

# FROM SOCIAL EXCLUSION TO RESPECT FOR THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

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**Abstract** - *Persons with disabilities have rights, duties, and obligations. Their development and training will depend on the extent to which society provides alternatives for recognition and protection at all levels. The objective was to identify the progress of scientific publications about the research topic. Bibliometric analysis was applied to identify the research trend and the literature review method was used. It was concluded that the promotion of inclusive education, the adaptation of educational services, and citizenship education are the main focus of future research.*

**Keywords:** *disability; empathy; law; person.*

## INTRODUCTION

In 2021, the living conditions, health needs, labor rights, and student identity of persons with disabilities in the context of pandemics were investigated (Nnawulezi & Remilekun, 2021. Friedman & Vanpuymbrouck, 2021. McMaughan, et al., 2021. Daly & Whelan, 2021. Martikainen, et al., 2021. Dejong, et al., 2002. Hussain, et al., 2015. Umucu & Lee, 2020).

Infringement of the human condition is one of the pillar issues related to disability (Barraco, 2021). If left unaddressed, it turns into concrete acts of discrimination (Muller, et al., 2021. Unger, 2002. Schur, Kruse & Blank, 2005. Scheer, et al., 2003. Ocran, 2019. Park, 2017). Social exclusion towards people with disabilities generates depression, and stress and represents a potential public health problem (Pyöriä, Ojala & Nätti, 2021. Booth, et al., 2021. Hodgson, et al., 2021. McLaughlin, Bell & Stringer, 2004).

The human rights of persons with disabilities are violated (Harpur, 2012. Annaswamy, Verduzco-Gutierrez & Frieden, 2020. Ganle, et al., 2020. Alexander & Gomez, 2017. Campbell, 2017. Nevala, et al., 2015). Several international instruments extend their scope of protection to avoid further impact on the development of everyday activities (Mégret, 2008. Wells, Sandefur & Hogan, 2003. Namkung & Carr, 2019. Murray De Meulder & Le Maire, 2018). The use of public spaces must be accessible to all, without distinction (Eskytè, et al., 2020). Equal respect guarantees the exercise of a dignified life (Breghs, et al., 2019. Mitra, et al., 2017. Ngubane-Mokiwa, 2018). The use of technology is for every human being, otherwise, the increase of the digital divide will be evident and will not allow the

development of the role of a citizen (Duplaga & Szulc, 2019. Waldschmidt & Sépulchre, 2019. Schur, et al., 2017. Scholz, Yalcin & Priestley, 2017).

The academic training of people with disabilities is included in the benefits derived from special education (Maeda, Hashimoto & Sato, 2021. Balakrishnan, et al., 2019. Morgan, 2021. Parey, 2020). The success of this is related to the recruitment of specialized teachers (Sharma, Forlin & Loreman, 2008). Knowledge acquisition will decrease exclusion and socio-dependency (Kitchin, 1998. Barnes & Mercer, 2005. Krahn, Walker & Correa-De-Araujo, 2015. Rimmer, et al., 2004. Deal, 2003. Schmöcker, et al., 2008).

In this order of ideas, it is noted that from the review of the Scopus database, it is recognized that in 2022 bibliometric publications on persons with disabilities were registered. This research focused on social and labor inclusion (Martínez-Medina, et al., 2022. Marín-Palacios, Carrero & Lohan, 2022).

In this sense, it is important to carry out this review to identify the progress of the topic related to persons with disabilities in scientific publications.

## 1. METHODOLOGY

The search and data extraction was on March 19, 2023. We considered using the PRISMA 2020 protocol to review the information transparently (Page, et al., 2021. Haddaway, et al., 2022). The present research is focused on literature review and bibliometrics, therefore, the study is descriptive and retrospective.

### Source identification

Scopus was selected because it is an internationally recognized multidisciplinary and impact database (Elsevier, 2022. Asai, 2022).

### Search strategy

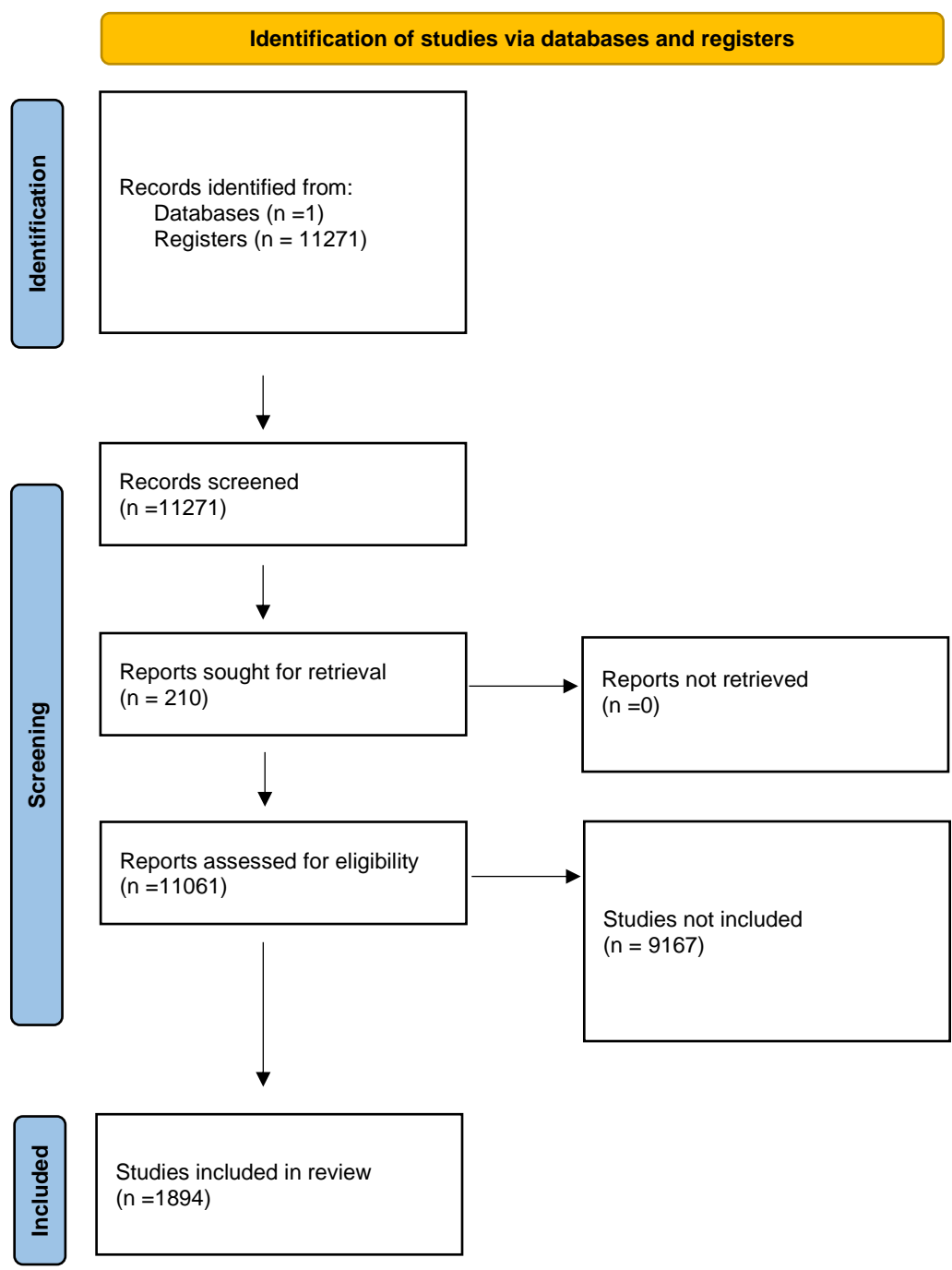
Consideration was given to including the title, abstract, and keywords in the search. The terms selected are "Disabled Persons" OR "Disabled Person" OR "Handicapped Persons" OR "Disabled People" OR "Persons With Disabilities" AND (education OR "special education").

### Inclusion criteria

- Documents from 1973 to 2022.
- Document type: article.
- Publication stage: final.
- Source type: Journal.
- Language: English.
- All Open access

### Exclusion criteria

- Articles not related to the topic.
- Documents from 2023 and 2024.



**Figure 1. Diagram**

**Data processing**

R-studio 4.1.0 software, the bibliometrix package, and the Biblioshiny interface were used.

**2. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

A total of 1894 documents related to education for people with disabilities were analyzed. The oldest document dates back to 1973. The annual growth rate is 11.71%. The scientific production focused on the research topic grew from 1 to 227 in 2022, which proves the growth and importance of the scientific community.

**2.1. Results related to bibliometrics**

This section was developed to identify the total number of citations, the most influential authors, research trends, and the most prolific journals about the topic of persons with disabilities.



a) Total citations

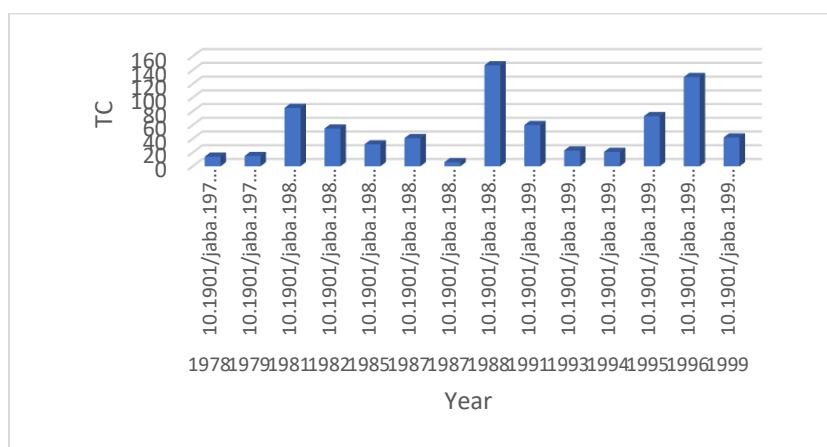
Table 1 shows the total number of citations for the last 10 years. It can be seen that the number of articles related to the topic of education of persons with disabilities has increased. From the visualization of the results, it is projected that research will continue and that the COVID-19 pandemic did not diminish the authors' attention. It is necessary to mention that, as of 2016, the focus of the study was consolidated in the employment, education, and use of information and communication technologies (Meshur, 2016).

Year	N	MeanTCperArt	MeanTCperYear	CitableYears
2022	227	1,57	1,57	1
2021	209	5,11	2,55	2
2020	190	7,21	2,40	3
2019	172	11,63	2,91	4
2018	154	27,69	5,54	5
2017	137	28,04	4,67	6
2016	109	35,75	5,11	7
2015	95	21,94	2,74	8
2014	79	36,53	4,06	9
2013	71	28,51	2,85	10

**Table 1. Total citations (TC)**

b) Most influential authors

The most influential author on the subject of people with disabilities is Reid DH. He has 14 papers written in Couatorian, whose DOIs are shown in Figure 2. The oldest is from 1978 and the most cited is from 1988. The latter reached 149 citations and was published in the Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis. This journal is current and belongs to the United States, its h-index is 80 and it corresponds to Scopus Q1.



**Figure 2. REID DH' Production over time**

c) Publication trend

Figure 3 shows that the terms disability and education stand out. The articles that exceeded 1000 citations are listed below:

- Global, regional, and national disability-adjusted life-years (DALYs) for 315 diseases and injuries and healthy life expectancy (HALE), 1990-2015: a systematic analysis for the Global Burden of Disease Study 2015. DOI [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(16\)31460-X](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(16)31460-X). It records



1440 citations and is published in the journal The Lancet, h-index 807, and is ranked Q1 in Scopus.

- Global, regional, and national disability-adjusted life-years (DALYs) for 333 diseases and injuries and healthy life expectancy (HALE) for 195 countries and territories, 1990-2016: a systematic analysis for the Global Burden of Disease Study 2016. DOI [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(17\)32130-X](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(17)32130-X). It has 1331 citations and is published in The Lancet, h-index 807, and is ranked Q1 in Scopus.
- Global, regional, and national burden of Parkinson's disease, 1990-2016: a systematic analysis for the Global Burden of Disease Study 2016. DOI [https://doi.org/10.1016/S1474-4422\(18\)30295-3](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1474-4422(18)30295-3). It has 1083 citations and is published in The Lancet Neurology, h-index 315, and is ranked Q1 in Scopus.

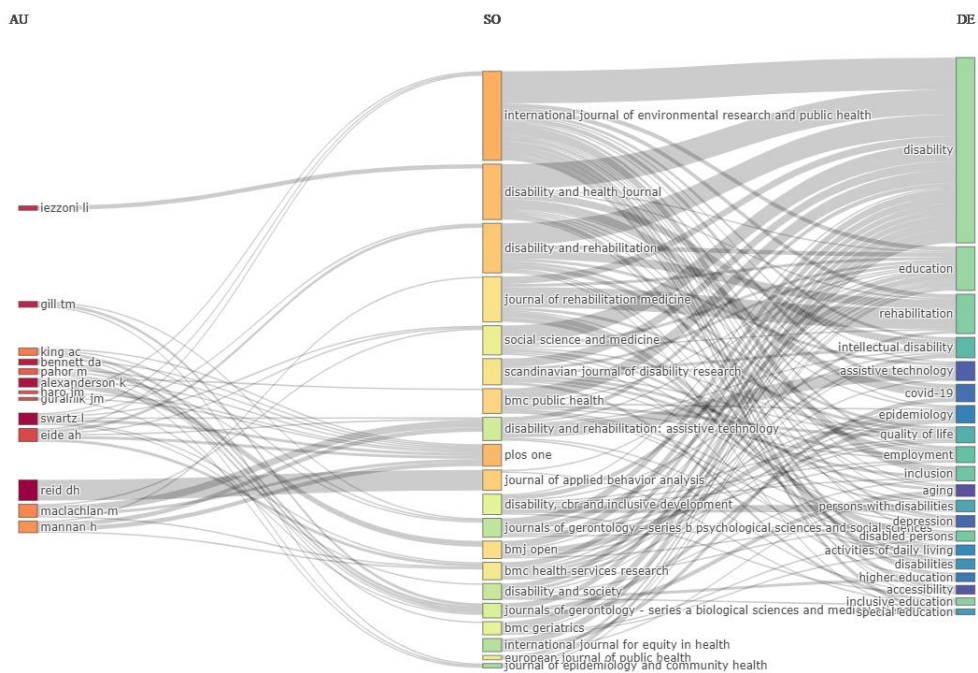


Figure 3: Three fields plot

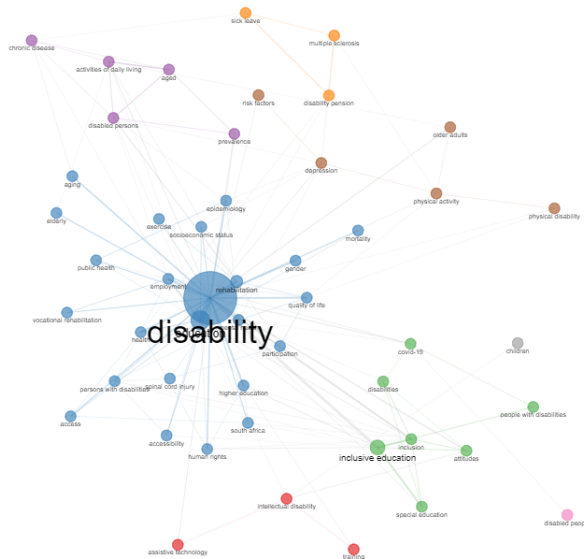
Figure 4 shows the top 5 search terms for people with disabilities, according to frequency: disability (358), education (100), inclusive education (75), rehabilitation (63), and disabled persons (52).



Figure 4. Word Cloud

Figure 5 shows that the blue cluster is more consolidated than the others. The word that stands out the most is a disability. Other terms such as public health, vocational rehabilitation, accessibility, socioeconomic status, participation, and quality of life also stand out. This cluster is consolidated.

The clusters in the process of consolidation are colored: green, red, purple, brown, and orange. The following terms are highlighted: sick leave, chronic disease, prevalence, inclusive education, attitudes, intellectual disability, depression, and older adults.



**Figure 5.** Co-occurrence Network

d) Most prolific journals

The 3 most representative journals related to the topic of people with disabilities are:

- International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health.  
 ISSN: 1661-7827 / E-ISSN:1660-4601  
 H-index: 138  
 Country: Switzerland  
 Quartile: 1  
 Articles: 78
  
- PLoS ONE  
 ISSN: 1932-6203  
 H-index: 367  
 Country: United States  
 Quartile: 1  
 Articles: 69

- Disability and Health Journal

ISSN: 1936-6574 / E-ISSN:1876-7583

H-index: 42

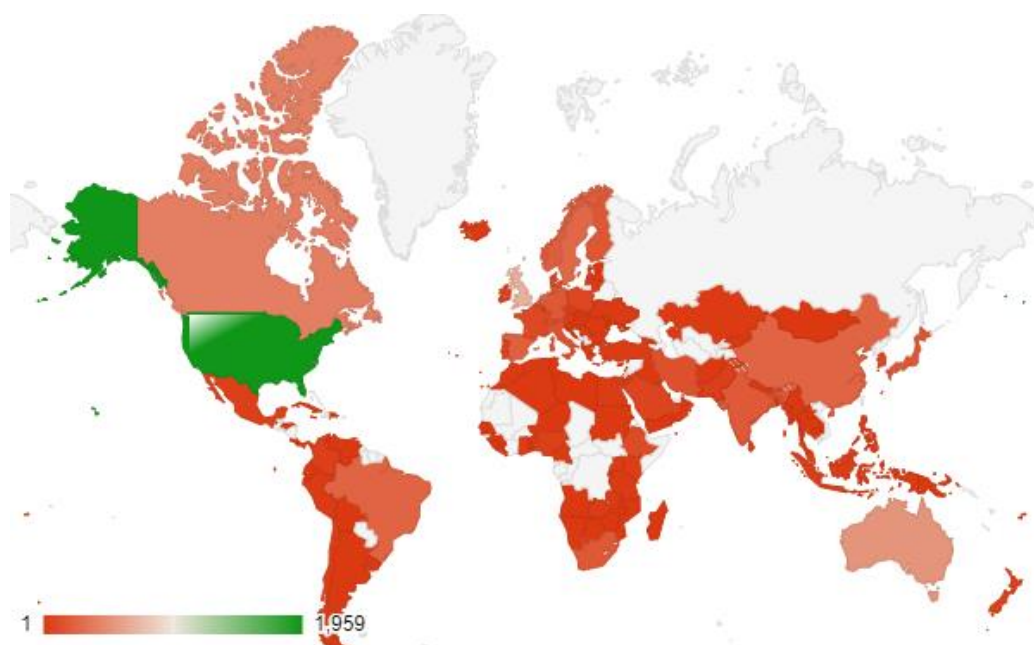
Country: United States

Quartile: 1

Articles: 48

It should be noted that, at a complementary level and about affiliation, the University of Toronto is in first place with 52 articles. Second place goes to University College London with 45 articles. Third place goes to the University of Michigan with 44 articles. Fourth place goes to Karolinska Institutet with 43 articles and fifth place goes to the University of Melbourne with 40 articles.

Along the same lines, Figure 6 shows the scientific production of the countries on the subject of people with disabilities. The participation of the USA, UK, and Australia stands out. Their frequency of scientific production is 1959, 684, and 521, respectively.



**Figure 6.** Country Scientific Production

## 2.2. Results related to the literature review

As a search filter, it was considered that the title of the documents to be analyzed should include some of the following terms: "Disabled Persons" OR "Disabled Person" OR "Handicapped Persons" OR "Disabled People" OR "Persons With Disabilities" AND (education OR "special education"). Inclusion criteria were considered to be: i) All open access, ii) Document type: article, iii) Publication stage: Final, iv) Source type: Journal, v) Language: English y vi) Search within the article title. 22 documents were obtained.

- Regarding the promotion of inclusive education

The principle of inclusive education allows for the transformation of mainstream schools for children with disabilities (De Beco, 2016). This is correct in that it encourages the creation of open schools.

The right to inclusive education benefits children and young people with disabilities (Byrne, 2022). We agree that it promotes balance toward diversity.



Inclusive education should focus on respecting the dignity of persons with disabilities (Broderich, 2018).

Inclusive education develops the teaching and accessibility of information and communication technologies for the benefit of people with disabilities (Lord & Stein, 2018).

Interacting with people with disabilities improves students' attitudes toward disability (Lim, et al., 2018). Interacting with people with disabilities encourages empathy, a soft skill that is very necessary for the development of the whole person.

Teachers should be prepared to reduce negative attitudes that affect children with disabilities (Alorani, Ibrahim & Al-Labadi, 2020).

- Regarding the adaptation of educational services

Students must perceive the importance and usefulness of the skills they will develop (Reid, et al., 1985). Educational institutions must be prepared both in terms of infrastructure and logistics.

Discrimination and intimacy towards people with disabilities develop naturally in schools. Inclusive processes need to be implemented to maintain social harmony in the classroom (Bjarnason, 2005). Teacher training in inclusion is essential, however, the theory is irrelevant if it is not put into practice.

It is necessary to implement occupational therapy on education and disability from the early years of training. This is the first step to reflecting and developing empathy for other young people (Van De Fátima Zanoni Nogueira & Oliver, 2018).

If the reality of people with disabilities is accepted by educational centers, it will allow the consolidation of inclusive societies (Álvarez-Delgado, et al., 2021). We agree with what has been stated. Neurodiversity is not current, but very old, but the system and its barriers limit education for all, and change requires the joint work of different actors.

People with disabilities in rural areas may have reduced opportunities for education (Kim, et al., 2014). It is important to analyze indicators of the inclusion of people with disabilities. It is also important to know how many are mapped for monitoring.

Inclusive higher education for future doctors reduce inequalities in the treatment of people with disabilities (Mirón Canelo, et al., 2019).

British disability legislation is related to education. This is unattainable for disabled students (Soorenian, 2018).

Formal education contributes to the improvement of sexual and reproductive health services for persons with disabilities (Du, et al., 2022).

The main barrier to disability education is staying in school, which involves a process of adaptation (França & Rios-Neto, 2012). We agree with the above. If the necessary measures are not taken, people with disabilities will not succeed in integrating into the study group.


About citizenship education

Citizenship education recognizes human rights advocacy for persons with disabilities (Wolbring, 2012). We agree with this statement, however, although human rights advocacy is recognized, inequality gaps for persons with disabilities are evident.

Listening to patients improves care and confidence among people with disabilities (Miller, 2015). People with mental disabilities require skills that enable them to function in the labor market (Brenda & Smejkalová, 2015). It is essential to know the type of impairment they have, whether it is mild, moderate, or severe. Based on this diagnosis, the area where they can contribute will be determined.

Children with disabilities must be guaranteed access to assistive technology (Le Fanu, Schmidt & Virendrakumar, 2022).





People with disabilities can participate in tourism education programs, thereby recognizing the commitment and importance of improving social inclusion (Makuyana & Plessis, 2022).

The social inclusion of persons with disabilities is a basic principle that enriches the culture of citizenship (Reyes, 2019).

Education has a positive effect on young people with disabilities; it is the best way to avoid discrimination in the search for employment (Nguon, 2015). We agree with this. Education is the key to the world, it allows us to eliminate ignorance and empower ourselves with knowledge. It would enable people with disabilities to know their rights and work towards their fulfillment.

### 2.3. Discussion

- About the bibliometric analysis of the topic of persons with disabilities

It should be borne in mind that this analysis made it possible to recognize that scientific production has increased over the last 10 years. The same exceeded 1000 citations for each document and the prolific journals belong to Scopus quartile 1. It should be noted that new search terms are recognized, for example, public health, quality of life, inclusive education, and older adults.

In this sense, it is recognized that the subject is growing exponentially and will continue to be the subject of research. At the same time, it should be noted that future research is envisaged on the perception of older adults of access to educational services, as well as the adaptation of technology as a guarantee of social inclusion and the protection of the sexual and reproductive rights of persons with disabilities.

- About the literature review

Inclusive education should not be considered lightly because it is not just about sharing a classroom among students. It is a responsibility of society, therefore, active participation requires the intervention of parents, teachers, and authorities of the educational institution. The provision of environments and budget allocation is key to the physical and emotional development of students. At the same time, it is a requirement that the teacher is prepared to understand and guide. It should be taken into account that in the area of persons with disabilities, there is usually a dissociation between what is stated in the legislation and reality. This is worrying because it does not take into account that inclusive education is an opportunity to develop empathy and avoid all forms of discrimination towards children, young people, and adults with disabilities.

In this sense, we agree with the authors detailed in the results of this research. Specifically, when they point out that the principle of inclusive education allows for the transformation of mainstream schools. Also, it is necessary to improve access to technology, and it involves teacher preparation. However, the active participation of parents in this process of adaptation and adaptation is not perceived. This aspect could be incorporated into future research.

The educational services offered to people with disabilities should promote harmony in the classroom. If this is achieved, the development in society will be different because the person with a disability will perceive that he/she is part of the group where he/she is and others will behave with empathy. Society must avoid continuing with acts of discrimination, neglect, and disinterest in the subject. This is the ideal opportunity to promote the development of a disabled person in the labor market.

In the same vein, it is stated that we agree with the authors detailed in the results of this research. Specifically, when they refer to the usefulness of the skills learned in educational centers and which will be developed in the labor market. However, it is perceived that it can only be the practice of some institutions, which does not guarantee continuity and uniformity in the process of adaptation of the disabled person in society.

Citizenship education is fundamental in the process of adaptation of a person with a disability. Without the participation of all, the effort would not have the expected results. The importance of acquiring a new vision of this issue is consolidated with the defense of human rights.

In that order of ideas, it is stated that we agree with the authors detailed in the results of this research. Specifically, in the preparation of citizens' education, since it is the best way to guarantee the elimination of discrimination in society.

### 3. CONCLUSION

The issue of persons with disabilities does have the potential to be the focus of future multi- and interdisciplinary research. This perspective would benefit the culture of citizenship and respect for human rights, which should be exercised without ties or social conditioning.

The literature review made it possible to identify the progress of scientific publications about people with disabilities. Three main lines of research are recognized: the promotion of inclusive education, the adaptation of educational services, and citizenship education.

#### Limitations


Only one database was used - Scopus and only one software for bibliometric analysis - Rstudio (biblioshiny).


#### Conflict of interest

The authors note that there is no conflict of interest to declare.

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