AN EVALUATION OF THE PROCESS OF INCLUSION THROUGH THE INDEX FOR INCLUSION

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Abstract

This article presents a study on the evaluation of the process of inclusion and the detection of the main barriers for learning and participation of all students. To this end, the Index for Inclusion (in its first phase) is applied to a representative sample of 2,492 members of the educational community (teachers, families, students, monitors and administrative personnel) of 6 schools (4 of primary education and 2 of secondary education) in the metropolitan area of Barcelona (Catalonia, Spain). The descriptive and inferential statistical, and qualitative analyses of the results show the lack of a collaborative culture and shortcomings with respect to shared responsibility by all members of the educational community; this is seen as being the main barrier for inclusion. Most respondents express the need for greater involvement and participation in the process of inclusion, especially of families; they also identify what teacher and student perspectives are in relation to inclusive practices (namely, self alienation in both groups); they believe that teacher training and the use of inclusive methodologies are crucial to the process of inclusion. The implications for practices and future research are then discussed.

Keywords: inclusive education, special education needs, collaboration, support.

1. Introduction

A society which nowadays boasts about being democratic cannot forget that it is necessary to educate its people to become active participants as it is the citizens who are responsible for everything and everyone in a society (Weis 2007). Inclusion seeks to prevent marginalisation of those susceptible of being excluded from society and must be analysed from an ethical, political, educational and, ultimately, multi-dimensional perspective. Education is inclusive or it is not education (Casanova 2011). However, the processes of inclusion are not static but rather a road to be travelled that is not without barriers and difficulties. In fact, the very concept of inclusion can give rise to different interpretations (Ainscow 2011; Slee 2012) and although it is a predominant discourse, it receives different and multiple approaches. For Matsura (2008, 2), 'inclusive education is an approach which strives to transform educational systems and improve the quality of teaching at all levels and in all environments, in order to respond to the diversity of learners and promote successful learning'. An inclusive school must be committed to reducing learning barriers for all students and promoting positive responses towards diversity. To that end, professional development must be encouraged together with the search for strategies to facilitate collaboration among all members of the education community (Simon, Echeita and Giné 2016).

In Spain the process of inclusion is shaping into an open and dynamic process under construction and permanent analysis. However, sometimes this process entails a complex dilemma between the right to inclusion and the conditions under which inclusion develops (Echeita et al. 2009). Changes which have to be implemented in order to achieve inclusive education imply multiple areas that are broader and interrelated including schools, teachers, social networks, organizations dedicated to people with special needs, government administrations, families and the students themselves (Booth and Ainscow 2015; FEAPS 2009; Echeita, Simon, Sandoval & Monarca 2013).

In the Spanish context the movement of people with disabilities has meant that it is now possible to visualise eliminating existing barriers in schools and thus move towards the processes of inclusion, as opposed to concentrating on the separate, individual conditions of students. These barriers have already been detected in pre-school education and intensify as we move up in the education system, being much more evident in compulsory secondary education, where the curriculum is predominantly focused on learning. The emergence of fixed diagnoses of some of the difficulties students have has somewhat served to stigmatise and hinder even further full immersion in a participative context, exacerbating the lack of mutual respect which becomes embedded in people's mindsets as higher levels of schooling are attained (Harwood 2009).

In the last decade in Catalonia (Spain) the number of students with ASD has increased in mainstream schools, which has particularly alerted teachers and families. This is not exempt of contradictions (Ravet 2011). Due to the increase of categorised students, teachers request additional resources in order to cover their learning needs (Frederickson, Jones, and Lang 2010; Drossinou et al. 2016; Lynch and Irvine 2009; Segall and Campbell 2012) and make these students more visible in a regular context that is more inclusive from an educational and social perspective (Osborne and Reed 2011; Shyman 2015).

However, in our context, these resources are not allocated to educational programmes to improve the process of teaching and learning for all students but rather for individuals who have been formally diagnosed as having special needs. In fact, their needs determine their location in schools (regular classrooms or special educational classrooms). In this way the commitment to inclusion and practical innovation as a collective action by all the educational community (schools, teachers and families) in favour of education for all is lost (Banks, Frawley & McCoy 2015). This individual conception of the resources determines the investment made. In Catalonia, the context of this research, the Special Education Support Unit (SESU) is considered a service and support resource for inclusion. Nevertheless, its implementation in schools is linked to the number of students who have been formally diagnosed as having special needs. In Catalonia, the emergence of the Special Education Support Units (SESU) as a support service is strictly related to the number of students with a diagnosis (between 8 and 10 individuals). Furthermore, some schools have created SESUs specialised in ASD. Thus the SESU is not conceived as an organisational-pedagogical strategy of the school for inclusion which is precisely where the success of any SESU lies (Colom and Prades 2014). The question starts from a conception of inclusive education in terms of a right for all that implies educational actions geared to

developing the full potential of each person regardless of their status. The necessary conditions for achieving inclusion successfully are also all those that contribute to a global improvement of the school, producing higher levels of achievement not only of students but also of teachers and families (Giné et al. 2009; Porter 2009).

One of the instruments which permits the evaluation and fostering of the process of inclusion in schools is the Index for Inclusion which has been applied and modified in different countries such as England (Booth 2011), Australia (Forlin 2004), South Africa (Engelbrecht, Oswald, and Forlin 2006), Hong Kong (Heung 2006), Tanzania (Polat 2011) and Spain (Duran et al. 2006; Miquel 2009) to name just a few. All countries mentioned require not only its translation but also its adaptation to the context where it will be implemented. All share the idea that the Index for Inclusion is an instrument designed to help schools move in a more inclusive direction (Booth and Ainscow 2015).

Developed by Booth and Ainscow in 2000, and based on a social model of disability (Barton 1998; Quinn 1997), the Index for Inclusion requires the interaction between people and their social context and it thrives on the ideological revision of the material and symbolic barriers that people have for becoming full citizens. Its main goal is to help schools analyse and assess to what extent they act as inclusive schools and the Index offers a guide on how to continue improving. That is, it serves as an incentive for 1) boosting the creation of awareness of barriers that lead to exclusion 2) implementing changes toward making inclusion easier and 3) developing a reflective attitude of teachers on their educational practices.

What are the barriers for inclusion in schools with SESU specialised in ASD? This is our research question. The goal is the detection of the main barriers for inclusion in primary and secondary schools with SESU specialised in ASD using the Index for Inclusion in its first phase of application as a diagnostic instrument for identifying the barriers for learning and participation of all students. This first step will enable the establishment of future workgroups to encourage the inclusion process in schools themselves. Moreover, the aim is also to discover if differences exist between students and families taking into account the level of the school as well as verify if differences exist between regular teachers and SESU teachers.

The novel nature of using the Index for Inclusion here is the fact that this is applied in schools that have one resource for inclusion (the SESU) specialised in one specific, special education need (ASD). In other words, schools that complete inclusive practices. Our starting hypothesis is that, although these schools have resources, if there is not really an inclusive culture that puts into practice the educational policy, the barriers persist (Ainscow 2011; Booth 2011; Grant & Jones-Goods 2016).

2. Research method

This research responds to a mixed methodology, descriptive-explicative and inferential, that obtains its results from applying the instrument, the Index for Inclusion, to a variety of data sources (multiple educational agents).

1.1. *Sample*

The sample of this study was six schools in the metropolitan area of Barcelona: 4 were primary schools (schools 1, 2, 3 and 4) and 2 were secondary schools (schools 5 and 6).

The selection of these schools was intentional according to the following criteria:

- Public school.
- Having a specific SESU for students with ASD.
- Having more than one class/group for each academic year.
- Having an educational project linked to inclusive education.

Access to the selected schools for this study required authorisation of school authorities (as management teams) for its execution and permission of the families involved.

The participants of this study were a total of 2,492 educational agents (1,664 from primary and 830 from secondary schools) including teachers, students, families, monitors and administrative personnel from each of

the schools (see table 1).

[Table 1 near here]

The total number of teachers who participated in the study was 203 (145 from primary and 58 from secondary education). Of those, 10 were SESU teachers (6 from primary and 4 from secondary education), most were women (91%) and their age ranged between 24 and 56 years, with an average teaching experience of 18 years.

In accordance with teachers' training related to special education needs (SEN), 100% of SESU teachers had received training. From the other teachers, 78% of teachers from primary and 13% of teachers from secondary education had received training in SEN.

The total number of students who participated in the study was 1,334: 780 were primary school students aged 6-11 years, and 554 were secondary school students aged 12-18 years. From all these, 39 (3%) were students with ASD (26 from primary and 13 from secondary education). Their attendance in regular classes was full-time (100% of school days) for students of schools 2 and 4, and part-time (50% of school days) for students from the rest of the schools of the sample.

As regards participating families there were a total of 895 (688 with children in primary and 207 with children in secondary education). They mostly belonged to a middle socio-economic class.

Finally, the total number of monitors and professionals whose activity is focused on helping students in the canteen and doing extra-curricular activities was 46 (43 from primary and 3 from secondary schools); the number of participants from administrative staff, concierges and office clerks was 16 (8 for primary and secondary schools respectively).

2.2. Instruments

The Index for Inclusion is the referent instrument of this research. The theoretical framework of the Index (Booth & Ainscow 2002) is progressively achieved to the point of defining the specific evidence of inclusive education of the everyday reality of each school. According to the authors, the process of inclusion requires a 3-dimensional analysis of each section as table 2 demonstrates.

[Table 2 near here]

The items for each dimension and section of the Index for Inclusion enable us to analyse and determine the degree to which schools apply the Index, in agreement (or not) with its established criteria, thus determining the degree of inclusiveness and the detection of barriers.

It must be kept in mind that this Index for Inclusion serves especially for implementing improvements in schools in order to achieve a higher level of inclusion. However, in this research, the Index for Inclusion has been used also for knowing if those exclusive barriers exist in other schools and to share, adopt and adapt improvement measures for its implementation.

In the year 2002 these authors published a new edition of the Index for Inclusion translated into Spanish (Ainscow & Booth 2012). It was the second version that was translated and adapted to the education reality in Catalonia (Duran et al. 2006) and is the one used to carry out the current study.

Within the framework of this research five models of questionnaires were applied in accordance with the Index for Inclusion and taking into account the main agents; the Index for Inclusion establishes specific items according to the education personnel that responded to the questionnaires.

One questionnaire with 44 items was applied to teachers; one with 24 items was for families and administrative staff; two questionnaires were given to students (one for students of primary education -20 items- and one for students of secondary education -34 items); finally, one questionnaire with 29 items was given to monitors. Each of the questionnaires had an open question that, as with the items, was different according to the education personnel profile that answered: '*list five priorities to be developed'* (for teachers); *'what changes would you like to see in the school'* (for families, monitors and administrative personnel); *'which three aspects do you like or dislike about your school'* (for students).

The rating scale ranged in three values in all the questionnaires (3=totally agree, 2=agree to a certain extent and 1=disagree), except in the questionnaire for primary education that had four values: YES (totally agree), yes (agree to a certain point), no (disagree to a certain point) and NO (totally disagree). The use of these values (YES, yes, no, NO) was carried out to facilitate the understanding of the responses of primary education students (students from third to sixth grade). According to the structure of the Index for Inclusion, all the questionnaires, except those for students, had the items grouped according to the cultural, political and practical dimensions of inclusion.

2.3. *Procedure*

The voluntary filling-in of the questionnaire was carried out during the months of February-April 2013. The questionnaire, together with an explanatory letter of the goal of the study and how to fill it in, was forwarded to the families via the children which, in turn, had to be sent back to the school within a week.

In the case of teachers, monitors and administrative personnel, they were informed in a meeting about how to respond to the questionnaire as well as the objective of the study. These professionals had one week to fill in the questionnaire. Giving out the questionnaires individually was chosen since there were some obstacles in the process of inclusion and anonymity made the analysis easier.

Lastly, the tutors of each course passed the questionnaire to their students during one of their classes.

The management teams of the schools' administration were in charge of gathering up all the questionnaires.

2.4. Data analysis

The results of this research were processed through statistical exploitation of the questionnaires with the program SPSS v.19.

Previous to this analysis, the questionnaires were submitted to a reliability process in order to know the internal consistency of the questionnaires and therefore of the obtained results.

The questionnaires of the teachers and families were analysed from the three dimensions included in the Index for Inclusion (cultural, political and practical). The reliability of the questionnaires was high for the teachers ($\alpha = .94$) as it was for the families ($\alpha = .88$).

In the case of the teacher's questionnaire, the items for each dimension obtained a high Cronbach's Alpha in the cultural dimension ($\alpha = .85$), political dimension ($\alpha = .89$) and practical dimension ($\alpha = .76$). The same occurred with the questionnaire for the families, whose items also show a high Cronbach's Alpha in the cultural dimension ($\alpha = .78$), political dimension ($\alpha = .66$) and practical dimension ($\alpha = .76$).

With respect to the analysis of the questionnaire to the students of primary and secondary education, the reliability of the two questionnaires was high (primary education, $\alpha = .73$; secondary education, $\alpha = .81$) although it is known that the Index for Inclusion does not group together the items in the three afore-mentioned dimensions. In the case of the primary education questionnaire, a reduction of the scale was carried out (YES, yes, no, NO) in three values to be on a par with the scale of assessment for the rest of the questionnaires (3=totally agree, 2=agree to a certain point and 1=disagree).

The analysis of the open question of the questionnaires (teachers, students, families, monitors and administrative personnel) was carried out by the qualitative analysis of the answers grouped into three categories of analysis (the same for the theoretical dimensions of the questionnaire: culture, policy and practice). For each one, two sub-categories were identified (the same for the theoretical sections of the questionnaire; see details in table 2).

3. Results

The results were organised taking into consideration the typology of the participants of the study.

3.1. Teaching staff

The teachers have a high perception of the process of inclusion (between 2 and 3) that is being carried out in the schools (see table 3). There was hardly any variation at any of the schools in the cultural, political and practical dimensions. Nevertheless, the cultural dimension of inclusion at the centres tends to be lower than

the political or practical ones. In addition, the teachers from the schools of secondary education present an index for inclusion lower than the schools of primary education. However, there does not appear to be any significant differences if variables such as teacher of the regular classroom or SESU teacher are taken into account.

[Table 3 near here]

As regards the cultural dimension, the values related to respect and non-discrimination are the highest. Teachers are in total agreement that 'the centre strives to reduce whatever kind of discrimination' (78%); 'the teachers and the students are treated as persons, independently of their role' (59%); and 'the teachers try to eliminate all the barriers to learning and participation at the centre' (51%). Even so, those items related to collaboration and participation are the ones that score lower, and few teachers are totally in agreement: 'there is collaboration between the teachers and the families' (22%); 'all the institutions of the local community are implicated in the centre' (22%); and 'the teachers and the members of the school board work together' (27%). In addition, a significant percentage of the teachers are in total disagreement with these last two items, 29% and 22% respectively. Finally, it is important to highlight that 22% of the teachers consider that the expectations are not high for all the students.

In the political dimension, 73% of the items obtained mean scores and agree to some extent. More than 50% of teachers are totally in agreement with only four of the items related to accessibility and the grouping of the students: 'the centre tries to accept all the students from their locality' (69%); 'the school premises are accessible to all' (64%); 'helps new students to settle in'; and 'the centre makes groupings of students in a way that all feel valued' (59%). On the other hand, the teachers express absolute disagreement with the items related to training and the role of services of psycho-pedagogical support: 'training activities help teachers to cater to the diversity of students' (17%); and 'psycho-pedagogical support is used to reduce the barriers to learning and the participation of all the students' (15%).

In the practical dimension, more than 50% of the teachers are totally in agreement with only five of the 16 items: 'the students can participate in extra-curricular activities' (75%), 'discipline in the classroom is based on mutual respect' (62%); 'the programme is thought up keeping in mind that all the students learn' (59%); 'the classes foster the participation of all the students' (55%); and 'classwork boosts a greater comprehension of difference' (53%). On the other hand, the items related to the use of resources, whether they are from the community, teachers or students, as well as the evaluation system, are where the teachers express their strongest disagreement: 'the resources are known and taken advantage of by all the community' (16%); 'the teachers use team teaching' (15%); 'evaluation fosters progress and the success of the students' (15%); and 'the students are involved actively in their own learning' (13%). It is important to highlight that only 21% and 23% of the teachers respectively were in total agreement with the last two items.

The priorities by teachers of primary and secondary education in the open question are related to the dimensions of policy and practice as table 4 shows.

[Table 4 near here]

3.2. Families

The perception of families with respect to the process of inclusion is higher with a mean ranging between 2.6 and 2.8 (see table 5). The cultural, political and practical dimensions record very high averages, the political aspect being the one that particularly stands out. Significant differences are observed among families whose children attend pre-school and primary schools, with a mean of 2.9, and the following stages of primary school: early stage (dif. .14, $p<.0001$), middle stage (dif. .09, $p=.0009$) and senior stage (dif. .13, $p<.0001$).

[Table 5 near here]

With regard to the cultural dimension, more than 50% of the families totally agree with all the items, emphasising those related to welcoming and attitudes of the teachers towards their students: 'it is ensured that all feel welcome at this centre' (90%); 'the teachers strive to help all the students to do their best' (89%); and 'the teachers believe that all the students are equally important' (83%). The item on which families agree less is the participation and involvement of the families at the centre: only 58% fully agree.

In the political dimension, the families express a high degree of being totally in agreement with all the items, between 78% and 90%. The item 'every effort is made to reduce intimidation', with a figure of 78%, is the one which has received the lowest score; against the item 'all new students that are accepted for the first time at the new centre are helped so that they feel integrated' and in which 90% of the families fully agree.

As in the case which occurs with the cultural and political dimension, the practical dimension shows a high number of items with a percentage greater than 70% of families that totally agree with the same. Only the item 'the students generally know what will be taught in the next lesson' obtains a percentage of 56% of families that fully agree.

It should be added that the percentage values 'in disagreement' are not very relevant with rates between 4.5% and 0.5% of the families in all the dimensions.

On the other hand, the changes that the families indicate in relation to the centre are directed at an improvement in the areas of culture and policy (see table 6).

[Table 6 near here]

3.3. Students

Both the students of primary and secondary education have a high perception of the process of inclusion (between 2 and 3) which is being carried out at their centres (see table 7). Nevertheless, primary school students have a more positive perception of the process of inclusion than secondary school students. In addition, there are significant differences between the students of primary education according to the level of studies that they are currently undertaking. Thus, the students at higher levels (sixth grade, which is their senior year) show a significantly lower mean than the students in third grade (dif. .06, $p=0.02$), fourth grade (dif. .07, $p=0.008$) and fifth grade (dif. .10, $p<.0001$). A similar situation occurs with the students of secondary education. The students of the first stage of secondary education obtain a mean that is greater than the students of the second stage of secondary education (dif. .19, $p<.0001$) and of the Spanish baccalaureate (dif. .11, $p=0.0094$).

[Table 7 near here]

With reference to primary school students, the items that obtain a percentage of students that fully agree are: 'I feel good about myself when I have done a good job' (91%); 'my family believe that this is a good school' (86%); 'if I don't go to school, my teacher asks me where I have been' (83%); and 'I think that the norms of our class are fair' (73%). On the other hand, the items with which the primary school students state their disagreement are related to situations of mistreatment or bullying and in boosting participation: 29% of the students consider that it is usual to give nicknames to other classmates; 37% of the students think that they feel threatened when they are playing in the schoolyard; 25% of the students consider that the teacher does not allow them to choose the tasks that they want to carry out.

Regarding to secondary school students, the items which obtain a percentage of students that fully agree are: 'I have good friends at this secondary school' (88%); 'I am happy with my tutor' (76%); and 'If I don't go to the secondary school on any one day, my teacher wants to know where I am' (75%). On the other hand, the items with which they are in most disagreement are those related to the time allocated to leisure in the community since 59% do not do any type of sport nor do they have recreational space to be with their classmates (36%). Furthermore, 20% of the students believe that they give nicknames to their classmates and 24% consider that teachers have preferences for some students over others.

As regards the qualitative analysis of the answers given by the students, it is worth highlighting that the one they most like is the schoolyard and the activities that they do in the workshops, classroom learning points and educational projects based on areas of interest (*practice dimension: orchestrating learning section*). On the other hand, what they least like are the situations of bullying that occur in the schoolyard and in some classrooms (*culture dimension: establishing inclusive values section*).

3.4. Administrative personnel and monitors

Both the administrative personnel and the monitors have a very high perception of the process of inclusion carried out at the centres (see table 8).

[Table 8 near here]

All the administrative personnel totally agree with 8 out of 24 items, especially in the political dimension, where all items have obtained a higher evaluation on behalf of all the personnel. Only one of the items ('teachers work well together') receives an evaluation of being totally in disagreement by one of them. With the exception of this item, no item is evaluated with total disagreement. In the cultural dimension, the items related to the welcoming of students by the centre and the attitude of respect between teachers and students are assessed by 100% of the administrative staff as being in total agreement. The item related to the involvement of the family in the school is the one which obtains the lowest score where only 42% of the administrative personnel are in total agreement. On the other hand, in the political dimension, the administrative personnel are totally in agreement in that activities of interest are organised for all (100%) and that the support teachers work with all of those students that need help (80%). There is total agreement with the rest of the items with a score that ranges between 60%-70%.

With respect to the monitors, the items with the highest score that are totally in agreement are related to the positive welcoming that the centre gives to new students (90%) and the attitude shown towards their students: 'the monitors do not favour one group of students over others' (93%); 'the monitors try to help all those students to do their best' (98%); and 'the monitors think that all the students are equally important' (98%). However, only 48% of the monitors are totally in agreement that families acknowledge their work and that they are involved in the dynamics of the centre (55%). In addition, 41% of the monitors express total agreement in the mutual support that the students give to them.

As for the qualitative analysis of the open question, it is clear that both the administrative personnel as well as the monitors consider the necessity to improve communication and involvement among the members of the community as one of the changes to be introduced in these schools (*culture dimension: building community section*).

4. Discussion

It is not usual to do a statistical analysis of the Index for Inclusion, even less when this instrument serves to progress on the road towards inclusion in schools. This analysis, however, has permitted us to detect the most significant obstacles shared by the schools under consideration.

From the results, it can be observed that the members of the community (teachers, students, monitors and administrative personnel) have a high perception of the process of inclusion that is being carried out in their schools. However, remaining with this statement could come across as pretentious. Each school experiences their process of inclusion in a unique way and their starting point is different and linked to its context. What is indeed true is the effort that schools make to pursue the path of inclusion. Just as Parrilla (2002) affirmed; inclusion does not involve a new educational approach which affects the school environment exclusively, but rather an ideological, ethical and social change.

Although the organisation of the schools favours support to all the students to develop their potentialities to the maximum, the attitudes, values, and educational practices linked to inclusion move on more unstable ground. This could be linked to the idea that 'the expression "inclusive education" could help to hide distinct points of view that are not complementary' (Slee 2012, 227). There are still those who believe that they undertake actions that are genuinely inclusive and are not conscious of continuing to have an erroneous conception (Iglesias and Calvo 2010). Proof of that is this research. Despite being completed in schools that are sensitive towards the inclusion process, and despite having resources for working in favour of inclusion (see the specialised SESU as an inclusive resource), in light of the results, barriers for inclusion can still be detected. One of the most important barriers is the lack of a collaborative culture and shared responsibility by all the educational community (Simon, Echeita & Giné (2016).

It is significant that all members of the educational community consider that there is still a lot to be done to develop a culture of collaboration, a culture that breaks down the walls of the schools and fosters active and

communicative cooperation among their members (Banks et al. 2016; Gillies 2014; Moliner et al. 2011). The findings show a very low incidence of usage of resources that the community offers; just observe the support between teachers and students, the participation of the families or services of external support; sometimes because of lack of information or training or because the mechanisms for their improvement have not been established (Ainscow 2011; Echeita et al. 2013; Grant & Jones-Goods 2016). This lack of involvement and participation is intensified even more so in the case of families (Sobsey, Forlin & Scorgie 2017) where everyone (teachers, students, monitors and administrative personnel and the families themselves) coincides in pointing out that their participation is not sufficient. As well as, students' voices must be listened when planning educational settings (Sandberg 2017). It would be necessary to take on, once again, the culture of care in which everyone is responsible for everything and the contributions of each one of those involved are assessed.

On the other hand, the results invite the asking of a pressing question whose response is complex: Why does the perception of the process of inclusion decrease on the part of teachers, students and families the higher the education level attained? The schools are obviously doing something wrong. According to the results released, the families of pre-school education have a better perception of inclusion than the families of primary and secondary. This could be connected to the fact that there are fewer students diagnosed in pre-school education, hence categorised, with the practice of more inclusive methodologies: flexibility of the curriculum, peer tutoring and cooperative groups (Gine, Balcells, Cañada & Paniagua 2016; Hanline and Correa-Torres 2012). In addition, both teachers and students in the higher stages of primary and secondary education perceive being more and more alienated from the goals of inclusion. The perception of support and the quantity and quality of resources to cater to the necessities of the students indicate the reasons for which inclusion is perceived as being more difficult, particularly with secondary school teachers (Chiner and Cardona 2013; Echeita et al. 2013). However, there are two other reasons: the lack of teacher training and the lack of appropriateness of the methodologies in accordance with inclusive pedagogical practices. What is especially significant is the little or no training of secondary education teachers (Leon and Arjona 2011; Moliner et al. 2011; Mulholland & O'Connor 2016), which directly affects less diversified and inclusive educational practices (Moliner et al. 2011; Pantic 2015; Moshe 2017). Nevertheless, it does not involve a specific kind of training on the educational needs of the students but rather on the formation of values, of a culture and of a methodological response rooted in the inclusive philosophy, capable of empowering their schools to create inclusive spaces with regard to diversity (Booth and Ainscow 2011; Casanova 2011; Sharman & Nuttal 2015).

Another reason why the students and teachers of the higher stages in primary and secondary education are more resistant to inclusion is the importance given to instructional processes, particularly in secondary education (Arnaiz 2012; Round, Subban & Sharma 2015). While it is true that flexible groupings are carried out -student group work, appropriateness of the curriculum, to name but a few- the methodology lacks an inclusive pedagogical perspective (Florian and Black-Hawkins 2011; Scruggs & Mastropieri 2017; Vlachou & Fyssa 2016). This would explain why the expectations of the students are low and the assessment is not conducive to achieving success if all the weight of education falls on the acquisition of knowledge. As Slee (2012, 245) states; 'it is necessary to persuade teachers to not just prepare their students for exams and to dedicate more time to teaching and learning'. The sole responsibility of teachers is not to be focused exclusively on the training and preparing students in order to pass academic evaluations; it has to be focused on preparing them for being citizens in society.

Lastly, it is necessary to point out that the Index for Inclusion permits the reviewing of practices and programmes that might be obsolete like in the case of projects on bullying in schools. All the schools in this study follow Coexistence Programmes to eradicate problems related to bullying. Nevertheless, both the students of primary and secondary education coincide in pointing out that the cases of bullying still continue to exist in their schools.

5. Conclusion

Index for Inclusion is a valuable instrument to mobilise schools in the quest for shared solutions that are more conducive to inclusion. Detecting its barriers is already an important first step towards progressing along the

road to inclusion; a road where the political, economic and social authorities are needed to facilitate its path. In accordance with the results of this study, we need to consider how schools should rethink their approaches to curriculum planning, pedagogy, and the taking of decisions of all the members of the education community.

From this perspective the schools that participated in this research project have started a process of checking their inclusive development; that is, how they implement the inclusion process. Their proposals of improvement are leading to: rethinking coordination and collaborative mechanisms between teachers (school 4); reorganizing the support in order to make it possible for students with ASD to spend more time in the regular classroom (schools 1 and 6); the use of more inclusive methodologies (for instance, making the student groups more flexible, diversifying educational materials or implementing shared teaching) (schools 2, 3 and 5). All those are little steps that can help towards finding big solutions.

6. Limitations and implications for practice in the future

The limitations of this study come from the selection of the sample. The schools analyzed are sensitive to the process of inclusion but are at different levels in its development. Furthermore, all the schools only took into account one type of SEN (ASD) without any other needs. In addition, the use of the Index for Inclusion has focused only on the detection of barriers to inclusion in schools where the context is different. In the future it would be necessary to analyse how the incipient improvement proposals are developed in each school. These improvements would imply a rethinking in the organisation of schools to help create opportunities for collaboration as well as the reorganization of support and teacher training, especially in the area of inclusive methodologies.

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Table 1. Sample and level of participation of each centre (% agents participation by school)

	Pre-school and Primary Schools				Secondary Schools		Total by agents
	School 1	School 2	School 3	School 4	School 5	School 6	
Teachers	38 (76%)	32 (89%)	48 (96%)	27 (82%)	34 (60%)	24 (51%)	203
Students	235 (91%)	198 (97%)	157 (95%)	190 (93%)	328 (66%)	226 (62%)	1334
Families	301 (50%)	131 (43%)	197 (29%)	59 (36%)	105 (23%)	102 (26%)	895
Monitors	9 (44%)	8 (73%)	14 (64%)	12 (72%)	1 (100%)	2 (100%)	46
Administrative personnel	2 (66%)	2 (100%)	3 (100%)	1 (50%)	5 (83%)	3 (75%)	16
Total by schools	585	371	419	289	473	357	2,492

Table 2. Dimensions and sections of Index for Inclusion

Dimension	Section
Creating inclusive culture	Building community
	Establishing inclusive values
Producing inclusive policies	Developing the school for all
	Organising support for diversity
Evolving inclusive practice	Orchestrating learning
	Mobilising resources

Table 3. Teachers' means in the questionnaire of the Index for Inclusion: general and dimensions

School	Global		Culture		Policy		Practice	
	Mean	Std Dev	Mean	Std Dev	Mean	Std Dev	Mean	Std Dev
1	2.5	.2	2.4	.3	2.5	.3	2.5	.3
2	2.1	.2	2.1	.2	2.2	.3	2.2	.2
3	2.6	.3	2.5	.3	2.6	.4	2.6	.4
4	2.3	.2	2.3	.3	2.3	.3	2.4	.3
5	2.2	.4	2.1	.4	2.3	.5	2.1	.4
6	2.2	.3	2.2	.3	2.3	.5	2.2	.4

Table 4. Teachers' priorities from qualitative analysis (open question)

Dimension	Section	Priorities
Producing inclusive policies	Developing the school for all	- To have more time available to coordinate. - training geared to their needs
	Organising support for diversity	- To have more resources to cater for all their students
Evolving inclusive practice	Orchestrating learning	- Improve the system of evaluation for all the students
	Mobilising resources	- The use of more inclusive methodologies like for instance shared teaching

Table 5. Families' means in the questionnaire of the Index for Inclusion: general and dimensions

School	Global		Culture		Policy		Practice	
	Mean	Std Dev	Mean	Std Dev	Mean	Std Dev	Mean	Std Dev
1	2.8	.2	2.8	.3	2.8	.2	2.8	.3
2	2.8	.2	2.8	.3	2.9	.2	2.8	.3
3	2.8	.2	2.8	.2	2.9	.2	2.8	.2
4	2.6	.3	2.5	.4	2.7	.3	2.6	.4
5	2.7	.2	2.6	.3	2.8	.2	2.6	.3
6	2.8	.2	2.7	.3	2.8	.2	2.8	.2

Table 6. Families' suggestions from qualitative analysis (open question)

Dimension	Section	Priorities
Producing inclusive policies	Developing the school for all	- Organisation of school hours
	Organising support for diversity	- To have more resources to cater for all the students
Creating inclusive culture	Building community	- Enhancement in communication between the school and the family through increasing the frequency

Table 7. Student's means in the questionnaire of the Index for Inclusion

School	Global	
	Mean	Std Dev
1	2.6	.2
2	2.5	.2
3	2.7	.2
4	2.5	.2
5	2.3	.2
6	2.4	.3

Table 8: Means of monitors and administrative personnel in the questionnaire of the Index for Inclusion.

School	Administrative Personnel		Monitors	
	Mean	Std Dev	Mean	Std Dev
1	2.9	.1	2.7	.3
2	3.0	.0	2.8	.2
3	2.9	.1	2.8	.1
4	2.8	.1	2.8	.1
5	2.7	.2	2.8	.0
6	2.8	.2	2.7	.1