key concepts worked in the Statistics I subject) to recognize the tool that allows make the calculation in a more simple, accessible and clear way. (Figure 5a-b Using Excel, Ti-Nspire and Google)

Activity 1	Objective	Technology used:
Statistics Calculations	Take advantage of the available technologies of a simple, remembering the concepts of Statistics I, correcting possible errors in the operations order	Excel, Amis, Calculadora TI-Nspire CX CAS, Celular

Desventaja de la Tecnología Ventaja de la Tecnología

Desventaja de la Tecnología Ventaja de la Tecnología

Alumna: creo que es más fácil que todas, pero solo porque ya sabía que ese es el resultado sé que no está mal, por que dicta muy rápido. Pero creo que es muy útil para cálculos cortos.

Figure 5a Using Excel, Ti-Nspire and Google

Calculadora TI-Nspire CX CAS

Desventaja de la Tecnología Ventaja de la Tecnología

Figure 5b Using Excel, Ti-Nspire and Google

Activity 2 The probability in the function of the normal distribution

In this activity you should recognize where is located in a distribution graph the probability, considering taking a sample that the median be near to median population; this probability coincide with the area below the curve formed by the density function (So before any calculation is done you should analyze the Figure 6 and Figure 7)

Activity 2	Objective	Technology used:
The probability in the function of normal distribution	Recognize the normal curve to determinate the probability of extract a sample with the median given	Numerical strip, Excel, Amis

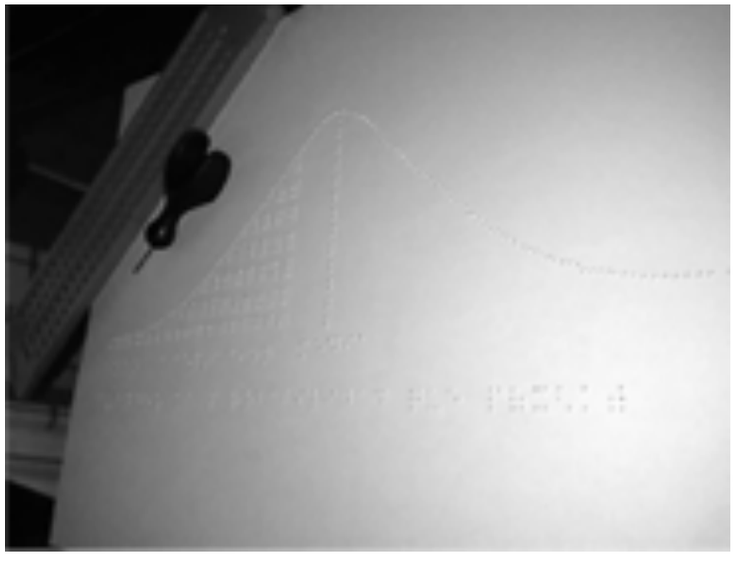

Figure 6 normal curve in Braille

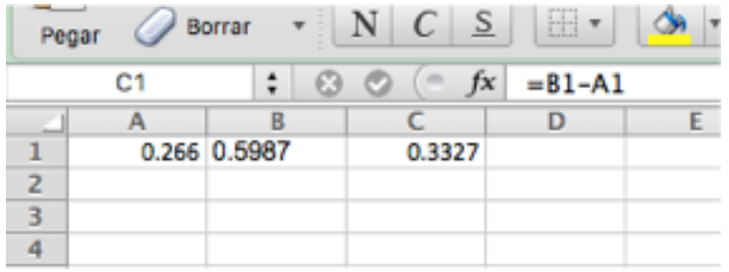

Figure 7 Calculation

Activity 3 Theorem of the central limit Estimation of parameters

In this activity you will have to make calculation of Z by your own and obtain the probability by the using the Z table (it should be noted that the Excel sentence needs to be used as can locate the data in this table Figure 8).

Activity 3	Objective	Technology used:
Theorem of the central limit Estimation of parameters	Recognize the normal curve, like a zone to determinate which is the probability of extracting a sample like a given median.	Numeric strip, Excel, Amis

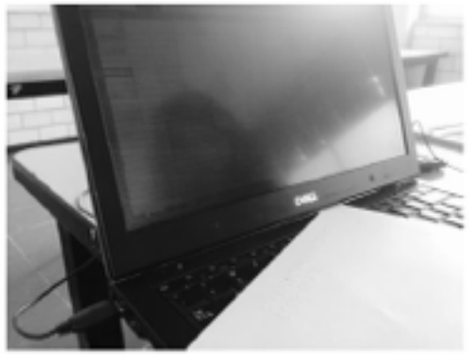

Figure 8 Excel Formulas in Braille

Activity 4: Proof of hypothesis

In these activities you will decide if we accept or reject the null hypothesis, from space showing the statistical values of contrast and associated probabilities, taking in count the normal distribution graph in figure 9.

Activity 4	Objective	Technology used:
Proof of hypothesis	Taking the decision according to the proof of hypothesis and interpret the results obtained in the problems of the Economics Administrative	Excel, Windows eye, numeric keyboard marked in Braille and iPad

Figure 9 Pattern built with Quiktac

Results achieved, materials developed

Based in the achievements made by the student Sarai in the applied activities, the adapted departmental exam and the work in the class, the student successfully passed the Statistics II course (Evaluated in the following way: teamwork 25%, project 30%, classroom exam 25% and departmental exam 25%) obtaining a final grade of 87, and not just the satisfaction of her final grade also the most important with the satisfaction of having dominated some of the Statistics tools, Excel and also the usage of technology that she has never worked on before.

By engagement of the student Sarai and the tools that were provided to her in this work, I can conclude that a student under these circumstances can confront with success a high level procedural subject (Substituted with technological tools), applying the correct concepts, letting the student in optimal conditions to learn how to learn technology, confront problems

that demand set out and demonstrate the hypothesis in the school field and/or working environment as well as knowing the importance of the roll that plays the technology to achieve its own school inclusion; it is worth mention every case will be different and it cannot guarantee the same success as it was obtained with the student Sarai, because each person with visual disability may have different learning styles, domain of technology, writing system and also people that do not want to receive any additional tool or be treated different from their classmates.

We can conclude that inclusion can not only be achieved by just providing a computer or tablet to a student but to have the proper content school insertion, providing the access to the information that any other student could have in a blink of an eye; Also as an important fact the sensitivity of the teaching community to promote an active participation, the correct way to create this inclusion can be found in the curricular adjustments and the tools of instructional design to create activities that allows them to participate in the classroom. Not necessarily make by the professor but done by the academicians.

With the experience of this investigation it is recommended to the teaching community know the conditions of their students, their domain/knowledge of technology, and as well their academic background; matters that will not take much long to discover but will save efforts by not allowing work with assumptions. But in assure an inclusion with quality it is not just a responsibility of the teaching community, it is recommended to look for support for the academicians to create investigation and support material.

The educational integration of a blind or visually impaired student it is a collective school institution in his combination and the success of the educational participation dwells in all the elements of the educational center, act for a common agreement for a base of a global Project of the center, collectively assumed.

Words from the student Sarai: “it really provides a learning that is interested in people like me and the professor did not just pass me because I am different from the rest of my classmates”

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Research on equity at university: dimensions to analyze practices aimed to successful education for all

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Keywords: Educational equity, Higher Education, Justice, Inclusion

General Description

Equity is a priority for many Universities around the World (Espinoza & González, 2010; Sellar & Gale, 2016). It is gradually taking on an enhanced role in the European context. Empirical evidence tells us that equity serves as a framework of university teaching in promoting educational success for all students (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2013).

Furthermore, there are several international and European researches on equity of access (supply, enrolment, input) and equity of result (performance, outcome, social impact), and not so many in terms of equity of process within the context of the European Higher Education (Boliver, 2012; Whiteford, Shah & Sid Nair, 2013).

One of the challenges of the current research on equity is to obtain a deep understanding of the pedagogical challenges for a successful educational process (equity of process) at University. So, identifying research paths and practices on this topic is relevant in a time when university systems are facing new social challenges and demands, and where University should combine its twofold objective: training professional and capable people to build a democratic, pluralistic and fair society (Sánchez-Santamaría & Nogueira, 2014). This approach is aimed at generating know-how linked to inclusion and justice principles (Sánchez-Santamaría & Ballester, 2012) from a pedagogical perspective with implications for teaching policy, management and practice at University.

In this sense, the aim of this paper is to show and discuss the main scope involved in the development of a conceptual and methodological framework for promoting a successful educational process at University through equity-based practices (Ramos Pardo et al., 2014; Sánchez-Santamaría & Nogueira, 2014).

From a descriptive methodology, it focused on critical review of empirical knowledge generated from research conducted by the GRIOCE (Research Group on Guidance, Quality and Equity in Education) at the University of Castilla-La Mancha (Spain).

The specific targets are three:

- Identifying the relevant scientific literature published in the prestigious journals on educational equity related to the Spanish university system.
- Proposing an update definition about equity in Higher Education.
- Defining the main analysis dimensions to evaluate the promotion of equity in the teaching and learning process at University

Methods

A descriptive method is used. It combines a quantitative and qualitative approach according to the objective of this paper (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014). It allows us to set the scientific context about equity at University (quantitative approach). At the same time, it is proposed an updated definition about equity and a set of dimensions and indicators for its evaluation.

In the case of quantitative approach, it is based on a census study of scientific articles published in the last 5 years (2012/2016). The source of information are two relevant databases: WoK-ISI and SCOPUS. It tends to obtain information of scientific interest on equity in Higher Education. It also analyses the content of the articles around three categories: equity of access, equity of process and equity of results.

The qualitative approach reviews the epistemological knowledge about equity generated from the research process by GRIOECE over the last few years. In such a way, three essential questions are answered:

a) What does equity mean from the perspective of a successful education for all in Higher Education? (*epistemological* setting).

b) Which are the relevant dimensions to define a model of evaluation of equity in Higher Education? (*methodological* setting).

c) Which could be, therefore, the indicators to evaluate equity as a process in Higher Education? (*procedural* setting).

Results

The quantitative analysis indicates a relevant concern on equity in Higher Education (33 papers in WoK-ISI/ 28 papers in SCOPUS).

In these papers the content of equity is focused on issues of social stratification and inequality from a sociological perspective (equity of access: 60 % of papers).

The pedagogical perspective is referred to academic performance (equity of results: 20% of papers), to a lesser extend in educational survival (equity of process: 10%), and mix (equity of access/results: 10%).

The inclusion and educational justice linked to the curriculum begins to emerge strongly as a new relationship between eq-

uity and excellence as defining elements of a new framework for successful education for all.

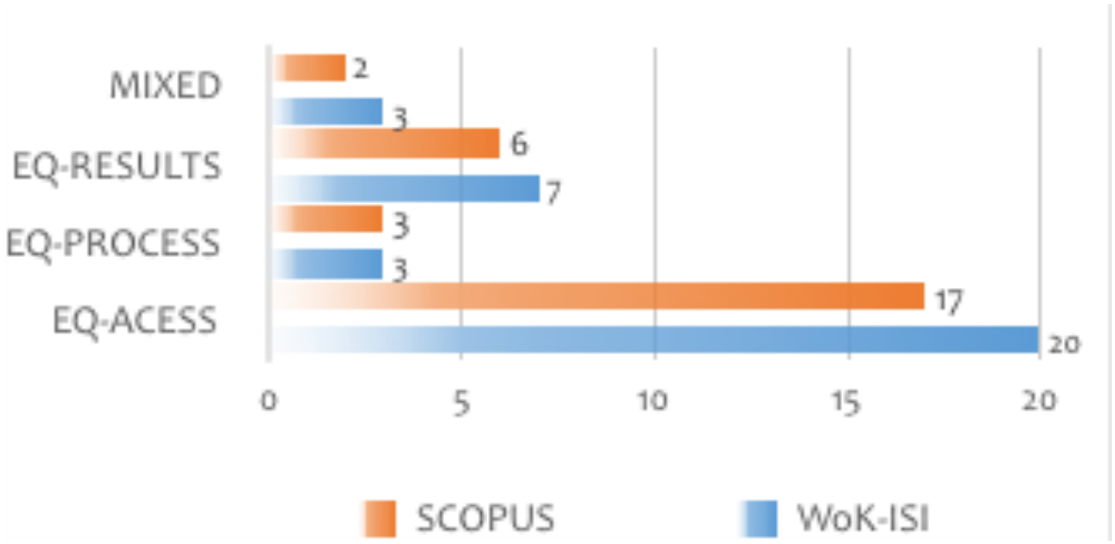

Figure 1. Number of papers by category and database (Source: Sánchez-Santamaría & Manzanares-Moya, 2016)

Other results of this study allowed us to delimit an updated concept of educational equity based on the perspective for a successful education: It is a set of pedagogical conditions and strategies for generating experiences so all students be able to get relevant and meaningful learning and providing them the necessaries resources to become citizens (Sánchez-Santamaría & Ballester, 2012; Sánchez-Santamaría & Manzanares-Moya, 2012; 2016).

And finally we are identifying three dimensions for the analysis of equity in Higher Education (Sánchez-Santamaría y Manzanares-Moya, 2016):

- Inclusion: related to promote participation understood as to be and to take part.
- Fairness: related to foster educational capabilities.
- Guidance: related to address the educational needs (decision-making and adjustment of the educational response)

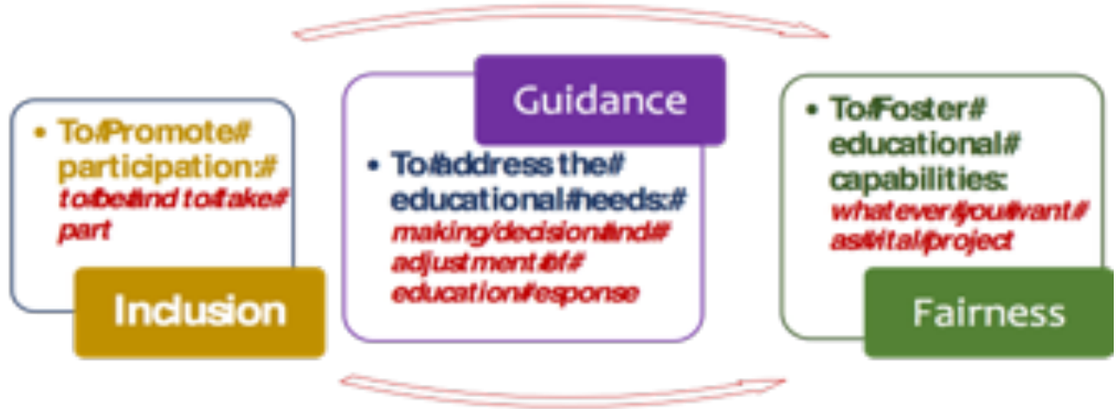

Figure 2. Dimensions to analyze educational equity in HE (Source: Sánchez-Santamaría & Manzanares-Moya, 2016)

Moreover, a set of indicators to evaluate the contribution of educational practices to the equity process are proposed (10 indicators).

Indicator (*survival, promoting, achievement, decision-making)*
1. Educational guidance: *Adjustment processes of the educational response*
2. Professional guidance: *Decision-making for the career*
3. Classroom management: *classroom climate, coexistence and diversity*
4. Active teaching methodologies
5. Teacher training to manage diversity
6. Teaching coordination to integrate the perspective of equity
7. Educational advice for teachers: *students with disabilities…*
8. Assessment as learning
9. Student participation: *to be present, to acknowledge & to take part*
10. New ways of teaching organization and relationship to the community

Table 1. Indicators to evaluate educational practices aimed to promote equity in HE

This work encourages us to a further research on factors associated with equity in Higher Education from the perspective of a successful education. It also requires an intensified research in the scientific contrast of successful education about quality criteria subject to empirical rigor (Apple, 2016).

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Creating social value in Higher Education through the application of marketing and service innovation concepts

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Keywords: Social value, Higher Education, Marketing, Social innovation, Disadvantage students.

The need to open the higher education sector to new publics, with special attention to low income and disadvantage students, the constant reduction of public funding, the emergence of a competitive higher education market and the creation of new educational formats is increasing the complexity of the management of higher education institutions, in general, and the management of students support, in particular.
In this context, the application of concepts and theories from marketing, with special attention to the service-dominant logic, may represent a major paradigm shift in the way higher education institutions manage their relationships with students and other stakeholders, not only in terms of training services but also at the level of the increasingly important social support services, creating a new logic in which students are identified as the main drivers of value creation process.
With the development of new management models focused on innovation and co-creation of value with the various stakeholders, it is expected to help higher education institutions to be more successful in creating social value, that is, access, success and employability of the most disadvantaged groups and thus be decisive in creating a more balanced and cohesive society, better prepared to deal with the expectations of a knowledge based economy and society.

The marketing as a holistic management process

In management contemporary thinking, marketing is increasingly considered as a holistic process, oriented to improve organizations by focusing on co-creation of value with its customers and other stakeholders, as opposed to the more traditional approach oriented to persuading customers to purchase a certain type of goods and services that were available in the market.
With the increasing attention to service marketing, the marketing theory as evolved to a new line of thinking: the "service-dominant logic" (Vargo & Lusch, 2004), or "service logic" (Grönroos, 2006). Many marketing researchers see this logic as a new reference for the theory and practice of marketing (Ford & Bowen, 2008).
The "service-dominant logic" represents an important theoretical evolution of marketing, inviting "marketers" to review its

position on marketing (Gummesson, 2008). It promotes a change in philosophy, from a logic dominated by products to a new service centred logic (Vargo & Lusch, 2004; Vargo & Lusch, 2008; Vargo & Lusch, 2010).
According to this logic, when the consumer and the vendor interact, the supplier is providing an extended service to the consumer, which includes product information, technical assistance, training, and other types of resources (Grönroos, 2006; Grönroos, 2010). In this perspective, consumers do not buy goods or services, but value propositions that serve them, in which they are co-creators and the value of the service is updated during the using process and not in the course of value chain management (Gummesson, 2007).

Service innovation

The management of student support service in the current context of higher education is a dynamic and complex process, which requires a constant adjustment of the value propositions to respond to rapid changes in the social context. This kind of organization is increasingly pressed to innovate in the services offered to their stakeholders (social innovation) as a way to respond to new audiences and problems that are faced.
However, the approach to innovation in service marketing context is opposite to the traditional approaches of innovation focused on organizational processes and implies the involvement of multiple stakeholders, an aspect that increases the difficulty of designing new services.

The research that is currently carried out on innovation is driven by the need to develop a creation of a more compelling value propositions system (Lusch & Vargo, 2006) in a world with a growing dynamism and interconnectivity. This broad vision drew attention to the inter-related and inter-connected processes through which develops innovation (Geels, 2004).
In a society increasingly focused on service, service innovation is crucial to enable organizations to achieve the proposed goals. In this context, the use of this concept in the provision of services to higher education students may help to find new answers to new problems.

Higher education challenges

Given the increasing complexity of the environment in which higher education institutions operate, this organizations are being forced to carefully rethink their role in society and to review its relations with the various stakeholders and the community with whom they interact (Jongbloed, Enders & Salerno, 2008).
In addition to the challenges that higher education institutions face demanding the creation of a competitive higher education market, this organizations are also struggling to respond to the growing expectations of society, which looks at the education in general and higher education in particular, as the main drive of promoting economic competitiveness and social cohesion and equity.

This approach is referred as “the social dimension of higher education”. This is an increasingly important concept in the context of the Bologna process and reflects the growing importance given by policy makers to the various components of the educational process in the higher education sector.
Higher education is seen, especially in Europe, through the logic of its social dimension. This assessment is based on the contribution that higher education gives to society, particularly in terms of:

• scientific and technical training of the population;
• development of individuals;
• promotion of social cohesion and social mobility of the most disadvantaged.

However, higher education institutions, in general, are not adequately prepared to respond to these demands of the society. The culture of universities is traditionally very conservative and remains very dependent on the more traditional management models. In fact, despite the existence of clear policies to promote equity in access to higher education, recent OCDE studies continue to identify the existence of difficulties in higher education to attract the most disadvantaged groups.
Despite the efforts made in recent years to promote equity and democratize access to higher education, this is a problem that persists in education. OCDE, European Commission and United Nations, through the publication of various studies, have expressed several times that higher education institutions play an important role in reducing inequalities and should develop approaches that create a higher education system more accessible to students from disadvantaged backgrounds.
Therefore, it’s essential for higher education institutions to invest in innovation and in the implementation of new management models, in particular in student support services.
Despite its relevance to the higher education institutions, students and society, the specificity of management of support services students is an issue that is not yet fully explored. The institutions and policymakers need to pay more attention to this area, since these services guarantee access to higher education of all kind of students, promote academic success, reduce abandonment and facilitate their transition to the work market.

Social innovation in the Polytechnic Institute of Viana do Castelo

The existing organizational culture of the social services (or student support services) of the Polytechnic Institute of Viana dos Castelo is clearly focused on students, their needs and in providing services that add value to students, academic community and other stakeholders. It is an organization that systematically promotes social innovation in close relation with their students. The goal is to be relevant to the students and their families and, in this way, to create social value.
The following good practices are examples of services made available to IPVC students that are intended to promote eq-

uity and inclusion and that resulted from the institutional social innovation process and social entrepreneurship.

A- *Academic Bus*

The Polytechnic Institute of Viana do Castelo, in conjunction with the Intermunicipal Community of the region, created a service of low-cost transport for students, operating since September 2015 and connecting 17 locations to schools. Taking into account the financial difficulties that a relocation could mean for families, especially for the neediest areas of the interior, this initiative aims to democratize access to higher education and allow students and potential students to move every day to schools and, then, to return home (in an effort to meet the needs for mobility and prevent academic failure and dropout, ensuring equity and promoting social cohesion).

Objectives

- Promote an alternative transport service to fill the gaps in public transport networks in the region;
- Practice a low cost price to ensure accessibility to higher education and minimize academic drop out;
- Facilitate mobility among students and schools in the region (avoiding the costs of displacement)

B- *Cultural Center*

The Cultural Center of the Polytechnic Institute of Viana do Castelo was created with the main purpose of promoting the development of cultural and artistic activities oriented to the promotion of arts education, not only to IPVC students but to all students of the region and general community. It was designed in collaboration with students associations to develop a project with value for young people and students of the region. It also has been developing a cultural and artistic program to stimulate the contact of the community with art, providing to internal and external communities of IPVC access to the work of important portuguese artists. Arts education, although often sidelined, is essential to develop the full human potential, as creative thinking and symbolism. This flexibility in the Arts field may lead to innovative ways of thinking.

Objectives

- Promote the participation of the academic and general communities in cultural and artistic activities;
- Disseminate the work of artists in order to promote aesthetic education and critical mass;
- Contribute to the cultural and artistic offer of the region, to a greater dynamism and artistic education (particularly in a socially disadvantaged region).

C - *SAS Mobile*

The mobile application SAS Mobile was created in a collaborative effort between students, teaching staff and non-teaching staff, with the higher purpose of promoting connectivity between the academic community (and families) and the services provided by the Social Services of the Polytechnic Institute, as well as improve the quality of these services by ensuring a greater proximity and information. All interested members can download the mobile application in the distribution

stores (Apple Store and Google Play) for free and take advantage of useful and updated information on services, particularly on the Food Service (with weekly menus and nutritional values for each option) .

Objectives

- Facilitate access to useful information of Social Services (Food, Accommodation, Social Support, Health, Sports, Culture) through the mobile application;
- Improve the quality of services provided to students;
- Promote the sense of belonging and connectivity.

D - *Low cost Laundry service*

In order to reduce the costs and ensure a better study experience in the Polytechnic Institute, the Student Support Services of IPVC has implemented, in September 2015, a new low cost laundry service, operating 24 hours/365days per year, at a price that is lower than market prices. In order to maximize the time used in laundry, users, while washing / drying / ironing their clothes, can take advantage of other services offered in the Academic Centre, such as, bar, restaurant, cultural gallery, sports centre, as well as use other services like Accommodation Service and Health Office. So, to meet the needs of the academic community and contribute positively to the satisfaction and integration, the entire academic community can wash, dry and iron clothes in an open space that promotes close and positive relationships and life quality, particularly to displaced students and staff.

Objectives

- Provide a modern laundry service that meets the needs of the academic community, particularly designed to displaced students (national and international);
- Offer a low cost quality service in order to reduce the expenses of students, promoting access to higher education (including socially disadvantaged students);
- Ensure a comfortable space in the building of Social Services, with other integrated services, in order to promote social integration and a positive experience.

E - *Controlled Consumptions*

The Controlled Consumptions Project appears in 2007 with the effort of all stakeholders in a partnership initially assumed between Integrated Response Center (to addictive behaviors and dependencies), Public Hospital and Polytechnic Institute of Viana do Castelo (public entities). In 2010, it has been recognized as good practice by the National Health and Alcohol Forum. It was realized 7 peer mediators courses, which provided approximately 210 student volunteers to intervene in academic festivals as vehicles of information and awareness to reduce risks and minimize harms associated with psychoactive substances use. To date, the project has planned and intervened in 120 academic festival nights (two weeks per year) and has a network of more than 12 interested and committed partners.

Objectives

- Develop among the academic population prevention, counseling and community action to promote the discussion and active participation in intervention on the issue of additive behavior and dependencies;
- Raise awareness among students of Higher Education on the risks associated to psychoactive substances use/ abuse;
- Mobilize and train student volunteers to participate as vehicles of awareness and information in festive contexts;
- Engage Student Associations and organizers of academic parties to plan the spaces in order to reduce risks and minimize harms associated with psychoactive substances use/ abuse.

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School to university pathways: enhancing access and participation in Higher Education for refugee background students

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Keywords: Refugee, Transition, Access, Barriers, Enablers

Introduction

The objective of this paper is to the enablers and constraints faced by refugee background students both in terms of their access and transition from school to university, as well as their subsequent retention in university.

In 2008, the Australian Government set a target stipulating that by 2020, 20 percent of higher education enrolments at the undergraduate level would be made up of students from low SES backgrounds (Bradley, 2008). Students of refugee background are a specific group within this low SES targeted cohort. Few universities, however, appear to be considering the distinct academic and social support needs that differentiate refugee background students from other low SES groups. While participation in tertiary education through on-campus support for refugee students (such as programs of language support, study skills development and acculturation activities) has been investigated, access to universities for students of refugee origin – and thus, the pathways and partnerships between education providers which may enable such access and retention –is poorly understood. The significance of the paper is that it draws attention to the disconnect between the intercultural vision that many universities purport to have for their diverse student cohorts and the realities that refugee youth face, which do not reflect the same vision. The approach, to provide relevant, quality and flexible learning experiences for refugee background students so that they can participate actively and responsibly in a changing world, contributes to the wider shift in current higher education in Australia and the world to formulate and encapsulate best practice.

Research suggests that successful transition and participation in educational contexts of refugee background students is inextricably linked to the development of positive interpersonal relationships combined with the ability to navigate the Australian educational system (Ferfolja et al., 2009). Moreover, as 'learner identity is not uniform' (Briggs, Clark & Hall, 2012, p. 4), the successful transition for refugee background students into university involves identity shifts associated with the increasing participation in the valued practices of the institution (O'Donnell & Tobbell, 2007), along with the resituating of students' existing knowledge in a new context.

As such, it is important to recognise the different factors that affect access to and participation in higher education for young refugee students. These include: 'strengthening capacities to cultivate networks (mobility), shape futures (aspiration) and narrate experiences (voice)'. Such factors 'increase people's ability to access, benefit from and transform economic goods and social institutions' (Sellar & Gale 2011, p. 116).

In this study, Appadurai's notion of aspiration (2004) provides a key theoretical framework for it is used to indicate the possibilities for the future that the students of our study are able to imagine. That is, 'aspiration' is not so much about students of refugee origin conforming to a socially-accepted, majority-defined, upwardly mobile aspirational future as it is about the potential to imagine any kind of future – a potential for imagining that is not limited to the elite or well-off members of society.

Introducing Appadurai's notions of the capacity to aspire into our study allows for a deeper understanding of the constraints that young students of refugee origin face as a social group in being able to imagine a future. Significantly, however, it also opens up opportunities for analysis of the ways that constraints are being challenged. In order to re-imagine the world from different perspectives, keeping an open and critical mind are essential (Latimer & Skeggs 2011). In this sense, the capacity to aspire and the ability to imagine are political, and essential in creating a just society.

Activities and instruments description

The project used qualitative data collected through focus groups and semi-structured interviews with staff and students at three universities and seven high schools across three main educational regions in Australia: (i) Greater Western Sydney (New South Wales); (ii) Albury/Wagga Wagga (regional New South Wales); and (iii) Canberra (Australian Capital Territory). The sites were chosen for their demonstrated experience in providing targeted programs for refugee students, significant refugee support programs and partnerships with schools and universities in the local area, and high refugee populations (Naidoo, Wilkinson, Langat, Adoniou & Cunneen, 2015).

Questions to refugee background students at secondary schools and universities focused on their educational and language acquisition experiences, family support, transition challenges and future aspirations. In addition, university students were asked about their views on support for access and transition to university while secondary school students were asked about their aspirations for higher education and knowledge of the Australian higher education arena. University teaching and support staff were asked about the major factors inhibiting access and participation of refugee background students in tertiary education. Questions focused on factors that promote participation, policies and provisions, data collection, current transition pathways and the identification of transition barriers and constraints. Secondary school teaching and support staff were similarly asked about the major factors in-

hibiting access and participation of refugee background students at secondary schools. Questions focused on factors that promote participation, provide support, learning and professional development, and approach current best practice.

At the three universities, semi-structured interviews were conducted with nine refugee background students. Two focus groups in each of the universities were held with (i) academic teaching staff, and (ii) support staff – that is, staff who provided support services to young people of refugee background in areas such as academic support and student welfare. In the seven secondary schools, two focus groups were conducted with 36 refugee background students. Two focus groups in each of the seven schools were held with (i) mainstream teaching staff, and (ii) English as Additional Language Dialect (EALD) and Ethnic support staff. In total, nine male and five female refugee background university students and 14 male and 22 female refugee background secondary school students participated in the study. All participants had arrived in Australia as humanitarian entrants with many having spent between three to sixteen years living under refugee status prior to their arrival.

Results

Six themes emerged from this study of the challenges and opportunities experienced by refugee background students, in their transition from school to university and experiences of university. They were:

(a) *Prior life experience and education*

Data from the research revealed, despite having faced similar experiences such as conflict and prolonged displacement, the circumstances and experiences of each refugee background student is different. Taking into account these considerations means that a 'one-size-fits-all' generic model of academic support is inadequate, as it will not meet the very specific and unique needs of such students.

(b) *Language*

English language proficiency is a significant issue for refugee background students transitioning into tertiary education as these students are on an English language-learning journey that can take up to 10 years. The university English language support programs which were reported as most effective were those that were situated within the discipline and allowed specific support with the genres of the discipline, syntax and vocabulary of those genres.

(c) *Aspiration, racialisation, and social change*

Many students highly prized tertiary education and qualifications. The transition to university, however, often led to difficulties with language, culture and the demands of tertiary study. More work needs to be done on recognising, accessing and utilising the various funds of knowledge that refugee background students bring to tertiary classrooms and courses.

(d) *An enabling learning culture*

A key recommendation of the study therefore is that an enabling learning culture needs to be built in universities, encompassing nurturing positive interpersonal relationships with peers, teachers, support staff and the wider community combined with the ability to navigate the Australian educational system. It is a holistic process that builds on the strengths, resilience and assets that young refugee background students bring to their learning.

(e) *Politics, policy and identification*

The responses from the participants revealed that refugee background students were exposed and vulnerable due to disadvantaged access to education in their early years. Without specific policies or strategies for the education of refugee youth in Australia, such students' university education is 'left to chance' (Sidhu & Taylor, 2007).

(f) *Transition*

For learning and teaching to be considered in light of students' subjective prior life experiences, it is important for universities to recognise the strengths, resources and support systems that refugee background students bring. They need to build on these qualities in an ongoing manner with targeted academic and social support that does not end at the entry to the university or the conclusion of first year.

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Facilitators and barriers perceived by students in relation to university access through non-traditional paths: multiple-case study

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Key words: Access; Higher education; Barriers; Facilitators; Non-traditional paths.

Introduction and theoretical framework

Currently in Spain, everybody is able to access University by his or her own merits. In our context, there is a constant debate in relation to the standardized exams (PAU) to access University. These tests are used as a filter and they can be linked to merit and excellence promotion only. This access path, throughout PAU, limits and forgets to take into account students' social dimensions; such as their socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds and their individual characteristics. However, the standardized tests are commonly justified by the fact that the labour market is not able to absorb as many university graduates, as well as to maintain the professional quality required from a massive pool of students (Juarros, 2006).

Taking into account that university enrolment has increased in recent years, some education policies developed by the Administration will have an essential role. One of the latest education legislations to be implemented in the Spanish education system is named "LOMCE", which has as a main goal to create new selective filters at the earliest stages of education.

However, equal opportunities in accessing University do not guarantee equitable access. This is because it has not taken into account socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds of the students, as well as their schooling progress and experience.

It has been studied by Martínez-Celorrio & Marín (2010) that student progress is directly dependent on its decision of cost-risk-benefit, in relation to a student's social class. On one hand, in order to achieve a certain social status, the student with a high socioeconomic status will tend have longer schooling. Conversely, it will be expected that a student with a low socioeconomic status will choose shorter and more modest schooling due to its cost-opportunity consequences. This evidence suggests that many students usually decide to interrupt their higher education or deviate to shorter training paths focused on the labour market.

There are inconsistencies when it comes to value, if the access to higher education is based on an equitable perspective (Martínez-Celorrio & Marín, 2010). Some different positions are related to diverse interpretations about the concepts of equity and its distinctive meaning with equal opportunities.

As a consequence, the objective of this research is to identify and analyse barriers and facilitators that students encounter when accessing University, and what influences them in deciding to access University by non-traditional paths.

Research questions and Objectives

Some questions regarding University access from undergraduate students have arisen as a result of this research problem. These questions are focused on the motives that lead students to access University through non-traditional paths and its possible relation with encountered facilitators and barriers throughout schooling. These are the following:

- What conditions lead students to access University through non-traditional paths?
- What perceptions do students have about University?
- What facilitators and barriers are perceived by students to access University?
- How could we reduce barriers and strengthen facilitators in order to guarantee equity when accessing University?

The objectives developed from the questions exposed previously are:

1. Analyse the factors that lead students to access University through non-traditional paths.

1.1. Identify decision facts that determine the reason why students access University through non-traditional paths.

1.2. Study of perceptions, opinions and stereotypes that students have in relation to University and its access through non-traditional paths.

1.3. Analyse facilitators and barriers perceived by students to University access through non-traditional paths.

2. Validate a model that supports students in order to reduce barriers when accessing University.

2.1. Analyse good practices and relate them with identified barriers.

2.2. Create a model in order to reduce existing barriers and to strengthen facilitators.

2.3. Validate the model created by experts.

Methods and Methodology

This study is based on the interpretative paradigm. The design developed is a mixed methods research since it involves collecting, analysing and interpreting qualitative and quantitative data. Specifically, the type of design conducted is classified as an exploratory sequential (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007; McMillan & Schumacher, 2010).

This design has two different phases: in the first phase qualitative data is collected and in the second one, and from the analysis of this data, quantitative data is collected to show possible relation between the studied factors (Creswell & Plano

Clark, 2007). Thereby, quantitative data will complete, determine and expand all the data collected through qualitative tools.

The sample for this multi-case study is formed by public universities in Barcelona, Spain: Universitat de Barcelona, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Universitat Politècnica de Barcelona and Universitat Oberta de Barcelona. The context selected for this research is the province of Barcelona since it collects the greater number of universities and students in Catalonia, having a total of 36.614 enrolments during the 2013-2014 academic year.

Results of the research

The earliest result of this research is a brief of barriers that students could find when accessing to University:

Authors	*Barriers to access to University*	
Fiona Mullen (2010)	Geographical Social Family Commitments and Responsibilities Course Provision Financial Enrolment and Admissions practices Articulation and Transition HE funding methods Disabilities and Additional Support for Learning (ASL) Needs	Gender Age Retention and Completion rates Confidence and Aspirations The Labour Market and Graduate Prospects/Employability/Earnings Potential Resources Available for Compulsory Education The Issue of 'Causality'
Angelo Vaccaro (2012)	Financial Issues Culture as a Factor Academic Factors Parental Education	Distance to PSE Aboriginal Students Gender Provincial Patterns
Martín Carnoy, Lucrecia Santibañez, Alma Maldonado y Imanol Ordorika (2002)	Geographical distance Cultural barriers Economical barriers Quality of Education and opportunity barriers Discriminatory factor	
Carmen Pérez, María Ramos, Marta Adiego Leonel Cerno (2013)	Gender National background Financial Human capital parents Parents employment status Home size	Number of under 16 years old family members Degree of urbanization GDP (Regional) Human capital stock (Regional) Unemployment rate (Regional) Youth unemployment rate (Regional)
Joaquín Gairín, David Rodríguez-Gómez y Diego Castro Ceacero (2012)	Economical barriers Quality of Education Tangible barriers Intangible barriers	

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Progettazione di un curricolo universitario inclusivo ICT based. Da un percorso di ricerca a una buona pratica

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Progettazione formativa ICT based: l'esperienza UniSalento.

Le tecnologie per la comunicazione a distanza costituiscono da tempo uno strumento di organizzazione dei processi formativi che si è evoluto insieme ai modelli di progettazione didattica e alle innovazioni informatiche che hanno prodotto nuove tecnologie di condivisione e di distribuzione del materiale formativo (Pinnelli 2007). Moodle costituisce una delle risorse più diffuse nel campo dell'e-learning, soprattutto, nel contesto accademico. Il gruppo di lavoro del Centro sulle Nuove Tecnologie per l'Inclusione (CNTHI) dell'Università del Salento ha stabilizzato un modello di progettazione e di formazione basato su tale piattaforma. Il modello che si vuole presentare e che andrà a regime nell'anno accademico 2016/2017, è il risultato di un processo di sperimentazione biennale (a.a. 2014-15/ 2015-16) sviluppato nell'ambito del progetto Tic&Dil (Pinnelli, 2015). Il progetto ha previsto una valutazione quali-quantitativa finalizzata a misurare e a conoscere l'impatto del modello formativo, nonché le criticità e le misure di aggiustamento, le variabili metacognitive coinvolte e le eventuali difficoltà su cui intervenire in ordine a migliorare e a potenziare tanto le funzioni tecnologiche, quanto i contenuti e le competenze necessarie per una fruizione ottimale del percorso formativo a distanza.

La sperimentazione biennale ha avuto tre specifici obiettivi:

- contenere il dispendio della risorsa tempo-studio all'interno del contesto accademico caratterizzato da un alto grado di libertà e di autogestione del tempo e dell'apprendimento stesso;
- fornire agli studenti universitari la possibilità di personalizzare il percorso di apprendimento in funzione dei propri bisogni formativi (stili di apprendimento, bisogni speciali etc.) e di vita (esigenze lavorative e familiari);
- conoscere le percezioni degli studenti coinvolti (Pinnelli e Fiorucci, 2015b) nell'esperienza blended learning e, nello specifico, indagare in che termini l'apprendimento digitale sia correlato alla competenza metacognitiva personale (Pinnelli e Sorrentino, 2015).

Nella prima annualità è stato sviluppato un ambiente e un percorso didattico-laboratoriale erogato in modalità blended learning e progettato secondo un approccio flipped classroom (FP) finalizzato ad approfondire il tema LINGUE e LETTURA

e destinato agli studenti dei corsi di laurea triennale e specialistica (area pedagogica e psicologica) della Facoltà di Scienze della Formazione dell'Università del Salento (Pinnelli, Fiorucci 2015a).

Nella seconda annualità (a.a. 2015-16) il modello formativo è stato esteso agli studenti UniSalento (Fig. 1) del Corso di Studi in Scienze della Formazione Primaria, del Master in Didattica e psicopedagogia per alunni con DSA e BES e del Corso di Specializzazione per insegnanti di Sostegno a.a. 2014/201, in ottemperanza a quanto previsto dal decreto del 30 ottobre 2011, (p. 11) che regolamenta tale corso di specializzazione e che prevede delle attività di recupero didattico per un massimo del 10% da gestire anche on line.

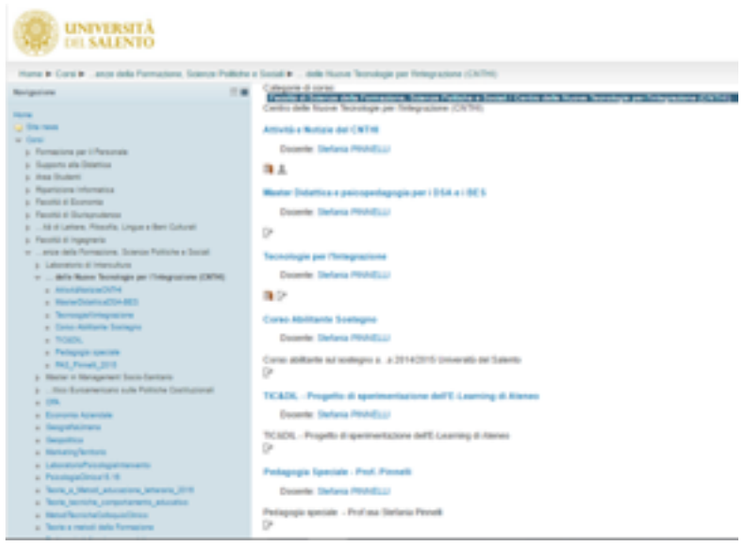

Fig. 1 Moodle di Ateneo – Sez. CNTHI, resp. Prof.ssa S. Pinnelli

A valle di tale sperimentazione, conclusa nell'a.a. 2015-16, è stato possibile predisporre e formalizzare un modello di progettazione formativa *ICT based*, che tenesse conto dei bisogni dello studente universitario tradizionale e soprattutto "non tradizionale" intendendo con quest'ultima espressione gli studenti lavoratori, gli insegnanti in servizio, coloro che, per diverse ragioni (salute, reddito, trasporti, distanze etc.) sono impossibilitati a prendere parte alle attività formative in presenza.

La sperimentazione: attività e strumenti

La sperimentazione del I anno ha previsto la diffusione e la fruizione dei contenuti didattici interdisciplinari – video lezioni e materiale strutturato - erogati in modalità e-learning attraverso una specifica piattaforma Moodle, e l'attribuzione da parte dei docenti di consegne formative laboratoriali e cooperative, propedeutiche alla ripresa e all'approfondimento dei contenuti di apprendimento in presenza.

La sperimentazione che si riferisce al primo anno ha coinvolto 380 studenti frequentanti (Gruppo Sperimentale 260; Gruppo di Controllo 120) e si è sviluppata su tre differenti livelli:

1. valutazione dei risultati degli apprendimenti;
2. rilevazione delle percezioni e degli atteggiamenti degli studenti coinvolti nella sperimentazione;
3. rilevazione dell'approccio allo studio messo in campo dagli studenti coinvolti nella sperimentazione.

Il primo livello ha indagato le performance accademiche (qualità dei lavori laboratoriali, autonomia nell'apprendimento, fre-

quenza attiva etc.) e i risultati di apprendimento (voti dei diversi esoneri e dell'esame finale). Le valutazioni dell'apprendimento mostrano quanto il modello abbia sollecitato gli studenti a creare, attraverso le ICT, dei prodotti formativi originali e altamente personalizzati. Inoltre, gli scambi di e-mail, il forum avviato all'interno di Moodle e la comunicazione in presenza hanno consentito di realizzare un percorso a distanza molto "vicino" ai bisogni degli studenti, in particolare, quelli "non tradizionali".

Il secondo livello ha esplorato la percezione e gli atteggiamenti degli studenti che hanno aderito al modello sperimentale FC. Per tale scopo è stato redatto e somministrato un *Questionario di valutazione sull'esperienza flipped* (QFC) (Pinnelli e Fiorucci, 2015b), uno strumento semi-strutturato composto da 7 aree di indagine (Tab. 1).

I area: dati socio-anagrafici dello studente (1-7, 21 item);
II area: percezione dell'esperienza dell'apprendimento FC (8-15, 23 item);
III area: valutazione delle scelte tecnologiche (16-20, 22 item);
IV area: autovalutazione della componente cognitiva del processo di accesso alla conoscenza (24-28 item);
V area: autovalutazione della componente organizzativa di accesso alla conoscenza (29, 30, 33, 34 item);
VI area: autovalutazione della componente sociale e motivazionale (31, 32, 35- 38 item)
VII area "pro" e "contro" l'esperienza vissuta (39-40 item aperti)

Tabella 1. QFC (Pinnelli e Fiorucci, 2015b)

Esso ha attestato un'accoglienza plebiscitaria del modello formativo: complessivamente tutti hanno giudicato utile e significativa l'esperienza realizzata con le video-lezioni rimarcando, però, che la forza del modello formativo risiede proprio in una didattica combinata (on-line e in presenza).
Il terzo livello è stato finalizzato a indagare in che termini l'apprendimento digitale implicasse l'acquisizione di abilità fondamentali che riguardassero la competenza metacognitiva. A tale scopo è stato utilizzato il *Questionario di Approccio allo Studio* (QAS) (De Beni, Moè & Cornoldi, 2003). I risultati (Pinnelli e Sorrentino, 2015; 2016) mostrano che gli studenti universitari coinvolti nella sperimentazione con le ICTs sono statisticamente più organizzati e utilizzano maggiormente strategie metacognitive funzionali allo studio.
Nel secondo anno (a.a. 2015-16), in riferimento a quanto emerso dalle valutazioni e all'erogazione dei nuovi contenuti disciplinari specifici, sono state apportate le seguenti modifiche ed integrazioni:

- riconfigurazione dei materiali video (video più brevi, contenuti nel tempo max. di 13 minuti); selezione dal web e costruzione attraverso le piattaforme Zaption e Ed Puzzle di video interattivi progettati all'interno di precisi lavori di gruppo e, successivamente, condivisi in piattaforma a vantaggio dell'intero gruppo;
- potenziamento della rete di relazioni tra studenti e gruppo di progetto, tanto nelle interazioni a distanza, quanto soprattutto in quelle in presenza;
- approfondimento sulle competenze metacognitive degli studenti coinvolti nel percorso formativa ICT based. Nel gruppo di alunni (n= 44) del corso di laurea in Scienze della Formazione Primaria dell'Ateneo, si è rilevata una differenza significativa nella sensibilità metacognitiva tra matricole e stu-

denti con alle spalle altri percorsi di formazione accademica. In particolare, la differenza fra le medie è risultata di 0,33 con una *t* di Student di 2,3399 (df=42) che risultava significativa per un valore di p<.005 nel *t* di Student per campioni indipendenti (Tab. 2).

Dataset	Gruppo I esperienza Univ.	Gruppo No I esperienza Univ.
Numerosità campione	20	24
Media	3,8250	3,4958
Dev. Standard	0,5014	0,4319
T	**2,3399**	
gradi di libertà	**42**	
P (livello di significatività)	**0,0241**	

Tabella 2. Area della Sensibilità Metacognitiva calcolo T-Student tra "Gruppo I esperienza universitaria" e "Gruppo No prima esperienza universitaria"

Inoltre, i valori ottenuti dall'*Effect Size* (ES: 0,71), calcolato con il software SPSS, confermano la forte relazione tra le due variabili, ossia tra anzianità universitaria e sensibilità metacognitiva, in particolare, la misura della forza dell'effetto "è grande".
Tali risultati potrebbero essere spiegati con un cambiamento a livello metodologico nella scuola superiore tanto da allenare gli studenti di più recente formazione ad un uso sistematico delle strategie metacognitive. Oppure, come più probabile, considerata anche l'eterogeneità della provenienza scolastica degli studenti di Scienze della Formazione Primaria, tale differenza trova ragione nel fatto che, durante un quinquennio di vita accademica, la sensibilità metacognitiva non sia più sollecitata, così come accade a scuola e, pertanto, andrebbe persa.

- valutazione con i corsisti del Master e del Corso di Specializzazione sul Sostegno del grado di *end users satisfaction*, ossia valutazione della soddisfazione rispetto alla soluzione formativa *ICT based* dello "studente non tradizionale".

Dal punto di vista strumentale-tecnologico si è continuato con l'uso della piattaforma Moodle.

La proposta UniSalento: risultati e materiali prodotti

La rilevazione delle percezioni degli studenti, l'analisi dei risultati apprenditivi e delle competenze metacognitive degli studenti ha permesso di individuare un modello didattico *technology-based* volto non solo a sostenere il processo di insegnamento, ma soprattutto a potenziare la riflessione sui propri processi di apprendimento. Il modello prevede consegne su compiti a distanza e attività laboratoriali *face to face*, attività didattica *blended* basata su moduli FC, video-lezioni di contenuto, consegne guidate su piste metacognitive volte a potenziare la propensione a riflettere e l'utilizzo di strategie efficaci di apprendimento allo scopo di allenare e di mantenere le abilità metacognitive: componenti dell'apprendimento autoregolato che, altrimenti, andrebbero perse nel percorso universitario.

La didattica on-line è stata articolata in un set di lezioni multimediali e video interattivi tematici progettati con logica ipertestuale e realizzati prevalentemente con uso di video e simulazioni al fine di favorire l'interazione diretta dello studente (Fig. 2).

Fig. 2. Esempio di video lezione

Per la realizzazione di tali attività didattiche sono stati utilizzati dei software *open source* e no (Camtasia, ExeLearning, Edpuzzle, Storyline, Xerte, Prezi, Il Mio Audiolibro) che hanno permesso di riusare il patrimonio video disponibile sui maggiori portali web, personalizzandoli e rendendoli interattivi anche con l'introduzione di strumenti di verifica della comprensione. Gli studenti hanno potuto cimentarsi con applicativi open, lavagna interattiva multimediale (LIM) e modelli di intervento didattico-educativi ICT based (Fig. 3).

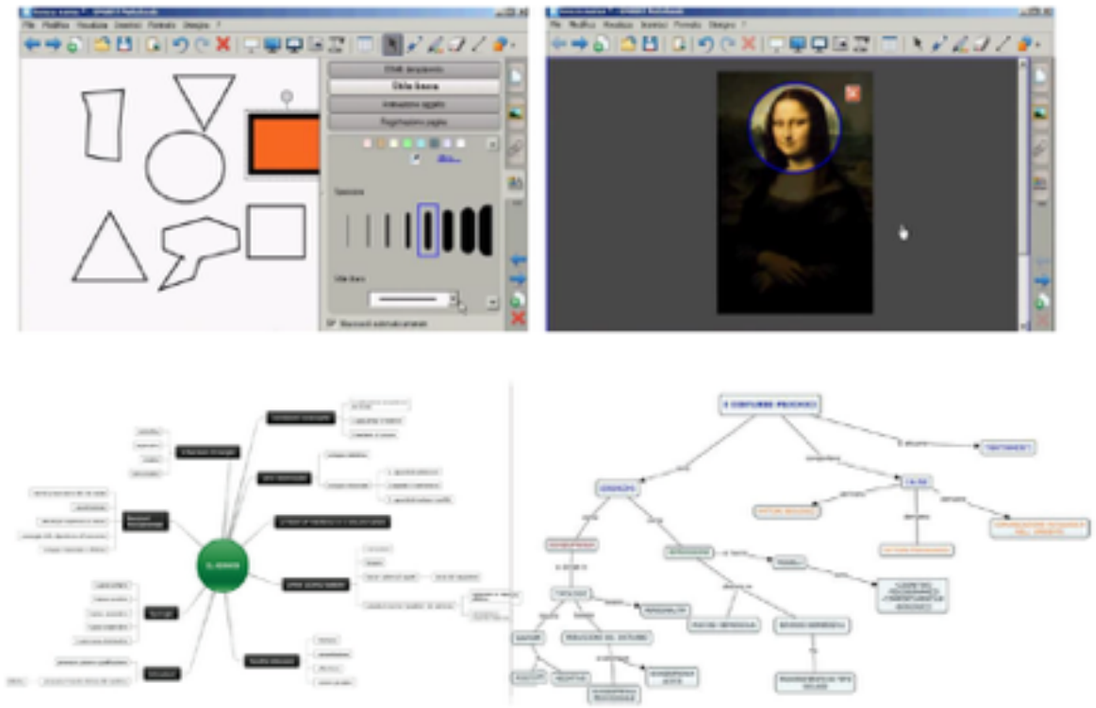

Fig. 3. Creazione di video tutorial con la LIM e utilizzo di sw per la creazione di mappe

In tal senso, la piattaforma Moodle ha rappresentato uno strumento generatore di idee progettuali per la didattica supportata dalle ICTs. Lo studente, seguendo un processo bottom-up, è stato chiamato a produrre idee all'interno di un format progettuale che lo ha avviato verso un processo di progettazione condivisa e collaborativa: la piattaforma ha supportato la didattica (accesso ai materiali didattici usati a lezione, dispense e mappe di sintesi), e ha incrementato l'interazione docente-studente. L'interazione tra pari durante le lezioni in presenza si è rafforzata molto, mentre ha avuto meno sviluppi in piattaforma e, quindi, in scambi on line. Questo aspetto diventa il prossimo step di attenzione della ricerca.

L'esperienza UniSalento registra una forte accoglienza e, allo stesso modo, evidenzia quanto un percorso *ICT based* funzionale ed efficace deve essere altamente disciplinato da:

- un attento processo di progettazione e di programmazione delle attività formative;
- una accurata gestione dei tempi di erogazione e di studio individuale;
- una scelta intelligente delle discipline e dei contenuti di apprendimento;
- una scelta delle modalità e degli strumenti di erogazione dei contenuti, delle consegne e delle valutazioni;
- una valutazione degli elementi cognitivo-culturali e degli stili di apprendimento e di insegnamento;
- una conoscenza del contesto di apprendimento e della competenza tecnologica;
- una specifica attenzione agli aspetti emotivo-relazionali;
- una riflessione costante e ricorsiva sull'operato e sui risultati in un'ottica migliorativa.

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Student voice in a practicum proposal: students as co-creators of curricula

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Keywords: Practicum, Inclusion, Student voice, Curricula co-creation.

General description of the context

The paper presented here summarizes the main results of a training proposal for student teachers where they are set up as co-creators of the curricula content of the training initiative. This proposal takes part of a wider research that constitutes a PhD thesis funded publicly in the framework of a Spanish Teacher Training Programme (NReg. 7208636035 YoSC000121).

Proposals for higher education students to participate in the curricula or in the pedagogical planning are not new (Dewey, 1916), although in Spain there have not been many examples of such experiences. One possible explanation for this could be that the structural conditions of university teaching, together with the tradition of teacher training, which is excessively massive and based on a model of transmissive teaching, have hindered the implementation of student voice experiences in the university. Based on this context, and taking advantage of the reforms that the Spanish University system is going through during the process of convergence with the European Higher Education Area, we develop this experience with the purpose of explore ways for student teachers to become full participants in the design of teaching approaches, courses and curricula (Bovill, Cook-Sather and Felten, 2011). Thus, practicum is a particularly interesting area for developing training proposals grounded in this co-production of curricula and to rethink the relationships between teachers and students towards more horizontal formats: the groups that orients each university supervisor are small (5-7 students) and the content is more open than the one from other subjects of the syllabus.

In summary, this paper presents a practicum training proposal for future teachers developed at the University of Cantabria which is articulated as a collaborative and systematic inquiry on the experience of teaching carried out by the students in their school placement. This initiative starts with the individual identification of a situation or a "pedagogical concern" that is chosen by each student and become the curriculum content which will lead the rest of the training initiative. The ultimate goal of these experiences is the development of university contexts that are more inclusive (Ainscow, 2001) and democratic (Apple & Beane, 2000), moving away from "traditional hierarchical models of expertise" (Bovill, Cook-Sather and Felten, 2011, p. 1) and placing student teachers as agents

and as “authorised voices” for teacher training improvement (Rudduck & Flutter, 2007; Susinos, 2009).

Activities and instruments description

The proposal was developed with a group of five final year students from the Infant and Primary Education Teaching degree in the Faculty of Education at the University of Cantabria (Spain). The practicum took place over sixteen weeks from February to May 2014, during these students’ final semester at university.

As said, this training initiative begins with the individual identification by participants of a pedagogic situation which has been central to their teaching practice. We understand that identifying a pedagogical concern in their teaching practice firstly permits them to critically examine teaching as a constant seeking of improvement. Furthermore, it allows the students to reflect upon pedagogical matters of relevance based on their own reality a connection that is not always present in the work carried out in university classrooms or at least not with the depth that many students would like. Subsequently, using this initial identification of a pedagogical concern as a reference, the training programme is developed consisting of two distinct spaces for reflection:

1. A first space for individual reflection, developed between the trainer and each participant, seeks to facilitate the first reflective approach to the chosen pedagogical concern. To this end, the university supervisor carries out a semi-structured interview with each participant. Its value should be epistemic and biographical (Brinkmann, 2007), that is, with the main function of beginning to reflect together and jointly explore the dilemma, as well as the relation between the concern identified and the personal and professional biography of each student. We believe students should be aware of what underlies the way in which they articulate their own educational concerns (how their identification of the problem is connected to their priorities, their values and, in general, their view of the world) in order to be able to refocus their practices and improve. Another strategy for individual reflection we have proposed is the teacher diary, given that writing is a powerful method for finding out about oneself and personal and professional concerns. Keeping a diary is regarded as a narrative space where information, thoughts, impressions and reflections on the pedagogical concern chosen by each student are registered systematically.

2. Proposals for curricula co-construction transcend individual frameworks and need spaces for university teachers and student teachers to work collaboratively (Brockbank y McGill, 2002). Thus, a second level of reflection of the practicum proposal is based on a space for collective reflection or “learning in relation” and is structured in different Training Seminars. For this reflective period each student must carry out a personal inquiry (based on readings, observations, information obtained from tutors or experts, participation in forums etc.) which allows them to develop a broader understanding of the

chosen pedagogical concern. This inquiry process is then shared with the group who, as far as possible, generate feedback and try to guide the process through their contributions.

Results achieved, materials developed

This training and research project is also recognised in some proposals from the student voice movement (Fielding and Bragg, 2003; Susinos, 2009). We advocate the need for training processes to be designed to allow greater student participation, where they are placed as active and responsible agents in their own teaching-learning processes. Our work revalues the voice of students and their experiences as a necessary knowledge in training processes, provided that the listening carried out by supervisors is sincere and not superficial or demagogic (Calvo y Susinos, 2010)

Thus, we have seen how selecting one pedagogical concern on which to base their project of reflection enabled a process of understanding and in-depth analysis of a teaching situation relevant to the students. Moreover, basing this on their pedagogical interests served as an essential motivating factor which facilitated their involvement during the process. It could be said that restricting the reflective process developed in the practicum to a single topic meant avoiding reflection on other pedagogical situations which were also interesting and relevant. However, it is important to highlight that the strategies of collaboration implemented enabled a systematic and thorough analysis not just of one but five educational topics.

In addition, during each reflective process other contents which we have been addressing emerged (attention to diversity, teaching conditions, school culture and inaction by schools, social-political factors in teaching etc.) which have also contributed to understanding the complex nature of education and the infinitude of issues which pervade it. This leads us to think that, independently of what the main focus of the students is, there are certain transversal issues in almost any content which must be addressed in a reflective training proposal. Therefore, it is the work of the university tutor to identify the link between these dimensions of education and each of the topics researched by their students.

For its part, the work of the university tutor or supervisor is consequently transformed in such a way that they adopt a more horizontal position. It can be said the practicum presented as a process of collaborative inquiry is an example in action of what Fielding (2012) called radical collegiality, offering a new model of relations between teachers and students.

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Expanding academic and social capital and supporting inclusion and success in Higher Education: online social networks and digital practices

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Keywords: Participation, Engagement, Digital technologies, Identity, Social capital, Belonging.

Introduction

This paper connects three ideas: increasing equity and inclusion in higher education, known as widening participation (WP), how students use online and social technologies independently within a 'digital university' environment and a wider digital world and the influence of both of these on participation, engagement and the development of academic and social capital. Increasing participation and equity in higher education is a strong focus of policy, research and practice in many countries (Osbourne, 2003, Hinton-Smith, 2012) and critical to the expansion of higher education globally and to changing international economic and social contexts (David, 2010). This has led towards a wider conception of participation with more emphasis on who goes where and what that experience involves (Reay, David and Ball, 2005). Yet, the role of informal networks and digital technologies and the interweaving of social and study dimensions of university life both online and offline and what they might contribute to under-represented students' successful participation in HE are under-researched.

Säljö argues that digital technologies allow possibilities for new ways of learning and new forms of knowledge and for rethinking how we learn (Säljö, 2010). Social networking sites (such as Facebook, Instagram) allow individuals to construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded space, share connections and establish group spaces for specific purposes. Within higher education, research on has focused mostly on the potential for formal educational activities (e.g. Sanzhe et al, 2013), transitions to higher education (e.g. DeAndrea et al, 2012) and for sustaining social interactions amongst students (e.g. Madge et al 2009). Yet what is less clear is how these online spaces and the associated practices of students might shape or influence studying and participation throughout university. However, digital technologies are neither neutral nor necessarily positive influences (Selwyn, 2011) and online social networks can reinforce existing inequalities and exclusion (Hughes, 2009) and therefore contribute negatively towards some of the challenges of diversity.

We take a sociocultural positioning; combining sociological, psychological and anthropological perspectives to investigate

the social, cultural and educational activities that university students engage in. In particular, we employ Holland et al (1998)'s work on agency and identity in cultural 'figured worlds'. Drawing on Vygotsky, Bakhtin and Bourdieu, they understand figured worlds as social encounters (such as universities or connected networks or groups) where the positions of those taking part matter. Developing a figured identity within a learning community involves agency through improvisational acts that help to overcome cultural and historical constraints that powerful structures and positions embody (ibid). Increasingly participating in higher education necessarily involves both online and offline interactions, for work and social activities, highlighting the changing spatio-temporal dimensions and continual boundary crossings across social and academic spaces involved in university life. Lemke (2004) argues that spatiality and temporality are related to action or material processes and that we experience space and time as we construct them and therefore they can be mobilised as resources for learning.

This paper draws on a recent study investigating underrepresented undergraduate experiences over one academic year at a UK university. The project was funded by the University of Bristol's Widening Participation Research fund from May 2013 – December 2015. It aimed to understand and reveal the ways in which digital technologies are influencing the studying practices of these students and how they might support their sense of belonging and participation within and to the university. The research questions focus on the extent to which 'a culture of belonging' is experienced and how this impacts on informal support and peer relationships, how digital technologies are being mobilised and what challenges or constraints are encountered.

Methodology

Thirty-one 2nd year undergraduates from under-represented categories took part in the Digital diversity, learning and belonging (DD-lab) study. Under-representation was defined through first generation university and state school attendance, black and ethnic minority, mature and local student community membership. The project adopted a co-researcher methodology (Timmis & Williams, 2013) to investigate informal studying practices, in a variety of different online or physical settings and outside of institutional walls, where data may be more personal and less accessible and researchers risk intrusion into social and home settings. Students were included as co-researchers rather than as objects of the research and the methodology aimed to ensure students were not positioned as 'disadvantaged' or 'needy', particularly important in a study about widening participation, learning and belonging for students from more diverse backgrounds. Co-researchers documented their informal studying practices and the use of digital technologies, and online spaces using an iPad and an application called Evernote. Students uploaded multimodal documentaries including screenshots, photos, video, audio files, texts and links to YouTube clips to illustrate and comment on their accounts throughout four-week periods in No-

vember, February and April/May 2014. Interviews were conducted after the first documentary phase, focus groups after the second phase and a final interview to review the whole year. Data included 700 documentaries, transcripts from 5 focus groups and 54 interviews. Data was analysed thematically using both inductive and deductive coding in relation to the theoretical framework. The paper highlights some of the challenges and issues encountered but will also argue that this approach supported the collection of more authentic life history accounts and offered an enrichment of the students' learning experiences at university.

Results

The students in this study experienced many participation challenges including adjusting to changing levels of connectedness to home, economic, ethnic and class differences, often exacerbated by the attitudes of students from more affluent backgrounds. Challenges related to studying included lack of previous knowledge of particular subjects, studying strategies, programme organization and a lack staff awareness of diversity issues. Students addressed these challenges by exploiting expanded opportunities for learning, collaboration and belonging through mobilizing digital technologies and setting up online spaces (e.g. Facebook). These spaces were frequently used for developing and maintaining social connections and for creating new academic spaces in order to share resources and ask sensitive or follow-up questions of peers. Social networking helped sustain connections to home, distant friendships and networks.

Digital technology practices and online social networking in HE therefore offer potentially more than just 'social glue' (Madge et al, 2009). Such activities can establish alternative 'figured worlds', and the development of social and cultural capital for mutual academic support, mobilising dissent and challenging academic orthodoxies, thus enabling repositioned identities. We conclude that digital technologies are playing an important role in expanding their social encounters and their identities. Yet, this can also be disempowering for some students, who are not (or choose not to be) part of the informal networks such as Facebook and who may therefore miss out on socio-academic interactions and risk being doubly excluded. This suggests the importance of acknowledging the role of peer relationships and social experiences as part of supporting widening participation and inclusion in higher education. Rather than focusing only on what universities can provide to students from diverse backgrounds, students should be encouraged to develop their own socio-academic networks and capacities and more value should be placed on students own agency and potential as change makers.

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School leaders and the promotion of social justice, equity and inclusion. A case study

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Keywords: Leadership, Social justice, Postgraduate program

Introduction and Purpose

The current circumstances in classrooms make it necessary that schools learn to provide equal opportunities to people from very different backgrounds (Hay & Reedy, 2016). This requires school leaders who are involved in equity and social justice, although this need was not taken into account by academia until a few years ago (Jean-Marie, Normore, & Brooks, 2009). However, the scientific literature has recently seen a significant explosion of studies focusing on educational leadership from the perspective of promoting equal opportunities and social justice (e.g.: Arar, 2015; Ayers, Quin, & Stovall, 2009; Bogotch et al., 2008; Bogotch & Shields, 2014; Chapman et al., 2016; Furman, 2012; Jean-Marie, 2008; Lindsey & Lindsey, 2011; Marshall & Oliva, 2006; Oplatka, 2013; Rigby & Tredway, 2015; Shields, 2013; Shoho, Merchang & Lugg, 2005; Stevenson, 2007; Theoharis, 2007, 2010).

Some examples reveal the changing trends and the importance being given in recent years to leadership and social justice. First, there is the fact that an article on leadership and social justice that was published in 2007 (Theoharis, 2007) became in 2015 the second most cited article on the Web of Science[1]. Second, the United States recently added a 2015 standard exclusively dedicated to social justice to the standards that it publishes from time to time for describing the characteristics of an effective educational leader (National Policy Board for Educational Administration, 2015).

Having this in mind makes we wonder not only how universities and particularly the schools of education are able to train administrators and future administrators in becoming committed to improving social justice in schools, but also how academia can help them overcome any obstacles that may arise. To this end, we focus on finding out what educational professionals do for promoting inclusion, what difficulties they face and how they overcome them. The purpose of this research is to answer these questions in the context of professionals who are immersed in a process of management training (Postgraduate Degree in Educational Leadership and Management).

We began with a conceptual analysis: social justice is related to many other terms, such as equity, equality, inclusiveness, equal opportunity, affirmative action, diversity, and culturally

responsive leadership (Blackmore, 2009; Bogotch & Shields, 2014; Khalifa, Gooden & Davis, 2016; Rigby & Tredway, n.d.). Of these, we have focused on the concept of equity as a way to manifest social justice.

Equity does not consist of treating all students equally, but rather ensuring that all students receive what they need in order to develop their full potential (Blankstein, Noguera, & Kelly, 2016). Therefore, certain principles exist for achieving equity (Blankstein, 2004, 2010, 2013; Blankstein, et al., 2016), and these require increasing the capacity of schools to meet the more and more complex needs of their students.

Methods/methodology

After revising the literature on leadership and social justice, we have conducted research on a small-scale and among current and future school administrators with the goal of determining: their level of awareness towards social justice; the difficulties they encounter in the process of achieving equity; and how they overcome these problems.

Our case study, which is highly qualitative, uses the administrators as a unit of analysis and studies 14 cases corresponding to graduate students in a leadership and management program at a private Catalan university. Of these students, 2 were directors at subsidized private schools with many years of teaching and administration experience; 2 were graduates without teaching or administration experience, and 10 were different types of middle-level school leaders with teaching experience and some experience in administration. Of the total participants, nine were women and five were men. The participants' schools were all situated in three of the four Catalan provinces and, with the exception of one Central American person, all were of Spanish origin.

As part of the program, participants had to write a composition describing an event experienced by either themselves or someone close. They were also asked to answer three questions: In what ways do you promote equity in your school? What kind of obstacles do you face? What strategies have you developed for overcoming these obstacles?

Afterwards, the results were collected, discussed among the participants, and then compared with the results obtained by Theoharis (2007).

Results and conclusions

From a theoretical point of view we show that leadership for social justice is gaining academic legitimacy inside the academic field and the leadership practice.

From a practical point of view: Among the strategies that teachers identify for promoting equal opportunities, they emphasize that the leadership team should have an open and positive attitude towards inclusion. Furthermore, this team should also allocate resources and support and motivate the teachers in their commitment to equity.

Administrators also need to help teachers overcome any obstacles they encounter in their work by providing support when

they occasionally feel they are unprepared or lack the capacity to meet the challenges. In addition, the leadership can help develop proactive strategies as well as manage the number of problem cases in schools.

Regarding obstacles, some are external and linked to difficulties in obtaining support from the administration or even resources for troubled students. Most are internal and related to a lack of preparation, lack of capacity, or fear of the responsibility involved in the task. Others have to do with parents of students with "no problems" who resist increasing the heterogeneity of the classroom or complain when the situation is poorly controlled. In addition to the lack of coordination and support from the institution, receiving only sporadic support from the families or the institution is seen as another obstacle. Among the adopted strategies for continuing in the face of these difficulties, some participants indicate that more dedication and hours of work are required. They also describe more proactive ways of overcoming obstacles: asking for help from specialists, frequent communication with families, and teamwork with professionals.

The responses remarkably parallel the results obtained by Theoharis in 2007 (results that were unknown to the participants), and in all cases they called for more training to address issues related to equity and social justice.

Our recommendations are therefore in line with many studies that advise undergraduate and graduate programs to incorporate the knowledge and skills related to equity and cultural sensitivity (i.e. following the “Profile of inclusive teachers”, developed in 2012 by the European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education). Furthermore, they should help develop culturally responsible teachers and administrators who are committed to social justice, particularly if they truly want to meet the needs of today's society.

It is necessary to inform future educational leaders about the results of the latest research that have provided scientific arguments in favor of equity, particularly in terms of pedagogy, neurology, and actual classroom experience. However, we cannot forget that there still exist many "arguments for inequality" (Blankstein et al., 2016) and much prejudice.

All these issues require a paradigm shift and, above all, a change in attitude that administrators must learn to cultivate in themselves and in their institutions – with courage and conviction. Therefore, we must convert the challenge and the urgency into opportunity.

Notes

1 Search done in the Web of Science (18th February 2016). Search criteria: The words “educational” and “leadership” in the title.Timespan=All years. Second most cited article over 477 with “educational” and “leadership” in the title.

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