

Reading, socioemotional development, and inclusion in adults with disabilities

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Abstract

The participation in leisure experiences and development of communication skills are fundamental for the well-being and social inclusion of people with disabilities. This research focuses on learning to read among people with intellectual disabilities (ID) and on finding strategies to make reading more accessible for this population. Through an intervention in an inclusive reading club, the study analyses how participation in this reading experience influences various aspects of the lives of adults with ID, evaluating their personal, social, and emotional development, reading skills, and social inclusion. A phase of evidence collection was designed based on a qualitative approach, through interviews with 22 participants (users, volunteer university students, and organisers). The results show a positive impact of these clubs on various aspects of the participants' lives, emphasising the need to continue adapting these initiatives in order to meet the specific needs of people with disabilities. Additionally, the importance of creating an inclusive culture that recognises self-determination as a crucial factor for the integration of people with ID into society is highlighted.

Keywords: Intellectual disability; inclusion; individual development; reading ability; reading club; case study.

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Lectura, desarrollo socioemocional e inclusión en adultos con discapacidad

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Resumen

La participación en experiencias de ocio y desarrollo de habilidades comunicativas son fundamentales para el bienestar y la inclusión social de personas con discapacidad. Esta investigación se centra en el aprendizaje de la lectura en personas con discapacidad intelectual (DI) y en la búsqueda de estrategias para hacer que la lectura sea más accesible para este grupo de población. Mediante una intervención en un club de lectura inclusivo, el estudio analiza cómo la participación en esta experiencia de lectura influye en diferentes ámbitos de la vida de adultos con DI, evaluando su desarrollo personal, social y emocional, habilidades de lectura y su inclusión en la sociedad. Se diseñó una fase de recogida de evidencias basada en un enfoque cualitativo, mediante la realización de entrevistas a 22 participantes (usuarios, estudiantes universitarias voluntarias y organizadores). Los resultados muestran un alcance positivo de estos clubes en diversos aspectos de la vida de los participantes, lo que enfatiza la necesidad de continuar adaptando estas iniciativas para satisfacer las necesidades específicas de las personas con discapacidad. Además, se subraya la importancia de crear una cultura inclusiva que reconozca la autodeterminación como un factor crucial para la integración de las personas con DI en la sociedad.

Palabras clave: Discapacidad intelectual; inclusión; desarrollo personal; habilidades de lectura; club de lectura; estudio de caso.

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INTRODUCTION

Social and cultural participation is essential for enhancing the quality of life for individuals with intellectual disabilities, promoting their equitable and active inclusion in society, respecting diversity, and fostering a sense of belonging, acceptance, and collaboration (Alqsaireen et al., 2023; Ainscow, 2005). These activities provide opportunities to form meaningful connections, develop social and emotional skills, and strengthen the sense of belonging and overall well-being (Brooks et al., 2021). Alzahrani (2020) further adds that inclusion goes beyond mere integration, recognising the rights of all individuals to participate in social, cultural, and educational life. This inclusion is not limited to physical presence, but also extends to the sense of belonging, acceptance, and appreciation within the community (Lindner et al., 2022).

Self-determination is crucial for the inclusion of individuals with intellectual disabilities, enabling them to control their lives, be active agents in their inclusion process, and form meaningful relationships, with the support of organisations that promote their autonomy and the impact of legislative advancements (Skarsaune, 2022). Leisure activities, including reading, contribute to increasing self-confidence, promoting social integration, boosting self-esteem, and improving overall life satisfaction for individuals with disabilities (Freire & Teixeira, 2018).

Promoting reading habits among individuals with disabilities is particularly relevant today. Reading, in addition to providing access to information, also contributes to cognitive and emotional development (Baba & Affendi, 2020; Tijms et al., 2018). For adults with intellectual disabilities, who often face additional challenges, reading allows them to expand their knowledge, improve communication and expressive skills, and enhance their quality of life (González-Ramírez et al., 2023).

Reading clubs are inclusive spaces that facilitate social and cultural participation, promoting the enjoyment of reading, personal development, emotional expression, and the establishment of meaningful relationships (Moreno-Mulas et al., 2020). Through the guidance of a moderator, participants explore texts and enrich their thinking through the exchange of ideas and reflections (Jiang & Hou, 2022).

In the Spanish context, reading clubs emerged in libraries in the 1980s, initially attracting adults, but over time, they diversified and expanded into various environments (Arana-Palacios & Galindo-Lizaldre, 2009). Reading clubs follow a common procedure for selecting books, reading over a specified period, and scheduling discussion sessions, where key passages are explored, characters are analysed, and reflections are shared (Daniels, 2023; Scheckle, 2022).

Reading clubs complement individual reading practices by fostering listening and oral expression skills, stimulating diverse interpretations of texts, and promoting literary criticism (Grenier et al., 2021). The presence of a facilitator is essential for guiding discussions and encouraging reflective analysis (Hales et al., 2021). The exchange of opinions and attention to each participant strengthen engagement and the sense of group belonging (Álvarez & Pascual-Díez, 2014). This dynamic environment drives intellectual growth by overcoming the fear of participation and validating diverse perspectives, facilitating the exchange of ideas (Rifai et al., 2023). It also fosters creative and comprehension skills, enriching the cultural background of individuals (Kosmicki, 2018). Participation is based on feeling valued and understood, promoting meaningful dialogue about literary works (Kent & Simpson, 2012).

These experiences have revitalised libraries and sparked an interest in reading among various individuals, even those with no prior interest in reading, fostering the development of reading habits (Álvarez-Álvarez, 2016a; Rosmayanti & Yahrif, 2023). These clubs have promoted the pleasure of reading during leisure time, allowing immersion in both real and fictional stories, and facilitating a deep understanding and analysis of the themes addressed (Rifai et al., 2023). Furthermore, they encourage critical thinking and have positive impacts on their members as well as on the reputation of the institutions that support them (Choi & Tinker, 2017).

Although there are studies on reading clubs in the Spanish context (Carreño, 2012; Moral & Arbe, 2013), few focus on individuals with disabilities (Fish et al., 2006; Goatley, 1996). Therefore, this research poses the following central question: What are the perceptions of professionals regarding their

participation in inclusive reading clubs aimed at individuals with disabilities? The aim of the study is to analyse the perceptions of community agents involved in the development of a reading club, understand its impact on the community, and identify areas for strengthening and development. Furthermore, it seeks to explore the participation experiences of individuals with intellectual disabilities (ID) in reading clubs, in order to understand their contribution to well-being and social inclusion. The research examines how participation in these spaces influences personal, social, and emotional development, as well as reading skills and integration into society, identifying elements valued by participants and offering recommendations to optimise the club's effectiveness.

The study has the potential to generate practical and social benefits by improving educational practices and social intervention, contributing to the inclusion of this group in society. It is also relevant in both the academic and professional contexts, as it addresses key challenges in inclusive education and the promotion of reading habits among vulnerable populations.

METHOD

The study employed a qualitative approach, which gathers descriptive data through verbal expressions, written accounts, and observable behaviour (Denny & Weckesser, 2022). According to Sandoval-Casilisma (1996), qualitative research aims to understand a constantly changing social reality, analysed from the experiences of the protagonists and their internal logic. This approach not only describes but also provides meaningful explanations about social reality (Toker, 2022). Semi-structured interviews were used – adapted to each participant group – were conducted in order to address the topics.

Context of the experience

The reading club “Reading + Inclusive” is part of the “Huesca more inclusive” project, promoted by the Huesca City Council and other entities. Its objective is to improve the inclusion of individuals with intellectual disabilities (ID) through reading, providing a space to develop cognitive, social, and emotional skills.

The club holds its sessions at the “Ramón J. Sender” Municipal Library in Huesca, where books selected by library volunteers are provided, taking into account their accessibility, interest, and ability to encourage debate. The works include short novels, short stories, and picture books with social, emotional, and cultural themes, and are adapted to the interests and needs of the participants. The selection criteria include the text simplicity, topics relevance to the group, and the potential to foster debate and reflection.

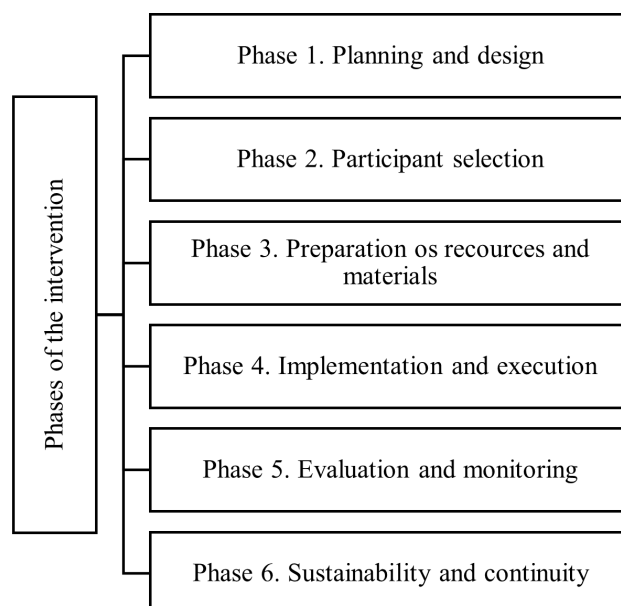
The group is made up of adults with ID, primarily with a disability degree greater than 33%, some with additional disabilities such as visual impairments or Autism Spectrum Disorder. For individuals with visual impairments, audiobooks are used, and individualised support is provided according to each participant's reading pace.

The club organised eight monthly sessions between 2023 and 2024, divided into six intervention phases, as detailed in Figure 1. The sessions include discussions, text analysis, debates, and creative writing activities to improve reading comprehension and social interaction. Each session begins with the introduction of the text, followed by debates where participants share reflections and opinions, with the support of the library volunteers acting as facilitators.

The book selection is constantly adapted based on the outcomes of previous sessions, prioritising topics that generate greater interest and are more comprehensible for the group. The interactions and cognitive and social progress of the participants influence these adaptations, ensuring that the process is dynamic and centred on their needs. The library volunteers are essential to the success of the programme, responsible for selecting the books, mediating activities, guiding discussions, respecting individual paces, and providing the necessary support to foster the effective participation of all members.

Figure 1

Phases of the intervention process of the “Reading + Inclusive” reading club.



Participants

The study involved 22 participants, divided into three groups. The first group consisted of eleven users who actively attended the sessions (table 1). The second group was made up of four volunteer librarians, university students responsible for coordinating the sessions (table 2). The third group comprised seven professionals from various local entities and associations, responsible for the organisation and promotion of the club (table 3). The only inclusion criterion was that the interviewees were directly involved with the reading club, either as active participants or in organisational roles.

Table 1

Sociodemographic characteristics of users with disabilities.

Participant	Sex	Age	Educational level	Occupation	Background	Reading Frequency	Motivations [*]
1	F	53	Compulsory Secondary Education	Unemployed	No	Weekly	1 & 2
2	M	31	Compulsory Secondary Education	Hospitality employee	Yes	Monthly	1 & 3
3	F	28	Compulsory Secondary Education	Gardener	No	Daily	1, 3 & 4
4	F	65	Compulsory Secondary Education	Retired	No	Weekly	1 & 3
5	M	37	Compulsory Secondary Education	Employed	Yes	Weekly	1, 3 & 4
6	F	62	Compulsory Secondary Education	Retired	No	Weekly	1 & 2

Participant	Sex	Age	Educational level	Occupation	Background	Reading Frequency	Motivations *
7	F	64	Primary Education	Retired	Yes	Occasionally	3
8	M	44	Compulsory Secondary Education	Employed	Yes	Daily	1, 2 & 3
9	F	42	Compulsory Secondary Education	Employed	No	Weekly	1
10	F	67	Compulsory Secondary Education	Retired	Yes	Daily	3
11	M	34	Compulsory Secondary Education	Employed	No	Weekly	1 & 2

* Motivations: 1. Meet new people; 2. Share my love for reading; 3. Learn more about different types of books and authors; 4. Participate in literature discussions.

Table 2

Sociodemographic characteristics of the library volunteers.

Participant	Sex	Age	Educational level	Occupation	Background	Motivations *
12	M	42	University studies (Bachelor's degree)	Student. Employee (Therapeutic Pedagogy Teacher)	No	1, 2, 3 & 4
13	M	22	University studies (Bachelor's degree)	Student	No	1, 4 & 5
14	F	24	University studies (Bachelor's degree)	Student	No	1, 4 & 5
15	M	28	University studies (Bachelor's degree)	Student	No	2 & 4

* Motivations: 1. Interest in promoting reading; 2. Enjoyment in sharing literary knowledge; 3. Seeking new experiences; 4. Interest in promoting inclusion and accessibility for people with disabilities; 5. Expanding university education.

Table 3

Sociodemographic characteristics of the organisers of the 'Reading + Inclusive' club.

Participant	Sex	Age	Educational level	Occupation	Background	Roles in the organisation	Motivations *
16	M	46	University studies (Bachelor's degree)	Employed	Yes	Down Huesca member	1, 2 & 3
17	F	31	Postgraduate studies (Master's, PhD,...)	Employed	Yes	Coordination between all collaborating entities	1, 2 & 3
18	F	46	University studies (Bachelor's degree)	Employed. Technician	Yes	Organisation, coordination, monitoring, and support of the group	1, 2, 3 & 4
19	M	31	Postgraduate studies (Master's, PhD,...)	Employed. Psychologist	Yes	Driver for encouraging some of the young people to participate	1, 2 y 3
20	F	57	University studies (Bachelor's degree)	Businesswoman. Project Manager of Info-doc	Yes	Proposal of the activity from the education committee	5
21	F	46	Postgraduate studies (Master's, PhD,...)	Employed. Library manager	Yes	Organisation, room booking, obtaining readings, proposals	1, 2 & 3

Participant	Sex	Age	Educational level	Occupation	Background	Roles in the organisation	Motivations*
						with the volunteer students, dissemination...	
22	F	35	University studies (Bachelor's degree)	Employed	Yes	Facilitator and logistical coordinator	1, 2 & 3

* Motivations: 1. Foster Reading within the community; 2. Create a cultural meeting space; 3. Contribute to the personal development of participants; 4. Create greater autonomy and confidence and bring reading closer; 5. Bring Reading closer to people with disabilities.

Instrument

Semi-structured interviews were used as a qualitative tool to gather relevant information, allowing the interviewees to freely express their thoughts and opinions (Kakilla, 2021). The interviews shared a common structure for all groups, with questions of a sociodemographic nature and fourteen questions focusing on the participatory dynamics of the reading club, adapted to the roles of each group to balance the consistency of the data and capture their particularities.

The interviews began by exploring the participants' experience of enjoyment and entertainment within the club, as well as the value they assign to their leisure and free time. Questions such as, for example, **how would you describe the experience of leading the reading club in terms of enjoyment and entertainment?** And **how do you feel the club project has added value to your free time?** were asked. The impact on social relationships was also analysed, observing how participation fostered meaningful interactions and strengthened support networks.

Next, emotional well-being was assessed by asking: **How do you feel your involvement has influenced your personal development or well-being?** The impact on reading habits and the perception of the intrinsic benefits of reading was also explored. Additionally, the supports and resources available in the club were investigated, asking: **How have the resources and supports been organised to ensure the development of the club?** Finally, the participants' expectations and goals were addressed to understand their influence on motivation and commitment to the club.

Procedure and analysis

The research process was organised in sequential stages to ensure effectiveness and consistency. Firstly, some literature review was conducted to contextualise the study and design the interviews. Participants were then contacted, the objectives were explained, and their anonymous and voluntary participation was assured. In cases of disabilities greater than 33%, informed consent was obtained from legal guardians, which was necessary for 8 out of the 11 participants, following rigorous procedures.

The interviews, between 40 and 60 minutes long, were conducted in person and recorded. Subsequently, they were transcribed and analysed following the steps outlined by Miles and Huberman (1994): identification of six predefined categories, clear coding of the data, and application of the saturation principle to consolidate concepts and establish connections.

Selection criteria for participants included voluntary attendance and active participation in the reading club, ensuring relevant experiences. To strengthen the methodology, qualitative measures were followed according to Byram (2022), detailing selection criteria, design, and analysis methods. Reliability was ensured with detailed transcriptions and data triangulation among three different groups, ensuring credibility and accuracy (Natow, 2020; Santos et al., 2020; Vivek et al., 2023). Audio recordings met conformity criteria, supporting the verification and auditability of the data.

RESULTS

The results are categorised based on the testimonies and observations, which include the impact on participation, social relationships, emotional well-being, and reading habits, among others. Table 4 summarises the results, comparing the three groups in each category. Below, the findings for users, volunteers, and organisers are presented.

Table 4.

Comparison of the impacts of the reading club across different categories for the three participant groups

Category	Users	Biblio-volunteers	Organisers
Participation in the reading club and its impact	Feeling of satisfaction, personal growth, and enjoyment in an inclusive environment.	The club is inclusive and empowering, creating support networks and personal development.	Significant value in leisure and free time; contributes to personal development and socialisation.
Impact on social relationships	Opportunity to make new friends and create connections through book discussions.	It fosters a supportive and solidarity-based environment, creating a space for camaraderie.	A space to interact, learn, and grow, benefiting both people with disabilities and volunteers.
Emotional well-being and self-esteem	Improvement in emotional well-being, motivation, and sense of belonging, as their opinions are valued.	They observe an increase in participants' confidence and self-esteem as they feel heard and respected.	Improvement in mood and emotional well-being through active participation in the club.
Changes in reading habits	Increased motivation and enjoyment in reading; they experiment with new genres and expand their literary horizons.	They appreciate the rise in participants' reading frequency and their willingness to explore new literary styles.	Positive cognitive development through sustained reading, strengthening reading habits.
Benefits of reading	Enhanced concentration, vocabulary, and moments of relaxation; improvement in quality of life.	Reading promotes inclusion, the exercise of cultural rights, and the development of social skills.	Stimulates critical thinking, empathy, and social skills, benefiting both users and volunteers.
Expectations and goals	They hope to continue enjoying and sharing literary experiences; they wish to maintain established connections.	Expectations were pleasantly exceeded by the active participation and enthusiasm of the members.	Creation of an inclusive and community-oriented space to share a passion for reading, with positive growth in participation.
Resources and support	They recognise the value of book diversity, though some suggest improving resources for people with visual disabilities.	They highlight the importance of book variety and the possibility of collaborating with other reading clubs to enrich activities.	Importance of coordination among different stakeholders and ensuring adequate resources for the specific needs of users.

Participation in the reading club and its impact on the participants' lives

Firstly, the analysis focuses on how participation in activities such as the reading club influences participants' lives. Participation in the reading club has a positive impact on participants' lives, offering entertainment, personal growth, socialisation, and skill development. Participants value the experience as enriching, especially when sharing and discussing books in a safe environment. Notable enjoyment is highlighted, suggesting that the club adds value to leisure and free time. The library volunteers and organisers emphasise the inclusive and empowering nature of the project, stressing the creation of support networks and the promotion of personal empowerment. Participante 1 (usuario): Participar en el club ha sido una experiencia "increíble", permitiéndome dedicar más tiempo a la lectura y sentirme más conectado con los demás miembros.

Participant 19 (organiser): The reading club project has added significant value to the participants' leisure and free time, providing a vital space for socialisation and personal development.

Impact on social relationships

The second category examines the impact of the reading club on social relationships, observing a positive effect on interpersonal dynamics, facilitating encounters and the exchange of ideas. The library volunteers highlight the supportive and solidarity-driven environment created, emphasising the importance of discussions on social issues addressed in the books. The organisers point out that the club provides a space to interact, learn, and grow together, benefiting both individuals with disabilities and volunteers:

Participant 4 (user): The reading club has made it easier to make friends. Before I joined, I only knew a few people. But now, by talking about the books we read, I have met more people and made new friends.

Participant 13 (library volunteer): library volunteer): In terms of social relationships, the club has become a meeting point for both of us as library volunteers and for them, creating a space for "camaraderie."

Emotional well-being and self-esteem

Regarding emotional well-being and self-esteem, users highlight how social interaction in the club stimulates their motivation and maintains a positive emotional state. Participation has driven changes in their self-perception and the development of reading skills, promoting their emotional and intellectual growth. The library volunteers observe that participants feel freer to express themselves in an inclusive environment, where their thoughts and emotions are valued, fostering a sense of belonging and validation within the group:

Participant 12 (library volunteer): (...) They feel heard and respected for their opinions, which makes them feel good about themselves (...) Everyone has the opportunity to say what they think, and that gives them a lot of confidence! They feel important and valued.

Participant 16 (organiser): Participants can experience improvements in their mood, emotional well-being, and satisfaction by participating in the reading club (...).

Changes in reading habits

On the other hand, members of the club have noticed a significant improvement in their reading habits, as they previously read little or not at all. The club motivates them to read more and enjoy the activity, expanding their literary horizons. The library volunteers highlight the positive change in the frequency of reading and the participants' willingness to explore new genres. They also emphasise the value of the community within the club, where participants feel valued and heard, which increases their motivation and emotional well-being:

Participant 15 (library volunteer): (...) The reading club has been a catalyst for improving reading habits and fostering a greater appreciation for literature in everyone (...). It has created a space to share experiences and discover new perspectives (...) which has significantly enriched their lives.

Benefits of reading

Most of the interviewees value reading not only as entertainment or knowledge but as a tool that promotes emotional well-being, cognitive, and social development. Users highlight how it improves their attention, vocabulary, and provides moments of relaxation, offering tools to improve their quality of life. Volunteers see reading as a means to access culture, participate socially, and promote the inclusion of people with disabilities. Organisers also emphasise its cognitive and emotional benefits, such as critical thinking and empathy. Everyone agrees that reading offers multiple benefits:

Participant 4 (user): Reading gives me much more than just having a good time or learning new things. It helps me relax, disconnect from stress, and imagine different worlds and situations.

Participant 21 (organiser): Reading is seen as an unlimited space where anything is possible. (...) It allows us to explore new worlds, better understand human life, and develop empathy by putting ourselves in the shoes of different characters (...).

Expectations and goals

Regarding opinions on the expectations and goals upon joining the club, participants expressed initial uncertainty but anticipated a positive experience. Users hope to continue enjoying reading, share opinions, and participate in literature-related activities. The library volunteers, with modest expectations, were pleasantly surprised by the enthusiasm and progress of the members, planning to evaluate the club through surveys to improve the program. Organisers hoped to create an inclusive and communal space to share the passion for reading, and they saw these expectations fulfilled, strengthening the community and promoting participation:

Participant 6 (User): I hope to continue enjoying the reading club and keep sharing experiences with the same people I have established bonds with (...).

Participant 17 (Organiser): I have observed an increase in attendance, engagement, and participation in discussions and activities. Furthermore, a collaborative and enriching environment has been created between volunteers and participants.

Resources and support

Regarding resources and support, both volunteers and organisers emphasise the importance of managing resources effectively for the club's operation, such as the variety of books available and the support from volunteers during meetings. They also value the coordination among the collaborating entities but suggest improving the availability of specific resources for people with visual disabilities, such as audiobooks and braille materials:

Participant 13 (library volunteer): The availability and provision of resources has been excellent. In the future, we could collaborate with other clubs. We could exchange experiences, ideas, and resources, (...) enrich our own dynamics, and offer a wider variety of activities and readings (...).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The aim of this study was to analyse the perceptions of the agents involved in inclusive reading clubs in order to understand their impact on the community and identify areas for improvement and development. The testimonies highlight an improvement in the reading habits of people with disabilities, including an increase in reading frequency and interest in exploring literary genres. This finding supports previous studies that emphasise the role of reading clubs in fostering reading interest, even among those with little interest or underdeveloped habits (Rosmayanti and Yahrif, 2023). Furthermore, research suggests

that environments that promote reading from childhood are key to the development of these habits (Baba and Affendi, 2020).

Participating in a reading club can help overcome ingrained habits by providing a supportive space. According to studies by De-Amo-Sánchez-Fortún et al. (2023), sharing experiences in these environments fosters communication and reflective skills, promoting the overall development of participants. For people with intellectual disabilities, these skills are strengthened through the social interaction provided by the club (Wood & Standen, 2021). Previous research also highlights the value of the community created by reading clubs, especially in revitalising reading interest in diverse contexts, such as for people with intellectual disabilities, for whom a sense of belonging is particularly important (Álvarez-Álvarez, 2016b).

Reading clubs have a positive impact on social relationships by enriching thinking through the exchange of ideas, which fosters the building of meaningful social ties and a sense of belonging among participants (Álvarez-Álvarez & Pascual-Díez, 2014; Rifai et al., 2023). Furthermore, clubs promote an environment of support and solidarity, creating a cohesive community (Hoyne & Egan, 2019), which contributes to a more enriching reading experience.

In relation to leisure, the results align with the theory that reading clubs, as spaces for personal and social enrichment, promote enjoyment of literature and a collective understanding of the topics addressed. Participants express great satisfaction with the experience, describing it as rewarding and beneficial for their personal development (Maina, 2018; Álvarez-Álvarez, 2016a). This finding is consistent with the concept of “dialogic reading,” where interaction and idea exchange during the sessions promote critical reflection and a deeper understanding of the texts (Michellini, 2023).

The testimonies of the participants reflect a diversity of expectations and goals when joining the reading clubs, which positively impact their motivation and personal gratification, promoting the expression of ideas and offering opportunities for learning and professional improvement (Álvarez-Álvarez & Pascual-Díez, 2014). Participants value the emotional and social connections created, which reinforces the sense of community. This finding aligns with evidence indicating that leisure activities can improve the overall life satisfaction of people with disabilities (Freire and Teixeira, 2018). Organisers and library volunteers, in turn, hope to strengthen the community and improve participation, which also helps to enhance the institutional reputation (Choi & Tinker, 2017).

Additionally, it contributes to improving literary comprehension through dialogue and promotes an education in values (Henriksson & Laakso, 2019). As for resource management, the importance of the availability of a wide range of books and accessible materials is highlighted, including tools such as easy-to-read formats, to improve understanding and foster reading habits, especially for people with visual and intellectual disabilities (Ladias et al., 2022).

The results of the study have significant practical implications for professionals and organisations involved in social inclusion. Reading clubs not only offer entertainment but also provide opportunities for personal development, socialisation, and skill learning (González-Ramírez et al., 2023). Promoting participation in these clubs can be an effective strategy to improve emotional well-being and intellectual development. In the educational field, professionals may see reading clubs as an intervention that enhances the quality of life of individuals (Tijms et al., 2018). Furthermore, future educators can develop essential skills such as creating inclusive environments that foster critical reflection and collaboration (Revuelta-Muela & Álvarez-Álvarez, 2021).

Libraries and other cultural institutions also play a key role in promoting inclusive reading. Collaboration between various entities can be crucial in organising inclusive and diverse reading clubs, promoting socialisation and access to literature (Saunders and Corning, 2020). The information obtained in this study highlights the need to continue exploring strategies to improve access to reading for people with diverse needs. The selection of materials that respond to the particular characteristics of participants is essential to encourage motivation and understanding. These materials should be accessible, with simplified language adapted to the group’s interests, and include pictograms or images to facilitate text comprehension (Tárraga-Minguez & Gómez-Marí, 2023).

Finally, reading materials should be inclusive not only in format but also in content, promoting a positive representation of diversity and contributing to personal and social development. The creation of catalogs of adapted readings, based on studies like the present one, could improve the social participation of people with diverse needs. In interventions involving easy-to-read materials, methodological approaches such as shared reading, group reflection dynamics, and multisensory tools can be used to enrich the reading experience (Cremin et al., 2014).

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AUTHORS’ CONTRIBUTION

Cristina Borau-Viu: Project management; Conceptualisation; Data curation; Writing - original draft; Methodology; Supervision.

Cecilia Latorre-Coscolluela: Formal analysis; Investigation; Resources; Software; Supervision.

Mireya Mallén-Berdejo: Formal analysis; Writing - original draft; Writing - review and editing; Supervision; Validation; Visualisation.

ETHICAL STANDARDS COMPLIANCE

This research has been approved by the Ethics Committee of the Government of Aragón (Spain), with approval code PI24/241.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The data supporting the findings of this study are openly available at: Cristina Borau, Latorre-Coscolluela, C., & Mallén Berdejo, M. (2025). Interview transcript_ Reading, Socioemotional Development, and Inclusion in Adults with Disabilities [Data set]. Zenodo. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.14968261>.

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