

# Condiciones para la inclusión y la atención a estudiantes con limitación visual en la universidad del Magdalena\*

Conditions for the inclusion and attention to students with visual limitation in the university of Magdalena\*

Condições para a inclusão e a atenção a estudantes com limitação visual na universidade del Magdalena\*

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## Resumen

El presente trabajo tuvo por objetivo identificar condiciones de la Universidad del Magdalena para la inclusión y la atención a estudiantes con limitación visual de Santa Marta – Colombia, basado en los postulados del MEN (2006), Instituto

Nacional Para Ciegos. (2011), Peña, N. (2014), Devia, V. (2015).

En relación a la metodología, la investigación se encuentra enfocada bajo el modelo cualitativo utilizando el diseño de la investigación acción. La población estuvo conformada por docentes adscritos a los diferentes programas académicos de la Universidad del Magdalena que poseen contrato de tiempo completo, catedráticos y modo ocasional que han tenido contacto con los estudiantes que poseen limitaciones visuales, con el fin de poder recolectar la información pertinente para el diagnóstico correspondiente a la investigación.

**Palabras clave:** Recursos, condiciones, estrategias, inclusión, aprendizaje.

## Abstract

The objective of this work was to identify conditions of the Universidad del Magdalena for the inclusion

and attention to students with visual limitations of Santa Marta - Colombia, based on the postulates of the MEN (2006), National Institute for the Blind. (2011), Peña, N. (2014), Devia, V. (2015). In relation to the methodology, the research is focused on the qualitative model using the design of the action research. The population was conformed by teachers assigned to the different academic programs of the University of Magdalena that have a full-time contract, professors and occasional teachers, that have had contact with students who have visual limitations, in order to collect the pertinent information for the diagnosis corresponding to the investigation.

**Keywords:** Resources, conditions, strategies, inclusion, learning.

### Resumo

O objetivo deste trabalho foi identificar as condições da Universidade de Magdalena para a inclusão e atenção aos alunos com limitações visuais de Santa Marta - Colômbia, com base nos postulados do MEN (2006), Instituto Nacional de Cegos. (2011), Peña, N. (2014), Devia, V. (2015), Em relação à metodologia, a pesquisa é focada no modelo qualitativo utilizando o delineamento da pesquisa-ação. A população foi conformada por professores designados aos diferentes programas acadêmicos da Universidade de Magdalena que possuíam contrato de período integral, docentes e eventuais que tiveram contato com alunos que apresentavam limitações visuais, a fim de coletar as informações pertinentes ao diagnóstico. correspondente à investigação.

**Palavras-chave:** Recursos, condições, estratégias, inclusão, aprendizagem.

### Introduction

Nowadays, educational inclusion has taken off, since this is one of the most effective mechanisms to guarantee the participation of segregated people in society, and achieve cohesion in all social processes. We consider that Inclusion at

Universidad del Magdalena is relevant where a population like that of students with visual limitations has been increasing; thus awakening our interest in how the teaching - learning process occurs in these students. To start this process of inclusion, it is necessary to have diverse tools, strategies and resources that allow the integration and the effective learning of those students with visual limitations. Inclusive Education in the "Universidad del Magdalena" has been taken a rise and at the same time the number of students with visual limitations has increased, facilitating access to a symmetric education. Inclusion brings peer support, cooperative learning, multiple forms of assessment, and the contribution to learning centered on the dynamic student, which together aim to obtain a more comprehensive education for all.

In this sense, we find that teachers are not informed about the conditions that Universidad del Magdalena has with respect to students with visual limitations. Likewise, it can be affirmed that the teachers of the Universidad del Magdalena are not aware of the strategies, nor of the typhlotechnological resources that allow the strengthening of the acquisition of learning. Therefore, it is necessary that the Universidad del Magdalena educates its teachers, on all those aspects that help to potentiate and enrich the learning process in students with visual limitations. To face the above approaches, the following objectives emerged for the formulation of an investigation. Identify conditions of the Universidad del Magdalena for Inclusion and especially for the attention of students with visual limitations of Santa Marta, Colombia.

### Methodology

The methodology was of descriptive type which according to Arias F. (2012) consists in the characterization of a fact, phenomenon, individual or group, in order to establish its structure or behavior. Also, it is focused on the qualitative model using the design of research-action. Therefore, the term research-action refers to a wide range of

strategies carried out to improve the educational and social system. There are multiple definitions of research-action; the lines that govern some of them. On the other hand, for Elliott (1993), the main representative of research-action from an interpretative approach defined research-action in 1993 as "a study of a social situation in order to improve the quality of action within the same." It is understood as a reflection on human actions and social situations experienced by teachers, which aims to expand the understanding (diagnosis) of their practical problems. The actions are focused on changing the situation once a deeper vision of the problems is achieved.

As defined by Izcara (2014), Intentional sampling is that in which the master elements are chosen based on pre-established judgments or criteria by the researcher. In this research, this type of sampling was used, since teachers who have a fundamental characteristic were selected, which is the contact with students who present visual limitations, belonging to various academic programs of Magdalena University, since this is considered a key piece to gather the required information.

The technique used was observation through the survey. The information obtained is valid only for the period in which it was collected, since both the characteristics and the opinions may vary over time. For this purpose, the measurement instrument used was the observation guide, consisting of 10 items, from the category conditions for inclusion. In which the latter is measured through the dimensions of access to information, communications and knowledge, autonomy, with indicators (screen reader software, plans, programs and projects for inclusion, disclosure of pro-inclusion actions).

Which had 4 answer options through the Likert scale, (1) does meet, (2) does not meet, (3) sometimes, and (4) I do not know.

This instrument responds to the objective, which was to identify conditions of the University of Magdalena for inclusion and especially for the attention of students with visual limitations. Likewise, for the validation of the instrument, the judgment of experts was applied so that they made

an assessment on the items that make up such observation guide and as well as an overall evaluation of it. In relation to the items, they were asked to assess qualitatively their degree of relevance to the object of study and also their degree of precision and adequacy from the point of view of their definition and syntactic formulation.

For the analysis of the results, the data obtained from the guide was represented in a general way, in graphic and systematized form, the analysis of the obtained results, for this circular diagrams were used and the technique that was used, was based on the calculation.

## Results

This analysis was made after the interpretation of the answers obtained from the teachers and students who were part of the selected population. Once the instrument was applied, established in graph and systematized, the results of the observation guide instrument were described. Likewise, it contains two dimensions: Dimension access to information, communications and knowledge, and the Autonomy Dimension. Both with two indicators, the first with four related items and the second with six related items.

### Access to information, communications and knowledge Dimension

In the observation guide directed to the teachers, it is requested to collect information of the observed by the teachers, then the results obtained are presented.

To the question, Does Magdalena University guarantee the autonomy and independence of blind people with low vision in the exercise of their rights to information, communications and knowledge? The teachers dictated that "sometimes" with a 37.5% that the Universidad del Magdalena guarantees the autonomy of blind and low vision people. Likewise it was evidenced that 37.5% have no information as to whether the university complies with the regulation for the attention to people with visual limitations, while the other two alternatives of answers presented the same

percentage of 12.5%, which are referred to the response options "does meet" and "it does not meet".

Therefore, it is evident that the majority of teachers do not know if the "Universidad del Magdalena" guarantees the autonomy and independence of the blind or with limited vision in the exercise of their rights to information, communications and knowledge. According to Buitrago (2011), the need to acquire information emerges due to the imminent change experienced by societies with respect to the preparation and dissemination of information, through technology and the mass media, thus permeating all sectors of human activity. That is, referring to changes and new challenges, Universidad del Magdalena must comply with providing information relevant to teachers and the student population that has visual limitations.

Faced with the question, does the University of Magdalena have software, a screen reader to guarantee access, use and appropriation of information and communication technologies of people with visual limitations as mechanisms to contribute to the achievement of their independence and autonomy?

62.5% of teachers do not know if Universidad del Magdalena has a software and screen reader. Likewise it is reflected that 25% affirm that the university does have these softwares, while 12.5% express that they do not comply with the aforementioned. It is also remarkable as stipulated by the Colombian law of 1680 of November 2013, that teachers must be trained in the handling of these tools and obviously they must know them and become familiar with them. Law 1680 of November 2013 in the Article 7 ° Implementation of the software, states in the Paragraph: "The public entities referred to in this article will train the people and public servants in the use and management of the screen reader software license for its massification."

Currently, the library of the university has two softwares, which are Magic and Jaws, which are poorly visited by teachers and the student

population that has visual limitations. In this sense we see that the university does have specialized softwares for students with visual limitations, which allow ease and access to technologies and in the same way strengthen learning in them. From this point of view, the knowledge and progress that this population may have in a classroom is limited.

Regarding the question: Does the University ensure that the design, execution, monitoring and evaluation of its plans, programs and projects include a differential approach, that ensures that people with disabilities benefit on equal terms and in terms of equity with their peers? A 37.5% of the teachers consulted consider that the university does assure the design and execution of plans, among others. It is also evident that in two response alternatives such as "sometimes" and "I do not know" they have the same percentage of 25%, unlike the 12.5% who affirm that the university does not comply with such process.

Therefore, it is necessary to take into account the Colombian Law 1680 of November 2013 in Article 11. Since it states that the "Participation: public entities and territorial entities will promote the participation of blind people, with low vision and their organizations, in the formulation and monitoring of public policies, development plans, programs and projects in the sector of information and communication technologies "; because it is considered of great importance to meet the needs of the student population with visual limitations, the implementation of projects and programs that meet this need, compared to the teaching-learning process.

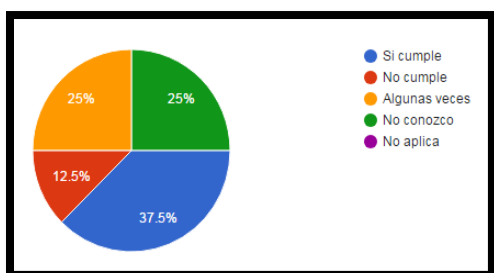
Does the university adapt its curricula and, in general, all the didactic, methodological and pedagogical practices that it develops, to effectively include all persons with disabilities?

Two answer alternatives were identified that had the same percentage of 37.5%: "does not meet" and "sometimes", compared to the adaptation of the curricula. While 25% of teachers say that they adapt their curricula to include young people with visual limitations. Taking into account the observed, a large majority of teachers adapt their curricula to

improve the learning of students with visual limitations. In accordance with the above, Rodríguez (2017) states that it is essential that curricular adaptations to be made to facilitate access to the ordinary curriculum for students with disabilities.

Regarding the autonomy dimension; This instrument also sought to identify the different actions used by Universidad del Magdalena with respect to the inclusion of students with visual limitations. The items related in this section are six related to the different indicators, then the results obtained are presented:

Diagram N°1. Disclosure of pro-inclusion actions. Exclusion. Source: authors.



Similarly, to the questioning Does it denounce any act of exclusion, discrimination or segregation against people with disabilities? 50% of the teachers affirmed that "sometimes" they denounce acts of exclusion, likewise it is observed that 25% express that they do not know this type of action, in addition we find two percentages of 12.5% expressing that it is not fulfilled and does not apply.

In accordance with the above, it is necessary to take into account statutory law 1618 of (2013) that guarantees the full exercise of the rights of persons with disabilities, in its Article 6. "Duties of society. They are the duties of the family, private companies, non-governmental organizations, unions and society in general, within which it proposes to ensure respect and guarantee of the rights of persons with disabilities and to denounce any act of exclusion, discrimination or segregation against people with disabilities" therefore teachers must denounce any act of the aforementioned through the student development unit of Universidad del Magdalena, which is in charge of managing

everything corresponding to the student population with special needs.

Equally to the question: Does it promote, disseminate, respect and make visible the effective exercise of all the rights of people with disabilities?

62.5% of teachers expressed that the University promotes, disseminates the rights of people with visual disabilities, while 25% responded that sometimes this process is carried out, however 12.5% said that this is not true. Disagreeing with the statutory law 1618 of (2013), which stipulates in article 6: "the promotion of the rights of the student population with visual limitations by public entities in order to comply with the compliance of the rights of that population. "

In this sense, the University has been promoting the rights of students with visual limitations. Starting with the entrance of the institution there is a structure on the floor that denotes that this space is for people with visual limitations, in the same way we see that they assign a monitor to the student to guide him in the classes and in the evaluations. That is to say, that the University is promoting the rights of students, but in a slow way, since there are many teachers who do not know many aspects that are favorable for this population.

Regarding the question, do you use resources or participation mechanisms in view of cultural activities, which allow the socialization of this?

62.5% of the teachers affirmed that the "Universidad del Magdalena" allocates resources to manage the participation of students with visual limitations. Likewise, 25% say that this event is sometimes evident, unlike other teachers who, with 12.5%, state that this is not true. It can be observed that the majority of teachers surveyed mention that the University does use resources or mechanisms of participation before cultural activities, which allow the socialization of this.

In this way, it is evident what the law 1618 of 2013 states in Article 5: "Guarantee of the effective exercise of all the rights of persons with disabilities and their inclusion: public entities must implement the necessary mechanisms to guarantee the full

participation of people with disabilities in the formulation of different public policies ", is also in accordance with what Solano (2015) says about education is a right recognized by the Constitution and therefore must be considered of great importance since the education with quality and promoting the inclusion, taking into account the needs of the students like fundamental piece to obtain an education of all and for all.

"Incorporate in their budget and investment plans, the necessary resources destined to implement the reasonable adjustments that are required so that people with disabilities can access a specific good or social service, and publish this information for citizens' consultation." In accordance with the above, it can be affirmed that the University of Magdalena allocates budget to help the needs of students with visual limitations and their participation in activities, such as cultural week, week of science, among others.

On the other hand, when asking, does it organize integrative and transversal strategies so that people with disabilities can access the contents of the subjects of the study plan? 62.5% of the teachers reflected answers that sometimes the Universidad del Magdalena organizes integrative and transversal strategies so that people with disabilities can access the contents of the subjects of the study plan, likewise it is shown that 25% state that, yes, this process is fulfilled. However, 12.5% say that it is not fulfilled. Therefore, it is necessary to take into account what (INCI, 2011) states, that is fundamental "the organization of strategies and guidelines that facilitate the learning process of students with visual limitations".

That is, the institution must integrate the different cross-cutting strategies so that people with visual limitations can access the contents of the subjects of the study plan that strengthen learning, aimed at a satisfactory teaching-learning process.

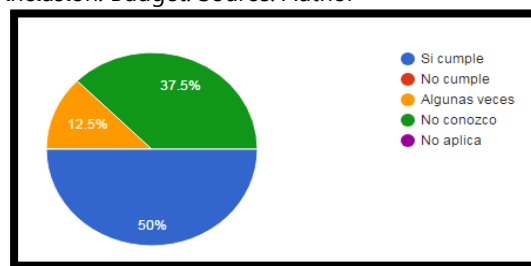
In response to the question, are the Institution's regulations reflected in plans in which social and educational inclusion are taken into account? 50% of teachers say that social and educational inclusion is complied with in the regulations of the

Universidad del Magdalena, and the other 50% said that this process is sometimes fulfilled.

Therefore, as expressed by law 1618 of 2013 in Article 2 ° Social inclusion: It is a process that ensures that all people have the same opportunities, and the real and effective possibility to access, participate, interact and enjoy a good, service or environment, together with other citizens, without any limitation or restriction due to disability, through concrete actions that help improve the quality of life of people with disabilities. Being in accordance with the law 361 of 1997 in its articles 11 and 19: In accordance with the provisions of Law 115 of 1994, no one may be discriminated against because of its limitation, to access the education service either in a public entity or private and for any level of training". Having said that, the University shows interest in strengthening the process of inclusion and equality with students who have some visual limitations.

Finally answering the question Does the Institution incorporate in its budget and investment plans, the necessary resources destined to implement the reasonable adjustments that are required so that people with disabilities can access a certain good or social service, and publish this information for consultation of the citizen?

Diagram N° 2. Plans, programs and projects for inclusion. Budget. Source: Author



50% of teachers affirm that the Universidad del Magdalena allocates budget and investment plans, for the necessary resources destined to implement the reasonable adjustments that are required so that people with disabilities can access a certain good or social service, and publish this information for consultation of citizens. However, 37.5 say that they do not know about this process, while 12.5% say that it sometimes occurs.



As shown, 50% of teachers affirm that this process is fulfilled, however, according to the (MEN, 2006) the institution must manage before the territorial entity, the allocation of the budget and resources for the development of the plans, educational programs and projects, in order to provide better education and participation by the student population with visual limitations. Likewise, as it is reflected in the accountability of the 2014-2016 period in which the various activities carried out by the Universidad del Magdalena are shown, and the budget management to execute such procedures with respect to students with visual limitations and in concordance with Alquino et al. (2014) who points out that investment in technology should be done to advance the inclusion of vulnerable groups for ordinary education, or else it would be a disadvantage due to its costs.

### Discussion

In compliance with the first objective; identify conditions of the "Universidad del Magdalena" for inclusion and especially for the attention of students with visual limitations, it is concluded that teachers are not informed about the conditions that the "Universidad del Magdalena" has with respect to students with visual limitation. Therefore it is necessary that the university community acquire greater knowledge about the physical part and access to communications, adding that the institution should show more interest in training its teachers and investing more in technology. In this sense, physical and technological accessibility is a challenge that can only be achieved by maintaining a budget designation for the acquisition of technology and adaptation of facilities, so that the resources get a more efficient use and incorporate forms of learning that optimize the capabilities of the person.

Being in contradiction with the thoughts of Cochran-Smith (1998, p.942) "we must enact policies, invent teacher preparation programs, establish professional development contexts, create research plans and write articles and statements that challenge inequalities (...) and prepare all teachers and students to contribute wisely and ethically to a diverse and democratic society. "

Therefore, the educational attention to people with visual impairment should be oriented towards the highest possible integration rates, understood as the elimination of any barrier that implies discrimination. Thus, principles such as equal opportunities, the right to diversity and education for all, must be fundamental axes for the society of the future.

### Conclusions

Finally, considering the conditions for inclusion and attention to students with visual limitations at the Universidad del Magdalena, it is recommended to use braille, typhlotechnological resources, have a translator or monitor specialized in the subject, management of specialized programs to implement in the pedagogical praxis, coordinate tasks and evaluate processes effectively. Additionally, it is suggested to provide material in Braille and that in the library they can find such material, establish prior information with the teachers to make known the conditions of the students (pathologies), the strategies and possible tools to use or, how to make the information more accessible for this student population.

In addition to the aforementioned, inclusive actions should be carried out with the general academic community, as a result of institutional regulations and not from particular individuals. Also, it is important that constant training to be carried out in regard to the aforementioned and that such differences be considered in opportunities to strengthen learning and educational inclusion, in accordance with what was indicated by UNESCO (2008), that establish that to respond to diversity, their participation should increase and reduce exclusion in and from education. This requires a series of gradual innovations that will make possible an inclusive education, through creations that involve the participation of each element of the community; on the one hand, to guide the presence of students with disabilities in regular courses, and on the other hand to reduce their exclusion.

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