Educational Leadership and Development of Inclusive Schools. Documentary Review

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Abstract

Educational leadership as a key element for the development of inclusive schools is a topic that is becoming increasingly relevant, both for school administration and for teacher training in the field of management. The aim of the study presented here is to identify, analyze and report the scientific production indexed in the SCOPUS database on the inclusive leadership of management teams in the years 2015-2022. The method applied to understand the evolution of this topic was a descriptive documentary review with a sample of 40 documents from 29 journals indexed in the SCOPUS database, between 2015 and January 2022, using the descriptors 'leadership', 'inclusive school', 'compulsory education', 'practices', 'participatory research' and 'families'. The results of this study show that the concept of educational or pedagogical leadership has evolved as a consequence of the dynamism of inclusive education: from the view of the educational leader as a manager and facilitator of good practices related to inclusive education, through the promotion of fair schools which respond to the needs of the educational community in schools so that the school becomes a space for inclusion.

Keywords: Leadership; Inclusion; Good Practices; Participatory Research; Family.

Points of interest:

- The growing importance of inclusive educational leadership: the text highlights the increasing relevance of inclusive educational leadership, both for the management of educational centers and for teacher training.
- The evolution of the concept of educational leadership: the results of the research show an evolution of the concept of educational leadership, moving from being seen as a manager of good practices to becoming a promoter of fair and participatory schools.
- Inclusive leadership as a promoter of participation: inclusive leadership is presented as a key factor in encouraging the participation of the entire educational community in the creation of inclusive school spaces.

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1. Introduction

Building a school that welcomes and cares for all, based on respect, educational quality, inclusion and social justice, is the primary role of school leadership at this time (Dematthews et al., 2020). Considering that school is defined, like any social organization, by its organizational structure or formal elements, as well as by classroom and school life or informal elements, it seems reasonable to think that educational leadership is of particular interest in this construction (Valdés Morales, 2018). But we must be aware that, in today's context, the roles of educational leaders involve tasks that entail a great deal of responsibility (Timothy & Agbenyega, 2018). It has been found in the scientific literature that the development and implementation of an inclusive culture in schools depends, to a large extent, on the type of leadership exercised in the school (Moreno & León, 2017). This should take into account the competencies and roles related to the capacity of educational leaders to manage the diversity existing in school institutions, to communicate and share their vision, to engage the whole educational community, and to foster educational practices based on quality and equity for all (Fernández & Hernández, 2013). In this sense, a leadership focused on creating inclusive schools must face dilemmas and actions which lead to making committed decisions in order to overcome obstacles (Poon-McBrayer, 2017) and to be able of implementing effective measures and changes. In short, we can speak here of the need to transform school leadership into inclusive leadership (León et al., 2018).

In this line, and following the review by Gómez-Hurtado et al. (2021), it can be concluded that inclusive leadership is a collaborative, democratic, participatory, sustainable, distributed and transformational leadership whose purpose is to improve the school and implement the principles of educational inclusion. In order for school leadership to truly contribute to educational change and the development of inclusive cultures, it must start from a series of premises (Osiname, 2018), such as: the shared responsibility of all its members and the development of a culture of collaboration which enables the involvement of all and the idea of working towards common goals (Karrera et al., 2020); attention and commitment to diversity (Quiroga & Aravena, 2018), broadening the vision of inclusion and attempting to implement school policies in line with these approaches; the provision of the necessary support and resources (Carpio et al., 2020), especially those related to the education and training of teachers and the management team itself; and innovation (Gian & Bao, 2021), developing and improving the quality of the teaching/learning processes, researching and deepening the competencies needed for successful leadership, and promoting change through appropriate planning and design.

In this way, Camarero et al. (2020) suggest that leadership is an essential element for school success, pointing out that the key is to achieve the educational and social inclusion of all students, as well as the personal and professional development of all members of the community. In this line, Woodcock & Marks Woolfon (2019) note that adequate support from educational leaders is perceived by teachers as a key component in achieving inclusion, highlighting the need for such leaders to undertake proactive planning in anticipation of problems. Feeling supported increases satisfaction and fosters positive attitudes among teachers. This is also reflected in the document published by the European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education (2021), which states that one of the strategic functions, which are essential in school leadership within the field of inclusive education, is human development. This is understood as the support and promotion of teaching quality, monitoring and assessment of educational practice. The latter is directly related to student achievement and performance, as well as to improving the motivation and working environment of all staff, developing the skills, knowledge and abilities of all to foster a professional community. Likewise, UNESCO (2018) highlights the role of school leaders and their influence on student learning, placing them at the center of educational processes and reforms, serving as mediators between different educational actors and ensuring successful implementation of inclusive approaches in schools.

In light of the above, we have carried out an analysis related to school leadership and how it is contributing to the construction of effective inclusive schools in recent years. This analysis has been carried out from the scientific production of journals indexed in the SCOPUS database (2015 - January 2022).

2. Objectives

Specifically, the overarching objective of this paper is to identify, analyze and report the scientific production indexed in the SCOPUS database on the inclusive leadership of management teams in the years (2015 - until January 2022). In order to do so, the following questions have been addressed:

- What are the descriptors which express the topics presented in the scientific papers?
- Which journals indexed in the SCOPUS database publish papers on the topic of educational leadership in inclusive schools (in Spanish or in English), on the dates specified (years 2015 to January 2022)?
- How many journal papers indexed in the SCOPUS database address this topic?
- Have there been any developments in the above-mentioned publications related to the issue of school leadership in inclusive schools in the period under review?

3. Methodology

Documentary review is a method which, in a first stage, makes it possible to identify the state of the art on a specific topic, as well as the authorship, dates and sources of a given object of study. All this is done in order to build some starting premises before developing a theoretical basis on which to work in a scientific field (Martínez-Corona et al., 2023). From here, once the sources and documents have been identified, the materials are analyzed and organized and connections between them are established.

This paper systematically reviews studies on educational leadership in order to identify relevant aspects of educational leadership in inclusive schools. This is done through the descriptors of the selected papers, by analyzing the references published in the SCOPUS database, as it gathers a wide coverage of quality documents, and has the appropriate analysis of its documents for the study we wish to carry out.

The work presented here is a descriptive documentary review, which seeks to ascertain the current status of the subject that concerns us and its impact in the field of education. To this end, it analyses the descriptors, titles and abstracts of scientific production between 2015 and January 2022, in journals indexed in the SCOPUS database in the thematic area of education.

The document search was conducted using the following process. Firstly, the descriptors that would determine the literature search were identified; these were 'leadership', 'inclusive school', 'compulsory education', 'practices', 'participatory research' and 'families.' In this identification, terms related to the descriptors and the subject matter being analyzed were also taken into account, resulting in an expanded list of terms, which facilitated the identification of the texts to be analyzed. Figure 1 shows the descriptors and indicators used, as well as the relationships between them.

Next, the inclusion criteria for the literature search were established. These criteria were:

- To select the production of scientific papers dealing with the topic of educational leadership in inclusive schools (in English or in Spanish) present in the SCOPUS database, from 2015 to January 2022
- To choose scientific papers published in journals indexed in the SCOPUS database in the field of education as the type of document to be analyzed
- To include those papers that contained in the title, abstract or keywords at least one of the descriptors selected for the bibliographic search, or any terms related to these descriptors that were established (see Figure 1)
- Also, to examine those texts which, even if they did not contain the descriptors, made reference to the characteristics and functions of educational leaders in inclusive schools

Figure 1. Related descriptors and indicators
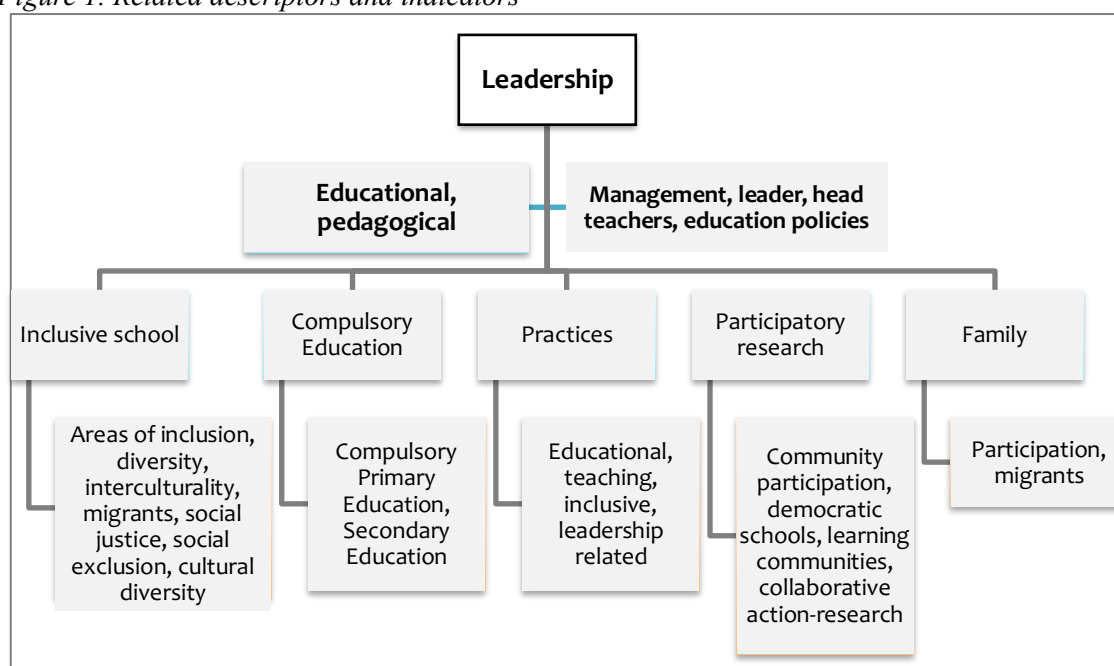
Source: Authors' elaboration based on the descriptor selection process. Year 2022

Subsequently, the following criteria for the exclusion of documents were agreed upon:

- To remove from the analysis those documents that did not meet the above criteria
- To exclude documents which, because of their subject matter, do not belong to the area of education
- To discard from the study those papers that did not have an abstract
- Likewise, documents that were not primary sources, i.e., papers that were not original, were not taken into account; therefore, abstracts of papers, compilations or lists of bibliographies were discarded
- To remove those papers which, although containing the specified descriptors, did not refer to the objective of the study

Once the inclusion and exclusion criteria for the search for information had been determined, the search itself was carried out. This began in January 2022. The search matrix was determined as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Search matrix

Database	Descriptors	Publication years	Thematic area
SCOPUS	- Leadership - Inclusive school - Compulsory education - Practices - Participatory research - Family	2015 - January 2022	Social Sciences: Education

Source: Authors' elaboration based on the results of the search. Year 2022.

The search was carried out firstly with the descriptor 'leadership', in order to carry out a first screening of documents. This yielded a total of 111 papers.
To make the result more closely aligned with the objective of the study, the descriptors 'leadership' and 'inclusive school' were connected, resulting in 96 documents. With these texts, a reading of the summaries of each one was carried out and it was observed that some were repeated, which were

removed. It was also noted that other documents did not correspond to the subject matter of the study, despite the fact that the database included them in the search. These papers were also excluded from the analysis. It was also noted that some of the selected texts addressed the topic of educational leadership in inclusive schools, even though neither the term 'leadership' nor any of the related indicators were included in the keywords. These papers were included in the analysis, as this possibility had been envisaged in the inclusion criteria.

After applying the inclusion and exclusion criteria, the combination of 'leadership' + 'inclusive school' yielded a total of 40 papers, which served as the basis for the rest of the searches, as shown in Table 2. Some texts were retained because the descriptors were found to be very general and, after a reading of the texts, it was found that the subject matter referred to school management.

Table 2. Number of documents analysed in the SCOPUS database

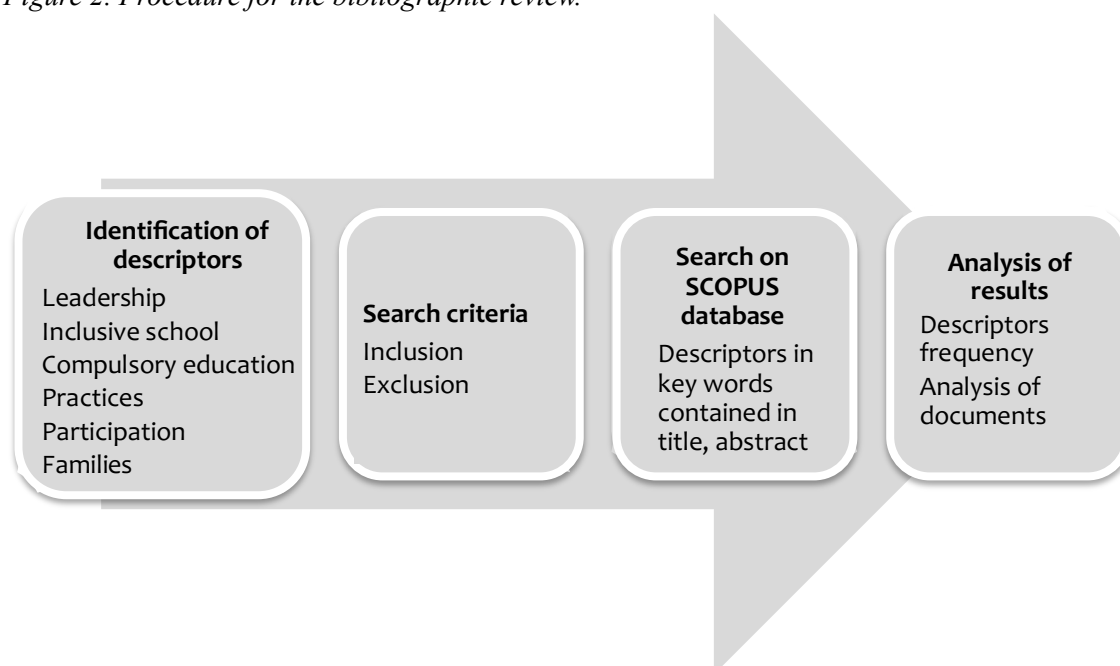| Search identification: keyword	No. of documents
Leadership + inclusive school	40
Leadership + inclusive school + compulsory education	12
Leadership + inclusive school + good practices	11
Leadership + inclusive school + participatory research	5
Leadership + inclusive school + families	9

Source: Authors' elaboration based on the results of the search. Year 2022.

Finally, the texts were analyzed. The analysis of the results was elaborated in response to the initial questions of this study:

- What are the descriptors which express the topics presented in the scientific papers?
- Which journals indexed in the SCOPUS database publish papers on educational leadership in inclusive schools, in English and Spanish, between 2015 and January 2022?
- How many journal papers indexed in the SCOPUS database address this topic?
- Have there been any developments in the above-mentioned publications related to the issue of school leadership in inclusive schools in the period under review?

Figure 2 graphically shows an outline of the procedure of the work carried out.

Figure 2. Procedure for the bibliographic review.

Source: Authors' elaboration based on the search procedure on the SCOPUS database. Year 2022.
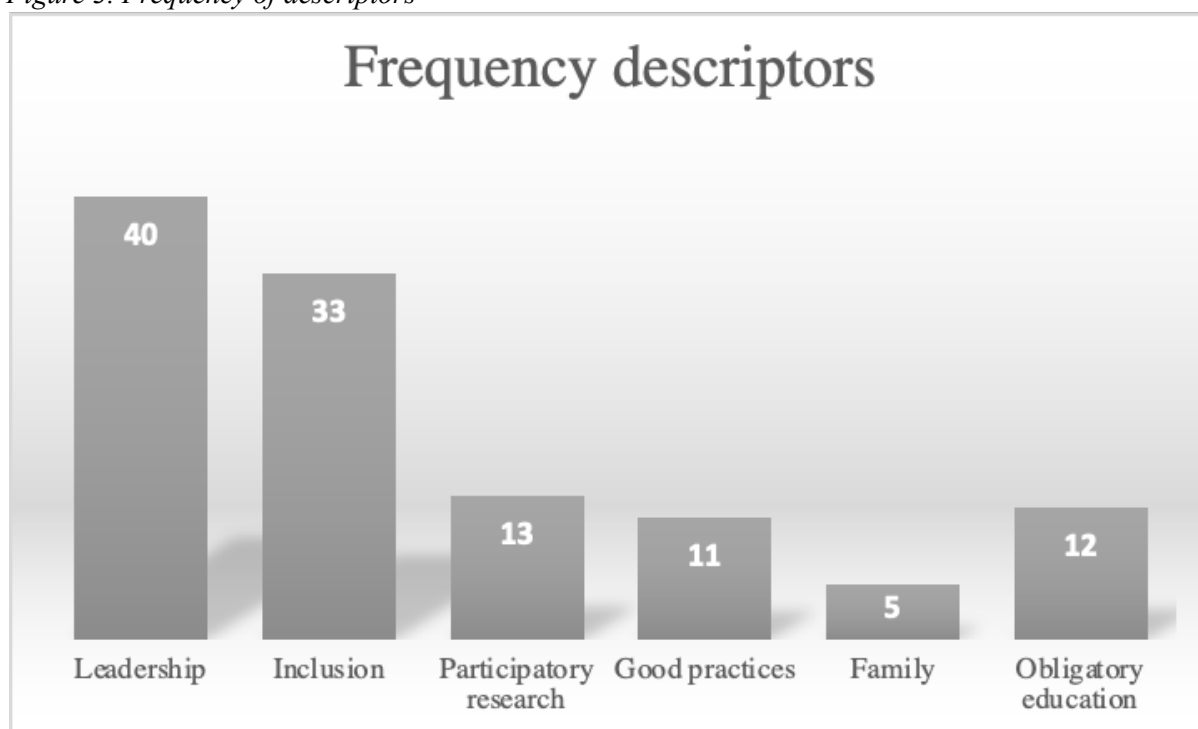
4. Results

A total of 40 documents in the SCOPUS database were analyzed, published between 2015 and 2022, classified by the descriptors identified above. (leadership + inclusive school, leadership + inclusive school + compulsory education, leadership + inclusive school + good practices, leadership + inclusive school + participatory research, leadership + inclusive school + families), in order to answer the questions posed.

First, we present the graphs showing the descriptors most frequently used in the papers studied. In addition, the results obtained are also presented organized in tables by year of publication, in which the publications, the references of the papers and the descriptors of each one of them are identified.

4.1. Descriptors defining the subject matter of the publications

In order to answer the question 'What are the descriptors which express the topics presented in the scientific papers?', a graph has been developed which represents the number of times these descriptors appear in the titles, abstracts or keywords of the papers which have been identified and subsequently analyzed.

Figure 3. Frequency of descriptors

Source: Authors' elaboration based on the results of the search. Years 2015-2022.

As can be seen, the descriptor that appears most frequently in the papers is leadership, followed by inclusion, participatory research, practices, family and, finally, compulsory education.

As we have been able to analyze the documents, the descriptor leadership is linked to the terms 'educational', 'pedagogical', 'management teams', 'headteachers', 'teams', 'inclusive', 'for learning', 'leadership practices', 'successful', 'in disadvantaged contexts', which indicates that the texts studied cover these dimensions of school leadership.

Inclusion is linked to 'inclusive education', 'inclusive schools', 'diversity' and 'intercultural education'; it is also associated with 'social justice' and 'social exclusion.'

Participatory research, as democratic or community participation, is an emerging topic. This descriptor is found alongside the terms 'democratic school', 'participation, 'learning communities.' This section

also includes 'action-research' and 'educational networks' as a form of participation in the educational community.

With regard to the descriptor 'practices', it is apparent that it refers to educational, teaching, inclusive or leadership practices.

Regarding 'families', the texts analyzed refer to their participation in research and also associated with educational inclusion.

Finally, there are only three references to 'compulsory education', including primary and secondary education, but no reference to compulsory education as such.

4.2. Analysis of publications by year

With this analysis we seek to answer the following questions:

- Which journals indexed in the SCOPUS database publish on the topic of educational leadership in inclusive schools on the dates specified (years 2015 to January 2022)?
- How many journal papers indexed in the SCOPUS database address this topic?
- Have there been any developments in the above-mentioned publications related to the topic of headteacher leadership in inclusive schools in the period under review?

We have analyzed 40 texts published in 29 journals indexed in the SCOPUS database and, in view of the results of this work, we conclude that the topic of educational, pedagogical or school leadership in inclusive schools is becoming increasingly important, since the number of publications has been growing, from just one paper published in 2015 to eleven publications in the year 2021. The highest scientific production has been in the years 2018, when six papers were published; 2020, when nine texts were published; and 2021, with eleven papers published.

The following tables, arranged by year of publication, show the data of the sources analyzed (journals and paper references) and the descriptors that define the subject matter of the texts and that are found in the keywords, titles or abstracts of each of them.

Table 3. Search in SCOPUS. Years 2015-2017

Publications in the SCOPUS database 2015	
Journals	Paper descriptors
Revista de Estudios Educativos, Culturales y Psicológicos *(Journal of Educational, Cultural and Psychological Studies)*, (12), pp. 117-141	Educational leadership; good educational practices; right to education; social and educational exclusion; social networks; leadership of management teams; compulsory secondary education.
Publications in the SCOPUS database 2016	
Profesorado *(Faculty)*, 20 (2), pp. 296-311.	Educational inclusion; family; participation; management.
Revista Electrónica de Investigación Educativa *(Electronic Journal of Educational Research)*, 18 (2), pp. 116-129.	Community participation; democratic school; inclusive education.
Estudios Sobre Educación *(Studies on Education)*, 30, pp. 51-70.	Inclusive intercultural education; professional development; professional learning communities; leadership of management teams.
Ensaio 24 (91), pp. 253-274.	Pedagogical leaderships; school headteachers.
Publications in the SCOPUS database 2017	
Revista Española de Pedagogía *(Spanish Journal of Pedagogy)*, 75 (268), pp. 541-564	Headteacher; leadership; poverty; quality of education

Educación XX1 *(Education XX1)*, 20 (1), pp. 75-98	Classroom techniques; migrant education; teaching practices; families; management
Revista Internacional de Diversidad en Educación *(International Journal of Diversity in Education)*, 17 (3), pp. 15-36	Curriculum; inclusive education; organisation
Estudios Pedagógicos *(Pedagogical Studies)*, 43 (1), pp. 41-59	Active learning; educational innovation; educational leadership; learning communities

Source: Authors' elaboration from search results. Years 2015-2017.

In 2015, only the *Revista de Estudios Educativos, Culturales y Psicológicos (Journal of Educational, Cultural and Psychological Studies)* published a paper on educational leadership in inclusive schools. It mentions educational inclusion as a right to education, and reports an experience on good teaching practices that foster educational and social inclusion, developed in Compulsory Secondary Education.

The journals *Profesorado (Faculty)*, *Revista Electrónica de Investigación Educativa (Electronic Journal of Educational Research)*, *Estudios sobre Educación (Studies on Education)* and *Ensaio* published in 2016 papers on pedagogical leadership and educational inclusion. They mention that the management of intercultural education facilitates a change in the school towards educational inclusion in all areas: attention to diversity, professional learning, participation, etc. However, there is a lack of commitment and leadership in management teams, which can become an obstacle to change (*Studies on Education* journal).

These papers are works framed within the compulsory education framework, but only the one published in the journal *Estudios sobre Educación (Studies on Education)* discusses good practices in inclusion, with experiences of innovation in the classroom based on intercultural approaches.

In the *Revista Electrónica de Investigación Educativa (Electronic Journal of Educational Research),* a document is published that highlights the democratic school as the axis around which participation in schools revolves. With this publication, proposals are initiated to promote a culture of collaboration for the development of the democratic school.

The participation of families, in the *Profesorado (Faculty)* journal, is facilitated by means of questionnaires, with which the aim is to find out the families' perception of the management of measures for attention to diversity.

In 2017, four articles were published in four journals referring to inclusive schools and advocating that educational leadership is important, as it forms the basis of improvement for educational change in schools. Noteworthy in this period were papers on good practice in inclusive education, as well as on classroom techniques for integrating life skills. The text published in the *Revista Internacional de Diversidad en Educación (International Journal of Diversity in Education)* focuses on the organization of classrooms to provide inclusive responses that meet educational needs.

Table 4. Search in SCOPUS. Years 2018-2019.

Publications in the SCOPUS database 2018	
Journals	Paper descriptors
Liderazgo y Gestión Escolar *(Leadership and School Management)*, 38 (1), pp. 32-52	Leadership for learning; leadership in disadvantaged contexts; leadership in secondary school; successful leadership.
REICE. Revista Iberoamericana Sobre Calidad, Eficacia y Cambio en Educación *(Iberoamerican Journal on Quality, Effectiveness and Change in Education)*, 16 (2), pp. 21-40.	Disadvantaged schools; educational managers; inclusive education; leadership.

Revista de Investigación Educativa *(Journal of Educational Research)*, 36 (2), pp. 455-469	Democratisation; diversity; inclusive education; inclusive practices; management.
Profesorado *(Faculty)*, 22 (2), pp. 29-49; 22 (2), pp. 71-90.	Educational networks; assessment; inclusive education; participatory action-research; school improvement; organizational design; compulsory secondary education.
Dialogo Andino *(Andean Dialogue)*, (57), pp. 9-20	Intercultural curriculum; dialogue; intercultural education; leadership; families.
Publications in the SCOPUS database 2019	
Gestión Educativa Administración y Liderazgo *(Educational Management, Administration and Leadership)*, 47 (1), pp. 147-164	Management; leadership; schools.
Aula Abierta *(Open Classroom)*, 48 (3), pp. 291-299	Inclusion; leadership; practices.
Archivos de Análisis de Políticas Educativas *(Archives of Education Policies Analysis)*, 27, art. en el. 12	Education policy; school improvement; school leadership.

Source: Authors' elaboration from search results. Years 2018-2019.

Table 4 provides the results obtained from the analysis of publications in 2018. The subject matter of these papers covers various areas of educational inclusion, such as disadvantaged schools – in *REICE, Revista Iberoamericana Sobre Calidad, Eficacia y Cambio en Educación (Iberoamerican Journal on Quality, Effectiveness and Change in Education)* – or intercultural education – in the journal *Diálogo Andino (Andean Dialogue)*.

Compulsory (secondary) education is mentioned in *Liderazgo y Gestión Escolar (Leadership and School Management)* and *Profesorado (Faculty)*, with papers analyzing research on the traits of educational leaders in disadvantaged contexts.

Participatory research is present in the paper published in the journal *Profesorado* (*Faculty,* volume 22, issue 2, pp. 29-49), where the need to create inter-school support networks to promote inclusive quality education is discussed.

The 2019 journals publish three papers, which address the issue of pedagogical leadership in inclusive schooling in the social field, and express the importance of equality for the inclusion of students at risk of social exclusion. Educational leadership focuses on administrative management and the promotion of good practice in disadvantaged schools – *Gestión Educativa Administración y Liderazgo (Educational Management, Administration and Leadership)*. The journal *Archivos de Análisis de Políticas Educativas (Archives of Education Policies Analysis)* also presents educational leadership as a strategic factor in education policy and learning improvement.

Papers published this year include participatory research of various kinds: inclusive leadership practices in novice headteachers – journal *Aula Abierta (Open Classroom)* – analysis of information on school leadership – journal *Archivos de Análisis de Políticas Educativas (Archives of Education Policies Analysis)* – and identify the characteristics of school management in disadvantaged schools – journal *Gestión Educativa Administración y Liderazgo (Educational Management, Administration and Leadership)*.

Table 5. Search in SCOPUS. Year 2020.

Publications in the SCOPUS database 2020	
Journals	Paper descriptors
British Journal of Educational Studies, 68 (6), pp. 753-770	Curriculum; inclusive school; pedagogical innovation; school organization.

Publications in the SCOPUS database 2020	
Journals	Paper descriptors
Revista Internacional de Liderazgo en Educación *(International Journal of Leadership in Education)*	Leadership practices, decision-making, teamwork.
Revista Complutense de Educación *(Complutense Journal of Education)*, 31 (4), pp. 485-495	Affective dimension; leader dimensions; pedagogical leadership; education quality; teacher.
Investigación Educativa *(Educational Research)*, 62 (1), pp. 111-127	Democratic education; distributed leadership; diversity; inclusive education; primary education.
Psicoperspectivas *(Psychoperspectives)*, 19 (1), pp. 1-13.	Management; educational administrators; school coexistence.
Revista de Educación *(Journal of Education)*, (388), pp. 163-187	Disadvantaged social context; inclusive education; leadership; primary school; school management; school success.
Praxis Educativa *(Educational Praxis)*, 15, art. no. e2015092	Educational management; foreign immigrants; inclusion; school headteachers; teaching.
Profesorado *(Faculty)*, 24 (3), pp. 9-26.	Citizenship; leadership; school headteachers; social justice.
Sustainability, 12 (13), Arte. no. 5375	Families; inclusive education; leadership.

Source: Authors' elaboration from search results. Year 2020.

In 2020, nine journals published papers on the management of the educational leader in socially inclusive settings.

Leadership practices are aimed at organizing and managing disadvantaged contexts and making decisions to facilitate school coexistence – *Revista Internacional de Liderazgo en Educación (International Journal of Leadership in Education)* – although this requires redefining the roles of members of the educational community, according to the *Revista de Educación (Journal of Education)*. The published texts show that there is a great interest in the management of the school adapted to the social demands of an increasingly diverse population, so that the management of the curriculum is necessary to promote good integration – journal *Praxis Educativa (Educational Praxis)*.

The affective dimension is deemed to be important in a pedagogical leader, as well as their capacity for training and participation – *Revista Complutense de Educación (Complutense Journal of Education)*. In this line, the ability to recognise the inclusion needs of their students is valued – journal *Investigación Educativa (Educational Research)* – the knowledge of their environment and the personal willingness to achieve the relevant changes in their centers – *Psychoperspectives (Psychoperspectives)* – which are aimed at real educational inclusion.

The participation of families in these publications aims to collect information on their opinions on school management for migrant integration – *Praxis Educativa (Educational Praxis)* – or for the validation of a questionnaire on leadership – *Sustainability*.

On the other hand, the paper published in the *British Journal of Educational Studies* refers to pedagogical innovation in the field of inclusion.

Table 6. Search in SCOPUS. Years 2021-2022.

Publications in the SCOPUS database 2021	
Journals	Paper descriptors
REICE. Revista Iberoamericana Sobre Calidad, Eficacia y Cambio en Educación *(Iberoamerican Journal*	Inclusive leadership; management; pedagogical autonomy; headteachers; school leadership; inequality; compulsory education.

on Quality, Effectiveness and Change in Education), 19 (2), pp. 9-22; 19 (2), pp. 73-90	
Desarrollo Profesional en Educación *(Professional Development in Education)*, 47 (1), pp. 115-127.	Leadership; socially just schools.
Ciencias de la Educación *(Education Sciences)*, 11 (4), art. 187; 11 (9), art. no. 511	Education; hearing impairment; inclusion; families; leadership assessment; school improvement; school leaders; compulsory education.
Liderazgo y Política en las Escuelas *(Leadership and Politics in Schools)*, 20 (1), pp. 111-126.	Educational leadership, social justice, immigrants.
Revista educativa *(Educational Journal)* 75(3), pp. 488-506	Curriculum; democratic school; educational innovation; participation; school organization.
Gestión Educativa Administración y Liderazgo *(Educational Management, Administration and Leadership)* 51(3), pp. 554-574	Community participation; distributed leadership; participatory research.
Estudios pedagógicos *(Pedagogical Studies)*, 47 (1), pp. 175-195	Coeducation; collaborative work; differentiated education; special education; leadership management; collaborative work.
Inclusión social *(Social Inclusion)*, 9 (4), pp. 69-80	Cultural diversity; diversity in schools; inclusive leadership; management teams.
Sustainability, 13 (5), art. no. 2583, págs. 1-18	Cooperative learning; inclusive education; teacher training; teaching practices; management.
Revista Complutense de Educación *(Complutense Journal of Education)*, 32 (4), pp. 537-546	Collaboration; collective efficacy; networks; school improvement.
Publications in the SCOPUS database 2022	
Perfiles Educativos *(Educational Profiles)*, 44 (175), pp. 62-78	Collaborative research; educational leadership; educational networks; educational organizations; organizational development; professional learning communities.

Source: Authors' elaboration from search results. Years 2021-2022.

In the year 2021 there is a great expansion of the subject under discussion, as a total of eleven articles are published in ten journals. In these publications we find all the areas that educational leadership for inclusive education covers: democratic participation and the sense of community – in *Gestión Educativa Administración y Liderazgo (Educational Management, Administration and Leadership)* – school organisation – in *Estudios Pedagógicos (Pedagogical Studies)* and, *REICE. Revista Iberoamericana Sobre Calidad, Eficacia y Cambio en Educación (Iberoamerican Journal on Quality, Effectiveness and Change in Education)* – and methodologies of attention to diversity such as cooperative learning – in *Sustainability*.

Leadership is aimed at building socially just schools – in *Desarrollo Profesional en Educación (Professional Development in Education)* – which require the commitment of leaders to the challenges they face in schools with large migrant populations – in *Liderazgo y Política en las Escuelas (Leadership and Politics in Schools)*. Noteworthy is the paper published in *Revista Educativa (Educational Journal),* which presents the strategies implemented in a school by pedagogical leaders to promote an inclusive and democratic school. In this same line is the paper published in the *Inclusión Social (Social Inclusion)* journal, which highlights the importance of leaders in the promotion of an inclusive collaborative culture and in classroom practices aimed at this inclusion.

Fewer papers related to interculturality as such are published, but there is an increase in papers on collaboration – in *Revista Complutense de Educación (Complutense Journal of Education)* – and diversity – *Inclusión Social (Social Inclusion).* On the topic of collaboration, more papers on networking for school improvement, and for leadership development in the educational community are beginning to be seen – in *Perfiles Educativos (Educational Profiles)*, year 2022.

5. Discussion and conclusions

When analysing the descriptors, we find that educational leadership includes, in addition to management, pedagogical direction and autonomy (Casanova, 2021), the delegation of authority and the development of affective, participative and formative dimensions (Gento-Palacios et al., 2020). The roles of the pedagogical leader cover school planning and resources, as well as the encouragement of good teaching practices, increasingly moving towards the educational inclusion of those who feel excluded for learning, economic or social problems (Camarero-Figuerola, et al., 2020; Alarcón-Leiva et al., 2020).

Leadership in the field of social justice is defined by the integration of migrant students and their families in schools, as advocated by Slater et al., (2021), or in the distribution of resources to make society more sustainable and schools fairer, as argued by Hernández-Castilla et al., (2020). In this sense, the school leader is seen as a manager of good practices and of the promotion of collaborative and inclusive culture, as stated by Gómez-Hurtado et al. (2021). They also seek the participation of families in changes and innovations in schools (Vigo-Arrazola & Beach, 2021), in order to meet their demands. The argumentation line of the texts in which leadership appears refers to the fact that educational leaders - or managers, as they are sometimes presented - undertake a multitude of functions: learning management, assessment, organization of spaces and times, curriculum planning, implementation of good practices, especially in inclusion, and relations with the educational community, as Guerrero et al. (2019) conclude. In addition, the issue of leadership in participation is carried out in the educational community and requires processes that encourage a culture of collaboration and the promotion of action-research, as well as the struggle against social and educational exclusion (García et al., 2016). In this regard, in our work we find similarities which consolidate the key elements that promote educational leadership, as expressed in the study by Rojas León et al. (2023): critical reflective learning, fostering relationships with the educational community, and promoting inclusive leadership.

Good practices in educational leadership are the key element for school improvement, as they have to respond to the diversity of the people who constitute the educational community, and include migrant families in this community. For this purpose, special attention is paid to professional development, school participation and the positive management of diversity (Gómez-Hurtado et al., 2021).

The school leader's relationships with families in inclusive schools are aimed at providing inclusive responses to the problems arising from the adaptation of children to the school for various reasons: educational needs, disadvantaged environments, or the perception that families have of the management of leaders in inclusive schools (López-López et al., 2021).

Finally, the questions raised at the beginning of this study are answered:

1. What are the descriptors which express the topics presented in the scientific papers?
The documents have been analyzed using the following descriptors, found in the keywords, title or abstract of the publication:

- Leadership: Educational and pedagogical leadership, management, leader, school headteachers, educational policies.
- Inclusive school: areas of inclusion, diversity, interculturality, migrants, social justice, social exclusion, cultural diversity.
- Compulsory education: Compulsory Primary Education, Secondary Education.

- Good practices: good educational, teaching, inclusive and leadership practices.
- Participatory research: community participation, democratic schools, learning communities, collaborative action-research.
- Family: participation, migrants.

2. Which journals indexed in the SCOPUS database publish papers on the topic of educational leadership in inclusive schools, on the dates specified (years 2015 to January 2022)?

The journals that publish on educational leadership in inclusive schools, in the period from 2015 to January 2022, which is the focus of the search, are 29: *Revista de Estudios Educativos, Culturales y Psicológicos, Profesorado, Revista Electrónica de Investigación Educativa, Estudios sobre Educación, Ensaio, Revista Española de Pedagogía, Educación XX1, Revista Internacional de Diversidad en Educación, Estudios Pedagógicos, Liderazgo y Gestión Escolar, REICE. Revista Iberoamericana Sobre Calidad, Eficacia y Cambio en Educación, Revista de Investigación Educativa, Dialogo Andino, Gestión Educativa Administración y Liderazgo, Aula Abierta, Archivos de Análisis de Políticas Educativas, British Journal of Educational Studies, Revista Internacional de Liderazgo en Educación, Revista Complutense de Educación, Investigación Educativa, Revista de Educación Psicoperspectivas , Praxis Educativa, Sustainability, Desarrollo Profesional en Educación, Ciencias de la Educación, Liderazgo y Política en las Escuelas, Revista Educativa.*

3. How many journal papers indexed in the SCOPUS database address this topic?

Forty papers published in 29 journals indexed in the SCOPUS database between 2015 and January 2022 were analyzed.

4. Have there been any developments in the above-mentioned publications related to the issue of school leadership in inclusive schools in the period under review?

The topic of educational or pedagogical leadership in inclusive schools has evolved as a result of the dynamism of inclusive education. Thus, the educational leader has moved from being considered as a manager and facilitator of good practices related to inclusive education, through the role of a promoter of fair schools and a facilitator of responses to the needs of the educational community, to becoming a leader who fosters the participation of members of the educational community in schools. All of this with the aim of making schools fair, and without forgetting that collaboration with other headteachers through networking is a necessary strategy to make schools places of integration and inclusion.

Finally, we propose as future lines of research to extend the search for documents with these same parameters into other databases, such as, for example, Journal Citation Reports (JCR), in order to establish a comparative evolution of the subject according to the sources and the time interval studied here. Similarly, the study can be extended to later periods of time, in order to continue to monitor the evolution of this topic, which is essential for the functioning of inclusive educational schools and the performance of one of their main objectives: to promote equal opportunities for all people.

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