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Developing inclusive learning and teaching practices in UK higher education institutions: A Straussian grounded theory study

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Abstract

Inclusive learning and teaching practices enable learners from diverse backgrounds and with different needs to learn together in the same institution. Despite its importance, little research has examined the contextual and intervening conditions, processes and consequences that shape the practices in the UK higher education institutions (HEIs). This study investigates the factors that influence inclusive learning and teaching practices, and develops a context specific substantive theory and conceptual model. It adopts a Straussian grounded theory methodology with symbolic interactionism and pragmatism. Data were collected from 36 academic professionals across 18 UK higher education institutions (HEIs) through in-depth interviews, field notes, and documentary sources. Open, axial and selective coding produced 463 initial codes, 13 categories and 57 sub-categories. Three contextual conditions were identified: teaching pedagogies, curricula and assessment, and feedback. Four processes were identified: the classroom learning environment, universal design for learning, implementation of government and education policy, and survey and observation. Three intervening conditions (support and opportunity, core goals and values, and culture) either facilitate or constrain practices. Three consequences emerged: improved inclusive practice, effective classroom practice, and academic and social impact. The resulting model integrates these elements into a single framework that extends prior work, which has largely concentrated on contextual conditions alone. The findings help academics, practitioners and academic leaders understand the conditions needed for inclusive education and support a more holistic approach to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) in HEIs.

***Keywords*:** Inclusive Learning and Teaching Practice, Straussian Grounded Theory, Higher Education Institutions, Universal Design for Learning, Inclusive Assessment and Feedback, EDI Framework, Education Policy, United Kingdom

JEL Classification: I21, I23, I24

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1. Introduction

The literature generally referred to the inclusive learning and teaching practices, typically an inclusive education system that includes all learners such as local and international students, special education needs (SEN), learners with dyslexia, dyspraxia, and social anxiety. All learners need to learn, whoever they are and whatever their abilities or requirements, and this means making sure that learning and teaching, curriculum, learning buildings, classroom, common room, library hub, technology facilities, ground, accommodation and transport are appropriate for all learners at all levels (UNICEF, 2017). Similar findings of other scholars who suggested inclusive learning and teaching practices provides and creates facilitates students with different education needs would learn together in the same education institutions (UNESCO, 1994; Equality Act, 2010; Price, 2018; Mason & Minerva, 2022). Inclusive education equips students with SEN and additional academic supports in the general education curriculum (Shyman, 2015; Price, 2018). It is therefore required having an effective inclusive practice at the higher education institutions (HEIs). Essentially, inclusion ensures that learners with SEN attend the general education curriculum (UNICEF, 2017; Mason & Minerva, 2022). Capturing the concept inclusive education is potentially intellectually challenging in terms of educational principles and practical application (Shyman, 2015), which involves transforming the whole education system legislation, policy, administration, organisation, design, monitoring, and financing system (UNICEF, 2017). Thus, the study needs to be grounded in theory, and robust in practice, which is an emerging concept. However, research on this has been fragmented, which comprehensively has not been examined. Limited research found particularly based on grounded theory approach considering intervening conditions, processes which affect the inclusive learning and teaching practices for subsequent institutional advancement of inclusive education in UK higher education institutions (HEIs).

Numerous scholarly literatures have been developed over the years, nevertheless, exiting literature overwhelming focused on contextual conditions (Shyman, 2015), which ignored intervening conditions, processes, and consequences of it, and relatively provided limited attention to the research context, which are embedded in the learning environment, daily procedure and systems is ignored (Woolfolk, 2008). The study aim is to critically assess the existing literature to investigate the inclusive learning and teaching practices, and its associated contextual and intervening conditions, processes, and consequences of it, and subsequently developed a substantive theory and model, that offer a new approach within the research context. The research addresses gap in existing literature, that in turn underpinned and justified the emergent model. An inductive approach of qualitative research design is adopted, data is collected through in-depth interviews, with field notes and various documents. The study used a Straussian grounded theory methodology, which conceptualised a new holistic approach to, and contributes to the current theories and practices. Although previous research has examined inclusive pedagogy, assessment, and institutional policy, limited research has integrated contextual conditions, intervening

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conditions, implementation processes, and consequences within a grounded-theory model of UK higher education institutions (HEIs).

2. Literature Review

2.1 The Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Framework in the UK

UK higher education institutions (HEIs), with its diverse learners and workforces, acknowledges the importance of cultivating inclusive environment. The Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) framework embedded with the institutional strategies, fostering equity and inclusion in the learning environment. The EDI has increasingly become important in the agenda of UK HEIs (Aveyard & Sharp, 2017), many universities have implemented policies and initiatives aimed at promoting the EDI practice. The EDI prioritising developing leadership roles, increasing a more diverse curriculum, and inclusive culture. HEIs prioritising the EDI which added value to the creation of more diverse and inclusive communities, preparing their learners to become versatile citizens in a rapidly growing world (Aveyard & Sharp, 2017; Wolbring & Nguyen, 2023; Zhao et al., 2024). The literature indicates that the EDI plays a critical role in leadership within HEIs (Wolbring & Nguyen, 2023). Institutional leaders could contribute to the development of a more equitable and inclusivity by enhancing leadership position which embrace the EDI principles, creating inclusive environment, and actively engage in the EDI practice (Wolbring & Nguyen, 2023; Zhao et al., 2024). Despite the evolving role of the EDI in HEIs leadership, several limitations remain, including insufficient systemic and a lack of attention to institutional-level interventions (Sidhu, 2025).

The EDI framework in higher education institutions (HEIs) within the UK embedding education for fair treatment, accessible learning and working environment and sustainability, which embedded with structured guidelines, for example, inclusive institutions framework (IIF) developed by Advance HE, institutional strategies, and statistical reporting aimed at embedding equitable practices across universities. The IIF framework enables administrator, educator, and academic leaders adopt a co-ordinated approach to structural changes, find priorities, and embed sustainable inclusion, which provides a structured approach that brings inclusion activity together into one coherent institutional strategy. Numerous UK universities (e.g. Greenwich, Leeds, ARU and Bedfordshire) launched holistic institutional strategies 2022, which is aligned with the Equality Act 2010 focusing on curriculum decolonisation, anti-discrimination, and inclusive assessments. The EDI policies, and the collective impact on organisational success within the ever-evolving HEIs (Aveyard & Sharp, 2017).

2.2 Inclusive Education Practice in HEIs

The inclusive learning and teaching practices focusses on inclusive assessment, feedback practice that should meet the learners need and appropriate strategies to support progress and understanding (Race, 2015; Mason & Minerva, 2022). HEIs providers have an obligation to make reasonable

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adjustment under the Equality Act 2010 in the UK, therefore they made an arrangement of different inclusive assessment practice which facilitated students with disability to remove obstacles (Price, 2018; Mason & Minerva, 2022) so that they can attain their full potential. Assessment is required to be inclusive so that students may have an equal chance to gain their employability. HEIs providers focus on flexibility and facilitate inclusivity in assessment considering learners with diversified culture and different needs. HEIs systems ought to be associated with the inclusive practice, and they would adhere to a social model of disability focusing on reasonable adjustment for all groups of learners. Thus, inclusive assessment and feedback encourage at HEIs in the UK, which facilitate flexibility in assessment and feedback practice considering learners with diverse culture so that reasonable adjustment could be done (Price, 2018). University of Plymouth (2014) suggested the 7 steps of inclusive assessment as a good practice guide, considering how to apply inclusive assessment practice in the UK. The inclusive assessment practice-built learners' skills and improved individual learning experiences (Brown, Race, & Smith, 2004), which improves assessment literacy (Brown, McKibbon, & Todd, 2024), ensuring all learners with diverse needs having different approaches of learning (QAA, 2018).

The provision of inclusive learning and teaching practices should ensure to establish equality and diversity goal (QAA, 2018). HEIs potentially promoted inclusive learning and teaching practices for learners with special education needs and diverse groups of learners; therefore, provided opportunities to safeguard, typically focusses on career employability, personal academic tutor, professional and non-academic support, and thereby fostering inclusive education practice (Mason & Minerva, 2022). Teachers adhere to inclusive education practice. It is also required to identify learners additional support and designing inclusive lesson plan to meet learning needs in line with special requirements for the learners with dyspraxia, dyslexia, and social anxiety (QAA, 2018). Thus, it is potentially significant research context.

2.3 Intervening Conditions

In inclusive education, fostering a learning environment where everyone, regardless of the background, abilities, or learning needs, has equitable access to educational supports and opportunities. The well-being support of HEIs in recent decades a growing global concern (Stanton et al., 2016; Campbell et al., 2022; Okoro et al., 2022), though learners well-being improved after pandemic, a substantial number of learners still grapple with reduced well-being (Liverpool et al., 2023; Brown, McKibbon, & Todd, 2024). Several research have unveiled sturdy links between learners' well-being, resilience, learning, and academic performance (Stanton et al., 2016). Thus, well-being grasp imperative in the inclusive education and significant impact on the academic journey. Leadership within HEIs is a vital element and critical in shaping organisational culture, influencing behaviours and strategic decisions and HEIs are keen to create inclusive environments, therefore, it is crucial specific leadership plays in the development of the EDI policies (Zhao et al., 2024), and Gender, ethnicity in the UK HEIs (Sang, 2016).

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Higher education institutions (HEIs) implement work climate supports that include staff development frameworks, accessible workplace adjustments support, diverse faculty and professional, inclusive curriculum designs (Liverpool et al., 2023). Several writers (for example, Shyman, 2015; Butcher et al., 2017; Crowe, 2021) also argued that work climate for skill acquisition had the potential to impact on learning. Academic practitioners have potential opportunity to explore and leverage their knowledge, skills and ability in their teaching practices, and to address learners with diverse needs (Crowe, 2021). Many UK HEIs align inclusion with work climate, viewing community-centred climate education frameworks and offer formal professional development, such as flexible online pathways like equipping educators and support staff with practical strategies for disability and special educational needs (Shyman, 2015; Butcher et al., 2017).

A few studies have delved intervening conditions for inclusive learning and teaching practices, particularly HEIs in the UK, limited evidence of these (Woolfolk, 2008; Shyman, 2015). Despite a substantial body of literature on inclusive learning and teaching practices, it is limited and overlooked from intervening conditions perspectives. The systematic literature review carried out for identifying research gap that had not previously been explored, and the research questions were identified to guide this study are;

RQ1. What contextual conditions shape inclusive learning and teaching practices in UK higher education institutions (HEIs)?

RQ2. Through what processes are inclusive learning and teaching practices implemented and managed?

RQ3. What conditions facilitate or constrain these practices?

RQ4. What consequences arise from inclusive learning and teaching practices, and how can the identified relationships be integrated into a substantive grounded-theory model?

3. Methodology

The study employed a Straussian grounded theory research methodology to capture qualitative data to derive a context specific theory within the research context, and identifying the insights into the given situations, it's contextual conditions, intervening conditions, processes and consequences of it (Corbin & Strauss, 2015). The methodology is consistent of philosophical position with symbolic interactionism and pragmatism and the theoretical perspective of interpretivism (Crotty, 1998; Corbin & Strauss, 2015), the study grasp an iterative data analysis process, which is closely aligned with the inductive approach (Corbin & Strauss, 2015; Charmaz, 2024), and it allows the participants and the researcher to jointly construct the multiple meaning of inclusive learning and teaching practices, social reality shaped through interaction (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

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3.1 Sampling Method

A purposive sampling was used for collecting data to understand multiple realities about a phenomenon. Academic professional from HEIs were chosen based on their knowledge, experiences, their willingness to participate in the interview, and they were chosen considering who were the best to provide meaningful information about the research questions (Corbin & Strauss, 2015; Charmaz, 2024). Theoretical sampling continued until theoretical saturation was achieved, and the number of interviews were therefore guided by on-going theory development during the constant comparison between categories (Creswell, 2014; Miles, Huberman & Saldana, 2015). 36 participants were interviewed from 18 HEIs in UK, 2 participants were chosen from each HEIs, 18 males and 18 females; participants ranged in age from 35 to 65 years. The interviews started on 1 September 2023 and finished on 1 December 2023, and the sessions typically lasted 60-90 minutes. HEIs names were replaced with code numbers, H1 to H18 and participants' names were replaced with code numbers (C1 to C36).

3.2 Data Collection

Data was obtained from a rigorous primary and secondary data source (Cresswell, 2014; Charmaz, 2024). The secondary data was used to support, validate and qualify the primary data. A primary contact was made via either email or phone call to arrange and confirm an interview date and time. A rigorous primary data was collected through in-depth interview to explain multiple realities of inclusive learning and teaching practices, which facilitated in-depth meaningful insights into a given situation through answers to the questions about what, why and how regarding the research topic (Easterby-Smith et al., 2018). Initially the questions were open-ended, but when interview progressed it became more directive (for example, semi-structured), which facilitated to explore the meaningful insights into given situations (Easterby-Smith et al., 2018). The study strictly adhered to ethical issues. Audio recorded was done for storing interview data. Data was also transcribed to analyse, interpret and validate data (Charmaz, 2024). Various documents were used to understand the research phenomenon, which validated and enriched primary data (Saunders et al., 2015).

Website and HEIs database, performance appraisal, NSS and OfS data, student survey were used as a rigorous data collection. Field notes were taken throughout the research process to capture primary data, familiarise with data, unfold rich and descriptive data (Charmaz, 2024), which later analysis data and interpretation (Saunders et al., 2015; Charmaz, 2024).

3.3 Data Analysis

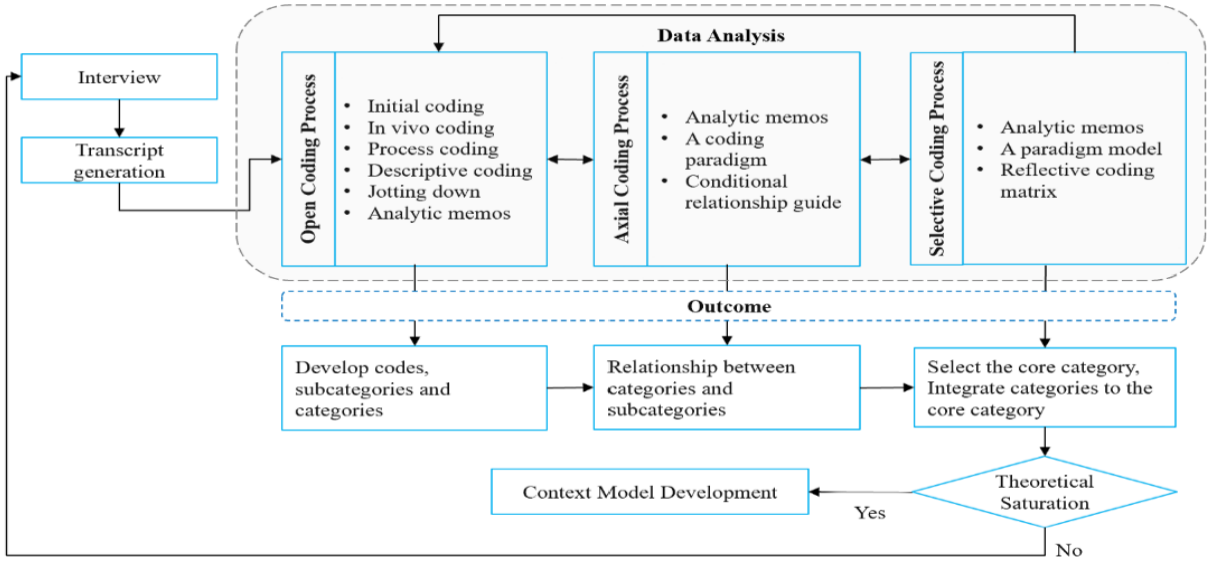
Data analysis involved in identifying code, categories, sub-categories, making comparisons between categories and sub-categories, contrast, and to unfold the story (Corbin & Strauss, 2015). All categories, and the findings were reviewed and re-analysed, further refinement and development. The three stages of data analysis involved in the research, including open coding,

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axial coding and selective coding, which facilitated analysis and interpretation to develop a meaningful contribution (Corbin & Strauss, 2015) (Figure 1). The data analysis began with open coding of the original interview data to develop codes, categories and sub-categories through initial coding, in vivo coding, describing coding, process coding, jotted down and analytic memos. Code, categories and sub-categories emerged during open coding, which later became categories, established and verified the relationships between categories and sub-categories through axial coding, including analytic memos, a coding paradigm and conditional relationship guide. That led to turn selective coding stage which identified the core category and integrated all the categories to the core category which allowed the development of the context specific theory, and which was achieved through analytic memos, a paradigm model and reflective coding matrix (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

Figure 1. The iterative date analysis process



Source: Author

4. Results

A total of 463 codes initially emerged through the open coding process. The 13 categories with 57 sub-categories emerged through axial coding. The 13 categories were further analysed through the selective coding to identify a core category which encapsulated the research phenomenon, and 3 consequences emerged from data analysis.

4.1 Category: Contextual Conditions: Inclusive Learning and Teaching Practices

The 3 categories of contextual conditions of the inclusive learning and teaching practices emerged from coding analysis, including teaching pedagogies, curricula and assessment, and feedback.

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Category 1: Teaching pedagogies: The 5 sub-categories of teaching pedagogies, including constructivist, collaborative, integrative, reflective, and inquiry and problem-based learning, all of which are the contextual conditions of inclusive learning and teaching practices. The teaching pedagogies emerged from participants' responses; for example, participant C20 made the following observation in Table 1.

Table 1. An interview quote and the emergence of descriptive code, teaching pedagogies

Case ID and Quote	Descriptive Code
Participant C20, Teaching approaches could be based on student-cantered, which is part of constructivist pedagogies learning to support the distinct learners' needs and requirements. In the diverse cultural background of learners, it requires having different teaching pedagogies, thereby achieving learning objectives.	Teaching pedagogies

Category 2: Curricula and assessment: The 4 sub-categories of curricula and assessment, including diverse curricula and materials, formative assessment, summative assessment, and peer and self-assessment. Participants C2, C4, C5, C8, C11, C13, C17, C19, C23, C27 and C30 suggested that curricula and assessment is significant for the inclusive teaching and learning practices. Participant C11 made the following observation.

Several assessments that include formative assessment such as Exit Ticket, summative assessment such as assignment and online exam promotes improving assessment literacy, and it deploys learners taking an ownership of assessments practices, supports inclusive teaching and assessment (In vivo Code: Formative assessment, Summative assessment).

Category 3: Feedback: The 3 sub-categories of inclusive feedback, including formative feedback, summative feedback, and feedforward feedback emerged from participants response. Participant C17 made the following observation.

An educator should provide formative feedback to the students during each course unit with at least 2 feedback for each course unit so that students could improve their course work to meet the learning outcome, and to understand specific learning criteria with a view to reducing error (Descriptive Code: Formative feedback).

4.2 Category: Process: Inclusive Learning and Teaching

The 4 categories of processes to manage the inclusive learning and teaching practice, which emerged from coding analysis, including classroom learning environment, universal design for learning, implementation of government and education policy, survey and observation.

Category 1: Classroom learning environment: The 5 sub-categories of classroom learning environment, including psychological safety, active participation tools, flexible content delivery and materials, build relationship, and collaborative classroom learning. The classroom learning

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environment emerged from participants' responses; for example, participant C23 made the following observation in Table 2.

Table 2. Illustration of an interview statement, identified open codes, jotted down and category

Case ID and Quote	Open Codes and Jotted Down Note	Category
Participant C23, We offer a wide range of assessment methods that we arrange based on students' skill, knowledges rather than depending on one assessment format. We offer PAT support using adequate resource content, material, and EdTech while teaching. We also facilitate flexible learning content.	Offer a wide range of assessment methods for students, Arrange based on students' skill, PAT support, Use adequate resource content and material, EdTech while teaching, Facilitate flexible learning content	Classroom learning environment

Codes were attached to almost every line in the interview transcripts to capture what was said (Table 3). For example, participants C4, C5, C8, and C13 made the following observation.

Table 3. Example of the development of codes, sub-categories and category from participants quotes

Case ID and Quote	Codes	Sub-category	Category
C4, Learning happens socially before it is internalised, learners gather knowledge together through collaborative dialogue, sharing knowledge and experiences.	Learning from social interaction, Gather knowledge collaboratively, Sharing knowledge and experiences	Collaborative classroom learning	Classroom learning environment
C5, Student who has a better understanding or a higher ability level than the other learner about a topic could share the topic with a peer.	Better understanding, Higher ability than other, Share topic with peer	Collaborative classroom learning	
C8, We facilitate various digital tools (e.g. Menti meter) to support quieter learners learn and engage comfortably.	Various digital tools, Learn and engage comfortably	Active participation tools	Classroom learning environment
C13, Providing facilitates learning technologies to engage students more effectively; such as, Kahoot, MS Form, quiz.com, and projector creating more participation.	Facilitate learning technologies, Creating participation	Active participation tools	

Category 2: Universal design for learning: It consists of 3 sub-categories, including multiple ways of engagement, multiple means of presentation, and multiple ways of expression emerged from

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participants response. Participant C22 stated that: *Teachers should facilitate diverse ways of presentation using many formats, like YouTube, audio, text, visuals, and online articles* (Descriptive Code: Multiple means of presentation).

Category 3: Implementation of government and education policy: It consists of 6 sub-categories, including the Equality Act 2010, inclusive education framework, the Department for Education (DfE), the EDI framework, the office for students (OfS), and quality assurance agency (QAA). Participant C22 made the following observation.

Government and education policy encompasses with human rights standards, discrimination and barriers, the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) framework. Grounded in legal obligations (such as the UK Equality Act 2010), we equip teaching support and facilitate to the all group of learners, such as, dyslexia, and diverse group of culture (Descriptive Code: Government and education policy).

Category 4: Survey and observation: It consists of 5 sub-categories, including peer observation, teaching observation, discussion, motivation survey, and student survey. Participant C12 stated that: *Teaching observation obviously imperative for the successful inclusive learning* (Descriptive Code: Teaching observation).

4.3 Category: Intervening Conditions: Inclusive Learning and Teaching Practices

The 3 categories of intervening conditions emerged from coding process, including support and opportunity, core goals and values, and culture.

Category 1: Support and opportunity: It consists of 5 sub-categories, including supportive leadership, flexible curricula, accessible environment and materials, training and development, and technology. Participants C3, C7, C10, C13, C14, C18, C21, C24, C26 and C29 stated that factors of support and opportunity facilitated or constrained the inclusive learning and teaching practices.

Support and opportunity emerged from data analysis as a descriptive code at the open coding stage but during subsequent axial coding it became a category through the conditional relationship guide, and verified the relationship between the code, and confirmed category as the consequences of it (Table 4). For example, participant C13 made the following observation.

Lecturer or course tutor, when they perceive that the possibility of leveraging their knowledge and ability, they become more interactive in inclusive practice. Academic Dean and administrators should make a clear inclusive vision to all, and fostering an inclusive VLE culture, for example, Rm unify, Turnitin, plagiarism detection tools, Google tools, immersive reader etc. that facilitate learners to learn in the inclusive learning environment, Higher management provide teachers with adequate CPD, staff development training (Descriptive Code: Support and opportunity).

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Table 4. The conditional relationship guide established and verified the relationship between the flexible curricula, and support and opportunity as the consequences of it

Conditional Relationship Guide						
Code	What the code refers to?	When the code would be used?	Where the code would be used?	Why the code would be used?	How the code would be used?	Consequences of using the code
Flexible Curricula	Contextual factors for the inclusive learning and teaching practice.	This is to understand the constraints and facilities for the inclusive learning and teaching practice.	Learning and teaching practice in higher education institutions in UK.	Flexible curriculum to accommodate diverse needs, Capabilities, Uses diverse perspectives for teaching, Support and opportunity for inclusive learning and teaching	Design curricula for the inclusive learning and teaching practice, Inclusive assessment and feedback, Assignment, Classroom learning	Support and Opportunity

Category 2: Core goals and values: It consists of 4 sub-categories, including equal access and removing barriers, respecting and valuing differences, adapting system, and adapting teaching. Participant C28 stated that: *Teachers should have positive views regarding diversity, inclusive teaching, and they should have professional skills, CPD training, and various EdTech resources, such as VLE, online platform technology, such as Canvas, YouTube video, Power-point, Microsoft Forms, Quiz.com, Kahoot to adapt their teaching methods for different learning styles and that facilitate learner to learn* (Descriptive Code: Adapting teaching).

Category 3: Culture: It consists of 6 sub-categories, including policy and norms, stakeholder involvement, flexible learning culture, structure, ethical issues, and management and leadership practice. Participant C22 stated that: *Our policy and norm is aligned with government education policy which we strictly adhere to maintain the EDI framework* (Descriptive Code: Policy and norms).

4.4 Category: Consequences: Inclusive Learning and Teaching Practices

The consequences of inclusive learning and teaching practices consist of 3 categories emerged from data analysis.

Category 1: Improved inclusive practice: It consists of 2 sub-categories, including improved inclusive teaching approach, and improved inclusive assessment and feedback. Participants C3, C4, C7, C10, C11, C15, C19, C22, C26, C29 and C31 suggested that improved inclusive practice

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is the impact of the effective inclusive learning and teaching practices. Participant C14 stated that: *When our higher management equip with diverse curriculum and assessment that would result in a positive impact on inclusive assessment and feedback.*

Category 2: Effective classroom practices: It consists of 4 sub-categories, including co-operative teaching, co-operative learning, collaborative problem solving, and effective teaching. Participant C20 stated that: *There is a significant impact of the universal design for learning. Thus, we facilitate multiple means of presentation information, which affect effective co-operative teaching.*

Category 3: Academic and social impact: It consists of 5 sub-categories, including higher achievement, better focus and engagement, increased empathy, increased employability, and challenging prejudices. Participant C4 stated that: *Various teaching pedagogies may influence better focus and engagement result in higher achievement academic impact.*

4.4. The Integration of Sub-categories to the Categories to Develop a Theory

The categories and sub-categories emerged from the grounded theory data analysis. The iterative data analysis was applied to link the categories and sub-categories in a set of relationships that explained for the inclusive learning and teaching practices, and subsequent inclusive education (Figure 2). All relationships between the categories, between the categories and sub-categories were established to understand and validate the relationships through the conditional relationship guide related to contextual conditions, strategies or processes, intervening conditions, and consequences. The relationship between all the categories and sub-categories were confirmed (based on the reflective coding matrix), and compared with the existing literature to develop a theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1998; Corbin & Strauss, 2015).

5. Discussion

The study highlights and develops a new approach to inclusive learning and teaching practices in higher education within the UK and are compared with existing literature (Figure 2). The discussion focuses on the research questions within the research context to bridge the gap.

RQ1, the findings indicated the 3 contextual conditions of inclusive learning and teaching practices that include teaching pedagogies, curricula and assessment, and feedback, the findings yield slightly different results from the literature of (Race, 2015; Wiliam, 2018).

Teaching pedagogies encompasses constructivist, collaborative, integrative, reflective, and inquiry and problem-based learning, which may apply to reflect and constructively align with the inclusive learning and teaching practices, the results are similar to the literature of (Biggs & Tang, 2011; Biggs, 2014; Feldman, Watson, & Gallik, 2022) who argued that teaching pedagogies should be part of all-inclusive education practice that would reduce the requirement for reasonable adjustment.

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Curricula and assessment encompasses diverse curricula and materials, formative assessment, summative assessment, and peer assessment, which may apply to reflect and constructively align with the inclusive learning and teaching practices, the results are consistent with the literature of (Biggs, 2014; Feldman, Watson, & Gallik, 2022) who argued that curricula and assessment should be part of all-inclusive education practice that would reduce the requirement for reasonable adjustment.

Feedback encompasses formative feedback, summative feedback, and feedforward feedback, all of which have been identified as contextual conditions in previous research on inclusive education (for example, Biggs & Tang, 2011; Biggs, 2014; Feldman, Watson, & Gallik, 2022), who suggested that feedback should be part of all-inclusive education practice that would reduce the requirement for reasonable adjustment (Race, 2015).

RQ2, the findings indicated 4 processes of inclusive learning and teaching practices that include classroom learning environment, universal design for learning, implementation of government and education policy, and survey and observation through which handle inclusive practice, the findings differ slightly from the existing literature of (Biggs & Tang, 2011; Biggs, 2014; Feldman, Watson, & Gallik, 2022)

Firstly, classroom learning environment encompasses psychological safety, active participation tools, flexible content delivery and materials, build relationship, and collaborative classroom learning that could enable students learning inclusively, equip them with good academic practice, class engagement, and enhances students' academic integrity, the findings are consistent with the work of (Race, 2015; Stanton et al., 2016; Wiliam, 2018), however, the findings are slightly different from the literature of (Biggs & Tang, 2011; Biggs, 2014; Feldman, Watson, & Gallik, 2022; Wolbring & Nguyen, 2023; Zhao et al., 2024). The psychological safety, build relationship contribute to increase collaborative learning, which were ignored in the existing literature.

Secondly, universal design for learning encompasses multiple ways of engagement, multiple means of presentation, and multiple ways of expression that could be the means of inclusive learning and teaching practices, which assumed to the subsequent inclusive education performance, the findings are slightly different from the literature of (Biggs & Tang, 2011; Biggs, 2014; Race, 2015; Wiliam, 2018; Feldman, Watson, & Gallik, 2022). The universal design for learning contributes to increase inclusive classroom engagement, but the results are not consistent with the existing literature.

Thirdly, a wide range of implementation of government and education policy, including the Equality Act 2010, inclusive education framework, the Department for Education (DfE), the EDI framework, the office for students (OfS), and quality assurance agency (QAA) through which handle inclusive practice, and equip teaching support and facilities to the all groups of learners, such as learners with SEN, dyslexia, dyspraxia, social anxiety, and diverse group of culture, the findings are consistent with the work of (Race, 2015; Wiliam, 2018), however, the existing

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literature failed to explain about how the implementation of government and education policy enables to manage the contexts of inclusive learning and teaching practices.

Finally, survey and observation is composed of peer observation, teaching observation, discussion, motivation survey, and student survey, all of which are imperative for successful inclusive learning and teaching practices. There is a knowledge gap in the existing literature, but the study incorporated observation and survey as a process for the inclusive learning and teaching practices.

The psychological safety, universal design for learning, implementation of government and education policy, and survey and observation contribute to handle the inclusive learning and teaching practices, these constructs are genuinely novel contributions, and which represent extensions of prior literatures and theories.

RQ3, the study identified 3 intervening conditions that include support and opportunity, core goals and values, and culture, all of which are facilitated or constrained the inclusive learning and teaching practices, subsequently produce a significant impact on outcomes, the findings are slightly different from the literature of (Biggs, 2014; Race, 2015; Wiliam, 2018; Feldman, Watson, & Gallik, 2022; Wolbring & Nguyen, 2023; Zhao et al., 2024).

Firstly, a wide range of support and opportunity (supportive leadership, flexible curricula, accessible environment and materials, training and development, and technology) influence the inclusive learning and teaching practices and subsequently consequences of it. The findings are consistent with the literature of (Wright & Beasley, 2004; Woolfolk, 2008; Biggs, 2014; Race, 2015; Wiliam, 2018; Feldman, Watson, & Gallik, 2022), who argued that work support and opportunity significantly imperative, which may have significant impact on human cognitive behaviour, attitudes, which may importantly facilitate for successful inclusive learning and teaching practices, the results slightly different from the work of (Scope, 2018). The supportive leadership, flexible curricula, accessible environment and materials affect the learning contexts and outcomes but there is no literature address these.

Secondly, numerous core goals and values (equal access and removing barriers, respecting and valuing differences, adapting system, adapting teaching), all of which could be significant elements in hindering, facilitating or enhancing inclusive learning and teaching outcomes. The study found higher education provider should ensure core goals and values that facilitated diverse need of students, equal access to the learning opportunities, and thereby fostering inclusive assessment, feedback and different teaching approaches (Mason & Minerva, 2022).

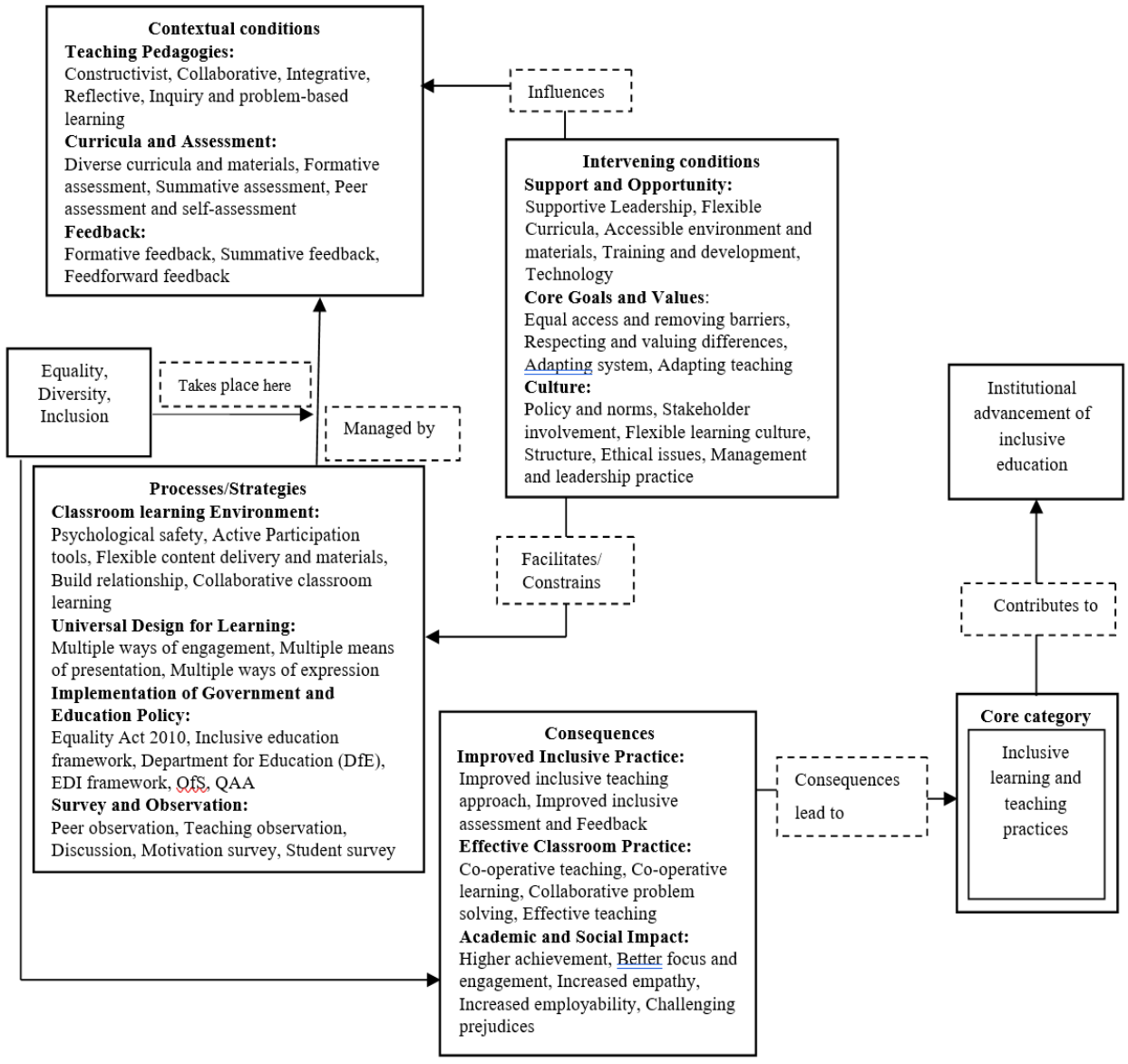
Finally, various culture including policy and norms, stakeholder involvement, flexible learning culture, structure, ethical issues, management and leadership practice, all of which are aligned with government education policy which we strictly adhere to maintain the EDI framework and the Equality Act 2010 and constructively aligned with the outcomes. This study incorporated support

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and opportunity, core goals and values, and culture, all of which are facilitated or constrained the inclusive learning and teaching practices.

Figure 2. A grounded theory model of the inclusive learning and teaching practices in higher education institutes (HEIs) in the UK



Existing literature did not examine how support and opportunity, core goals and values, and culture affect the contexts and process of inclusive learning and teaching learning practices. The study incorporated contextual factors in inclusive learning and teaching practices, as a contribution to new knowledge and therefore, these constructs are genuinely novel contributions, and which represent extensions of prior literatures.

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The RQ4 focuses on articulating a grounded theory conceptual model, which described a new approach to the inclusive learning and teaching practices in higher education institutions (HEIs) within the UK based on the contextual conditions, processes, intervening conditions and consequences, which contributes to the institutional advancement of inclusive education within UK higher education institutions (HEIs), subsequently, led to the development of a context specific substantive theory (Figure 2). The 3 distinctive consequences of the process to manage the inclusive learning and teaching practices in HEIs within the UK are improved inclusive practices, effective classroom practices, academic and social impact. The intervening conditions influence the inclusive learning and teaching practices, and the factors constraint or facilitate the contextual conditions, processes and consequences. The newly developed and its associated findings emerged, are compared with relevant existing literature, that in turn allowed to develop a theory. The intervening conditions constraints or facilitates teaching pedagogies, curricula and assessment, feedback, universal design for learning and classroom learning environment those have potential impact on the inclusive learning and teaching practices. The study contributes by integrating these previously dispersed constructs into a context-specific grounded-theory model for UK higher education.

5.1 Theoretical and Practical Contributions

This study developed a new substantive theory of inclusive learning and teaching practices in HEIs within the UK. The study makes a significant and original contribution to the inclusive learning and teaching literature by developing a grounded theory model tailored to the HEIs in the UK. A particular strength of the study is by incorporating contextual conditions, intervening conditions, processes, and consequences into a single integrated model. The study defined, developed abstract and conceptualised a new model and its consequence form the interdisciplinary perspective within the research context, which have never focused. Evidently, additional constructs are added to the new model.

The study also makes a noteworthy contribution by highlighting contextual factors such as support and opportunity, core goals and values, and culture, are significant which could affect the inclusive learning and teaching practice's contexts and processes, and these new abstracts were added to the exiting literature. The 3 consequences of inclusive learning and teaching practices, including improved inclusive practices, effective classroom practices, academic and social impact, that are new addition to the existing theory and often underemphasised in conventional evaluation models. The study defined 4 processes to handle the inclusive learning and teaching practices which added new abstracts and addition to the existing knowledge and practices.

Inclusive learning and teaching practices becomes sustainable when pedagogical, feedback, and assessment practices are implemented through accessible institutional processes and reinforced by supportive leadership, shared values, and an inclusive organisational culture. The proposed grounded theory model provided guidelines to the HEIs, academic, administrator, and practitioner

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about the inclusive learning and teaching practices from different lens and perspectives, subsequent institutional adavancement of inclusive education. The use of grounded theory is well aligned with the research objective. The study bridges the research gap and offers a significant theoretical, practical, and methodological contributions.

6. Conclusions and Implications of the Study

The study addressed the inclusive learning and teaching practices in a different context with a unique methodological approach, where research-based knowledge is limited. A new approach to the inclusive learning and teaching practices is developed and offered a new theory within the research context. Grounded theory analysis used to find categories, sub-categories and a core category to unfold a story. The 3 contextual conditions, 3 intervening conditions, 4 processes and 3 consequences are developed to effectively manage the inclusive learning and teaching practices within UK higher education institutions (HEIs). In consequence, the research aim, objectives and questions are achieved, however, findings need to be empirically tested for making generalised. However, generalisability is not a requirement of qualitative research design. The theory would be useful and applicable within the research context. Further research may be required for a deeper understanding considering education for sustainable development**.**

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