EDUCATIONAL INCLUSION AS A DETERMINANT OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING: A LITERATURE REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

This study examines educational inclusion as a determinant of psychological well-being in university students through a review of literature published between 2013 and 2025. A comprehensive search was conducted in the Scopus, Scielo, and Dialnet databases, resulting in the selection of 29 relevant studies. The findings reveal that students who experience discrimination or exclusion based on ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender, or disability are more likely to exhibit high levels of anxiety, low self-esteem, and academic disengagement. Conversely, inclusive educational environments—defined by equity, respect for diversity, and institutional support—positively influence psychological well-being by fostering resilience, self-acceptance, and a sense of belonging. Resilience, in particular, emerges as a key protective factor in adverse academic contexts. The reviewed literature consistently highlights the need for universities to implement psychoeducational strategies, inclusive teacher training, and accessible mental health services to uphold the right to non-discriminatory education. It is concluded that educational inclusion constitutes an essential condition for comprehensive well-being and academic success in higher education settings.

Keywords: educational inclusion, psychological well-being, university students.

INTRODUCTION

Educational inclusion, understood as the universal right to access, remain, and fully develop within the educational system without discrimination, remains a critical challenge in higher education globally. Although there are normative frameworks aimed at ensuring equitable access, structural and social barriers persist that limit opportunities for students belonging to groups historically marginalized on the basis of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, or cultural background (Global Education Monitoring Report Team [GEM Report], 2022a). According to the GEM Report Team (2022b),

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33% of these students have experienced some form of discrimination, and 29% have reported exclusion in group activities, tutoring, or extracurricular events. These events not only affect their academic performance but also compromise their emotional well-being: 42% report symptoms of anxiety or depression related to the educational environment (GEM Report Team, 2020). Such psychosocial impacts—marginalization, low self-esteem, and a weakened sense of belonging—can even lead to dropout (GEM Report Team, 2024).

In Latin America, educational inclusion policies still present serious limitations in their effective implementation within the university system. According to ECLAC (2023), 46% of Indigenous, migrant, or disabled students have been treated unequally by teachers or peers. In addition, 38% report the absence of clear protocols to address discriminatory acts (UNESCO, 2023; Oñate & Alfaro, 2021). This lack of institutional response contributes to 51% of affected students experiencing academic stress as a direct result of rejection or invisibilization, which negatively impacts their performance and retention.

In   context, university inclusion remains a structural challenge, despite the legal recognition of the right to education without discrimination. Reports from the Ministry of Education (MINEDU, 2023a) indicate that 57% of students identified as belonging to vulnerable groups—due to ethnic, economic, disability, or gender diversity reasons—have experienced exclusion on campus. This problem is exacerbated by the limited implementation of psycho-emotional support programs: only 21% of universities have specific initiatives in place (MINEDU, 2023b). As a consequence, 48% of affected students report symptoms of anxiety, lack of motivation, or academic withdrawal (MINEDU, 2022), in a context where structural, curricular, and attitudinal barriers persist, compromising their retention and success (MINEDU, 2023c). This situation highlights the urgent need for effective inclusive policies and teacher training with an intercultural and diversity-oriented approach.

In this context, the present research is justified by the imperative need to guarantee the right to inclusive, equitable, and non-discriminatory higher education. Although universal access is normatively guaranteed, in practice, many students face exclusion for reasons unrelated to their academic performance. These experiences generate significant psychological impacts, manifesting as anxiety, low self-esteem, and chronic stress. The lack of effective policies and specialized teacher training perpetuates exclusionary institutional dynamics. Therefore, this article proposes to analyze educational inclusion as a determinant of university students' psychological well-being, with the aim of designing intervention strategies that promote equity and student retention. This reflection is fundamental to strengthening the humanistic and transformative character of higher education, ensuring that no one is left marginalized from knowledge.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A comprehensive understanding of the educational phenomenon in the contemporary university requires, beyond traditional approaches focused on quality and teaching, the incorporation of emerging dimensions such as inclusion, emotional well-being, and fundamental rights, all of which are key to achieving equitable and transformative education (Messiou & Ainscow, 2021). From this perspective, the Theory of Educational Inclusion serves as an essential theoretical framework that allows for addressing student diversity and fostering accessible academic environments for all (Ainscow et al., 2024).

According to Ainscow and Viola (2023), inclusion should not be understood merely as physical presence in the classroom, but rather as active participation and meaningful learning. This conception originated at the end of the twentieth century in response to the systematic marginalization of students with disabilities and proposes a profound reconfiguration of institutional, curricular, and pedagogical practices to eliminate all forms of structural barriers (Sider et al., 2024). In the university context, such transformation demands methodological reformulation, the production of inclusive teaching materials, and continuous teacher training to promote equity and the recognition of individual differences.

In parallel, the emotional well-being of university students constitutes an essential component to ensure a comprehensive educational experience. Indeed, the Theory of Students' Psychological Well-being has recently become a priority axis in educational policy (Cortés-Rodríguez et al., 2023). Ryff (cited in Siggayo, 2023) developed a multidimensional theoretical model that articulates factors such as autonomy, personal growth, sense of purpose, positive interpersonal relationships, and environmental mastery. This model, developed out of concern for high levels of stress and demotivation in demanding educational contexts, has shown that psycho-emotional well-being directly impacts academic performance (Dharshini & Veena Vidya Sri, 2024). Integrating this vision into curricular and institutional design not only supports student retention and academic success, but also helps form resilient, autonomous citizens who are committed to their own well-being (Ryff, in Cortés-Rodríguez et al., 2023).

On another note, any educational proposal aspiring to be just and equitable must be anchored in a solid ethical and legal foundation. In this sense, the Theory of the Right to Education without Discrimination provides the essential normative framework to underpin inclusive policies (Kraljić, 2024). Katarina

Tomaševski, former UN Special Rapporteur, argued that access to education cannot be conditioned by factors such as gender, ethnicity, disability, migration status, or sexual orientation (Moinipour, 2025). This theory, which emerged at the turn of the twenty-first century in response to persistent inequalities, posits that education is an enabling right, that is, a prerequisite for the exercise of other fundamental rights (Šmigová, 2024).

In the university context, its application requires not only the implementation of anti-discrimination policies and affirmative actions, but also institutional monitoring mechanisms that ensure entry, retention, and graduation under conditions of equality (Kraljić, 2024). In this way, the concept of a democratic university, committed to social justice and respect for diversity, is strengthened (Moinipour, 2025).

Consequently, educational inclusion—understood as the process aimed at guaranteeing access, participation, and achievement for all students—must transcend personal, social, or cognitive conditions (Leonard et al., 2023). Fernández-Cerero et al. (2023) argue that this approach requires the transformation of institutional structures and policies in order to respond equitably to diversity. Rather than adapting the student to the system, it is about redesigning the system itself to meet the learner's needs, promoting education that is genuinely student-centered (Paz-Maldonado & Flores-Girón, 2021).

From an operational standpoint, inclusion involves eliminating barriers that hinder both learning and participation (Parada-Gañete & Trillo-Alonso, 2023). This requires equity in resource distribution, flexible pedagogical methodologies, differentiated attention to diversity, and an institutional culture based on respect and collaboration (Leonard et al., 2023). Moreover, this perspective is not limited to disability but encompasses multiple forms of exclusion, such as those related to gender, ethnicity, economic status, or mental health (Paz-Maldonado & Flores-Girón, 2021).

Various authors (Parada-Gañete & Trillo-Alonso, 2023) distinguish between social inclusion, focused on community participation; pedagogical inclusion, oriented towards didactic strategies; and institutional inclusion, which demands clear regulatory frameworks and coherent policies. Taken together, educational inclusion is essential for building democratic, sustainable systems committed to human rights (Leonard et al., 2023). However, its effectiveness also depends on recognizing the psychosocial conditions of the student body, which directly impact academic performance (Fernández-Cerero et al., 2023).

In this same vein, the right to education without discrimination is a principle enshrined in the international human rights system. This is recognized in normative instruments such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Art. 26), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Art. 13), and the 1960 UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education, which oblige States to guarantee inclusive, equitable, and quality education (Chuco, 2021; Ruiz et al., 2022). The failure to uphold this right not only violates human dignity but also perpetuates exclusion and inequality (Acho et al., 2021).

In the Peruvian context, the Political Constitution (Art. 17) recognizes education as a fundamental right and expressly promotes equal opportunities (Chuco, 2021). Likewise, the General Education Law (Law No. 28044) establishes equity as a cross-cutting principle of the education system (Calizaya, 2022). In line with this, the National Intercultural Bilingual Education Plan 2022–2026 aims to guarantee access and retention for Indigenous peoples in conditions that respect their language and culture (Ruiz et al., 2022). However, significant challenges remain, especially in rural areas, where gaps in infrastructure and resources continue to affect the effective exercise of the right to education (Acho et al., 2021). Overcoming these obstacles requires coordinated, sustained state action with an intersectional approach (Calizaya, 2022).

Finally, psychological well-being, considered a fundamental dimension of academic, emotional, and social development, must be integrated transversally into the educational process. As Villani et al. (2021) affirm, this well-being involves the balance between environmental demands and personal resources, including self-esteem, motivation, emotional regulation, and sense of belonging. Wei et al. (2021) state that students with high emotional well-being are better able to face challenges, establish healthy relationships, and build a strong identity. Therefore, fostering well-being requires safe environments, positive relationships, and institutional support programs (Koo, 2021).

Among the attributes that characterize well-being are resilience, self-efficacy, autonomy, adaptive coping, and emotional stability (Villani et al., 2021). Its promotion also demands educational policies that prioritize mental health through counseling, prevention, and psychosocial support services (Labrague, 2021). Ultimately, the educational experience is profoundly conditioned by this component (Koo, 2021).

The relationship between inclusion and well-being is both close and reciprocal. As Labrague (2021) notes, full inclusion cannot be achieved without a comprehensive approach to students' emotional dimension. In turn, Villani et al. (2021) highlight that well-being fosters inclusive practices by reducing internal barriers such as anxiety or low self-esteem. Therefore, addressing both dimensions in an integrated manner is an indispensable condition for advancing towards a humanized, equitable, and genuinely transformative education (Koo, 2021).
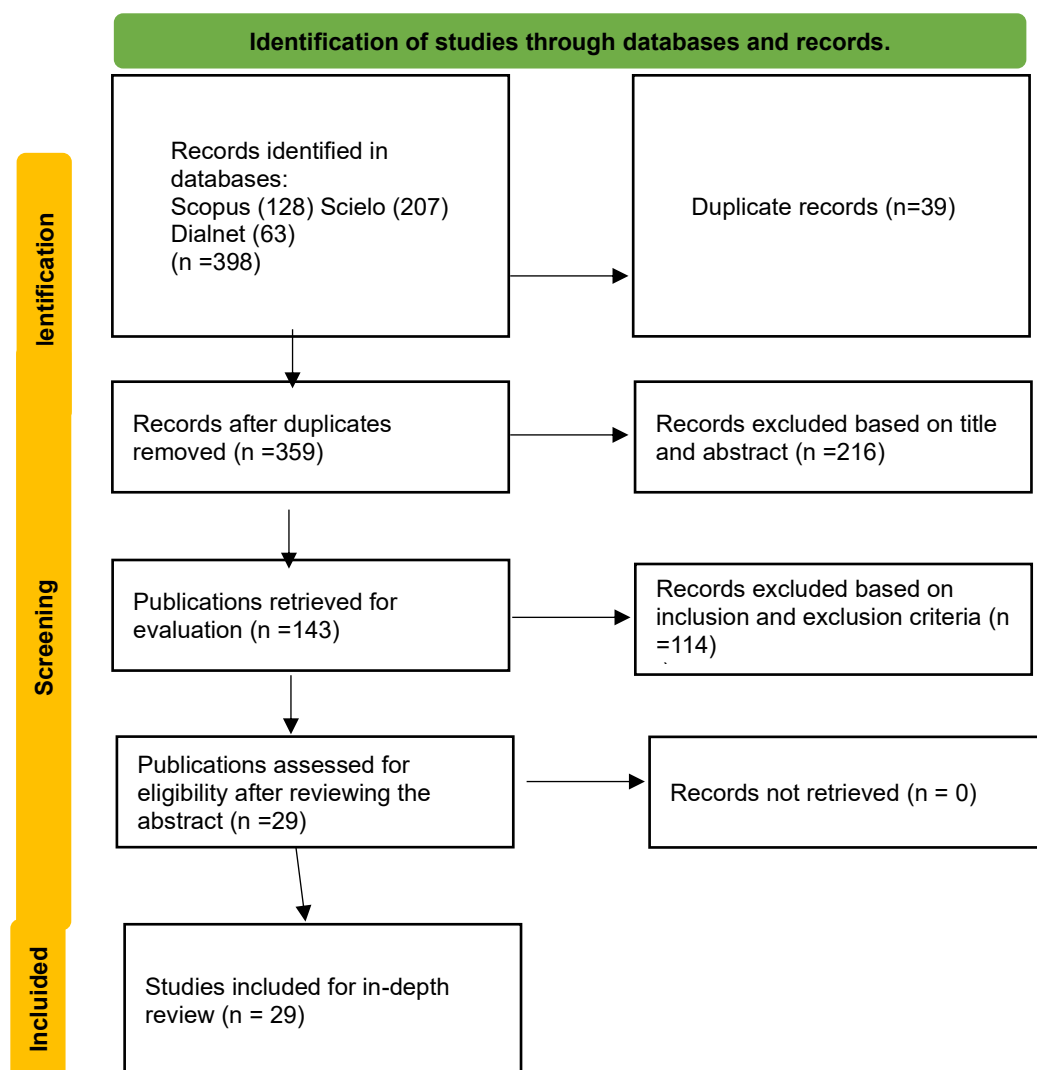
METHOD

The present study was conducted through an organized literature review, a methodology that enables the analysis of a specific phenomenon within a defined period. Searches were carried out in the Scopus, Scielo, and Dialnet databases using the keywords "educational inclusion," "psychological well-being," and "university students," resulting in the identification of 398 scientific articles.

For the selection of articles, the following inclusion criteria were established: (a) publications from 2013 to 2025; (b) quantitative, qualitative, mixed-methods, or review studies. The following were excluded: (a) letters to the editor, book chapters, conference proceedings, and narrative reviews; (b) publications unrelated to the research topic; (c) articles not focused on educational inclusion and psychological well-being in university students; (d) studies that did not offer a novel contribution; and (e) publications without full-text access. Boolean operators such as AND and OR were used to combine the search terms, creating the following search strings:

"educational inclusion" AND "psychological well-being" AND "university students";
"educational inclusion" OR "psychological well-being" OR "university students";
"educational inclusion" AND "psychological well-being" AND ("university students");
"educational inclusion" AND "university students" AND ("psychological well-being");
"psychological well-being" AND "university students" AND ("educational inclusion");
"psychological well-being" AND ("educational inclusion" OR "university students").

Figure 1 *Flow diagram of the selection of scientific articles*

After applying the criteria, 29 full-text publications were selected for systematic analysis, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1 *Identified scientific articles*

N°	Author	Article Title	Methodology	Country	Year	Database
1	Asad et al. (2023)	Effect of technostress on psychological well-being of post-graduate students: A perspective and correlational study of higher education management	Mixed	Spain (Western international context)	2023	Scopus
2	Rasheed et al. (2022)	University students' mental well-being during COVID-19 pandemic: The mediating role of resilience between meaning in life and mental well-being	Quantitative	Pakistan, specifically in universities of Punjab	2022	Scopus
3	Ebrahim et al. (2022)	The psychological well-being of university students amidst COVID-19 pandemic: Scoping review, systematic review and meta-analysis	Systematic review	International review. Majority of studies included from China (30), followed by MENA (22), Europe, the Indian subcontinent, and others	2022	Scopus
4	Wang (2024)	An interactive online educational environment to reduce anxiety, improve emotional well-being, and critical thinking for college students	Quantitative	Not clearly specified. The article does not provide a precise location regarding participants or research country	2024	Scopus
5	Vira et al. (2021)	Swedish middle school students' psychosocial well-being during the COVID-19 pandemic: A longitudinal study	Quantitative	Sweden	2021	Scopus
6	Martínez et al. (2022)	Students with disabilities and educational inclusion in Chile: progress and challenges	Qualitative	Chile	2022	Scopus
7	Rodríguez et al. (2024)	Path toward educational inclusion: benefit for all	Systematic review	Peru (with emphasis on Latin America)	2024	Scopus
8	Torres-Zaragoza et al. (2024)	Barriers to the inclusion of Muslim migrant students in Western educational contexts: A systematic review	Systematic review	Spain (Western international context)	2024	Scopus
9	Rodríguez et al. (2022)	Psychological well-being in early-year	Qualitative	Peru (Lima)	2022	Scielo

		students at a private university in Lima				
10	Castro et al. (2024)	Coronavirus anxiety and psychological well-being in university students returning to face-to-face classes	Quantitative	Peru (Tarapoto)	2024	Scielo
11	Bardales-Encinas et al. (2023)	Mental health in the academic performance of adolescent school students	Quantitative	Peru (Trujillo)	2023	Scielo
12	Cuba et al. (2023)	Psychological well-being in students at a public university in Lima, Peru	Quantitative	Peru (Lima)	2023	Scielo
13	Carbajal et al. (2022)	Psychological well-being and use of social media in ICT Institute students, Huancayo	Quantitative	Peru (Huancayo)	2022	Scielo
14	Farfán et al. (2025)	Psychological well-being and school coexistence in secondary school students	Quantitative	Peru (Lima)	2025	Scielo
15	Escalante et al. (2022)	Inclusion in education	Systematic review	Peru	2022	Scielo
16	Valarezo-Cueva et al. (2022)	Educational inclusion: A look toward an epistemological horizon	Qualitative	Venezuela	2022	Scielo
17	San et al. (2020)	Path to inclusive education: barriers and facilitators for cultures, policies, and practices from the teachers' perspective	Qualitative	Chile	2020	Scielo
18	Belmonte-Pérez et al. (2023)	Inclusion in different educational realities: voices of professionals	Qualitative	Spain	2023	Scielo
19	Anta et al. (2024)	Path toward educational inclusion: benefit for all	Systematic review	Latin America (various countries)	2024	Scielo
20	Jiménez et al. (2020)	Inclusive culture for attention to diversity	Qualitative	Ecuador	2020	Scielo
21	Urías et al. (2024)	Inclusive education facing contemporary challenges	Systematic review	Ecuador	2024	Scielo
22	Muñoz-Ortiz et al. (2023)	Universal Design for Learning: an approach for inclusive education	Qualitative	Ecuador	2023	Scielo
23	De la Cruz et al. (2020)	Inclusive education at the upper-secondary level: analysis from the perspective of principals	Qualitative	Mexico	2020	Scielo
24	Jumbo-Jumbo et al. (2024)	Inclusion and improvement of the educational space in the classroom	Quantitative	Venezuela	2024	Scielo

Open Access

25	León et al. (2025)	Inclusive education: challenges and solutions for a diverse classroom	Qualitative	Ecuador	2025	Scielo
26	Casiano et al. (2024)	Psychological well-being and academic performance in university students from the south of the State of Mexico	Quantitative	Mexico	2024	Dialnet
27	Guerrero-Aragón et al. (2023)	Life skills and psychological well-being in health students in Bogotá D.C., Colombia, 2021	Quantitative	Colombia	2023	Dialnet
28	Chérrez et al. (2024)	Body image and psychological well-being in university students	Quantitative	Ecuador	2024	Dialnet
29	Nuñez et al. (2022)	Resilience and its relationship with psychological well-being in university students	Quantitative	Ecuador	2022	Dialnet

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

According to the review conducted, the following topics are addressed: educational inclusion and psychological well-being in university students.

Table 2 *Scientific articles on educational inclusion and psychological well-being in university students.*

Authors	Article Objective	Article Contributions	Article Conclusions
Asad et al. (2023)	Examine the effect of technostress on the psychological well-being of postgraduate students in higher education, and analyze the relationship between different technological stressors and their psychological well-being.	Technostress has a weak but existent association with psychological well-being. "Techno-insecurity" has the greatest negative impact. "Techno-uncertainty" has the least effect. "Techno-overload" has no significant impact. Gender and computer self-efficacy influence responses to technostress.	No significant moderating effect was found, but there is a relationship between technostress and psychological well-being. "Techno-insecurity" is the most relevant factor. Responses to technostress vary based on individual and organizational characteristics. The study contributes to theoretical and practical understanding of technostress in postgraduate education.
Rasheed et al. (2022)	Examine (a) the level of mental well-being among university students taking online classes during the COVID-19 pandemic, and (b) assess whether resilience mediated the relationship between meaning in life (presence and search for meaning) and students' mental well-being.	Normal to satisfactory level of mental well-being during COVID-19 (average 6.4/10). Presence and search for meaning in life are positively associated with resilience and mental well-being. Resilience acts as a mediator. Family size is associated with resilience, and having a private room is linked to mental well-being.	Finding meaning in life and having high resilience improves mental well-being during difficult times. Educational environments should promote programs that foster resilience and a sense of purpose. Future research should use longitudinal methods and diversified techniques.
Ebrahim et al. (2022)	Summarize the current evidence on the psychological well-being of university students during	Combined prevalence of anxiety: 29.1%; depression: 23.2%. Significant mental health impacts due to COVID-19. Higher	More qualitative and longitudinal research is needed to understand the causes and evolution of psychological distress. Contextual

	the COVID-19 pandemic by identifying, classifying, and describing related studies to guide future research and address key questions about the pandemic's psychological impact on this population.	prevalence of anxiety than depression in the first year. Risk factors include gender, economic status, access to technology, exposure to information, and living conditions.	factors such as online education and socioeconomic conditions must be considered. The development of sustainable metrics and active research models is recommended.
Wang (2024)	Examine the influence of an interactive methodology based on an online platform on students' anxiety and critical thinking, as well as analyze its impact on emotional well-being and social skills. It seeks to propose an interactive educational strategy applicable across educational settings to help students manage anxiety and foster a comfortable learning environment.	Initially high anxiety (average 28.5 points on the Taylor scale). Improvement of 2.5 points in the "publicity" dimension (from medium to high level). Methodology rated 8.3/10 for effectiveness in managing anxiety and improving critical thinking and social skills. General emotional state and learning environment improved.	The online interactive methodology is effective for reducing anxiety and improving emotional well-being and critical thinking. Easy to implement by teachers using online resources. Recommended for use in various educational settings. Further research should explore dimensions such as empathy, self-control, interpersonal relationships, and academic performance.
Vira et al. (2021)	Assess the differences in psychosocial well-being among Swedish middle school students before and during the COVID-19 pandemic, measuring factors such as psychological adjustment, relationships with significant others, and school adjustment to understand the pandemic's impact.	During the pandemic, there were significant declines in school adjustment (teacher support, school/classroom well-being, self-esteem). No significant differences in emotional problems. Psychological adjustment showed reductions but insignificant effects on hope and self-efficacy.	Middle school students in Sweden who continued attending school during the pandemic demonstrated positive adaptation and resilience. No significant deterioration in psychosocial well-being was observed, in contrast to contexts with school closures. Differences in school adjustment are attributed to pandemic-related disruptions and typical developmental changes.
Martínez et al. (2022)	Review the current state of educational inclusion policy in Chile, focusing on access opportunities for students with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities. It compares foreign models and discusses challenges to achieving inclusive education in a changing sociopolitical context.	Access is conditioned by labels following specialist diagnosis. Pressure toward segregating practices due to standardized goals. Special education teachers are overburdened and undervalued. Inclusion is particularly challenging for students with sensory disabilities. Foreign models such as Finland's offer more flexible approaches. Full-time special education professionals are essential.	Teacher training should be strengthened, and regulations reviewed. Special education teachers must be valued and supported. Segregation should be avoided through appropriate educational practices. Real inclusion requires the continuous presence of specialists.
Rodriguez et al. (2024)	Analyze inclusion criteria in education, reflecting on metrics that allow respectful coexistence without segregation or exclusion, thereby fostering an effective inclusive process.	Identification of dimensions, strategies, and practices for inclusion. Inclusion as a change model for students with and without disabilities. Teachers play a crucial role despite lacking adequate didactic methods. ICT facilitates accessibility and removes barriers.	Inclusion is an integral process requiring individualized attention. ICT is a key tool for accessibility. Policies need to be strengthened to ensure inclusive and equitable environments.

Torres-Zaragoza et al. (2024)	Identify differences in barriers to the educational inclusion of Muslim migrant students according to generation and educational stage.	Barriers vary by generation (first generation faces more linguistic and cultural obstacles). Discrimination, policies, and pedagogical practices affect both generations. Sociopolitical factors influence inclusion depending on national context.	A limitation of the study is the treatment of Muslim students as a homogeneous group. It is recommended that studies differentiate by educational stage. There is a need to identify protective strategies. Teaching practices should be adapted and improved.
Rodríguez et al. (2022)	Describe the psychological well-being of first-year students in the Faculty of Health Sciences at a private university in Lima, Peru, exploring how their social and emotional environments influence their well-being.	Six interrelated core categories were identified: self-acceptance, purpose in life, autonomy, environmental mastery, positive relationships, and personal growth. Students showed a favorable psychological well-being status associated with a positive classroom climate and favorable self-perception. Weaknesses include difficulty taking responsibility for actions and lack of short-, medium-, and long-term goals. Remote teaching and reduced face-to-face interaction negatively impacted students, generating anxiety and overload.	The study allowed for a description of students' psychological well-being, recognizing strengths and areas for improvement. It supports future proposals to prevent and address problematic factors. The importance of the remote teaching context is highlighted.
Castro et al. (2024)	Determine how COVID-19 anxiety affects psychological well-being and its dimensions in university students returning to face-to-face classes. The study aims to guide future research and improve post-pandemic university mental health services to prevent or address psychological disorders.	COVID-19 anxiety affects approximately 40% of psychological well-being. Despite the end of the pandemic, anxiety persists and impacts social bonding, activity planning, and self-acceptance. The idea of contagion or death from COVID-19 causes anxiety, instability, and frustration, affecting personal, family, and work-related decision-making. Well-being is compromised by future uncertainties, interpersonal conflicts, academic instability, and economic issues.	Negative emotions (fear, distress, insomnia, appetite loss, nausea, irrational thoughts) persist due to the possibility of a new pandemic. COVID-19 anxiety hinders relationship building, activity planning, and affects psychological well-being. Programs and activities should be implemented to reduce anxiety and support academic and personal performance.
Bardales-Encinas et al. (2023)	Determine the relationship between anxiety and depression with academic performance among adolescent secondary students at an educational institution in Trujillo, Peru.	63.4% showed some level of depression (15.2% mild, 23.2% moderate, 25.0% severe). 81.1% reported sleep habit changes related to anxiety and depression. Significant inverse relationship between depression and academic performance (-0.898), and a moderate relationship between anxiety and performance (-0.653).	Mental health must be addressed as an integral part of academic and personal development. Specialized attention is needed through collaboration among education, health systems, and the community. Sociocultural and academic factors should be prioritized.
Cuba et al. (2023)	Determine the psychological well-being of students at a public university in Lima, Peru.	51.76% had adequate psychological well-being, 48.24% inadequate. Adequate in dimensions such as bonding, life projects, and environmental control. Inadequate in self-	Positive well-being is associated with personality acceptance, awareness of strengths and weaknesses, and the ability to face challenges. While adequate levels were found, qualitative and quantitative research

		acceptance: dissatisfaction with body, personality, and perceived unlikability. Over half had globally adequate psychological well-being.	is needed to design psychoeducational interventions that strengthen self-acceptance. Further research and work on weak areas is recommended.
Carbajal et al. (2022)	Determine the relationship between psychological well-being and social media use in students at the ICT Institute in Huancayo, Peru, during the pandemic.	51.6% had psychological well-being leaning toward low; only 7.5% showed high levels. Moderate inverse correlation between psychological well-being and social media use ($r = -0.499$). Obsession with social media inversely correlates with psychological well-being ($r = -0.485$, $p = 0.000$).	There is a moderate inverse relationship between psychological well-being and excessive social media use. Overuse may negatively affect well-being. Programs should be developed to help regulate emotions and promote well-being.
Farfán et al. (2025)	Determine the relationship between psychological well-being and school coexistence among secondary school students in Lima.	Positive and significant relationship between psychological well-being and school coexistence (rho $= 0.493$, $p = 0.000$). Well-being dimensions—control, bonding, life projects, and self-acceptance—were positively correlated. 54.2% showed a high level of psychological well-being.	Psychological well-being is crucial for the quality of school coexistence. It improves interpersonal relationships, school climate, and academic performance.
Escalante et al. (2022)	Conduct a systematic review of publications specializing in the analysis of educational inclusion to understand opinions and technical components related to inclusion, aiming to improve student competencies and promote critical thinking and reflective reasoning.	Educational inclusion has entered the educational process, improving conditions for students who previously faced segregation or exclusion. There is consensus on removing barriers that hinder inclusion, especially for students with SEN. Policies must consider inclusion as a pedagogical principle. Limitations persist due to lack of resources, methodological, and structural barriers.	The need to eliminate barriers for students with special educational needs (SEN) was confirmed. Inclusion should be a real, sustainable, and appropriate process. Emphasis should be placed on awareness, teacher training, curricular adaptation, and multidisciplinary collaboration.
Valarezo-Cueva et al. (2022)	Analyze educational inclusion from a perspective that guides toward an epistemological horizon. Provide critical reflection on inclusion and its limitations.	Inclusion is a response to inequalities generated by the capitalist system. Paradigmatic, methodological, and political limitations exist. There is a need to overcome the classical paradigm through complex thinking.	Inclusion is seen as a patch in response to inequalities. Epistemological, methodological, and political limitations prevent full achievement. A new epistemological horizon based on complex thinking is proposed.
San et al. (2020)	Identify, through teachers' voices, the barriers and facilitators to inclusive education in state-subsidized schools in Chile.	Identification of barriers and facilitators from cultural, policy, and practice dimensions. Collaborative work is a key facilitator. Cultures: beliefs, values, representations. Policies: school management and resources. Practices: teaching experience, strategies, and collaboration.	There is a need to address cultures, policies, and inclusive practices comprehensively. Inclusion maximizes participation and learning. Collaborative work can be either a facilitator or an obstacle. Teachers' perceptions provide valuable insights.
Belmonte-Pérez et al. (2023)	Explore how educational professionals from different schooling modalities	Teacher attitudes improve in more heterogeneous contexts. Greater importance placed on	Evaluations vary depending on the type of schooling. Greater effort is required in more heterogeneous

	evaluate the inclusion of students with SEN, investigate responses to diversity, and identify perceived barriers.	teacher coordination in mainstream schools. Lack of teacher training is a barrier. Initial fear, lack of knowledge, and poor coordination are obstacles.	contexts. Dialogue and professional coordination are essential. Research should be centered on practical implementation.
Anta et al. (2024)	Analyze inclusion criteria in education, focusing on key metrics to foster respectful coexistence in non-segregated and non-exclusive environments.	Identification of 35 articles on inclusive dimensions, strategies, policies, and practices. Need for an educational framework that respects diversity. Limited teacher support due to inadequate didactics. Families sometimes do not share inclusive values. ICT is crucial for accessibility.	An integral view of inclusion is needed. There is a positive relationship between inclusion and ICT. Inclusion should serve as a model for active participation. Policies and technological access must be strengthened.
Jiménez et al. (2020)	Promote an inclusive culture within an educational community to improve attention to diversity. This involves exploring the criteria underlying inclusive culture through interviews and focus groups and developing a methodological strategy based on the findings.	Practice of inclusive values (respect, honesty, responsibility, empathy, solidarity, and love). Teacher training in inclusion. Proper development of planning and curricular adaptations. Multidisciplinary work and active community involvement. Awareness-building for acceptance and appreciation of diversity.	It is necessary to enrich inclusive culture to improve attention to diversity. Shortcomings include a lack of inclusive values, limited teacher training, and minimal community collaboration. A three-stage methodological strategy (awareness, implementation, evaluation) is recommended to strengthen inclusive values, promote active participation, and redesign the institutional plan with an inclusive focus.
Urías et al. (2024)	Update theoretical conceptions of inclusive education and their implications for a contemporary inclusive educational model.	Inclusive education requires a close link with the family and schools that welcome everyone. A society must be promoted that values what unites us in diversity. Inclusive classrooms and modern curricula are essential.	A diversified curriculum for all is needed, avoiding labels or segregating approaches. Schools must respond to social, ethnic, cultural, gender, and disability-related diversity. Teacher preparation is essential. Inclusive education represents social justice and opportunity creation.
Muñoz-Ortiz et al. (2023)	Describe the key elements of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) as a potential framework for Inclusive Education, aiming to ensure equal learning opportunities and address educational exclusion.	Inclusive education is an inalienable right. It requires flexible curricular models. UDL helps overcome physical, sensory, and cognitive barriers to ensure accessibility and equity.	Inclusive education is an evolving right. Ecuador has made legislative progress. UDL is an effective strategy to make rigid curricula more flexible and address diversity.
de et al. (2020)	Analyze strategies implemented by high school principals in Mexico to promote inclusive services for students with disabilities; learn from their experiences and testimonies.	Implementation of inclusive strategies by school principals. Lack of support, assistance, and resources from authorities. Legal discourse does not always translate into school practice.	Mexico has made legal advances, but there are gaps in the skills, knowledge, and resources of school principals. Ongoing training, organizational adjustments, infrastructure, and affirmative policies are needed. The challenge is to move from legal frameworks to real implementation.
Jumbo-Jumbo et al. (2024)	Reflect on inclusion and improvement of the educational space in primary school classrooms, promoting an inclusive	Promotion of equality from early childhood. Education is a pillar of human development. Inclusion is synonymous with quality. Inclusive classrooms enrich the learning experience.	Inclusion is a continuous, dynamic process toward equitable education. A holistic approach is needed, involving classrooms, families, and communities. Strategic planning and

	environment from early childhood.		participation from all actors are crucial.
León et al. (2025)	Analyze challenges and propose solutions for educational inclusion in diverse classrooms, addressing all students' needs for equitable and accessible education.	Challenges include lack of teacher training, resources, and inclusive policies. Inclusion requires cultural change and flexible didactic strategies. Solutions include teacher training, adapted materials, and collaborative environments.	Inclusive education is complex and requires institutional commitment, teacher professionalization, and social awareness. Comprehensive educational policies must support this approach.
Casiano et al. (2024)	Correlate psychological well-being and academic performance in first-year students of Business Administration and Psychology programs at the Professional Academic Unit of Tejupilco, Autonomous University of the State of Mexico, during the 2022B semester.	34.2% show low psychological well-being. Significant correlation (P < 0.05) between self-acceptance, positive relationships, autonomy, environmental mastery, and academic performance. No significant relationship between personal growth, life purpose, and performance. Higher psychological well-being correlates with better academic performance.	A little over one-third of students had low psychological well-being, particularly in life purpose and personal growth. There is a significant correlation between psychological well-being and academic performance in several dimensions. It is recommended to implement workshops that improve well-being to boost academic indicators.
Guerrero-Aragón et al. (2023)	Determine the prevalence of psychological well-being and level of life skills in undergraduate students at a health sciences educational institution in Bogotá, Colombia.	All ten dimensions of the life skills test were rated within low-normal or high-normal levels. Psychological well-being prevalence: 15.59% high, 79.12% moderate, 5.29% low.	Most students scored within normal (low or high) ranges for life skills. These skills should be strengthened as protective factors against depression and anxiety.
Chérrez et al. (2024)	Determine the relationship between body image and psychological well-being in university students.	No significant correlation between body image and psychological well-being (Rho = 0.149, p > 0.05). 80.2% showed no concern about body image. 39.6% showed high levels of psychological well-being. No relevant differences by sex.	There is no significant correlation between body image and psychological well-being. Body image does not affect psychological well-being in this sample. Future studies should include additional variables. No relevant gender differences were found in psychological well-being.
Nuñez et al. (2022)	Understand the relationship between resilience and psychological well-being in university students, specifically in nursing students.	Direct correlation between resilience and psychological well-being (Rho = 0.554, p < 0.001). Well-being dimensions (self-concept, life purpose, positive relationships, personal growth) are correlated with resilience. Medium and high levels predominate in both resilience and psychological well-being.	There is a direct and significant relationship between resilience and psychological well-being. Very low and high levels of resilience predominate without significant differences. Resilience is key to facing university challenges and maintaining psychological well-being.

Relationship between psychological well-being and academic performance

The relationship between psychological well-being and academic performance has been widely addressed from multiple dimensions, both individual and contextual. Casiano et al. (2024) provide evidence that reduced levels of well-being negatively affect students' academic achievement. Components such as self-acceptance, autonomy, and environmental mastery are positively correlated with academic performance, suggesting that emotional balance enhances student effectiveness (Guerrero et al., 2023). In this regard, resilience—understood as the capacity to cope with adversity—has been identified as a factor that strengthens well-being and thus improves educational outcomes (Núñez & Vásquez, 2022). Conversely,

high levels of anxiety and depression negatively impact performance by disrupting processes such as concentration, sleep, and decision-making (Bardales et al., 2023). Although body image did not show a significant relationship with well-being, it was observed that those who report higher overall well-being tend to achieve more stable academic results (Chérrez & García, 2024).

From a dimensional perspective, well-being acts as a modulator of academic behavior, especially in high-pressure contexts. Self-acceptance allows students to face challenges without compromising performance (Casiano et al., 2024), while positive interpersonal relationships facilitate adaptation (Guerrero et al., 2023), and a sense of purpose enhances academic engagement (Núñez & Vásquez, 2022). In contrast, depression undermines motivation and cognitive functioning (Bardales et al., 2023). Taken together, well-being contributes to emotional stability and time management (Chérrez & García, 2024), consolidating itself as an essential axis for sustained academic achievement.

Indeed, well-being, resilience, social bonds, and a sense of purpose interact as key supports in demanding educational contexts (Casiano et al., 2024; Guerrero et al., 2023; Núñez & Vásquez, 2022). For this reason, fostering socio-emotional competencies, generating supportive environments, and implementing psychoeducational interventions not only mitigate the effects of anxiety or demotivation (Bardales et al., 2023), but also strengthen long-term academic performance (Chérrez & García, 2024).

Resilience as a protective factor in university life

Resilience has been recognized as a key resource for preserving psychological well-being among university students exposed to adversity (Núñez & Vásquez, 2022). This capacity, which is closely linked to a sense of purpose and self-concept, is associated with high psychological functioning in demanding contexts (Casiano et al., 2024). Its role has been particularly relevant in coping with post-pandemic anxiety, favoring emotional balance during the return to in-person learning (Castro et al., 2024). Moreover, resilience has been identified as a mediating factor between mental well-being and sense of life, functioning as a regulator of emotional adjustment (Rasheed et al., 2022). Its stability also correlates with lower stress and greater academic persistence (León et al., 2025).

Students with higher resilience are more effective at coping with the cognitive, emotional, and social demands inherent in the university environment (Casiano et al., 2024). This synergistic interaction between resilience and well-being promotes adaptive responses (Castro et al., 2024). The relationship between self-concept and resilience justifies its incorporation into student development programs (Núñez & Vásquez, 2022), as interventions aimed at strengthening it reduce anxiety, improve social bonds, and increase self-efficacy (León et al., 2025; Rasheed et al., 2022).

Furthermore, resilience has been validated as a mediator between subjective well-being and academic performance (Castro et al., 2024), with positive effects on emotional regulation and frustration tolerance (Rasheed et al., 2022). Its inclusion in university training has demonstrated benefits in terms of retention and mental health (Casiano et al., 2024; Núñez & Vásquez, 2022). In summary, it should be understood as a comprehensive resource that brings together personal, social, and academic variables, promoting sustained well-being (León et al., 2025).

Impact of the pandemic on student well-being

The pandemic had a profound impact on the psychological well-being of university students, generating persistent emotional and functional disturbances. Castro et al. (2024) report the emergence of symptoms such as fear, irritability, and sleep disorders, which hindered academic adaptation. Globally, Ebrahim et al. (2022) report a prevalence of 29.1% for anxiety symptoms and 23.2% for depression during the first year. While virtual interventions with an emotional focus helped mitigate anxiety (Wang, 2024), in-person attendance—when possible—contributed to better emotional adjustment (Vira & Skoog, 2021).

During lockdown, forced virtualization disrupted routines and affected emotional balance, especially among those lacking support networks (Castro et al., 2024). Symptoms such as insomnia, loss of appetite, and fatigue intensified, often linked to depressive states (Bardales et al., 2023), and unequal access to digital resources widened disparities (Ebrahim et al., 2022). Nevertheless, interactive programs strengthened social skills and critical thinking, reducing anxiety (Wang, 2024). In contexts where face-to-face learning was maintained, greater emotional stability and self-esteem were observed (Vira & Skoog, 2021).

Subsequently, post-pandemic psychological well-being has depended on institutional factors. Economic precariousness and resource shortages increased the risk of distress (Castro et al., 2024), whereas the use of active methodologies and access to psychological support have been shown to be protective factors (Wang, 2024; Bardales et al., 2023). Even with the return to face-to-face classes, emotional policies were decisive in preserving student well-being (Vira & Skoog, 2021).

Therefore, it is a priority to strengthen university well-being through comprehensive programs that combine emotional support with academic strategies (Ebrahim et al., 2022). The implementation of hybrid models must address structural inequalities, always prioritizing mental health as a prerequisite for equitable and

sustainable education (Bardales et al., 2023; Wang, 2024), as demonstrated by successful experiences grounded in institutional resilience (Vira & Skoog, 2021; Castro et al., 2024).

Inclusive Education: Common Barriers and Facilitators

Inclusive education has been widely analyzed, with structural, methodological, and attitudinal barriers identified as major obstacles to its effective implementation (Escalante et al., 2022). In the Latin American context, a reductionist perspective focused on disability still predominates, limiting the broader scope of inclusion (Valarezo et al., 2022). This narrow approach is compounded by insufficient teacher training on diversity and a lack of pedagogical coordination (Belmonte et al., 2023). According to San Martín et al. (2020), traditional school cultures perpetuate exclusionary practices, while the absence of resources and comprehensive policies hinders the development of sustainable inclusion (Antayhua & Rodríguez, 2024). Without articulated strategies and collective commitment, inclusion remains largely theoretical (Jiménez & Mesa, 2020).

Nevertheless, various experiences have identified key facilitating factors. Collaborative work among teachers, families, and school leaders fosters institutional transformation (San Martín et al., 2020), while the promotion of values such as empathy, respect, and participation reinforces inclusive practices (Jiménez & Mesa, 2020). Targeted teacher training enables the application of inclusive strategies (Escalante et al., 2022), and curricular flexibility helps close achievement gaps (Antayhua & Rodríguez, 2024). Furthermore, a positive attitude toward diversity creates more open and inclusive school environments (Valarezo et al., 2022).

From a structural perspective, clear public policy is required, with assigned resources and ongoing technical support (Antayhua & Rodríguez, 2024). Institutions with well-defined guidelines achieve greater stability in their processes (Belmonte et al., 2023). Teachers demand continuous professional development, accessible materials, and reorganized support systems (San Martín et al., 2020). Inclusion must be integrated within institutional projects and accompanied by constant monitoring (Jiménez & Mesa, 2020), moving toward a structured—not merely assistentialist—school model (Valarezo et al., 2022). School leadership and community awareness are fundamental for sustaining such changes (Escalante et al., 2022). In this regard, San Martín et al. (2020) propose conceptualizing inclusion as a process of cultural, organizational, and pedagogical transformation. This requires strategies centered on respect for difference and the elimination of discrimination (Jiménez & Mesa, 2020), involving the entire educational community (Belmonte et al., 2023). A school culture based on equity and collaboration facilitates effective inclusion (Escalante et al., 2022), while policies that promote the participation of marginalized students are essential for achieving educational justice (Antayhua & Rodríguez, 2024; Valarezo et al., 2022).

Self-Acceptance and Purpose as Key Dimensions

Within university students' psychological well-being, self-acceptance and a sense of purpose are fundamental dimensions for academic and emotional adaptation (Casiano et al., 2024). These act as indicators of positive mental health and as protective factors against emotional vulnerability (Guerrero et al., 2023). In a study conducted at the Technical University of Ambato, Chérrez & García (2024) found that 39.6% of students with high psychological well-being exhibited greater personal and academic stability, highlighting self-acceptance as a central variable. However, low levels of self-acceptance are associated with body dissatisfaction and personal difficulties (Cuba et al., 2023), while a lack of life purpose is linked to decreased autonomy and increased dependence (Carbajal et al., 2022).

When these dimensions are strengthened, students face academic challenges with greater resilience (Guerrero et al., 2023). Self-acceptance enhances the ability to manage criticism and supports personal valuation (Casiano et al., 2024), while a clear sense of purpose drives perseverance in the face of adversity (Rodríguez & Sánchez, 2022). Nevertheless, many students still struggle to define their goals, which affects their emotional stability (Carbajal et al., 2022). Therefore, it is recommended to integrate personal reflection spaces and life project development into the university curriculum (Chérrez & García, 2024).

To this end, universities should promote programs that strengthen self-awareness, foster a respectful classroom climate, and develop emotional self-regulation skills (Cuba et al., 2023; Guerrero et al., 2023; Casiano et al., 2024), adapted to the diversity of the student body (Carbajal et al., 2022). Fostering these competencies is essential for a balanced and meaningful university experience (Chérrez & García, 2024).

Educational Technology and Inclusion Challenges

The use of technology in education presents a double-edged sword: while it broadens access, it also reveals new structural and functional barriers (Asad et al., 2023). This paradox intensified during the pandemic, as the shift to digital environments exacerbated inequalities in access and pedagogical adaptability (Ebrahim et al., 2022). Interactive platforms have proven effective in reducing anxiety and fostering participation, provided that adequate infrastructure and relevant teacher training are in place (Wang, 2024). However, many institutions still operate under rigid frameworks that hinder the inclusive use of technology (Muñoz

et al., 2023), while at middle and higher education levels, there is often insufficient technical support for these initiatives (de la Cruz, 2020).

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) has been promoted as a strategy for transforming technology into an inclusive tool (Muñoz et al., 2023). This approach aims to eliminate sensory and cognitive barriers through accessible resources for all students (Urías & Pino, 2024). However, its implementation remains uneven, hampered by standardized pedagogical models (Asad et al., 2023) and a lack of didactic guidance, limiting its real impact (Ebrahim et al., 2022). Additionally, it is necessary to strengthen interpersonal connections and emotional well-being in virtual environments (Farfán et al., 2025), as well as to ensure adequate infrastructure to accommodate functional and cultural diversity (Wang, 2024).

At the institutional level, it is urgent to connect inclusion and innovation through coherent educational policies and ongoing teacher training (Urías & Pino, 2024). Some educators succeed in diversifying their methods through ICT (Wang, 2024), but obstacles persist, such as platform incompatibility and lack of regulatory knowledge (Muñoz et al., 2023). The impact of technology on inclusion is context-dependent: it can facilitate processes or generate new forms of exclusion (García et al., 2023). Excessive use can even negatively affect self-acceptance and concentration (Carbajal et al., 2022). Therefore, it is crucial to implement sustainable, culturally sensitive strategies focused on the right to quality education (Mendoza et al., 2020; López et al., 2020).

CONCLUSION

The review of the literature reveals the interdependence between psychological well-being, resilience, educational inclusion, and technology within the university context. Variables such as self-acceptance, sense of purpose, interpersonal relationships, and adaptability emerge as key factors for emotional stability and academic performance. These dimensions are closely intertwined with structural and institutional factors, shaping an ecosystem where subjective well-being becomes a transversal axis of educational success. Thus, promoting environments that are sensitive to emotional and cognitive diversity is a strategic priority.

Resilience stands out as a dynamic resource that mitigates the impact of adverse factors such as the pandemic, stress, or inequality. Its relationship with psychological well-being underscores the importance of integrating programs that strengthen coping skills and self-regulation. Nevertheless, educational inclusion still faces persistent obstacles linked to rigid institutional cultures, inflexible pedagogies, and a lack of accessible technology. Despite notable progress, structural change requires political will, ongoing professional development, and an ethical commitment to equity.

In this context, technology represents both an opportunity and a risk. It can broaden access when digital environments are designed to be accessible and culturally relevant. When grounded in inclusive pedagogical principles, technology facilitates both learning and well-being. However, in the absence of digital justice, it tends to reproduce existing forms of exclusion. Therefore, technology, inclusion, and mental health must be addressed in a coordinated manner to build more human and sustainable universities.

A limitation of this review lies in the methodological heterogeneity of the studies analyzed, which makes direct comparisons difficult. Furthermore, some research lacks clear institutional context or representative samples, restricting the generalizability of the findings. The predominance of quantitative approaches also limits the exploration of relevant qualitative nuances.

It is recommended that universities implement comprehensive psychoeducational programs that combine emotional development, resilience, and digital inclusion. Future research should further explore diverse contexts and historically marginalized populations through more contextualized and effective mixed-methods approaches.

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