

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AND SOCIAL INCLUSION: A COMMUNITY COMMITMENT

Educación inclusiva e inclusión social: un compromiso comunitario

Francisca MORENO-TALLÓN and Joan Jordi MUNTANER GUASP

Universitat de les Illes Balears. Spain.

francisca.moreno@uib.es; joanjordi.muntaner@uib.es

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2923-4911>; <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2485-3257>

Date received: 23/12/2024

Date accepted: 11/02/2025

Online publication date: 02/06/2025

How to cite this article / Cómo citar este artículo: Moreno-Tallón, F. & Muntaner Guasp, J. J. (2025). Inclusive Education and Social Inclusion: A Community Commitment [Educación inclusiva e inclusión social: un compromiso comunitario]. *Teoría de la educación. Revista Interuniversitaria*, 37(2), 145-162. <https://doi.org/10.14201/teri.32395>

ABSTRACT

This article explores the close relationship between inclusive education and social inclusion, highlighting their central role in building fairer and more equitable societies. Inclusive education not only facilitates access to education but also promotes participation in the community by all people, eliminating barriers that limit personal and collective development. The main aim of this work is to demonstrate the interdependence of the two concepts and how inclusive education can be an essential tool for promoting equity, social justice, and citizen participation. To this end, an education-based theoretical methodology using documentary analysis and critical review of specialised literature is used. The evolution of educational approaches is examined, from integration models to proposals focused on full inclusion, assessing their impact on educating committed citizens and reducing structural inequalities. The results show that inclusive education

contributes significantly to social inclusion, equity, and a sense of belonging to the community. However, there are still challenges that hinder its effective implementation such as structural, cultural, and attitudinal barriers that can perpetuate the exclusion of certain groups. The article emphasises the need to transform these barriers into opportunities through education policies that foster accessible, participatory and community-based environments, ensuring equal access to quality education and participation in social life. It concludes that inclusive education is key to building an equitable society, ensuring that all people can participate, reach their full potential, and contribute to collective well-being, fostering the creation of fairer and more equitable communities.

Keywords: community; inclusive education; equal opportunities; social inclusion; social justice.

RESUMEN

Este artículo analiza la estrecha relación entre la educación inclusiva y la inclusión social, destacando su papel clave en la construcción de sociedades más justas y equitativas. La educación inclusiva no solo facilita el acceso a la enseñanza, sino que también promueve la participación de todas las personas en la comunidad, eliminando barreras que limitan el desarrollo personal y colectivo. El objetivo principal es demostrar la interdependencia entre ambos conceptos y cómo la educación inclusiva puede ser una herramienta fundamental para fomentar la equidad, la justicia social y la participación ciudadana. Para ello, se emplea una metodología teórica en educación basada en el análisis documental y la revisión crítica de literatura especializada. Se examina la evolución de los enfoques educativos, desde modelos de integración hasta propuestas centradas en la inclusión plena, evaluando su impacto en la formación de ciudadanos comprometidos y en la reducción de desigualdades estructurales. Los resultados evidencian que la educación inclusiva contribuye significativamente a la inclusión social, la equidad y el sentido de pertenencia a la comunidad. Sin embargo, persisten desafíos que dificultan su implementación efectiva, como barreras estructurales, culturales y actitudinales, las cuales pueden perpetuar la exclusión de ciertos grupos. Se enfatiza la necesidad de transformar estos obstáculos en oportunidades mediante políticas educativas que fomenten entornos accesibles, participativos y comunitarios, garantizando la igualdad en el acceso a la educación de calidad y la participación en la vida social. Se concluye que la educación inclusiva es clave para construir una sociedad equitativa, asegurando que todas las personas puedan participar, alcanzar su máximo potencial y contribuir al bienestar colectivo, favoreciendo la creación de comunidades más justas y equitativas.

Palabras clave: comunidad; educación inclusiva; igualdad de oportunidades; inclusión social; justicia social.

1. INTRODUCTION

The interplay between educational inclusion and social inclusion is a central element in understanding socio-educational processes that involve equity for all

students, independently of the context in which they are situated. Enabling inclusive education not only promotes full participation in the field of education by all individuals, but it also encourages their participation in the social sphere, promoting proactive strategies in school that produce the change from exclusion to inclusion (Juvonen et al., 2019).

This reciprocal interaction between educational and social inclusion is fundamental for establishing just and equitable settings that promote the integral development of all students and ensure their active participation in society (Booth & Ainscow, 2015). Inclusive education is a paradigm that values diversity in the classroom, planning and implementing educational proposals that foster equity (UNESCO, 2020).

It also promotes pedagogical processes that include different forms of learning and being (Inostroza-Barahona & Lohaus-Reyes, 2019). This outlook ensures that all students, regardless of their individual characteristics and needs, have equal opportunities (Chiroleu, 2018) to access a quality education that is not yet available (Porter et al., 2021).

Inclusive education is also characterised by recognising and valuing differences, seeing this diversity as an inherent aspect of the human condition. It also enriches and improves the quality of teaching and of students' training and education (González-Alba et al., 2020).

The importance of promoting social justice also stands out (Jiménez et al., 2017), guaranteeing students' participation in a process of learning together in mainstream classrooms regardless of their personal, social, or cultural circumstances by eliminating barriers to learning and participation (Ainscow, 2012).

This objective requires the introduction of inclusive cultures, policies, and practices (Booth & Ainscow, 2015), as well as the implementation of widespread and generalised intervention strategies and support measures (Arnaiz-Sánchez et al., 2022), designed with the aim of identifying and meeting the personal needs and characteristics of all students.

It is important to note that there is no single conceptualisation of inclusive education, although the concepts do share common elements, as Muntaner et al. explain (2022):

1. They recognise diversity as inherent to the human condition, and so any differences that exist should not be an obstacle in the educational context.
2. They advocate respect for diversity, which involves dispensing with classifications within the student body.
3. They promote the identification and elimination of contextual barriers that hinder participation, also taking into account the facilitators that are present.

To promote inclusive education effectively, it is essential to identify and eliminate barriers that interfere with all students' presence, participation, and progress in mainstream

classrooms (Muntaner, 2013). This process involves breaking down the walls that prevent the creation of inclusive scenarios in the school environment (Hurtado et al., 2023).

This holistic perspective on inclusive education considers all of the barriers that can hinder learning; it does not restrict itself to those that affect students with special educational needs or disabilities (Shaeffer, 2019) but instead considers those that impact the student body as a whole. In this sense, Guajardo-Ramos (2018) suggests considering additional dimensions, such as gender, interculturality, and socio-economic level, thus expanding the scope of inclusive values and principles.

In response to this challenge, inclusive education addresses the task of promoting inclusive societies that foster participation by all individuals (Hurtado et al., 2023). To guarantee this right, it is necessary to develop educational policies that establish a truly inclusive system (Peña & Cárdenas, 2020).

It is important to stress that achieving inclusive education not only depends on educational work but also requires community commitment as reducing inequality cannot be limited to the school setting but must extend to the social sphere, including the family and the local community (Bolívar, 2019).

During this process, social inclusion plays a prominent role by directing its initiatives towards eliminating obstacles such as lack of accessibility or mechanisms of exclusion. Likewise, it provides facilitating resources, such as universal settings and support services (Taff & Clifton, 2022), with the aim of promoting participation by all people in the different spheres of society.

The interconnection between these two concepts is manifested through the promotion of more equitable and just social settings for all. Therefore, it is argued that stakeholders in society must commit to the implementation of inclusive education, considering it as a communal task (Bolívar, 2019).

The school as a system reflects the characteristic values and dynamics of 21st-century society, with the primary objective of facilitating the inclusion of all students in their local community and meeting their needs (Rapanta et al., 2021), considering the intrinsically social nature of the human being. In the same way, social inclusion is conceived as the process of empowering individuals and groups, in particular those from more vulnerable and marginalised sectors, to ensure that they are not excluded from society (Graziella & Rivera, 2018). Social inclusion involves coexisting with diversity without allowing discrimination, guaranteeing all people the same rights within society (Rojas, 2018).

From the perspective of social justice and the dynamic development of society, it is vital to move away from separation and towards inclusion in mainstream settings, enabling participation by all. This process invokes three dimensions that Inostroza-Baraona (2021) highlights:

1. Equitable redistribution of resources.
2. Recognition of all people's characteristics respecting their differences.

3. Representation of and participation by all students in the representational and meaningful spheres of their lives.

In accordance with what is proposed, it should be noted that tackling policies, practices, and cultures that perpetuate processes of exclusion within schools, the repercussions of which are later manifested in society, requires the transformation of educational settings and the elimination of exogenous and endogenous factors that bring about exclusion in educational processes (Ordóñez & Granja, 2023).

To achieve this effectively, it is crucial to approach rigorously and reflexively the different dimensions of the interaction between inclusive education and social justice, taking into account the relationship between students and the context (Amaro & Martínez, 2020). This leads to examination of the theoretical foundations and the practical educational implications that make equality of opportunities possible for all students.

Consequently, this study presents the theoretical foundations relating to educational inclusion and how it interacts with social inclusion, emphasising their interdependence in the construction of a more equitable society. The main aim is to establish a solid theoretical basis that demonstrates the close relationship between inclusive education and social inclusion, regarded as fundamental elements for the transformation of a society from a community perspective through social and educational actions (García-García & Cotrina-García, 2023). Evincing the implications of educational inclusion for equity and community participation is a particular objective, analysing its impact on social inclusion both in the short term during the process of schooling, and in the long term after completing obligatory education. The theoretical and regulatory focuses proposed by international bodies, which underpin and promote educational and social inclusion, are also analysed.

To achieve these objectives, a methodology characteristic of theoretical research in education is used. As Romero (2024) observes:

Although research of this type does not, from an academic or formal viewpoint, require the methodology followed to be specified, it is generally based on analysis and synthesis of precise documentary sources, a coherent corpus of arguments, and using relevance, conceptual precision, the structure of the argument, originality, and the rigour of the studies as criteria for their validity (p. 5).

Unlike the empirical model, this research focus is directed at validating theories, clarifying concepts, and identifying broader theoretical consequences (Sánchez et al., 2018). It can be defined as a systematic process dedicated to constructing, reconstructing, exploring, and critically analysing the concepts and theories that underpin diverse areas of knowledge (Barahona, 2013).

The inclusive education focus goes beyond just considering people with disabilities and includes all individuals (Mitchell & Sutherland, 2020), enabling full development of their potential and capacities at school and in independent adult life.

Ultimately, inclusive education and social inclusion are essential components that make a significant contribution to eliminating inequalities in communities and to non-separation in class. They also promote equity, specifically in diverse educational settings where differences are valued and coexistence between different students is fostered (Arnaiz-Sánchez & De Haro, 2020).

2. DEVELOPMENT

This analysis considers in depth the elements that guide inclusive education (UNESCO, 2017), underlining how collaboration among different social agents is essential to overcome the barriers that limit full inclusion. In addition, it underlines the importance of building an inclusive society by promoting values that foster equality, respect, and social justice. This focus recognises that responsibility for progress towards inclusion does not just fall on educational institutions but that it involves the community as a whole.

Inclusive education loses its purpose if it is not directed towards constructing an inclusive society. In this sense, it is defined as a process that facilitates removal of the barriers that limit all students' presence, participation, and achievements, recognising that each student is unique and valuable regardless of his or her characteristics and needs (UNESCO, 2017). To this end, it is vital to foster inclusive cultures, establish inclusive educational policies, and develop pedagogical practices that integrate these values in the school and community dynamic (Booth & Ainscow, 2015). This process creates a feedback cycle, in which transformations in the educational sphere contribute to improvements and social change, and vice versa. Therefore, inclusion is conceived as an integral and continuous effort by everyone, with inclusive values and practices permeating all levels of society.

2.1. *Inclusive education: a communal task in the promotion of inclusive values*

The initial process of the communal task in promoting inclusive education founded on inclusive values is based on the principles established by UNESCO (2017), which state that guaranteeing an inclusive, equitable, and quality education is often a collective undertaking where participants must make a joint effort to fulfil their responsibilities. In line with this premise, building and developing an inclusive education requires the convergence of three essential elements UNESCO (2017):

Firstly, it involves all students participating in communal spaces (Calderón & Echeita, 2022) and the agreement of all of the educational agents involved, as the resolve to advance towards an inclusive school should not fall solely, or principally, on students with special educational needs and their family members; instead it must be demanded by all of the educational community, build on voluntary participation by all agents (Sosa & Villafuerte, 2022).

Secondly, it requires a commitment to share in the struggle against cultural, social, and educational barriers (Crisol, 2019), not only from the sphere of school but also from the social sphere, for example the family, the neighbourhood, and the municipality, with the aim of reducing inequalities.

Thirdly, it requires the promotion and fostering of values in the community that make it possible to achieve a more inclusive society for all, where each individual has a full presence, feels respected, and perceives that his or her contribution is valued and promoted (Olsson & Nilholm, 2022).

Inclusive education must be a basic part of the path towards an inclusive society. The inclusive school must lead change from its field of action to make progress in constructing inclusive communities through deep reflection on the human values that underpin its educational project and the pedagogical responses that it implements to cater for all students (Echeita, 2022).

The connection between inclusive education and social inclusion is very important to guarantee the quality of the education provided and to shape effective social policies and structures for transition. This relationship leads to a change in the distribution of resources and processes, enabling full participation in society by all individuals (Sandoval, 2017).

To approach a truly inclusive society, it is necessary to consider the diverse and disparate social values associated with inclusion (Booth & Ainscow, 2015). In this context, values are the foundation of all actions, educational practices, and policies. Adopting an appropriate posture in the educational field requires understanding that values emerge from our own actions; therefore, inclusion addresses us directly, requiring us to make explicit the ethical principles underlying inclusion (Booth, 2006). The values of equity, social cohesion, and respect are the pillars on which any effort to construct an inclusive society and design an inclusive education that responds to the needs and potential of all of its members must be built:

Equity, defined as a principle that goes beyond equality, is based on recognising and respecting individual differences. This concept seeks to guarantee equality of opportunities and access for all students, regardless of their particular characteristics (Maringe & Chiramba, 2022). Equity, then, is concerned with a just education, so that the education of all students is equally important (UNESCO, 2017).

Treating everyone equally or wanting the same for all people results in the most vulnerable being abandoned, separated, or marginalised. Equity adds consideration of the specific situation of each individual and his or her needs to guarantee equality of conditions, which must be supported by greater resources for the most vulnerable (Silva, 2020).

Social cohesion is based on the acceptance and recognition of the differences between the members of a group. This value is supported by consensus and belonging to a common project, founded on establishing solid relations and on effective interaction within the social group. Social cohesion is essential for strengthening community

bonds and building an inclusive society, in which differences are recognised and valued as knowledge of the other, thus promoting coexistence among its members.

Finally, respect is presented as an essential value for coexistence in an inclusive society. This principle requires accepting people as they are without attempting to change them, and it alludes to the capacity to value and honour the individual characteristics of others. Respecting others means understanding and accepting individual differences, while recognising that, as members of the same society, all people are equal in rights and actions.

2.2. Developing inclusive education systems

The concept of inclusive education is not equivalent to simply enrolling all of the school-age population in mainstream schools. True inclusion involves all students participating in all educational areas and contexts so that the education can be regarded as truly inclusive (De la Cruz, 2020). In no case do education systems have a right to a particular kind of student; instead all students have a right to inclusive education (Naciones Unidas, 2006). Inclusive education encompasses all students without exception, guaranteeing equitable access and meaningful participation by each individual in the educational process (Calderón & Habegger-Lardoeyt, 2017; UNESCO, 2017).

Inclusive education is part of a way of thinking that regards education as a fundamental human right. It is a social choice that defends access to excellent education for all (Ainscow & Messiou, 2018). There is consensus on the benefits of inclusive education, both in the field of human rights (Naciones Unidas, 2006; Calderón & Calderón, 2016; UNESCO, 2020) and in the promotion of social inclusion. The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities establishes the two basic components of the right to an inclusive education: firstly, the right of all people to learn in ordinary school environments and, secondly, the right to have the necessary reasonable support and adjustments within these same schools (Naciones Unidas, 2006).

An appropriate formulation of inclusive education leads to the progressive establishment of educational and social networks in which the different members of the community come together. The objective of this community focus is not only to address inequalities in educational results, but also to tackle the inequalities and inequities of society (Parrilla, 2013).

Ainscow et al. (2013) argue that developing an inclusive education system requires an integral strategy that encompasses three interrelated areas, each of which addresses different fundamental spheres. These areas are:

Firstly, internal factors in the school that involve the development of inclusive practices aimed at promoting social justice through teaching and the organisation of learning. These practices relate to social forms and relations within the school setting, including interactions with families and local communities. To strengthen

this internal setting, the validity of the *Index for Inclusion* (Booth & Ainscow, 2015), among other factors, is especially relevant. This is a tool that guides the development and implementation of three fundamental dimensions: creating inclusive cultures, developing inclusive policies, and designing inclusive practices.

Inter-school factors underline the importance of establishing collaboration and support networks among educational institutions. These networks make it possible to share knowledge and experience among teachers who work under similar conditions, and they are one of the most effective means for promoting improvements in educational centres; recognising the interdependence of problems and of the solutions to put in place (Arnaiz-Sánchez et al., 2018). According to the authors, leadership by school management teams is vital for promoting this interchange, although other measures can also be necessary to consolidate these networks.

Furthermore, factors that go beyond the school include the broader political context in which schools operate, as well as the family processes and the resources that shape how students learn and develop. This sphere includes the education professionals' interests, their level of pedagogical comprehension and their reflections (Vera-Rivera et al., 2024), as well as factors relating to the demographics, economy, culture, and history of the communities served by the schools. It is equally important to consider underlying social and economic processes at both a national and a global level, as these shape the local circumstances in which schools operate.

Increasing social capital to benefit educating the public together involves linking it closely to family action as well as extending its fields of action to the municipality or city in general. This expansion of horizons is necessary to confront emerging new social challenges. Establishing networks of schools with the participation of families (Simón & Fernández, 2019) and other community stakeholders increases social capital, thus contributing to configuring joint spaces for inclusive and shared education.

2.3. *From inclusive education to social inclusion: a fundamental proposal*

Education is the essential bridge to making participation in employment and society and full exercise of citizenship a reality (Humby et al., 2022), especially for people with disabilities. According to the Agencia Europea para las necesidades educativas especiales y la inclusión educativa (2018), the relationship between inclusive education and social inclusion is based on three key ideas that give it meaning. Firstly, the positive impact of inclusive education on promoting social inclusion, establishing itself as a central element to achieve a more equitable and inclusive society.

Secondly, attending separate schools considerably limits opportunities for social inclusion, both in the short term, during their time in education, and in the long term, after completing education. According to Aramendi et al. (2022), attending

special classes or schools is directly associated with low academic and professional qualifications, a lower likelihood of leading an independent life, and insufficient establishment of satisfactory social networks and interactions after graduation.

And thirdly, no model of inclusive education guarantees these positive impacts on students. Therefore, a truly inclusive model is required in which all students' presence, belonging, participation, and learning are constant and tangible realities in every experience, activity, and learning situation. As the Naciones Unidas (2015) notes, this conception of inclusive education must be implemented in educational contexts that promote effective fulfilment of the principles of non-discrimination and equality of opportunities. The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Naciones Unidas, 2006) underlines the need to guarantee the personal, material, and formal resources necessary for inclusive education to be viable in all educational stages and in any type of school.

The reports by the Human Rights Committee (Comité de las Naciones Unidas sobre los Derechos de las Personas con Discapacidad, 2020; Comité sobre los Derechos de las Personas con Discapacidad, 2024) recognise that people with disabilities who have received an inclusive education are more likely to lead an independent life than those who have been educated in separate schools. So, the concept of disability is referred to using the social model and the medical model is abandoned (Vila-Merino et al., 2024).

Inclusive education, understood and applied from the paradigms of educational quality, must consider fundamental factors such as equality of opportunities, equity, and universal accessibility throughout the whole of a person's life if it is to have an impact on social inclusion (Gallego & Rodríguez, 2015; Kefallinou et al., 2020). In this way, this type of education increases the chances of finding a job, it promotes personal autonomy, exercise of the right to take one's own decisions and choose one's own way of life, and social inclusion.

Having reached this point, two key questions should be asked. Firstly, is inclusion limited to the school stage or is it necessary to seriously consider the social inclusion of vulnerable groups, paying special attention to people with disabilities? Secondly, what happens after the end of the school stage?

We can state that there is a direct relationship between inclusive education and social inclusion, as Huete (2017) observes. The education system is much more than a tool for imparting knowledge. It is a key socialising agent that distributes cultural capital, establishes models of behaviour, personal relations, links, expectations, about one's own life and the lives of those who surround us. It is, then, a fundamental element for facilitating social inclusion that is productive, relevant, and done in society (Ainscow et al., 2003). Furthermore, it helps develop inclusive attitudes that break from prejudices and obsolete beliefs from previous times that should already have been abandoned.

Being outside the ordinary education system entails exclusion from society, and this separation is suffered both by the person and by his or her family, creating

a circle of vulnerability, that hinders social inclusion. The aim of focussing on the community is not only to address inequalities in educational outcomes but also to confront society's inequalities and inequities, thus ensuring that academic achievements are not only dependent on the school system but on the whole of the social system, which is present all through life.

This relationship takes shape in the ideas raised by the report of the Agencia Europea para las necesidades educativas especiales y la inclusión educativa (2018), which refer both to incorporation into and participation in the community, and to achieving decent employment:

With regards to employment, it is notable that attending schools with inclusive education is one of the factors that increase the chances of people with disabilities finding work, whether in jobs with support, independent activities, or self-employment. The nature of the curriculum can limit or increase opportunities for young people with disabilities to find work and foster relations with peers. It is also noted that high-quality transition programmes offered in mainstream education, the strategy of social and workplace inclusion, and the supported employment model can increase people with disabilities' chances of finding employment (Calvopiña-Roca & Ayala, 2024).

With regards to community life, the goal is to achieve an independent life with the necessary support, which comprises leading an autonomous life, having friendships and social networks, being economically independent, and participating in leisure activities: it is clear that education and social well-being policies are interrelated to ensure the autonomy and self-regulation of people with disabilities. Young people with disabilities who attend schools with inclusive education are more likely to achieve economic independence soon after graduating from secondary school. In contrast, attending separate schools reduces the possibilities of forming friendships and social networks in adult life. Furthermore, being educated in an inclusive school is a factor that increases opportunities to participate in leisure activities, while being educated in a separate school can impede this participation.

For inclusive education to have an impact on social inclusion, it is necessary to guarantee that students with disabilities participate under equal conditions with students who do not have disabilities in all aspects of the school, including learning, games, and school activities, and that they have access to all spheres (Ioannidi & Malafantis, 2022). Accordingly, the guarantee of quality must make it clear that both academic and social achievements should be achieved in inclusive education systems, and so to offer conducive environments and the necessary forms of support (Sandoval et al., 2019).

3. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The role of inclusive education in teaching and learning processes and in education systems stands out as an essential element for promoting social inclusion.

This close relationship between the two aspects underlines their interdependence, with the success of one directly affecting the other and actions undertaken in the school setting having an impact on the community and society.

For inclusive education to have a real impact on social inclusion, it is vital that educational policies and practices feature high-quality inclusive models. It is therefore necessary to eliminate the contextual barriers that obstruct the presence of and participation by all students in the school and which involve exclusionary practices (Forteza et al., 2019). This requires implementing strategies that personalise the learning process, through the application and design of universal learning situations that offer multiple forms of commitment, representation, and expression (CAST, 2024; Espada et al., 2019).

It is essential to ensure that all students have access to quality resources in ordinary environments and classrooms, avoiding separate schooling and turning away from excuses that justify exclusion into special classes and/or schools. Providing these resources, in a broad sense, makes it possible to transform the support model from a communal perspective (Honkasilta, 2017), ensuring that the individual needs of each student are met. This process makes it possible to break with the compensatory practices that by means of additional support are carried out in special settings (Amiama-Espallat, 2020).

In parallel, a cultural shift in the school environment and in society in general is essential to develop models of inclusive education in different education systems and settings. This cultural change must be directed towards overcoming deep-seated prejudices and false beliefs about differences that perpetuate discrimination and towards fostering a culture of accepting and valuing the characteristics of all people.

In relation to this topic, it is worth noting that responsibility for promoting inclusive education falls on the educational community as a whole, not just on professionals directly involved with disability. All agents in the education system, including teachers, leaders, families, and students, must actively cooperate to create inclusive settings that promote the integral development of each individual. As inclusive education is a right to equity and equality of educational conditions (Calderón & Verde, 2018), this right must form part of the values of society as a whole, not just a few people.

With regards to education professionals, it is important to note that they play a decisive role in the educational process. They can adopt two roles: acting as guides and facilitators or becoming barriers to learning. This duality represents one of the fundamental challenges that the education system currently faces. What beliefs and attitudes favour or hinder the move towards an inclusive society? It is evident that this educational focus demands continuous training, as well as the commitment and coordination of all educational staff (Echeita, 2022).

In accordance with what is stated, the relationship between inclusive education and social inclusion is very important, underlining the essential role of education in

promoting inclusion in diverse areas of society. It is generally accepted that inclusive education is not limited to the school setting but that it has a significant impact on social and working life, as it helps eliminate obstacles to full participation in society by the most vulnerable groups. Therefore, what educational programmes are offered to guarantee education for employment and for life in the community? This would shed light on advances in social inclusion (Agencia Europea para las necesidades educativas especiales y la inclusión educativa, 2018), as the backing for inclusive education by a community and its various agents has a positive impact on the promotion of social inclusion. In turn, social inclusion is concentrated in three fundamental fields: education, employment, and community life.

Despite implementing educational policy actions, separate schooling represents a significant hazard (Estalayo et al., 2021) as it reduces opportunities for social inclusion. To what extent are current educational policies effective at reducing separate schooling and promoting inclusive education? This consequently affects the three fields mentioned above, which are vital for all individuals' integral development within their community and ultimately in society as a whole.

Therefore, it is essential to maintain attention in this sphere, considering inclusive education as a valuable instrument for moving towards a more equitable and just society. The inclusive school must play an active role in building collaborative communities, fostering principles of respect, tolerance, and equity at all levels of the community. In this sense, a need to reflect on the role of the inclusive school in social transformation emerges. How can it contribute to creating inclusive communities and the cohesiveness of the social fabric?

Finally, inclusive education must be a fundamental part of the path towards an inclusive society. The school, in its environment, must facilitate progress in the construction of inclusive communities to enable everyone to participate fully and, with this aim, we must continue to fulfil the right to autonomy and self-determination in society.

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