Student and Staff Views on Inclusion and Inclusive Education in a Global South and a Global North Higher Education Institution

Acquilina Wafula Nawire [1], Sally Musungu [2], Vasiliki Kioupi [3,*], Felister Nzuve [4] and George Giannopoulos [5]

1 Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE), International Rescue Committee, New York, NY 10168, USA; acquilinarwafula@gmail.com
2 Schlumberger Foundation, Houston, TX 77056-2790, USA; mrnmusungu@gmail.com
3 Sustainability Research Institute, School of Earth and Environment, University of Leeds, Leeds LS2 9JT, UK
4 Department of Plant Science and Crop Protection, University of Nairobi, Kangemi 00625, Kenya; fnzuve@uonbi.ac.ke
5 Department of Physics and Astronomy, Faculty of Mathematics and Physical Sciences (MAPS), University College London, London WC1E 6BT, UK; g.giannopoulos@ucl.ac.uk
* Correspondence: v.kioupi@leeds.ac.uk

Abstract: This article presents views and experiences of staff, and learners from two Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)—the University of Nairobi in Kenya and UCL in the UK—on their intuitional structures, support, and education mechanisms related to disability, international and refugee status. Inclusive education is a complex subject and often the focus is particularly placed on learners with disabilities, but this study explored several layers of diversity. The objective of this study was to investigate the views and experiences of students and staff on policies and practices of inclusion and inclusive education using two case studies, one in each university. Data were collected through surveys and interviews. Results are presented in the following areas: (1) capacity building for staff; (2) support and reporting services for all; (3) class sizes; and (4) modes of course delivery. Findings reveal that implementation of inclusion and inclusive education is still a challenge for both HEIs. The gaps identified can be used as a reference point for action. Inclusion and inclusive education are necessary to ensure the needs of every learner and staff are met. The article is structured into five sections: a brief description of inclusive education in the two HEIs, methodology, results, discussion, and conclusion.

Keywords: inclusion; inclusive education; disability; international students; refugee students; university policies

1. Introduction

Demand for tertiary education has skyrocketed, a phenomenon referred to as massification (Boughey, 2012). This increase in the demand for Higher Education (HE) is a call to Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to create more inclusive environments where all learners can thrive regardless of their characteristics. Governments have been at the forefront of ensuring that there is no discrimination in providing quality education among diverse groups, which may comprise students with disabilities, different sexual preferences, economic class, and ethnicity, among others (Boughey, 2012; Pino & Mortari, 2014). The concept of inclusion in education especially in the Global South has been used to remedy the gaps in the Education for All initiative and link to educational practices that could enhance the quality of the educational offer for learners with disabilities and others (Miles & Singal, 2010). Schuelka (2018) highlights that successful inclusive practice explores all layers of diversity including socio-economic status, gender, ethnicity, and language. As

much as learners with disabilities were the main motivation behind the concept of inclusive education, many individuals will be left out if we stick to that. The complexity of inclusive education is something that needs attention (Teschers, 2020).

The continuous debate over the definition of Inclusive Education (IE) underscores the intricate and multifaceted nature of the topic. When we refer to inclusion, we use the Kenyan definition that sees it as a "philosophy which focuses on the process of adjusting home, school, and society so that all the individuals, regardless of their differences, can have the opportunity to interact, play, learn, work and experience the feeling of belonging, and experiment to develop in accordance with their potentials and difficulties". The Kenyan definition is in synchrony with the wider view that inclusive education encompasses several tactics, actions, and procedures designed to ensure everyone has access to quality, relevant, and suitable education (Stubbs, 2008). It is a way of meeting people's rights. IE in higher education is conceptualized as being influenced by a series of interacting dimensions; institutional infrastructure, culture and community, staff diversity, student diversity, institutional policy on inclusion, and inclusive education practice, specifically enabling all individuals to embody their identities and enjoy their rights and respect those of others (Kioupi et al., 2023). In this study, we explore several layers of diversity including disability, race, and refugee status. Several declarations made by the United Nations concerning inclusive education have implored governments to restructure their policies, and legal and budgetary provisions to give equitable access to education to diverse students (Ireri et al., 2020). The UK Equality Act (2010) also includes provisions that legally protect people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society.

Several theories inform the concept of Inclusive Education (IE). The Right to Education project and the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education propose the 4 As conceptual framework (Tomasevski, 2004). The 4 As conceptual framework (Acceptability, Availability, Adaptability, Accessibility) can be summed up as follows: quality education and well-trained teachers, availability of adequate infrastructure, adaptability to the unique needs of learners, and non-discrimination in the education system. The social capital theory underscores the importance of learners who are disadvantaged at building relationships with institution personnel and teaching techniques that create a learning environment for all (Liou & Chang, 2008); the humanistic theory places importance on self-actualization in relation to the learner's perception of the school environment (Rogers, 1957). All these theories put an emphasis on an appropriate learning environment for all which is core in scaling inclusive education. The learning environment encompasses teaching personnel and every other item that is used in the teaching and learning process.

Different social, economic, cultural, and political factors hinder the realization of inclusive education. This calls for proper diversity management practices to achieve a competitive advantage, creativity and innovation, higher productivity, employee attraction and retention, and higher employee morale in HEIs. The study by Mukhwana et al. (2017) reported clear discrepancies in terms of gender, tribe, and people with disabilities employed at HEIs in Kenya. The application of the Universal Design for Learning which has the capacity to promote inclusive learning is still ambiguous in institutions of higher learning (Fornauf & Erickson, 2020). Additionally, a study conducted by Tavares (2024) in a Canadian university pointed out that international students are not considered as a group at the risk of marginalization despite the structural barriers they face. Their experiences are overlooked. A concerted effort to ensure inclusivity is required by all stakeholders in the education system. This will ensure quality education which provides students with skills and knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, and broader life skills that seek to improve their lives while empowering them to be leaders and change-makers. Enhancing the educator's

knowledge of inclusive education strategies is important by integrating them into the syllabi (Damiani et al., 2024).

It is very important to measure access to Higher Education (HE) for underrepresented groups, but this is a complex task (Claeys-Kulik et al., 2019; Pitman et al., 2020). The key question remains: for whom is accessibility and inclusion being sought? (Veidemane et al., 2021). In the Global North, despite variations in how inclusion is defined, its effectiveness is directly tied to student management by minimizing distraction in regular classrooms and limiting 'failure' in systems of education (Armstrong et al., 2011). In the global South, inclusion in education is influenced by post-colonial perspectives and economic development initiatives, often funded by international organizations (Armstrong et al., 2011). The complexity of the term 'inclusion' presents an opportunity for Institutions of higher learning to explore what diversity and inclusion really mean.

The diversity of learners in higher education institutions ranges from those with disabilities, minority groups, international students, and refugees, among others. A study conducted by Mercer-Mapstone and Bovill (2020) in the UK revealed that higher education is evolving at a slower rate than student cohorts are diversifying, and the impediments faced by students are inequitable. Universities ought to modify their strategies and environment to meet the diversity of students (Kioupi et al., 2023).

Despite the widely recognized benefits of quality education provision for refugees in developing resilience, there are major barriers to providing high-quality education to refugees at all levels Crea (2016). In many countries, refugees experience discrimination, intimidation, and social exclusion, which may negatively impact their psychological health and ability to enter and complete higher education. Even in national university structures that welcome refugees and endeavor to include them in their curriculum, they are rarely well represented (Lambrechts, 2020). Refugee students are particularly vulnerable to institutional barriers (Martin & Stulgaitis, 2022), which we explore in this article. Refugees are generally highly disadvantaged compared to other migrants (Koehler & Schneider, 2019).

Individuals may belong to many disadvantaged groups at the same time, resulting in a system of disadvantage (Crock & Ernst, 2017). Crock and Ernst (2017) examine the intersectionality between refugee status, gender, and disability. It was revealed that the combination of refugee status and disability influences people's attitudes toward the inclusion of male and female refugees in distinct ways. Aybars (2011) views intersectionality as a fluid and context-specific concept, highlighting how individual and group characteristics, which place an individual either at an advantage or disadvantage, influence individuals' places in society, as well as the extent to which attributes such as disability, refugee status, and gender can combine to produce social inclusion or exclusion. The combined impact of these intersecting obstacles leads to systematic exclusion from higher education opportunities, thus prolonging intergenerational poverty cycles and a decline in economic output (Aybars, 2011).

To ensure that the University of Nairobi and UCL deliver quality education, inclusive education is a priority. The ongoing reforms and new policies should endeavor to encompass inclusivity, equity, and equality to eliminate stereotypes and any prejudices, hence reducing biases, discrimination, and intolerance and achieving cultural change that respects learner identities (Kioupi et al., 2023). Students and staff in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) have views and lived experiences through their participation in learning and working and they should have a say in the design of such policies; thus, this research aims to investigate these. Through surveys and interviews on the status of inclusion and inclusive education, the views of students and staff in two higher institutions (one in Kenya and one in the UK) were collected and analyzed. The findings will help improve the

design of policies and the practice of inclusion and IE, shed light on the lived experience of students and staff, and may provide some recommendations for improving their sense of belonging. We focused on disability, race, and international/refugee status as a follow-up of an initial funded study into the policies and practices on inclusion and IE at UCL and the University of Nairobi (Kioupi et al., 2023).

2. Materials and Methods

The study was guided by the classical liberal theory of equal opportunities developed by Sherman and Wood in 1982 (Sherman & Woods, 1982). This theory asserts that everyone deserves an equal opportunity in education. Everyone is born with an inherent ability that cannot be altered and this means that education systems especially universities should be crafted to remove any barriers including those which are institution-based so that learners can maximize their inherent abilities. Inclusive education is about adapting the system to fit the learner and not the other way around. It pins the 'issue' of exclusion solely to the system, rather than the individual or their attributes (Stubbs, 2008). This theory was our starting point which we combined with the social model of inclusion (Lawson & Beckett, 2021) to uncover interlinkages among the many dimensions of diversity in higher education and how they are influenced by contextual factors. We came up with a systemic view on inclusion and inclusive education which guided our preliminary study on the policies and practices of inclusion and IE that resulted in knowledge exchange and sharing of good practices of inclusive education between the UCL and the UoN (Kioupi et al., 2023). This framework recognized the interconnectedness among inclusion, inclusive education, student, and staff diversity, as well as infrastructural, cultural, and community factors that need to be taken into consideration when investigating inclusion in HE (Figure 1). This was used to analyze policy and practice on inclusion in the first stage of our study.
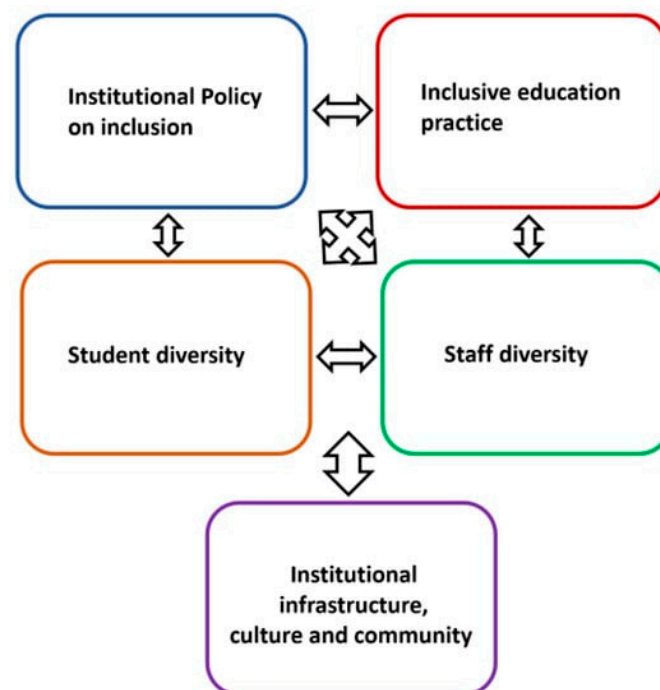

Figure 1. The multiple and interacting dimensions of how inclusion and inclusive education are operationalized in a higher education context taken from (Kioupi et al., 2023).

Based on our conceptual framework we developed, the following research questions for our study consider the contextual factors that influence policy on inclusion and IE practice based on our earlier analysis (Kioupi et al., 2023).

Research questions relevant to The University of Nairobi:

i. To what extent does the availability of resources and support services determine the implementation of inclusive education?
ii. To what extent do modes of course delivery determine the implementation of inclusive education?
iii. In what ways does the capacity building of lecturers determine the implementation of inclusive education?
iv. How does class size determine the implementation of inclusive education?

Research questions relevant to UCL:

i. To what extent does capacity building of staff on inclusive education affect its implementation?
ii. To what extent are the staff engaged with the EDI Program and how does this determine the implementation of inclusive education?
iii. What is the staff's and students' experience with the EDI support tools at UCL?
iv. What are the views and perceptions of discrimination and belonging by staff and students at UCL?

This was an exploratory study that assessed students' and staff's perceptions and experiences of inclusivity in higher education. To answer the research questions, we developed surveys and interviews to collect data from the two universities as the combination would give us a more high-level overview of the views of staff and students as well as a deeper insight into their perceptions and experiences (Timans et al., 2019). One limitation was the number of responses that we collected in the surveys and interviews; however, as the focus was on views and experiences, we acknowledge that all reported views and experiences are valuable for knowledge exchange and for understanding some of the conditions that are at play in both HEIs. For designing these, we took into account existing policies and practices on inclusive education in both HEIs; we included questions that captured student and staff diversity, especially for the UCL study, as well as accessibility of spaces/online environments, support mechanisms, teaching culture, and sense of belonging.

Five surveys were generated, three for the students of the two universities and two for the staff of the two universities. For UoN, specifically due to dissemination constraints, one survey was disseminated to Learners With Disabilities (LWDs) and one to refugee students, while for UCL the survey was disseminated to every student. This recruitment method was followed at UoN because these populations would be difficult to reach with a generalized survey. Surveys were disseminated through Qualtrics, an online survey tool that was freely available to UCL staff members and shared with UoN colleagues. The surveys were designed to reflect policies and practices on inclusion and IE that had been researched in the first phase of the research project. All surveys included closed and open-ended questions to enhance the richness of the data. General variables in both institutions were disability, race and international/refugee status, and participants' views on inclusion and inclusive education practices. At UoN, specific variables were student population size, infrastructure, modes of course delivery, and professional development of educators. In addition, the UoN student surveys included questions on student learning experience, e.g., support services, curricular design, teaching methods, online mode of delivery, well-being, sense of belonging and discrimination as well as accessibility. The UCL staff survey focused on personalized support for disability or international status, social life, sense of belonging, satisfaction with support tools and services, awareness of EDI policies and race and equality charters, training, and adjustments in teaching for students with reasonable adjustments. The UCL student survey was largely similar but asked about the learning experience of students and their experience of inclusivity.

The surveys were disseminated through newsletters and emailing key stakeholders, who were the EDI, Teaching and Learning and Disability representatives of the two HEIs. Consenting participants from UCL and UoN were invited to a follow-up interview. The interviews were conducted online for UCL and in person for UoN. The project was approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the Institute of Education at UCL (REC 179 dated 2 May 2023). The results from the surveys and interviews at both institutions were analyzed using Excel tools for the surveys and thematic analysis for the interviews and were used to build two case studies to shed more light on how students and staff think about their learning and working experience, respectively, at the two institutions, which are contextually different, as well as to gain views on how they could be better supported by the HEIs. The survey and interview questions can be found in the Appendices A and B.

The study was conducted by researchers at the University of Nairobi and UCL because of two funding calls received by UCL staff. The first one was an Institute of Education (IOE) International fund, which called for collaborations with international partners from the Global South on pressing educational matters for which a considerable knowledge exchange could happen so that more holistic solutions could be suggested for both HEIS. The second was a Take Bold Action for Inclusion fund from the Faculty of Mathematics and Physical Sciences (MAPS) at UCL that aimed to produce solutions to inclusion challenges at the university and generate a wider impact. The two UCL researchers developed an interdisciplinary team with a UoN researcher involved in EDI work. The funding was utilized to employ two research assistants, one at UoN and one at UCL, who supported the delivery of the research, conducted an analysis of policies and practices of inclusion and inclusive education as well as an investigation of the views and lived experiences of staff and students at the two universities.

3. Results

To answer our research questions, we implemented surveys for students and staff at UoN and UCL, which were complemented by interviews so that we could delve deeper into their views and experiences of inclusive education. We received 79 responses to the UoN staff survey, 109 responses to the UoN student survey (78 for the refugee and 31 for the disability survey), 39 responses to the UCL staff survey, and 44 responses to the UCL student survey. Further 4 people were interviewed at UoN (two students and two members of staff) and 11 people at UCL of which 7 were students and 4 were staff members. We present the results as two case studies as we used different approaches to survey distribution and interview participant recruitment at the two institutions that operate under different contexts. The results per case study are presented in the next two sub-sections.

3.1. Case Study 1: The University of Nairobi Case Study

3.1.1. Characteristics of the Student and Staff Survey Samples

Most of the refugees reported to have held the status for 11–20 years which is a significant period of time (Figure 2). Childhood experiences, however, remain persistent over time and influence refugee socio-emotional status.

A greater number of the LWDs surveyed reported to have leg impairments and blindness (Figure 3). Only one preferred not to say, indicating that there is no fear of declaring disability status to the majority of them which is positive. Identities of most LWDs are highly shaped by social interactions with colleagues with impairments and without (Forber-Pratt et al., 2021). The inclusion of LWDs is advantageous in comparison to the biased adoption of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with

Disabilities (Bruijn et al., 2012). Inclusion can be promoted through awareness-raising campaigns and loud advocacy for the rights of LWDs (Mittler, 2012; Wasserman, 2013).
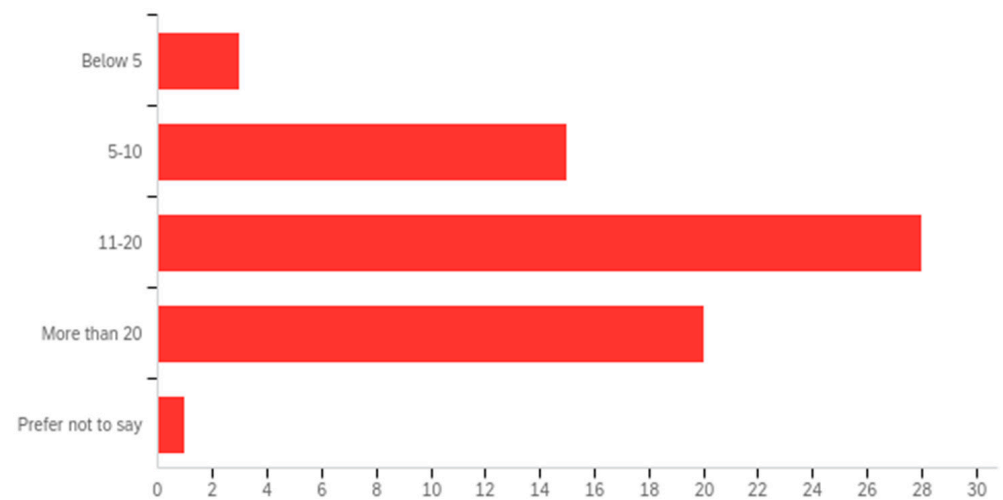
Figure 2. Refugee student responses to the question: for how many years have you had refugee status in Kenya?
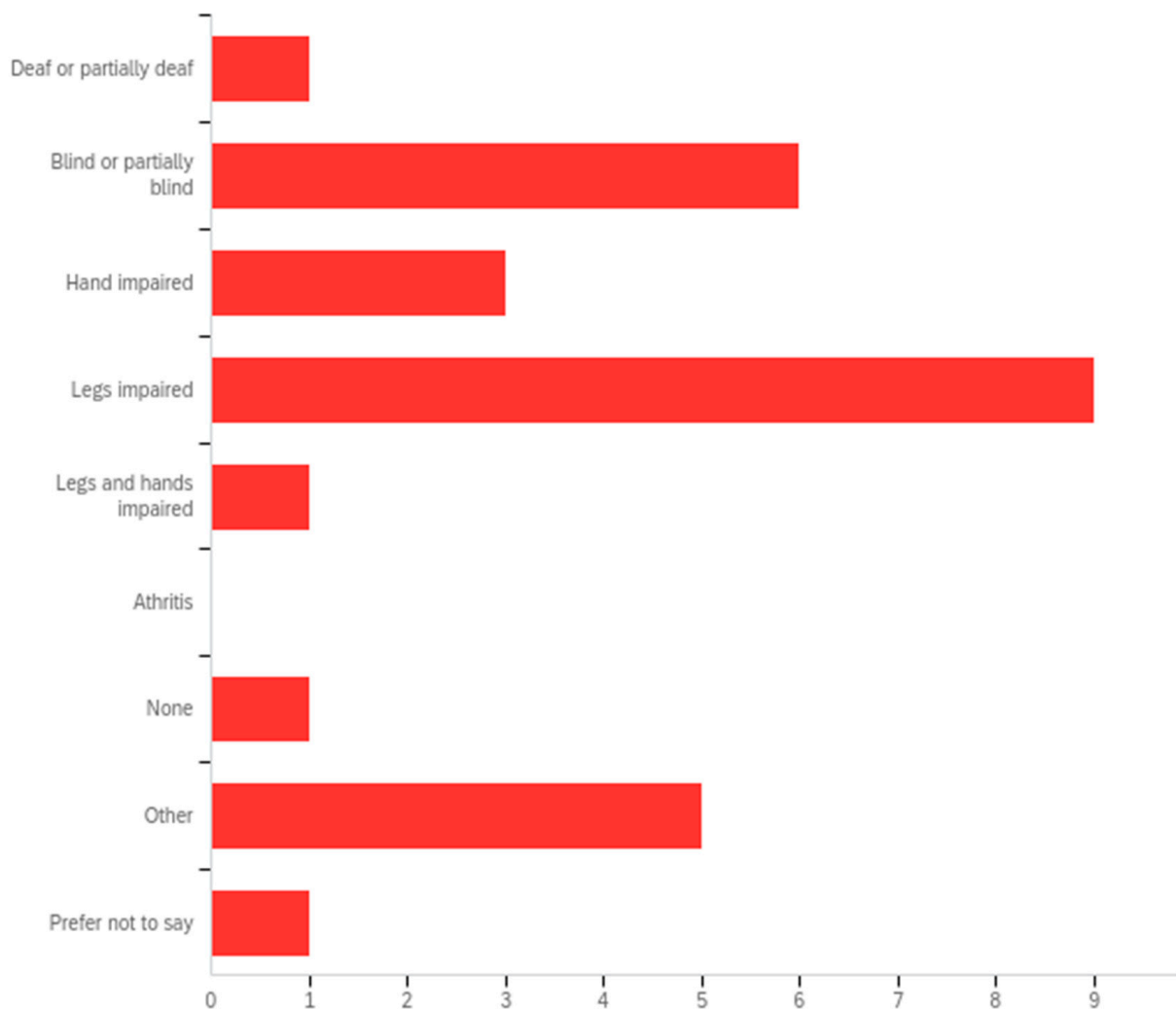
Figure 3. Student responses (LWDs) to the question: what is the nature of your physical impairment?

Over two-thirds of the refugee survey sample identified as men, less than a third as women, and one preferred not to disclose. On the other hand, almost 45% of the students with disabilities identified as women. Transforming HEIs to achieve actual gender parity across all student categories remains a dilemma to be tackled (David, 2015). Survey respondents came from the following faculties: Arts and Social Sciences, Engineering, Agriculture, Education, Health Sciences, Science and Technology, Business and Management Science, Built Environment and Design, Economics and Statistics, Computer Sciences, and Law.

In terms of the staff survey, 57% of the respondents were women, none disclosed disability, and most came from the Faculty of Education, Business and Management Science and Agriculture. The majority of lecturers (57) had worked at the UoN between 11 and 20 years.

3.1.2. Focus of the Analysis

In the first case study, we explored two layers of diversity: physical disability and refugee status. In the assessment of the implementation of IE for refugees and learners with disabilities (LWDs), we explored the following factors which affect learning as per our research questions:

- Availability of resources and support services;
- Modes of course delivery;
- Capacity building of lecturers;
- Class sizes.

The above factors are key determinants in implementing inclusive education policies in HE and were part of the student and staff surveys. The results for each of the factors according to the survey and interview data are presented below.

3.1.3. Availability of Resources and Support Services

This dimension encompasses safe and inclusive learning spaces that foster a sense of belonging and ensure effective learning. The relationship between students and the learning environment plays an important role in the successful implementation of inclusive education. Unangst and Crea (2020) highlight that several institutions of higher learning offer special support services to refugees to prevent dropouts. Some universities, however, do not give refugees special treatment because they are not viewed as people with distinct needs; this was the realization made by over half of the universities in England (Lambrechts, 2020). In our research, because of a lack of data related to student dropouts, we could not examine the dropout rates for refugee students and LWDs.

The curriculum is one of the resources in an educational system, and it has a vital impact in either inhibiting or facilitating the growth of inclusion (UNESCO, 2003). The curriculum should be adaptable and accommodating so it can cater to diverse students' learning needs. Individualized instruction has become an increasing priority expressed through educational studies owing to its ability to improve student learning results (Juniarni et al., 2024) and is crucial for achieving inclusion.

In addition to a curriculum for all, the learning spaces should be well equipped and safe to accommodate LWDs. The closure of the disadvantage gap depends on proper support for the learners at the risk of marginalization. Social Emotional Learning (SEL) plays a vital role as a support service in aiding refugees in navigating the challenges associated with immigration, disruptions in familial patterns, and discrimination (Block et al., 2014). Scholarly research reveals that social and emotional learning (SEL) exhibits a considerable beneficial relationship with academic success. A growing body of Australian research has indicated that universities have exhibited reluctance in tailoring their services to cater to the specific requirements of refugee students (Joyce et al., 2010; Lenette, 2016)

and in promoting their academic growth and persistence in higher education (Kong et al., 2016).

Findings on Resources and Support Services

Data on resources and support services were obtained through a questionnaire for the students (refugees and LWDs) and an intensive interview with a representative of each group. The first question to be answered before any further interrogation was whether or not the learners were comfortable being in the same class with others who were not disabled in the case of LWDs and 'nationals' in the case of refugees. They all reported being comfortable in the same class with other learners. This counters findings by Sheikh et al. (2019) who reported in their study that refugees in higher education were not comfortable being in the same classroom with other learners. An inclusive classroom where all learners feel welcome regardless of their characteristics is very vital (Faulkner et al., 2021). Having a sense of belonging and acceptability impacts academic achievement at all levels of education. In the absence of this, people who were previously disadvantaged continue to face a persistent gap in their advancement.

The interviews with lecturers and two faculty deans revealed gaps in relation to resources and support services. The most important findings from the two surveys can be found in the following sections:

- Learners with disabilities;

Almost three-quarters of the survey respondents reported that they do not receive any kind of individualized support in the classroom. The lack of individualized support affects their learning outcomes in the areas which require the instructors to pay attention to individual characteristics such as physical disability. Additionally, learning outcomes are not segregated on the basis of disability, gender, or refugee status, so it is not possible to tell whether some individuals are facing difficulties/challenges because of their status. This concurs with the findings by Roegman et al. (2018) who found out that academic performance is more often disaggregated based on the instructor and level than learner personal characteristics such as gender, disability, race, etc. The university is seeking to bridge this gap. The learners gave suggestions including giving more time for assignments and exams, providing Assistive Technology (AT), and providing adapted seats, which are actionable recommendations.

- Refugee students.

The UNHCR defines a refugee as a person living out of their country due to a legitimate fear of persecution. The vast majority of the survey samples (81.2%) do not undergo progress monitoring to assess potential dropouts or delays in completion rates. Once more, it was observed by a Key Informant interviewee that the monitoring of enrolment and completion rates among various learner groups is lacking, hence hindering the identification of potential issues within the educational environment that may impede their learning outcomes. In Europe, retention and completion rates are used by HEIs and the government as metrics of student success (Vossensteyn et al., 2015). There is a need to invest in data collection systems for matters concerning refugee students to help track their progress and document any challenges faced. The data collected can be organized in terms of the following: areas in the university needing modification, unmet needs of the refugees, and actions that can be taken towards closing the gap. Most refugee students also indicated that they do not receive any support from the university, and this finding concurs with a study by Abamosa (2023) that colleges lack dedicated spaces or support centers expressly geared to meet the requirements of refugee students. Findings also revealed that in making decisions on matters concerning the refugees, their involvement is missing. The 2018

Global Compact on Refugees and the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (UN General Assembly, 2016) advocates for including refugees in the decision-making processes pertaining to issues that directly impact their lives.

On a positive note, only a small proportion, specifically 8.9%, reported facing discrimination based on their origin. With more structures in place, this can be completely eliminated. Most importantly, they reported they did not encounter any hurdles during their enrollment at the university.

The researchers conducted further interviews with a representative from the group of refugee students, resulting in the following insights:

> "*Some students discriminate against refugees based on their status, so you have to avoid interacting with them, but others are accommodating. This indicates that students must be sensitized to the inclusion of refugees*". The student added that "*World Refugee Day is not given attention; this may be used by the University to send a message to other students who feel differently about refugees*".

The significance of commemorating Global Refugee Day, as it serves as a platform for refugees to articulate their concerns and difficulties is highlighted by (Balabanova, 2019). Kardeş and Akman (2022) further explain the importance of offering seminars to other students to help change their perspective towards refugees.

Findings also revealed that the curriculum exhibits a high level of inflexibility, as indicated by a significant majority of the lecturers, and therefore it cannot be twisted to make add-ons according to the needs of the refugee students. The curriculum ought to be flexible and open rather than rigid (Jonnaert & Therriault, 2013) so it can be aligned with mandates from IE.

The faculty deans reported that there are no centers dedicated to IE in their respective faculties.

3.1.4. Modes of Course Delivery

Effective modes of course delivery translate to the best learning outcomes. The Education 2030 Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action (UNESCO, 2016) observes that progress towards the achievement of SDG 4 relies on the opportunities and challenges presented by technology. Effective use of the online mode of course delivery calls for appropriate pedagogical practices that meet the needs of every learner and adequate instructor preparation. The refugee students and LWDs were asked to share their thoughts on online learning via an open-ended question, with the goal of measuring their sentiments about this style of course delivery. Online classes are the new norm, no longer a response to COVID-19. One recurrent concern in HE is the effectiveness of online instruction (Kofoed et al., 2024). Both refugees and LWDs demonstrated a preference for face-to-face classes because they offer an opportunity for interaction. According to the views collected by Chakraborty et al. (2021) on the opinions of students on online learning versus physical classes, it was similarly reported that physical classes are preferred because they offer opportunities for social interaction which is important. Students in online classes are also unlikely to participate in collaborative learning (Dumford & Miller, 2018). However, university students who are satisfied with online learning have a positive attitude towards it and are very willing to attend classes online (Al-Maroof et al., 2021).

As much as learning outcomes are sustained in online learning as reported by the instructors, the students (both refugees and LWDs) reported that they do not receive adequate ICT support for online learning. This is a gap that needs to be closed. There is a need for adequate ICT support for students in order for online learning to be successful (Ali, 2020). On the other hand, the lecturers reported receiving enough ICT support which is encouraging. The lack of a digital learning policy is a gap to be filled. To better address

these issues in online learning, the challenges and opportunities posed by online learning ought to be assessed by the university.

3.1.5. Capacity Building of Lecturers

It is really important that lecturers undergo continuous professional development to be able to navigate the challenges posed by diverse classrooms in this digital age. Instructors are expected to handle learners from diverse backgrounds and this can only happen effectively if they are continuously reskilled and upskilled. The assessment of capacity building of lecturers was performed using a Likert scale and data collected from the surveys are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Agreement with statements on the challenges in the implementation of inclusive education for refugee students (F = frequency of response, % = percentage).

	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Undecided		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Lack of sensitization on the UDL (Universal Learning Design) And its application	18	22.8	27	34.2	11	13.9	15	19.0	8	10.1
Lack of workshops to capacity build lecturers on IE	7	8.9	10	12.7	6	7.6	38	48.1	18	227
Lack of a policy that addresses Issues related to refugee and Migrant students.	4	5.1	13	16.5	12	15.2	42	53.2	8	10.1
Lack of training on how to provide Psychosocial support to learners	8	10.1	13	16.5	6	7.6	38	48.1	14	17.7
Lack of knowledge of Socio-Emotional Learning.	11	13.9	18	22.8	9	11.4	31	39.2	10	12.7
Lack of appropriate resources.	10	12.7	11	13.9	3	3.8	43	54.4	12	15.2

More than a third (34.2%) of respondents expressed disagreement with the notion that a lack of sensitization regarding Universal Design for Learning poses a problem to the implementation of inclusive education for refugees. Furthermore, 22.8% of respondents strongly disagreed with this statement. However, a total of 19.0% of respondents expressed agreement with the statement, while 10.1% indicated a great level of agreement. This implies that as much as the instructors are not sensitized on the Universal Design for Learning (UDL), the majority do not deem it to be a challenge towards the implementation of IE. Contrary to their opinion, training instructors on the application of the Universal Design for Learning would help them better support learners with unique needs (Rao, 2021).

A majority of respondents (48.1%) expressed agreement with the assertion that the absence of workshops aimed at enhancing the skills and knowledge of lecturers in inclusive education has a detrimental impact on the successful implementation of inclusive education. Furthermore, 22.7% strongly endorsed this viewpoint. This suggests that capacity building ought to be scaled in the field of inclusive education because it is one of the barriers to the successful implementation of inclusive education. Continuous professional development of instructors is crucial for the successful implementation of inclusive education (Van Mieghem et al., 2020).

Based on the responses obtained from the open-ended questions, the following was suggested by a participant that:

"All instructors should be trained in inclusive education, particularly in addressing the physiological needs of students from disadvantaged backgrounds".

Another challenge the researcher sought to investigate whether it affects the implementation of inclusive education for refugee students was the lack of a policy that addresses issues related to refugee and migrant students. More than half (53.2%) agreed with this statement while 10.1% strongly agreed. However, 16.5% and 5.1.% disagreed and strongly disagreed, respectively. Based on the responses, it is imperative for HEIs to have policies as guides to action for marginalized groups. It is quite difficult to address some complexities without policies in place. *"Existing policies should be reviewed to cater to refugee students who confront various kinds of impediments"* was a sentiment from one of the respondents.

Additionally, the instructors were queried on the potential issue posed by insufficient training in delivering psychological assistance to students. In this regard, a significant proportion of respondents, namely 48.1%, expressed a strong inclination towards agreement, while an additional 17.7% indicated a strong agreement. In contrast, a notable proportion of respondents, namely 16.5%, expressed their disagreement with the given statement, although a smaller percentage of 10.1% strongly disagreed. This finding is not different from Jack et al. (2019) who reported from refugee students in a HEI in the UK that their psychosocial needs are not met due to institutional barriers.

In addition to the aforementioned issues, the researcher sought to investigate whether a dearth of understanding regarding socio-emotional learning poses a difficulty for educators in their efforts to help marginalized students. Based on the results, it was found that 39.2% of participants expressed agreement, while 12.7% strongly agreed. In contrast, a notable proportion of the participants, namely 22.8%, expressed their disagreement, while a further 15.2% strongly disagreed.

The findings elucidate that there are several elements that provide challenges to lecturers in the implementation of inclusive education at the University of Nairobi.

3.1.6. Class Size

Class size is also a factor that affects the implementation of inclusive education policies. Small class sizes are many times regarded as an indicator of quality education in HE (Wright et al., 2019). Class size implications differ depending on the learner's characteristics (Blatchford & Russell, 2020) such as disability and trauma-affected learners. The lecturers were queried on whether the class sizes were manageable, and the majority (63.28%) reported that the class sizes were not manageable. Large class sizes pose a great difficulty for the lecturers to offer individualized support to learners who need it. They are also a barrier to building meaningful connections between the lecturers and students which would promote learning. Class size is a great factor that influences the efficiency of an instructor (Baş, 2022).

3.2. Case Study 2: Exploring Physical Disability and Race Dimensions of Inclusivity; A Case at the University College London (UCL)

3.2.1. Background

The University College London (UCL) community is diverse with differently abled individuals. The UCL is a leader in the UK and is committed to fostering an inclusive working and learning environment. This case study explores UCL's efforts to support students and staff with physical disabilities or impairments (used interchangeably) from international and minority backgrounds. It explores how these categories of students and staff perceive the support they receive and identifies gaps in the provision of IE. The case study was conducted by surveying and interviewing students and staff on various aspects of relevant existing inclusion and inclusive education support tools. Through an analysis

of questionnaires and interview data, this case provides insight into the impact of inclusive support tools on physically disabled and minority individuals at UCL. The majority of respondents report not having a physical disability but a substantial number mention one or more mental health problems. There was, however, limited participation from black representatives from the university in the surveys and interviews. These insights suggest that improving support tools for staff with physical disability and creating an environment for active participation for minority individuals could go a long way in enhancing inclusive learning and working conditions. In the following sections, we are providing an overview of the results that were crucial for the identification of gaps and the development of recommendations on inclusive education and inclusion.

3.2.2. Results

The data from the survey study provide insight into the types of disabilities and the subjective evaluation of the existing UCL inclusion support tools. The findings show the distribution of physical impairment among students and staff and their level of satisfaction with the existing inclusive support tools and learning or teaching environments adjusted to the needs of its populace. The interviews were used to offer deeper insights into the results of the survey and enrich the discussion of findings.

Characteristics of the Student and Staff Survey Samples

Most staff survey respondents were women (47%) and came from three UCL faculties, predominantly MAPS (Mathematics and Physical Sciences), IOE (Institute of Education), and Life Sciences. Most staff surveyed did not disclose any disability but those who did suffered from hand impairment. Over a quarter of staff survey participants disclosed they had experienced mental health problems in the last 12 months. However, non-physical impairments were not the focus of this study. Most student survey respondents were women (57%) and came from six faculties (Figure 4). Most students did not disclose disability but of those who did, the majority selected others and did not disclose further. Also, 37% of students reported that they had experienced mental health issues over the last 12 months.
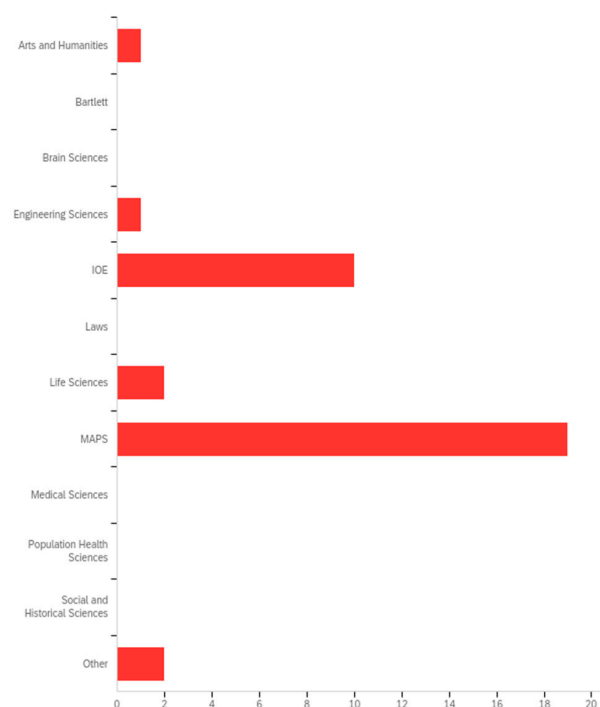

Figure 4. Distribution of student survey respondents by UCL faculties.

Students' Experience of Discriminatory Behavior

Most of the seven students interviewed claimed to have been discriminated against and had reported the incident to the university for action. Some students, however, did not officially report due to fear of negative consequences. Of the students who completed the survey over three-quarters disagreed with the statement that they had undergone discrimination and only 4% agreed that they had reported discriminatory behavior. A small percentage of surveyed students (less than 10%) mostly agreed that they were afraid to report discriminatory behavior, while around 31% disagreed or strongly disagreed that they had never witnessed discriminatory behavior. It seems that for a small proportion of students, discrimination is a reality, and fear of reporting constitutes an actual barrier to the students receiving the support they need as specialized systems are in place. This can have implications for their learning progression and overall mental health and well-being and is something the university should address. Specifically, UCL can take action by communicating clearly the support mechanisms that exist for students, raising awareness on how to access them, and providing assurance of confidentiality coupled with systemic changes that would result in a culture of inclusion and boost a sense of belonging that would benefit its diverse student body.

Support for Physically Disabled Staff

About 80% of the surveyed physically disabled staff did not receive the requested support to meet their needs. Also, about 52.9% of staff claimed they were unaware of the support available for physically disabled persons at UCL when they were recruited. This constitutes a significant gap that relates to how the university is communicating the support available to staff. This should be clarified at the recruitment stage (even as part of the job descriptions), application stage, and induction of new staff at the university. The university could implement better monitoring systems to ensure that staff are receiving the requested support, such as collecting feedback from users on their experience and following up to see if the adjustments or other support measures have been implemented or need to be further modified. A continuous dialog with disabled staff would assure them that their needs are being met.

Capacity Building of Staff on Inclusive Education

All staff interviewed were quoted to request more training to improve the learning experience for students but also recognized progress that had been made through UCL Inclusive Learning (2024). Of the total who were trained, 60 per cent perceived the training was inadequate to help them adjust their teaching to meet the needs of the students. Also, about 86.4% of teaching staff have students with Summary of Reasonable Adjustments (SoRA), and 70.8% mentioned to have adjusted their teaching to accommodate their student's needs. The statements of interviewed staff include the need for *"more training for teaching about the Summary of Reasonable Adjustment (SoRA) students"*. The SoRA is one of the inclusive tools designed to identify and respond to various needs of students with a disability before learning commences and is made available by the UCL disability service (UCL Disability Support for Students, 2024). Other views included *"Engage color blindness and visual impairment themes more in training"*. One statement mentioned *"I would like greater awareness of EDI and what it actually means in everyday practice."* and *"While we don't do everything perfectly, I do think that UCL has made significant progress over the time I have been here"*. Staff training on inclusive education should be continuous and mandatory. Opportunities for staff to not only engage with theoretical aspects of IE training but to examine specific case studies and reflect on the kind of support they could provide or what

kind of practice/support would be required for specific disabilities could help them cater to the diversity of students they are teaching.

Staff Engagement with the EDI Program

About 83.3% of the interviewed staff reported having received the mandatory equality, diversity, and inclusion training (UCL Centre for Inclusive Education, 2024). It is interesting that a significant proportion of staff reported they had not engaged with EDI team members and had not accessed the departmental EDI networks available at UCL which shows low awareness and engagement with EDI (Figure 5). Although most staff are aware of the mandatory training, the visibility of the EDI teams is reduced, which may have to do with how the work is communicated and how closely the team is working with staff to understand their views and experiences as well as how many opportunities staff have to feed into the work of these teams. However, in the views of one of the interviewees, who is an academic member of staff involved in EDI, staff have increased workloads, focus on their research and teaching, and view these opportunities as add-ons and not as a central part of their work. This calls for more joint work between EDI and the various teaching and learning as well as research committees at the university so that IE is seen as a central requirement for the provision of quality education and not something that is good to have. Stronger integration of IE into the vision and mission of UCL would motivate all levels of staff.
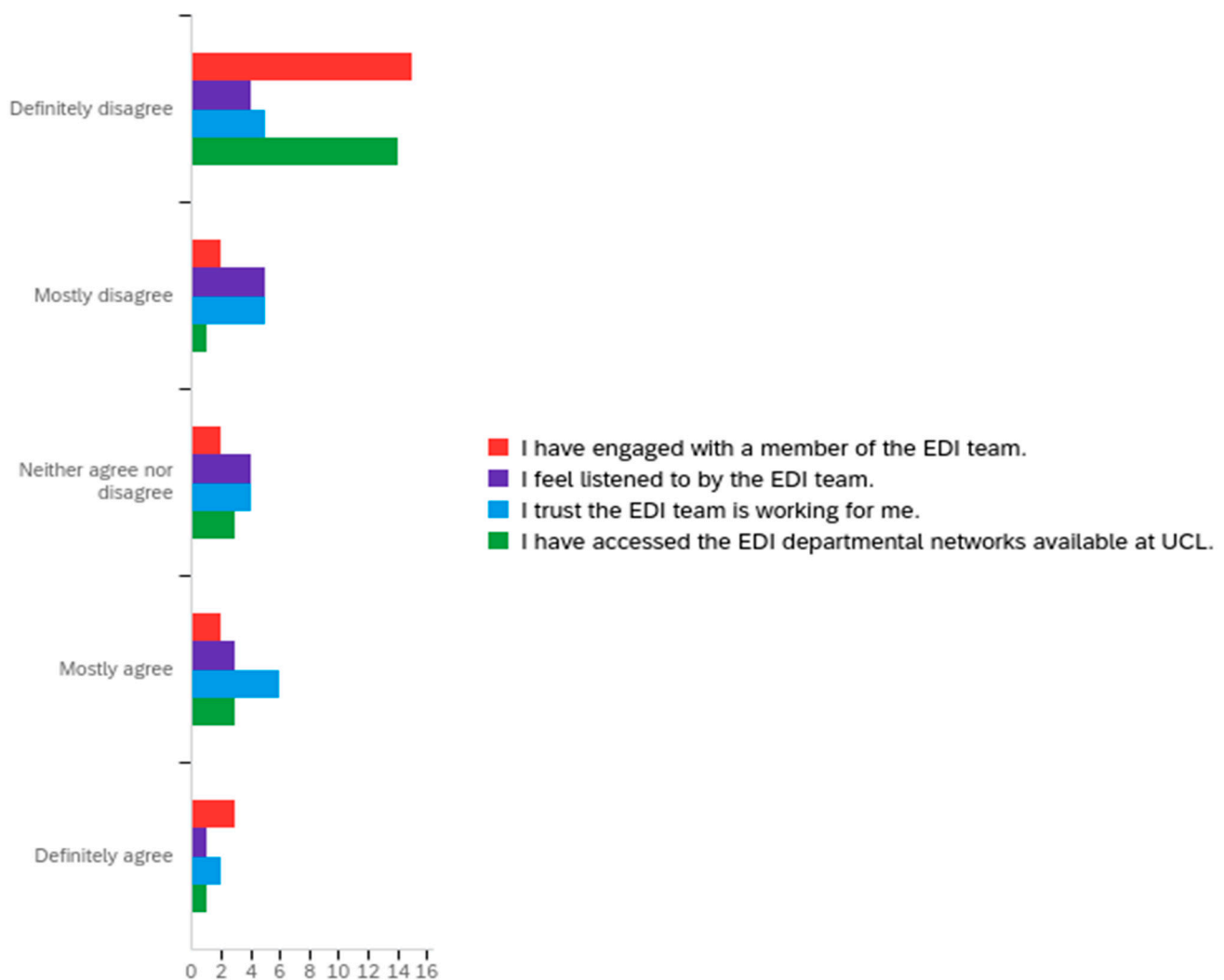

Figure 5. Staff responses in relation to engagement with the EDI program at UCL.

Students' Experience with Support Tools

The majority of students surveyed (89%) were satisfied with the level of support system and tools offered at the UCL. They, however, identified a few areas which could be improved. One student mentioned "*I hope the* support (e.g., mental *health, personal well-being,* etc.) *can be integrated with the SoRA system so that after receiving help from UCL service, it can remind and encourage me to apply SoRA to some of my academic work. It will definitely help reduce pressure during some periods*". Another student reported "*more orientation sessions for fresh international students from minority backgrounds are needed. Some students desperately need help, but they do not know how the support system in the university works*". Another student stated that staff should make efforts to "*get to know individuals better, I feel like none of the staff knows us*" and expressed that priority should be "*Understanding each student's needs*".

There seems to be satisfaction with tools that are working at the university such as the disability support system, but for students from minority and international backgrounds, although support mechanisms exist, they are not communicated effectively so that students experience barriers in accessing them. These tools and support mechanisms should be signposted appropriately as part of the student and staff induction, but they should also be part of personal tutorials and the university should ensure that student reps are encouraged to remind students of the support available. Crucially for staff from minority backgrounds, mentoring programs, designated points of contact to raise issues, and opportunities for networking have been found paramount in inclusion efforts (Bhopal, 2015). More generally, students want to forge more meaningful relationships with staff that would help develop a better mutual understanding of each unique position. The university should be giving more opportunities for students to articulate their voice and participate in decision-making, encourage more connections to emerge through more humanistic pedagogies that enable this (e.g., small group work, dialogic approaches, reflective approaches), and through social or other events that bring together students and staff (Nabiullina, 2015). Lastly, minority staff should be encouraged to share their views on engaging with minority students and make contributions to how inclusive education should be approached (Bhopal, 2015).

4. Discussion

Our theoretical framework is based on the position that for all in higher education to have equality of opportunity to develop their potential and have their needs met crucial barriers should be removed as well as indemnities and rights in terms of accessibility, availability, adaptability, and acceptability should be respected. The framework visualizes direct links between inclusion policies and the practice of inclusive education, which are informed by student and staff diversity and become enabled by contextual factors such as infrastructure, culture, and community.

From the findings of our study, the gap in the achievement of inclusivity at the University of Nairobi is sustained by a lack of adequate policies, resources, and support services for refugees, limited or ineffective capacity building for lecturers, which negatively influences their practice, inadequate ICT support for learners and large class sizes as well as accessibility issues for LWDs. This relates back to our conceptual framework for this research as a gap in the recognition of student diversity in terms of catering to their unique needs as well as a limited understanding of staff diversity and their capacities which explains the lack of policy and support mechanisms and negatively impacts education practice. These coupled with limited institutional support and accessibility of infrastructure, whether physical or virtual, create an institutional environment that presents barriers to refugee students specifically and less so for LWDs. Both groups of learners cannot fulfill their rights to inclusive education because of a lack of accessibility to infrastructure physical

or online, adaptability of the learning environment to fulfill their needs, and availability of appropriate learning resources as staff are not adequately trained.

Refugees and LWDs require specialized kind of recognition and support because they are already disadvantaged. Refugees need psychosocial support and SEL, which lecturers are not prepared for, especially as research by Rizkalla et al. (2020) conducted among Syrian refugees established that displacement and stressors that come from their family's history, expose refugees to animosity from their peers, academic challenges, and even domestic abuse. Adequately qualified teachers can significantly improve the student learning experience and provide the psychosocial support needed. SEL for refugees aims to equip them with the necessary skills for learning and mitigating the adverse effects of migration and conflict (Dalrymple, 2023). The 'Universal SEL' model which is commonly used in the United States aims at enhancing learners' skills in the following areas: relational intelligence self-awareness, social consciousness, decision-making self-management (Collaborative for Academic, 2015, 2020). A document analysis on the enrollment of refugees pre- and post-COVID indicated that the enrollment has been on a downward trajectory post-COVID, which is alarming (Kenya DAFI Scholars enrollment records, 2023). LWDs need adequate support in terms of Assistive Technology and adapted seats, as reported in the questionnaire. Without such support, it is very difficult to achieve inclusion.

Most of the learners registered a preference for face-to-face rather than online classes. Online classes come with isolation and a feeling of loneliness. We cannot completely avoid online learning in this digital age, but adequate ICT support for the learners and blended classes would be the solution so that students and staff feel supported and learning outcomes are achieved. Large class sizes were found to be another obstacle to the implementation of IE at the University of Nairobi. According to research commissioned by Education International, it has been observed that lower class sizes are imperative in order to facilitate inclusive education for all students by enabling instructors to effectively cater to their needs (Ananga & Tamanja, 2017). Additionally, instructors cannot implement IE policies without being equipped with the same. This is also a gap that ought to be filled by the University of Nairobi so that lecturers are able to handle learners according to their needs.

This is in contrast with the UCL case study, in which the policies are in place taking into account student and staff identity but their potential to translate into inclusive education practice is limited and is mainly restricted contextual factors. These include communication/awareness raising practices, trust in support mechanisms, appropriateness of training and teaching approaches, navigating the complexity of systems and infrastructure that generate reduced effectiveness in how systems operate, are accessed, or in training/support provision that is not fit for the realities staff and students are facing. This is coupled with limited opportunities for building in student and staff feedback on their experiences with tools and processes and monitoring and evaluating their implementation. Although accessibility and acceptability may not be an issue for most staff and students at UCL, challenges with the adaptability of systems to offer satisfactory follow-on to ensure the barriers they are facing have been lifted and availability of practical IE and EDI resources they can understand and apply immediately, seems to be limiting the experiences of staff and students.

The UCL case study identified that most physically impaired students are satisfied with the support tools available. This higher level of satisfaction may be attributed to the Summary of Reasonable Adjustments service. The SoRA allows students to self-report their disability during the registration process which allows the university to remove barriers to learning and level the learning grounds. However, there is a low level of satisfaction among physically impaired staff with regard to the support tools available. For

instance, feedback from staff suggests a slower response time. Developing university-wide standards for the provision of reasonable adjustments to staff across all departments might improve the level of satisfaction and well-being for physically impaired staff and is in alignment with guidelines (ACAS, n.d.) According to research, staff with disability report reluctance to disclose a disability to their employers and this has to do with negative experiences of reasonable adjustments in a previous workplace, which may be missing or inappropriate (Olsen, 2024). This could involve creating a centralized system for managing and monitoring adjustments for staff that will enable them to perform at a similar standard to their non-disabled colleagues and maintain their enjoyment, health, and well-being. This study was conducted in three departments, and future studies should include a university-wide survey and interviews to evaluate the impact of support tools on staff well-being. Surveyed students and staff at UCL report concerning the occurrence of mental health issues this should also be the objective of a future research project as it may lead to low attainment, drop-out, and underperformance of staff or even staff attrition.

The UCL case findings suggested the need for increased communication and awareness of existing support tools. While UCL provides a wealth of information on available support services, some students and staff find it challenging to navigate these resources. Simplifying the process of accessing information might improve the level of awareness among students and staff. Also, the finding on the number of staff who undertake training and the mismatch between training and practice suggests the learning for some students is still not inclusive and that the training is mainly theoretical with little support for staff on how to transform it into something practical with which they can help their students. Implementing comprehensive training programs for staff members to increase their awareness and understanding of the needs of disabled and minority students and the SoRA tool might aid in creating a more inclusive learning environment. What is more, transforming theory into practice with practical examples of how IE can be integrated across curricula and teaching and learning methods would be key. This could include workshops on inclusive teaching practices and disability awareness with internal and external speakers/facilitators and applying the Universal Design for Learning as also the UoN case study has shown.

There are cases of discrimination across the student body, which might negatively impact their experience and well-being. UCL has a tool that students can report experienced discrimination but not all students are comfortable doing so. This finding suggests that more awareness needs to be made of the confidentiality of reports and support tools for students. It also suggests the need for increased training in diversity, not just for staff but for all communities within UCL. Finally, the UCL case received limited data from minority students which suggests a lack of active participation from those populations. An inclusive environment is not just about diversity but should be evaluated by the level of active participation. Further studies need to be conducted to understand the reasons for the low participation of minority students.

5. Conclusions

It is evident from the research conducted at the two universities that students and staff have diverse experiences of inclusion and IE and these are linked to the context. The lack of institutional policies and awareness of refugee students' needs at UoN may lead to negative outcomes for these students. This is not different from research findings by (Eurydice (European Education and Culture Executive Agency) et al., 2019) which established that refugees in England are not given consideration in any of the national policies on Higher Education. While there is a policy for LWDs, students would like more accessible infrastructure and support in online courses similar to that requested by refugee students as these environments are particularly challenging for them. It is important for the

UoN to come up with a policy that covers refugee students because they are a marginalized group, in addition to adopting World Refugee Day into the calendar. Staff at UoN believe that with more training on IE and reduced-size classes, they will be able to cater better to their students' needs. While UCL has EDI policies for disabled students and staff and also for staff and students from international/minority backgrounds, they both feel they would like more support to navigate the complexity of the systems and tools. Students in particular feel hesitant to report discrimination and staff need a more tailored system for disability support and timelier responses to their queries. Staff, in particular, feel they also need more practical training on how to implement IE and benefit their students' learning and students demand to be seen and their needs to be met. Minority staff and students from UCL did not form a large part of the surveys and interviews sampled; this could be tackled in future research by employing a similar approach to that undertaken at UoN where specific surveys targeting these populations were developed and the recruitment was undertaken in contact with appropriate committees/representatives, this would enhance the trust of these populations to the research being conducted and enable them to articulate their voice.

It seems that HEIs both in the South and North are trying to balance the challenges and opportunities presented by their diverse student and staff populations and need to close the gaps that are remaining in order to advance to more inclusive learning and working environments. It is also important for the universities to set specific targets and Key Performance Indicators for the implementation of inclusion and inclusive education and a strategic monitoring and evaluation system to track them that is responsive to user feedback. Opportunities for marginalized students and staff to articulate their voices and recognition of their district characteristics, contributions, and needs, opportunities for coming together to acknowledge their views and contributions, as well as platforms for exchanging views celebrating world days and achievements can generate positive cultures in HEIs. Quality educator training is something that all HEIs should invest in being cautious that training should be touching specific layers of diversity as well as intersectionality, should be practical enabling transformation of theory into practice, and should be reviewed frequently to fit its purpose. More research is needed to better understand these gaps and find appropriate ways to reduce them, especially within distinct student and staff populations and various disciplines.

Appendix A

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR PARTICIPANTS FROM UON

For refugee students

1. Do you receive individualized assistance in the classroom?
2. Are you at ease being in the same classroom as students who are not refugees?
3. Do you face any kind of discrimination based on origin?
4. Are you involved in decision-making processes in matters concerning you?
5. How has online learning been for you?
6. How was the enrollment process like? Were there any hurdles?
7. Do you receive any support services from the university? Are they effective?
8. Is your progress and well-being monitored while in school? What is the impact?

For staff

9. Do the teaching staff get sensitized on IE through seminars, workshops and in-service training?
10. Are there digital learning policies in place?
11. Does your faculty have a centralized unit to dealing with IE?
12. Is the situation of IE assessed often?
13. Is there a strategy to monitor enrollment and completion rates for different groups of learners?
14. Do you conduct information campaigns to raise awareness on migration?
15. Are the challenges and opportunities posed by online learning assessed?

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR UON STUDENTS.
Background information for refugee students
Gender Male ( ) Female ( )
For how many years have you been a refugee in Kenya? Below 5 [ ] 5–10 [ ] 11–20 [ ] More than 20 [ ]
Background information for Learners with disabilities
Gender Male ( ) Female ( )
Which kind of disability do you have? …..…….….….….….….….….….…..

1. Do you receive individualized assistance in the classroom? YES [ ] NO [ ]
2. Are you comfortable being in the same class with other learners who are nationals? YES [ ] NO [ ]
3. Is teaching learner centered? YES [ ] NO [ ]
4. Students are provided with code of conduct and clear guidelines on the use of digital learning tools to prevent bullying YES [ ] NO [ ]
5. Are your needs fully accommodated in the curriculum? YES [ ] NO [ ]
6. Do you have a platform where you share your views on matters concerning you? YES [ ] NO [ ]
7. There is enough ICT support infrastructure to support online programs? YES [ ] NO [ ]
8. Is your progress and well-being in the University closely monitored? YES [ ] NO [ ]

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR UON LECTURERS
1. What is your gender? Male [ ] Female [ ] Prefer not to say [ ]
2. Disability status Disabled YES [ ] NO [ ] Prefer not to say [ ]
3. For how many years have you served as a lecturer at the university of Nairobi? Below 5 [ ] 5–10 [ ] 11–20 [ ] More than 20 [ ]

4. Faculty. . . . .

5. The class sizes are manageable YES [ ] NO [ ]

6. There are teacher aides to help give attention to learners with individualized needs YES [ ] NO [ ]

7. There is enough ICT support infrastructure to support online programs? YES [ ] NO [ ]

8. Are learning outcomes for different groups of learners disaggregated, i.e., in terms of disability, refugee status (If any)? YES [ ] NO [ ]

9. Various presentation methods used in online learning as prescribed by the UDL YES [ ] NO [ ]

10. Are learning outcomes sustained in online learning? YES [ ] NO [ ]

11. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements on the challenges on the implementation of IE? (**Kindly Tick as appropriate, the answer is based on your opinion**) where 1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Undecided 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree?

No.	Challenges	5	4	3	2	1
a.	Lack of sensitization on the UDL and its application					
b.	Lack of workshops to capacity build lecturers on IE					
c.	Lack of a policy that addresses issues related to refugee and migrant students					
d.	Lack of training on how to provide Psychosocial Support to learners					
e.	Lack of knowledge on Social-Emotional Learning					
f.	Lack of appropriate resources					

Appendix B

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR PARTICIPANTS FROM UCL

For staff

16. Tell me about yourself?

1. How long have you worked at UCL?
2. What are your thoughts about inclusivity, diversity and equality at UCL?
3. What are your thoughts about the Fair recruitment tool?
4. What are your thoughts about Athena Swan 2020 and Equality Charter submissions?
5. What would you like to see included in the EDI program?
6. What would you like removed from the EDI program?
7. What are your top three most pressing needs concerning inclusivity, diversity and equality?
8. Have you requested support, and have your needs been addressed?

For students

1. Tell me about yourself?
2. What are your thoughts about inclusivity, diversity and equality at UCL?
3. Do you feel the way you are being trained is inclusive?
4. What can be done to make teaching inclusive?
5. What barriers have you experienced or are still experiencing that limit your academic performance?

6.   What barriers have you experienced or are still experiencing that limit your social life at UCL?
7.   What would you have achieved at UCL without no named barriers?
8.   What is your three-wish list for the EDI team?

For EDI team

1.   Tell me about yourself?
2.   What is the importance of EDI for students and staff?
3.   Do you engage in feedback sessions with students and staff about the performance of different EDI tools/programs? If yes, how often?
4.   Who do you involve when designing mandatory inclusive training for staff?
5.   How do you monitor progress?
6.   Do you enjoy your job?

The UCL student and the UCL staff surveys can be found here: https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1mkuY8_-8VwA7KlFiFba808UCWn6erwA_?usp=sharing, accessed on 12 October 2024.

Appendix C

CONSENT FORM
CONSENT FORM FOR ADULT PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH STUDIES
Please complete this form after you have read the Information Sheet and/or listened to an explanation about the research.
Title of Study: Promoting Knowledge and Practice exchange on Inclusive Education between UCL and the University of Nairobi Kenya
Department: Curriculum, Pedagogy and Assessment, IOE, UCL; Department of Physics and Astronomy, UCL; Department of Plant Science and Crop Protection, University of Nairobi
Name and Contact Details of the Researcher:
Name and Contact Details of the UCL Data Protection Officer:
This study has been approved by the UCL Research Ethics Committee: Project ID number: REC1798 and the data protection number is Z6364106/2023/04/41 social research.

Thank you for considering taking part in this research. The research team organizing the research must explain the project to you before you agree to take part. If you have any questions arising from the Information Sheet or explanation already given to you, please ask the researchers before you decide whether to join in. You will be given a copy of this Consent Form to keep and refer to at any time.

I confirm that I understand that by ticking YES in each box below I am consenting to this element of the study. I understand that it will be assumed that ticking NO boxes means that I DO NOT consent to that part of the study. I understand that by not giving consent for any one element that I may be not be able to participate in the study.

Please tick the appropriate boxes	Yes	No
Taking Part in the Project		
I have read and understood the participant information sheet dated 26/5/2023 or the project has been fully explained to me. (If you will answer No to this question, please do not proceed with this consent form until you are fully aware of what your participation in the project will mean.)		☐
I have been given the opportunity to ask questions about the project. I am aware of who I should contact to ask further questions or raise any concerns with.		☐

I agree to take part in the project. I understand that taking part in the project will include (please tick any of the below that are applicable): An individual interview with the researcher AND/OR Completing an online survey (Qualtrics)	☐ ☐
I know that I can refuse to answer any or all of the questions and that I can withdraw from the interview at any point	☐
I know that I can refuse to answer any or all of the survey questions and that I can stop completing the survey at any point	☐
I understand that my taking part is voluntary and that I can withdraw from the study at any time; I do not have to give any reasons for why I no longer want to take part and there will be no adverse consequences if I choose to withdraw. I understand that if I decide to withdraw, any personal data I have provided up to that point will be deleted unless I agree otherwise.	☐
How my information will be used during and after the project	
I understand my personal details such as name, gender, disability, status and email address will not be revealed to people outside the project and all efforts will be made to ensure I cannot be identified.	☐
I agree for the interview to be recorded (audio or video based on my preference), and that recordings will be kept secure and destroyed immediately after the transcription of data. I know that all data will be kept under the terms of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and for a period of up to 10 years according to UCL Records Retention Schedule. Please note: If you do not want your interview recorded you can still take part in the study.	☐
I understand that in exceptional circumstances anonymity and confidentiality would have to be broken, for example, if it was felt that practice is causing safeguarding concerns, or there were concerns regarding professional misconduct. In these circumstances, advice would be sought from a senior manager from another local authority who will advise us as to the appropriate course of action and as to whether we need to inform the authority of what you have told us.	☐
I understand and agree that small parts of my words could be quoted and information I have submitted may be used in the project report and subsequent publications. I understand that I will not be named and will be given a pseudonym to ensure I am not identified.	☐

If you would like your contact details to be retained so that you can be contacted in the future by UCL researchers who would like to invite you to participate in follow up studies to this project, or in future studies of a similar nature, please tick the appropriate box below.

Yes, I would like to be contacted ☐

Name of participant [printed]	Signature	**Date**

References

Abamosa, J. Y. (2023). Social inclusion of refugees into higher education: Policies and practices of universities in Norway. *Educational Review*, *75*(6), 1181–1201. [CrossRef]

ACAS. (n.d.). *Supporitng disabled people at work, what employers should do.* Available online: https://www.acas.org.uk/supporting-disabled-people/how-an-employer-should-support-disabled-people (accessed on 12 October 2024).

Ali, W. (2020). Online and remote learning in higher education institutes: A necessity in light of COVID-19 pandemic. *Higher Education Studies*, *10*(3), 16–25. [CrossRef]

Al-Maroof, R. S., Alnazzawi, N., Akour, I. A., Ayoubi, K., Alhumaid, K., AlAhbabi, N. M., Alnnaimi, M., Thabit, S., Alfaisal, R., & Aburayya, A. (2021). The effectiveness of online platforms after the pandemic: Will face-to-face classes affect students' perception of their Behavioural Intention (BIU) to use online platforms? *Informatics*, *8*(4), 83. [CrossRef]

Ananga, E. D., & Tamanja, E. M. (2017). *Managing the effects of large class sizes on quality education in Ghana.* Education International.

Armstrong, D., Armstrong, A. C., & Spandagou, I. (2011). Inclusion: By choice or by chance? *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, *15*(1), 29–39. [CrossRef]

Aybars, A. İ. (2011). Women with disabilities in Turkey and France. In *EU Non Discrimination Law and intersectionality Investigating the triangle between racial gender and disability discrimination.* European University Institute. Available online: https://open.metu.edu.tr/handle/11511/84261 (accessed on 12 October 2024).

Balabanova, E. (2019). Communicating cosmopolitanism during times of crisis: UNHCR and the World Refugee Day campaign in the UK and Bulgaria. *Journal of Human Rights Practice*, *11*(3), 467–485. [CrossRef]

Baş, G. (2022). Factors influencing teacher efficacy in inclusive education. *Australasian Journal of Special and Inclusive Education*, *46*(1), 19–32. [CrossRef]

Bhopal, K. (2015). *The experiences of black and minority ethnic academics: Multiple identities and career progression.* Available online: https://eprints.soton.ac.uk/374244/1/__userfiles.soton.ac.uk_Users_slb1_mydesktop_Aiming%2520Higher.pdf (accessed on 12 October 2024).

Blatchford, P., & Russell, A. (2020). *Rethinking class size: The complex story of impact on teaching and learning.* UCL Press. Available online: https://library.oapen.org/handle/20.500.12657/51776 (accessed on 12 October 2024).

Block, K., Cross, S., Riggs, E., & Gibbs, L. (2014). Supporting schools to create an inclusive environment for refugee students. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, *18*(12), 1337–1355. [CrossRef]

Boughey, C. (2012). Social inclusion & exclusion in a changing higher education environment. *Multidisciplinary Journal of Educational Research*, *2*(2), 133–151.

Bruijn, P., Regeer, B. J., Cornielje, H., Wolting, R., Maharaj, N., & van Veen, S. C. (2012). *Count me in: Include people with disabilities in development projects. A practical guide for organisations in the North and South.* Available online: https://research.vu.nl/en/publications/count-me-in-include-people-with-disabilities-in-development-projects.pdf?sfvrsn=18 (accessed on 14 October 2024).

Chakraborty, P., Mittal, P., Gupta, M. S., Yadav, S., & Arora, A. (2021). Opinion of students on online education during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Human Behavior and Emerging Technologies*, *3*(3), 357–365. [CrossRef]

Claeys-Kulik, A.-L., Jørgensen, T. E., & Stöber, H. (2019). *Diversity, equity and inclusion in European higher education institutions.* (51p, Results from the INVITED Project). European University Association Asil. Available online: https://multinclude.eu/wp-content/uploads/sites/23/2020/06/35.-EUA-diversity-equity-and-inclusion-in-european-higher-education-institutions.pdf (accessed on 12 October 2024).

Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning. (2015). *Effective social and emotional learning programs: Middle and high school edition.* CASEL.

Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning. (2020). *The CASEL guide to schoolwide SEL essentials.* CASEL.

Crea, T. M. (2016). Refugee higher education: Contextual challenges and implications for program design, delivery, and accompaniment. *International Journal of Educational Development*, *46*, 12–22. [CrossRef]

Crock, M., & Ernst, C. (2017). Where disability and displacement intersect: Asylum seekers and refugees with disabilities. In *Refugees and Rights* (pp. 349–378). Routledge. Available online: https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/edit/10.4324/9781315244969-16/disability-displacement-intersect-asylum-seekers-refugees-disabilities-mary-crock-christine-ernst-ron (accessed on 12 October 2024).

Dalrymple, K. (2023). Social Emotional Learning with Refugees in East Africa: Understandings, Implementation, and Impact. *Current Issues in Comparative Education*, *25*(2). Available online: https://journals.library.columbia.edu/index.php/cice/article/view/10688 (accessed on 12 October 2024). [CrossRef]

Damiani, M. L., Elder, B. C., & Oswago, B. O. (2024). Tracing the lineage of international inclusive education practices in Kenya. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, *28*(8), 1535–1550. [CrossRef]

David, M. E. (2015). Women and gender equality in higher education? *Education Sciences*, *5*(1), 10–25. [CrossRef]

Dumford, A. D., & Miller, A. L. (2018). Online learning in higher education: Exploring advantages and disadvantages for engagement. *Journal of Computing in Higher Education*, *30*(3), 452–465. [CrossRef]

Eurydice (European Education and Culture Executive Agency), Crosier, D., Kocanova, D., & Delhaxhe, A. (2019). *Integrating asylum seekers and refugees into higher education in Europe: National policies and measures.* Publications Office of the European Union. Available online: https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2797/548910 (accessed on 12 October 2024).

Faulkner, S. L., Watson, W. K., Pollino, M. A., & Shetterly, J. R. (2021). "Treat me like a person, rather than another number": University student perceptions of inclusive classroom practices. *Communication Education*, *70*(1), 92–111. [CrossRef]

Forber-Pratt, A. J., Minotti, B. J., Burdick, C. E., Kate Brown, M., & Hanebutt, R. A. (2021). Exploring disability identity with adolescents. *Rehabilitation Psychology*, *66*(4), 550. [CrossRef]

Fornauf, B. S., & Erickson, J. D. (2020). Toward an inclusive pedagogy through universal design for learning in higher education: A review of the literature. *Journal of Postsecondary Education and Disability*, *33*(2), 183–199.

Inclusive teaching, learning and assessment. (2024). Available online: https://www.ucl.ac.uk/teaching-learning/publications/2020/apr/inclusive-teaching-learning-and-assessment (accessed on 14 October 2024).

Ireri, B. R., King'endo, M., Wangila, E., & Thuranira, S. (2020). Policy strategies for effective implementation of inclusive education in Kenya. *International Journal of Educational Administration and Policy Studies*, *12*(1), 28–42.

Jack, O., Chase, E., & Warwick, I. (2019). Higher education as a space for promoting the psychosocial well-being of refugee students. *Health Education Journal*, *78*(1), 51–66. [CrossRef]

Jonnaert, P., & Therriault, G. (2013). Curricula and curricular analysis: Some pointers for a debate. *Prospects*, *43*(4), 397–417. [CrossRef]

Joyce, A., Earnest, J., De Mori, G., & Silvagni, G. (2010). The experiences of students from refugee backgrounds at universities in Australia: Reflections on the social, emotional and practical challenges. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, *23*(1), 82–97. [CrossRef]

Juniarni, C., Sodikin, M. A., Akhyar, A., Almujahid, A., & Asvio, N. (2024). The Importance of Personalized Learning: How to Tailor Education to the Individual Needs of Students. *Education Studies and Teaching Journal (EDUTECH)*, *1*(1), 188–196.

Kardeş, S., & Akman, B. (2022). Problems encountered in the education of refugees in Turkey. *International Journal of Psychology and Educational Studies*, *9*(1), 153–164. [CrossRef]

Kenya DAFI Scholars enrollment records. (2023). Available online: https://www.unhcr.org/sites/default/files/2024-09/dafi-annual-report-2023.pdf (accessed on 12 October 2024).

Kioupi, V., Nawire, A. W., Musungu, S., Nzuve, F., & Giannopoulos, G. (2023). Policy and practice on inclusive higher education in the UK and Kenya: A theoretical framework and recommendations. *Sustainability*, *15*(18), 13540. [CrossRef]

Koehler, C., & Schneider, J. (2019). Young refugees in education: The particular challenges of school systems in Europe. *Comparative Migration Studies*, *7*(1), 28. [CrossRef]

Kofoed, M. S., Gebhart, L., Gilmore, D., & Moschitto, R. (2024). Zooming to Class? Experimental evidence on college students' online learning during Covid-19. *American Economic Review: Insights*, *6*(3), 324–340.

Kong, E., Harmsworth, S., Rajaeian, M. M., Parkes, G., Bishop, S., AlMansouri, B., & Lawrence, J. (2016). University transition challenges for first year domestic CALD students from refugee backgrounds: A case study from an Australian regional university. *Australian Journal of Adult Learning*, *56*(2), 170–197.

Lambrechts, A. A. (2020). The super-disadvantaged in higher education: Barriers to access for refugee background students in England. *Higher Education*, *80*(5), 803–822. [CrossRef]

Lawson, A., & Beckett, A. E. (2021). The social and human rights models of disability: Towards a complementarity thesis. *The International Journal of Human Rights*, *25*(2), 348–379. [CrossRef]

Lenette, C. (2016). University students from refugee backgrounds: Why should we care? *Higher Education Research & Development*, *35*(6), 1311–1315. [CrossRef]

Liou, T.-Y., & Chang, N.-Y. (2008). The applications of social capital theory in education. *Hsiuping Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, *11*, 99–122.

Martin, M., & Stulgaitis, M. (2022). *Refugees' access to higher education in their host countries: Overcoming the 'super-disadvantage'*. International Institute for Educational Planning (UNESCO).

Mercer-Mapstone, L., & Bovill, C. (2020). Equity and diversity in institutional approaches to student–staff partnership schemes in higher education. *Studies in Higher Education*, *45*(12), 2541–2557. [CrossRef]

Miles, S., & Singal, N. (2010). The Education for All and inclusive education debate: Conflict, contradiction or opportunity? *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, *14*(1), 1–15. [CrossRef]

Mittler, P. (2012). *Working towards inclusive education: Social contexts*. David Fulton Publishers. Available online: https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/mono/10.4324/9780203386149/working-towards-inclusive-education-peter-mittler (accessed on 12 October 2024).

Mukhwana, E. J., Kande, A., & Too, J. (2017). Transforming university education in Africa: Lessons from Kenya. *African Journal of Rural Development*, *2*(3), 341–352.

Nabiullina, R. K. (2015). The principle of humanism-The fundamental principle of inclusive education. *Review of European Studies*, *7*, 73. [CrossRef]

Olsen, J. (2024). Employers: Influencing disabled people's employment through responses to reasonable adjustments. *Disability & Society*, *39*(3), 791–810. [CrossRef]

Pino, M., & Mortari, L. (2014). The Inclusion of Students with Dyslexia in Higher Education: A Systematic Review Using Narrative Synthesis. *Dyslexia*, *20*(4), 346–369. [CrossRef] [PubMed]

Pitman, T., Edwards, D., Zhang, L.-C., Koshy, P., & McMillan, J. (2020). Constructing a ranking of higher education institutions based on equity: Is it possible or desirable? *Higher Education*, *80*(4), 605–624. [CrossRef]

Rao, K. (2021). Inclusive instructional design: Applying UDL to online learning. *The Journal of Applied Instructional Design*, *10*(1), 1–10.

Rizkalla, N., Mallat, N. K., Arafa, R., Adi, S., Soudi, L., & Segal, S. P. (2020). "Children are not children anymore; they are a lost generation": Adverse physical and mental health consequences on syrian refugee children. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, *17*(22), 8378. [CrossRef] [PubMed]

Roegman, R., Samarapungavan, A., Maeda, Y., & Johns, G. (2018). Color-neutral disaggregation? Principals' practices around disaggregating data from three school districts. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, *54*(4), 559–588. [CrossRef]

Rogers, C. R. (1957). Personal thoughts on teaching and learning. *Merrill-Palmer Quarterly (1954–1958)*, *3*(4), 241–243. [CrossRef]

Schuelka, M. J. (2018). Implementing inclusive education. In *K4D helpdesk report*; Institute of Development Studies. Available online: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5c6eb77340f0b647b214c599/374_Implementing_Inclusive_Education.pdf (accessed on 12 October 2024).

Sheikh, M., Koc, Y., & Anderson, J. R. (2019). A qualitative exploration of the tertiary education experiences of refugee and asylum seekers in australia. *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk (JESPAR)*, *24*(4), 346–368. [CrossRef]

Sherman, L. M., & Woods, D. J. (1982). *Education theories in the eighties*. University of Illinois.

Stubbs, S. (2008). Inclusive education. In *Where there are few resources*. The Atlas Alliance Publishers. Available online: https://www.academia.edu/download/37729926/Stubbs_2008_IE_few_resources_.pdf (accessed on 12 October 2024).

Tavares, V. (2024). Feeling excluded: International students experience equity, diversity and inclusion. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, *28*(8), 1551–1568. [CrossRef]

Teschers, C. (2020). *Proposing a holistic inclusive education model for policy, curriculum and classroom development*. Available online: https://ir.canterbury.ac.nz/bitstream/10092/102045/2/Teschers%202020%20-%20Holistic%20Inclusive%20Education%20Model.pdf (accessed on 12 October 2024).

Timans, R., Wouters, P., & Heilbron, J. (2019). Mixed methods research: What it is and what it could be. *Theory and Society*, *48*(2), 193–216. [CrossRef]

Tomasevski, K. (2004). *Manual on rights-based education: Global human rights requirements made simple; collaborative project between the UN Special Rapporteur on the right to education and UNESCO Asia and Pacific regional bureau for education*. Available online: https://policycommons.net/artifacts/8956101/manual-on-rights-based-education/9822078/ (accessed on 12 October 2024).

UCL Centre for Inclusive Education. (2024). Available online: https://www.ucl.ac.uk/ioe/departments-and-centres/centres/ucl-centre-inclusive-education (accessed on 14 October 2024).

UCL disability support for students. (2024). Available online: https://www.ucl.ac.uk/equality-diversity-inclusion/equality-areas/disability-equality/disability-support-students (accessed on 14 October 2024).

UK Equality Act. (2010). Available online: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents (accessed on 14 October 2024).

Unangst, L., & Crea, T. M. (2020). Higher Education for Refugees: A Need for Intersectional Research. *Comparative Education Review*, *64*(2), 228–248. [CrossRef]

UNESCO. (2003). *Overcoming exclusion through inclusive approaches in education: A challenge and a vision*. UNSECO.

UNESCO. (2016). *Incheon declaration and framework for action for the implementation of sustainable development goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all*. Available online: https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000245656 (accessed on 12 October 2024).

UN General Assembly. (2016). *UN declaration on refugees and migrants*. Available online: https://www.unhcr.org/media/new-york-declaration-refugees-and-migrants-0 (accessed on 12 October 2024).

Van Mieghem, A., Verschueren, K., Petry, K., & Struyf, E. (2020). An analysis of research on inclusive education: A systematic search and meta review. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, *24*(6), 675–689. [CrossRef]

Veidemane, A., Kaiser, F., & Craciun, D. (2021). Inclusive higher education access for underrepresented groups: It matters, but how can universities measure it? *Social Inclusion*, *9*(3), 44–57. [CrossRef]

Vossensteyn, J. J., Kottmann, A., Jongbloed, B. W., Kaiser, F., Cremonini, L., Stensaker, B., Hovdhaugen, E., & Wollscheid, S. (2015). *Dropout and completion in higher education in Europe: Main report*. Available online: https://research.utwente.nl/en/publications/dropout-and-completion-in-higher-education-in-europe-main-report (accessed on 12 October 2024).

Wasserman, I. C. (2013). Strengthening Interpersonal Awareness and Fostering Relational Eloquence. In B. M. Ferdman, & B. R. Deane (Eds.), *Diversity at Work: The Practice of Inclusion* (1st ed., pp. 128–154). Wiley. [CrossRef]

Wright, M. C., Bergom, I., & Bartholomew, T. (2019). Decreased class size, increased active learning? Intended and enacted teaching strategies in smaller classes. *Active Learning in Higher Education*, *20*(1), 51–62. [CrossRef]