



INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AS A SYSTEMIC AND CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE CONSTRUCT

Mary Lilian Oyooⁱ

M.Ed.,

Special Education Inclusion Teacher and
Researcher in Inclusive Education,
Greenville County Schools,
South Carolina, United States of America

Abstract:

Inclusive education has received broad support and recognition both theoretically and empirically, yet its definition and implementation have been multifarious and context-dependent. Typically, inclusive education has been defined and measured by placement-based indicators that focus narrowly on physical access to general education environments without adequate consideration of instructional quality, cultural responsiveness, and learner belongingness. This conceptual paper argues that these narrow definitions and implementations of inclusive education limit research and practice by failing to capture the systemic and relational aspects of inclusion. This paper, which draws upon both the Social Model of Disability and culturally responsive teaching theories, critically examines literature from across the world, including the U.S. and Kenya, to redefine inclusive education as a systemic, instructional, and cultural construct. This paper critically examines the intersections between disability, culture, language, and identity. It highlights the limitations of compliance-based approaches to inclusive education. It offers a different and more viable definition and implementation of inclusive education based upon (a) the elimination of systemic barriers, (b) the promotion of learner identity, and (c) mutual instructional responsibility.

Keywords: inclusive education; procedural and substantive inclusion; culturally responsive teaching; social model of disability; secondary education; instructional responsibility

Palabras clave (Spanish): educación inclusiva; enseñanza culturalmente responsiva; modelo social de la discapacidad; educación secundaria; responsabilidad instruccional

ⁱ Correspondence: email maryoyoo2022@gmail.com

Maneno muhimu (Kiswahili): elimu jumuishi; ufundishaji unaozingatia utamaduni; mtazamo wa kijamii wa ulemavu; elimu ya sekondari; uwajibikaji wa ufundishaji

1. Background

Inclusive education has become one of the fundamental principles that guide educational policies and studies around the world, especially within the broader context of special education. Legislative and policy guidelines, such as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in the USA and the international guidelines by UNESCO, among other bodies, advocate for the education of students with disabilities within the general education classroom to the maximum extent possible. Such guidelines are informed by both the legal imperative and the cultural imperative. Education, however, is a microcosm of the broader culture that is informed by the ideals of merit, normalcy, language, and academic competition, among other factors. This creates a tension between the ideals that guide inclusive education and the realities on the ground (Das & Sarkar, 2025; Nieminen, 2022). In other words, while inclusive education is the ideal, the practice is quite varied. In fact, inclusive education is often implemented physically but not pedagogically.

Research shows that inclusive learning environments can have a positive impact on the academic and social lives of students with disabilities and their non-disabled peers. Nevertheless, the persistence of exclusionary practices in inclusive classrooms signals a disconnect between inclusive policy and practice, and this disconnect can be explained through a cultural lens. School cultures that celebrate the “ideal” self-reliant, always-present, and high-achieving student tend to define disability as a deficit and accommodation as an exception, thereby shaping teachers’ perceptions of students’ potential and deservingness (Goodall *et al.*, 2023; Sapir & Banai, 2023; Nieminen, 2022). Much of the work on inclusion in the past has continued to focus on structural measures of inclusion, such as placement, service delivery models, and compliance measures. While such measures are relevant, they provide little information about students’ experiences or about teaching and assessment practices, which are imbued with cultural ideologies and expectations and have a significant impact on students’ access to learning and full membership in the school community (Das & Sarkar, 2025; Gallego-Ortega & Rodríguez-Fuentes, 2021; Nieminen, 2022).

In addition, the inclusion research has often viewed disability as a distinct category, which has not done enough to explain how culture, language, and identity interact with disability in the schools. Students with disabilities in more and more diverse classrooms are frequently also multilingual learners or members of historically marginalized cultural groups, the practices of which may vary in the ways they communicate, learn, and engage. When the systems of inclusive education do not consider such overlapping identities and neglect the cultural politics of the knowledge, language, and behavior that are worth valuing, the practice of instruction has the potential to reproduce the racist, linguistic, and disability-based inequities in the name of

inclusion (Das and Sarkar, 2025; Karni-Vizer *et al.*, 2025; Alhumaid *et al.*, 2023). Such situations are perceived in terms of cultural stereotypes and deficit-oriented stories, instead of an asset-based conceptualization of diversity (Goodall *et al.*, 2023; Karni-Vizer *et al.*, 2025; Krämer & Zimmermann, 2025).

This paper will suggest that inclusive education should be re-conceptualized beyond the placement-based models to a culturally responsive, system-level model that is based on the Social Model of Disability and Culturally Responsive Teaching. The paper builds on a conceptual reframing of inclusion as a collective instructional and relational practice with the theme of belonging, instructional flexibility, and cultural affirmation (based on the scholarship that views inclusion as a highly internalized social and cultural process, which is influenced by norms, attitudes, relationships, and institutional climates) (Das and Sarkar, 2025; Nieminen, 2022; Gallego-Ortega & Rodriguez-Fuentes, 2021). It predicts the influence of cultural beliefs and institutional cultures on perceptions of disability and expectations of students with disabilities. Also, it suggests a framework that can be used to design inclusive practices in a way that is both structurally and culturally transformative by synthesizing international, U.S., and Kenyan scholarship.

2. Defining Inclusion: A Conceptual Perspective

Inclusive education is an inherent but unevenly conceptualized notion in educational research and policy. Earlier and policy-based definitions have tended to focus on the physical location of students with disabilities in general education classrooms, commonly in terms of access to the least restrictive environment. Although these definitions have increased access to general education environments, they have helped develop a limited conceptualization of inclusion that places greater importance on where one is rather than the quality of instructional and relational experiences, and the cultural circumstances creating perceptions of who is considered to fit in those places.

The modern work is becoming less and less satisfied with placement-based definitions, in which inclusion is viewed as an ever-engaging process instead of a predetermined environment. In this sense, inclusion includes the active involvement, the right to the challenging curriculum, and the social inclusion in the learning communities (Ainscow *et al.*, 2006; Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011). It is entrenched in culture: the normality, achievement, behavior, and language use expectations influence how teachers perceive students' participation and potential, and whether disability is perceived as a difference and is appreciated, or disability is perceived as a deficit and is controlled (Pervaiz & Tatlah, 2025; Da Cruz *et al.*, 2024). When the definition of inclusion largely depends on the aspect of placement, key aspects like instructional design, teacher cooperation, classroom discussion, and culturally sensitive interaction are usually sidelined.

Despite these developments, inclusion literature still predicts disability as a specific category, often overlooking the overlapping area of culture, language, and identity. The culturally and linguistically diverse populations have disproportional

representations of students with disabilities, especially in the secondary education settings (Artiles *et al.*, 2010). Cultural discourses of race, language, and social class also engage with ableist beliefs in these contexts to construct the perception of who is perceived to be able, motivated, and college-bound (Pervaiz & Tatlah, 2025; Da Cruz *et al.*, 2024). When inclusion structures do not respond to these intersections and the cultural politics of whose knowledge, histories, and styles of communication are authorized, practices can still be structurally obedient and recreate disproportionate results.

With the help of the Social Model of Disability, inclusion may be redefined as a social obligation and not an accommodation (Oliver, 1996). It is in this perspective that the barriers that marginalize learners include not only the physical or curricular barriers, but also the cultural barriers - ingrained through norms, routines, and standards of evaluation that favor certain forms of identity and ways of learning over others (Brady *et al.*, 2024; Pervaiz & Tatlah, 2025). Culturally Responsive Teaching also adds to this definition by making culture, language, and identity central to the process of learning and by framing the cultural background of students as a learning resource (Gay, 2018; Ladson-Billings, 1995). A combination of these views gives rise to a definition of inclusion that goes past physical location. This paper defines inclusion as a deliberate planning of education systems, cultures, and teaching to eliminate systemic and cultural obstacles, recognize and honor student identity, and encourage meaningful engagement, high expectations, and a sense of belonging among all learners.

3. Inclusive Education in the Kenyan Context

Kenya offers a very important context to study inclusive education as a policy commitment and a culturally mediated and contested practice. The official policy to enable equal access and inclusion of learners with disabilities is reflected in the national legislation, such as the Basic Education Act (2013) and the Sector Policy of Learners and Trainees with Disabilities (2018). The policies are consistent with the international frameworks of inclusion by establishing inclusive education as a systemic challenge as opposed to a learner issue, and also overlap with the Kenyan sociocultural principles of community, care, and educational aspiration.

Regardless of this policy congruence, empirical studies in Kenyan education environments consistently report a disconnect between inclusive policy purpose and classroom implementation (Ohba & Malenya, 2022). Physical integration is often practiced with inadequate instructional modification, educator training, and systemwide assistance. The existing curricular and assessment cultures in most schools include high-stakes tests, competitive ranking, and speedy coverage, which can reinforce deficit perception of students with disabilities and reduced expectations of their success. This means that disabled students might be found in the general education classrooms but not be able to participate in the instruction and assessment processes.

Kenyan scholarship also supports the relevance of contextual and cultural influences in terms of developing inclusive practices. The studies conducted in both

urban and rural areas show that the availability of resources, teacher education, and attitudes of communities about disability play a crucial role in comprehending and implementing inclusion (Karanja *et al.*, 2021). In other societies, disability can be linked to stigma or philanthropic pity, and how the students will be treated as able learners or as care receivers. The importance of culturally responsive pedagogy, indigenous knowledge, and family–school partnerships in facilitating the process of inclusion is also identified in studies in the early childhood and basic education settings (Wickenden *et al.*, 2023). Taken together, Kenyan studies support the thesis statement that meaningful inclusion needs systemic adaptation and culturally responsive practice, such as a change in community beliefs and school culture, not policy compliance.

4. Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework, which is based on the combination of the Social Model of Disability and Culturally Responsive Teaching, underlies this paper. The concept of the Social Model of Disability views disability as a result of social, environmental, and institutional restrictions on participation (Oliver, 1996). In education, it moves the focus off of remediation of each learner, and the focus onto the ways the curriculum is designed, the ways of assessment, classroom practices, and school organization, which make or limit access to learning.

This framework is supplemented by Culturally Responsive Teaching, which preempts the contribution of culture, language, and identity to learning. Culturally responsive pedagogy recognizes students and their cultural knowledge and lived experience, instructional relevance, and relational trust and academic agency (Gay, 2018). Empirical studies of culturally responsive pedagogy and its models indicate that culturally responsive practices are associated with enhancing engagement, a sense of belonging, and participation, particularly among marginalized or diverse student groups (Cruz *et al.*, 2025; Abdalla & Moussa, 2024; Ghaemi & Boroushaki, 2025; Schirmer & Lockman, 2022; Ye *et al.*, 2025).

A combination of these frameworks enables one to conceptualize integration as a structural and cultural-instructional process. Using social-model theories of systemic barriers in inclusive education and curriculum frameworks that integrate the Social Model of Disability with other pedagogical frameworks (Bashir *et al.*, 2025; Jazmines & Caballes, 2025), the conceptual framework of the paper is based on an inclusive conception of three intersecting layers:

- 1) system-level policies and resource allocations,
- 2) school-level cultures and organizational practices, and
- 3) classroom-level pedagogy and relationships.

These layers are reciprocal and cyclical, not strictly hierarchical: system policies and funding influence school priorities and teacher training; school cultures and leadership mediate the interpretation of policies; and classroom practices and student experiences influence school improvement efforts and, over time, policy revision (Solis-

Grant *et al.*, 2023; Jazmines & Caballes, 2025). Classroom-based culturally responsive practices (e.g., acknowledging cultural identities of learners, incorporation of local knowledge, and the establishment of collaborative and trusting relationships) rely on and transform institutional and policy environments that facilitate inclusive education (Cruz *et al.*, 2025; Jazmines & Caballes, 2025; Gray, 2025; Schirmer & Lockman, 2022).

This multi-layered model enhances the explanatory power of the model over placement-based models of inclusion, which mainly concentrate on the location where learners with disabilities receive education. Placement models are limited in their ability to describe why students can still feel excluded, poorly participating, or underachieving within inclusive classrooms. In contrast, the current framework outlines the way in which inclusion is created in the interaction of the structural, cultural and pedagogical processes: eliminating environmental and institutional barriers (Social Model of Disability), aligning curriculum and assessment with the requirements of various learners, and responsive relationships and instruction to diverse cultures in everyday practice (Bashir *et al.*, 2025; Solis-Grant *et al.*, 2023).

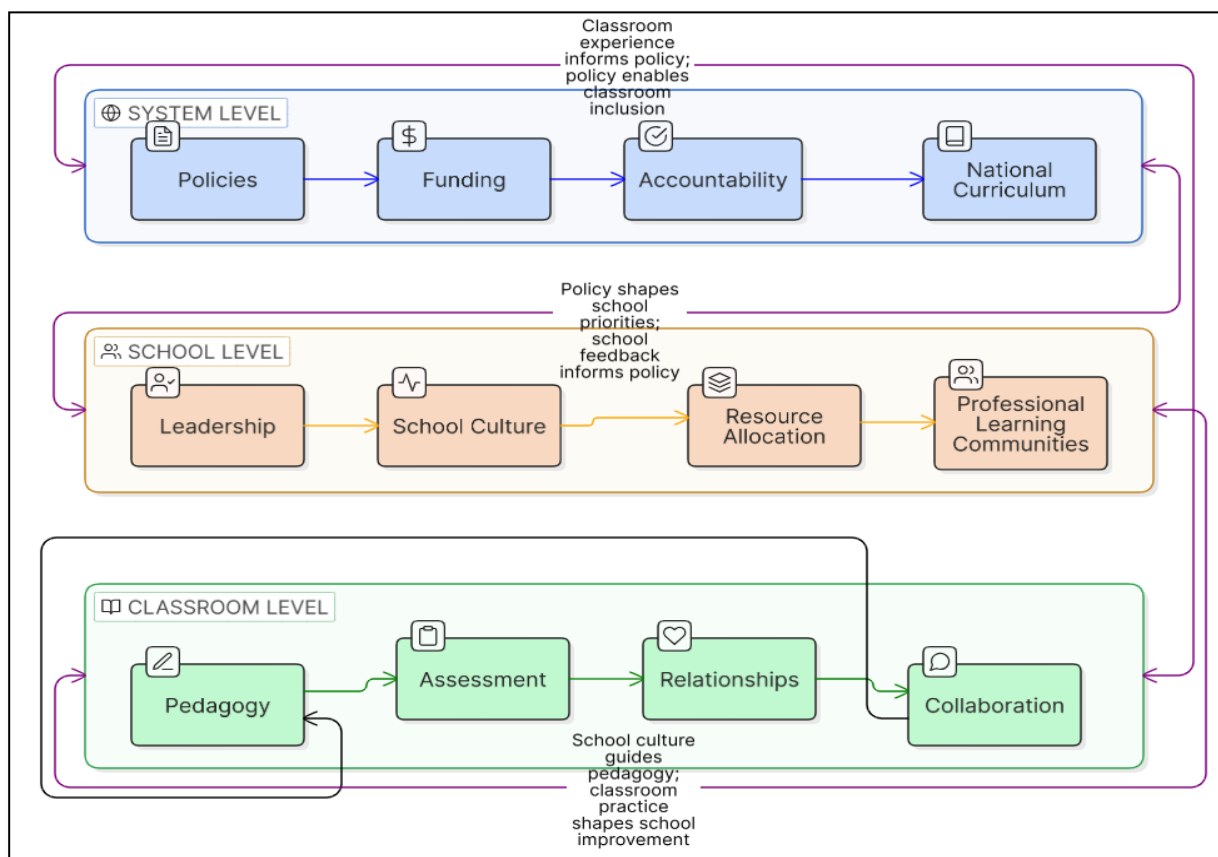


Figure 1: Conceptual model of inclusive education as a systemic and culturally responsive practice, integrating the Social Model of Disability and Culturally Responsive Teaching to illustrate shared instructional responsibility within school systems

4.1 From Procedural to Substantive Inclusion

There is a key difference under inclusive education in terms of procedural inclusion and substantive inclusion. Procedural inclusion involves the physical presence of students with disabilities in the general education classrooms, and is usually characterized by little to no coordination between general and exceptional teachers. Such support is often based on reactive, compliance-driven forms of support - like passive push-in support or ad hoc accommodations - that do not fundamentally change core pedagogy, assessment, or classroom culture (Yang *et al.*, 2025; Nieminen, 2022). This kind of spatial inclusion or symbolic inclusion meets policy requirements but does not do much to break academic ableism or teacher isolation and deficit-oriented perceptions of students (Nieminen, 2022).

Substantive inclusion, on the other hand, is instituted with deliberate, cooperative, and evaluative instructional activity. Teachers participate in co-planning and co-teaching and utilize the data of formative assessment to discover learning gaps, track the effectiveness of instruction, and provide differentiated and timely interventions (Brennan & Gorman, 2023; Argyriou, 2025). Collective inquiry and professional learning communities have been indicated to transform teacher ideologies, enhance efficacy, and develop truly inclusive pedagogy with the help of leadership, time, and external facilitation (Brennan & Gorman, 2023). Substantive inclusion is therefore an indication of a change like individual accommodation, and reactive support to a situation of collective instructional responsibility whereby different learners are expected during initial curriculum, assessment, and classroom routine design (Argyriou, 2025; Yang *et al.*, 2025). The use of student self-advocacy as the primary support mechanism is a serious impediment to effective inclusion. A lot of students with disabilities and other marginalized identities do not actively demand help due to stigma, cultural beliefs regarding the necessity to seek help, language barriers, or lack of self-advocacy skills (Thompson & Brewster, 2022; Laaksonen *et al.*, 2025). Inclusion can easily become symbolic when it is conditional upon student request and not the expectation of the educator that the student needs support. Substantive inclusion thus necessitates proactive organization, ongoing evaluation, and collective responsibility among the educators, based on the cultural responsiveness and anti-ableist practice (Abdalla & Moussa, 2024; Nieminen, 2022).

4.2 Conceptual Model of Inclusive Education

This paper proposes a Systemic and Culturally Responsive Model of Inclusive Education. The model conceptualizes inclusion as the interaction of three interdependent layers:

Table 1: Three-layer systemic and culturally responsive inclusion model

Model layer	Core elements
Systemic foundations	Policy, leadership, funding, teacher preparation, and school culture
Inclusive instructional practices	Co-teaching, UDL, formative assessment, culturally responsive pedagogy, inclusive assessment
Student experience	Participation, access to rigor, belonging, identity affirmation, and well-being

The model positions inclusion as an ongoing process rather than an endpoint, emphasizing that meaningful inclusion occurs when systems adapt to learners and instructional practices are intentionally designed to remove structural and cultural barriers and support diverse ways of learning (Yang *et al.*, 2025; Deroncele-Acosta & Ellis, 2024).

4.3 Implications for Research and Practice

To researchers, this framework demands a reassessment of operationalization and measurement of inclusion. Further research must go beyond the placement-based indicators and examine the aspects of instructional quality, collaborative practices, assessment design, and experiences of participation, belonging, and identity affirmation of students (Yang *et al.*, 2025; Laaksonen *et al.*, 2025).

To practitioners and policymakers, the framework will highlight the fact that inclusion is best achieved when implemented as a collective teaching and a relationship task. The structures of the schools and teacher preparation and continuous professional development should be able to promote collaborative planning, formative and alternative assessment, and culturally responsive instruction in order to make inclusion substantive instead of procedural (Brennan & Gorman, 2023; Abdalla & Moussa, 2024; Nieminen, 2022).

5. Conclusion

Culturally responsive system-level responsibility is the most logical way to conceptualize inclusive education, as opposed to the placement-based or compliance-oriented mandate. This conceptual paper places inclusion as a process, where systems, school structures, and classroom practices are deliberately planned to eliminate barriers and establish diverse identities by incorporating the Social Model of Disability with Culturally Responsive Teaching. In this reframing, inclusion is practiced by using shared instructional responsibility, formative assessment, and culturally based pedagogies, which facilitate participation, access to high-quality curriculum, and a sense of belonging (Black & Wiliam, 2009).

Such a reconceptualization of inclusion has far-reaching implications for research, policy, and practice. It is recommended that researchers shift their emphasis from place-based indicators to an analysis of the quality of instruction, experiences of students, and

cultural aspects of disability in schools. Similar calls are made to policymakers and practitioners to bring legislation, teacher preparation, and school organization into systemic and culturally responsive inclusion. With this alignment, inclusive education can go beyond procedural integration to substantive, equity-based practice that provides educational experiences to all learners that are more significant.

Creative Commons License Statement

This research work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License. To view a copy of this license, visit <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0>. To view the complete legal code, visit <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/legalcode.en>. Under the terms of this license, members of the community may copy, distribute, and transmit the article, provided that proper, prominent, and unambiguous attribution is given to the authors, and the material is not used for commercial purposes or modified in any way. Reuse is only allowed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

About the Author(s)

Mary Lilian Oyoo, M.Ed., is a Special Education Teacher with Greenville County Schools in the United States and an inclusion educator with experience in secondary education. Her work focuses on inclusive pedagogy, co-teaching, formative assessment, and culturally responsive teaching. Her research interests include reconceptualizing inclusion as a system-level instructional practice, promoting meaningful student participation, and advancing equitable learning outcomes for diverse learners. She is a member of the Kappa Delta Pi Honor Society and actively engages in professional learning and research related to inclusive education.

References

- Abdalla, H., & Moussa, A. (2024). Culturally Responsive Teaching: Navigating Models and Implementing Effective Strategies. *Acta Pedagogica Asiana*. <https://doi.org/10.53623/apga.v3i2.432>
- Ainscow, M., Booth, T., & Dyson, A. (2006). *Improving schools, developing inclusion*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203967157>
- Alhumaid, M., Alfozan, S., Alobaid, M., AlNajjar, N., Allah, B., & Said, M. (2023). Effects of disability type, prior contact, and school setting on attitudes toward peers with disabilities among Saudi female students aged 7 to 12 years. *PLOS ONE*, 18. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0291274>

- Argyriou, M. (2025). Integrating Technology-enhanced Alternative Assessment in Special Education: Pedagogical, Cultural and Structural Dimensions for Inclusive Practice. *European Journal of Special Education Research*. <https://doi.org/10.46827/ejse.v11i6.6256>
- Articles, A. J., Kozleski, E. B., Trent, S. C., Osher, D., & Ortiz, A. (2010). Justifying and explaining disproportionality, 1968–2008: A critique of underlying views of culture. *Exceptional Children*, 76(3), 279–299. <https://doi.org/10.1177/001440291007600303>
- Bashir, M., Singh, A., & Taily, T. (2025). Inclusive Physical Education: A Theoretical Framework for Students and Sportspersons With Disabilities. *International Journal of Social Science Research (IJSSR)*. <https://doi.org/10.70558/ijssr.2025.v2.i2.30282>
- Black, P., & Wiliam, D. (2009). Developing the theory of formative assessment. *Educational Assessment, Evaluation and Accountability*, 21(1), 5–31. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11092-008-9068-5>
- Brady, L., Wang, C., Griffiths, C., Yang, J., Markus, H., & Fryberg, S. (2024). A leadership-level culture cycle intervention changes teachers' culturally inclusive beliefs and practices. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America*, 121. <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.2322872121>
- Brennan, A., & Gorman, A. (2023). Leading transformative professional learning for inclusion across the teacher education continuum: lessons from online and on-site learning communities. *Professional Development in Education*, 49, 1117–1130. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19415257.2023.2238717>
- Cruz, L., Aguinaldo, I., Alzate, L., Camero, C., Abiado, K., & Gumpal, B. (2025). Fostering Intercultural Competence through Culturally Responsive Pedagogy: Practices and Perspectives in Philippine Higher Education Institutions. *International Journal on Culture, History, and Religion*. <https://doi.org/10.63931/ijchr.v7isi2.187>
- Da Cruz, N., De Lima, J., Gervásio, G., De Oliveira, A., Santos, S., & Gomes, A. (2024). Inclusive Education and Cultural Diversity. *ARACÊ*. <https://doi.org/10.56238/arev6n3-101>
- Das, S., & Sarkar, R. (2025). Rethinking School Readiness for Inclusion: A Theoretical Evaluation of Social and Cultural Climates for PwDs. *Asian Research Journal of Arts & Social Sciences*. <https://doi.org/10.9734/arjass/2025/v23i11835>
- Deroncele-Acosta, Á., & Ellis, A. (2024). Overcoming Challenges and Promoting Positive Education in Inclusive Schools: A Multi-Country Study. *Education Sciences*. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci14111169>
- Florian, L., & Black-Hawkins, K. (2011). Exploring inclusive pedagogy. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 41(4), 443–458. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0305764X.2011.625005>
- Gallego-Ortega, J., & Rodríguez-Fuentes, A. (2021). Teaching Attitudes towards Students with Disabilities. *Mathematics*. <https://doi.org/10.3390/math9141637>
- Gay, G. (2018). *Culturally responsive teaching: Theory, research, and practice (3rd ed.)*. Teachers College Press. Retrieved from <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED581130>

- Ghaemi, H., & Boroushaki, N. (2025). Culturally responsive teaching in diverse classrooms: A framework for teacher preparation programs. *Australian Journal of Applied Linguistics*. <https://doi.org/10.29140/ajal.v8n1.102433>
- Goodall, G., Mjøen, O., Witsø, A., Horghagen, S., Hardonk, S., & Kvam, L. (2023). Attitudes towards students with disabilities achieving their educational and work-related goals: a factorial survey experiment among higher education institution employees in Norway. *Higher Education*, 1–47. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-023-01123-8>
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. § 1400 (2004).
- Jazmines, N., & Caballes, D. (2025). Implementation and Sustainability of Inclusive Education Programs Towards Curriculum Development Framework. *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research*. <https://doi.org/10.26803/ijlter.24.8.4>
- Karanja, D. N., Musyoka-Kamere, I., & Wawire, V. (2021). Inclusive education policy and its influence on the academic participation of students with disabilities in selected public universities in Kenya. *International Journal of Multicultural and Multireligious Understanding*, 8(5), 389–401. <https://doi.org/10.18415/ijmmu.v8i5.3296>
- Karni-Vizer, N., Arslan, M., & Hazan-Liran, B. (2025). Inclusion Across Educational Levels: Cultural Differences in the Attitudes of Jewish and Arab Teachers in Elementary, Middle, and High Schools. *Education Sciences*. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci15101398>
- Krämer, S., & Zimmermann, F. (2025). Teachers' perceptions of students with different disabilities through the lens of the stereotype content model. *Social Psychology of Education*, 28. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11218-025-10046-4>
- Laaksonen, J., Korhonen, H., & Vainio, A. (2025). Narratives of Inclusion: Story-Based Reflections on Special Education Practices in Finnish Primary Schools. *International Journal of Educational Narratives*. <https://doi.org/10.70177/ijen.v3i3.2205>
- Ladson-Billings, G. (1995). Toward a theory of culturally relevant pedagogy. *American Educational Research Journal*, 32(3), 465–491. <https://doi.org/10.3102/00028312032003465>
- Nieminen, J. (2022). Assessment for Inclusion: rethinking inclusive assessment in higher education. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 29, 841–859. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13562517.2021.2021395>
- Nieminen, J. (2022). Unveiling ableism and disablism in assessment: a critical analysis of disabled students' experiences of assessment and assessment accommodations. *Higher Education*, 85, 613–636. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-022-00857-1>
- Ohba, A., & Malenya, F. L. (2022). Addressing inclusive education for learners with disabilities in the integrated education system: The dilemma of public primary schools in Kenya. *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education*, 52(4), 575–592. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03057925.2020.1762461>
- Oliver, M. (1996). *Understanding disability: From theory to practice*. Macmillan. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-349-24269>

- Pervaiz, R., & Tatlah, I. (2025). Impacts of Social and Cultural Inclusion in Education. *Proceedings of The World Conference on Teaching and Education*. <https://doi.org/10.33422/worldcte.v4i1.1240>
- Republic of Kenya. (2018). *Sector policy for learners and trainees with disabilities*. Ministry of Education.
- Sapir, A., & Banai, A. (2023). Balancing attendance and disclosure: identity work of students with invisible disabilities. *Disability & Society*, 39, 2032 - 2052. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09687599.2023.2181765>
- Schirmer, B., & Lockman, A. (2022). Culturally Responsive Teaching in an Undergraduate Online General Education Course. *Online Learning*. <https://doi.org/10.24059/olj.v26i3.2805>
- Solis-Grant, M., Bretti-López, M., Espinoza-Parçet, C., Pérez-Villalobos, C., Rodríguez-Núñez, I., Pincheira-Martínez, C., & Sepúlveda-Carrasco, C. (2023). Inclusion in the university: Who assumes responsibility? A qualitative study. *PLOS ONE*, 18. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0280161>
- Thompson, D., & Brewster, S. (2022). Inclusive placement learning for diverse higher education students: anxiety, uncertainty, and opportunity. *Educational Review*, 75, 1406–1424. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131911.2021.2023470>
- Wickenden, M., Njungi, J., & Rohwerder, B. (2023). Experiences and expectations of inclusive early childhood education in Kenya. *Disability and the Global South*, 10(1), 1–23.
- Yang, C., Wang, T., & Xiu, Q. (2025). Towards a Sustainable Future in Education: A Systematic Review and Framework for Inclusive Education. *Sustainability*. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su17093837>