Does Art Education Matter in Inclusiveness for Learners with Disabilities? A Systematic Review

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Abstract. The pursuit of fostering inclusive educational environments, particularly in alignment with the United Nations' Sustainable Development 2030 Agenda, prioritizes the advancement of quality education. In this endeavor, there is a central emphasis on fostering equitable, inclusive, and high-quality education accessible to all individuals, including those with disabilities. Art education plays a relevant role within this agenda due to its multifaceted benefits and potential to contribute to inclusive educational environments, which are crucial for individuals with disabilities. This study contributes to this goal by investigating the intricate link between art education and inclusivity for disabled learners. In using the PRISMA (preferred reporting items for systematic reviews and meta-analyses) approach, we conducted a comprehensive analysis of literature sourced from reputable databases such as Google Scholar, Semantic Scholar, Web of Science, and Scopus. The timeframe for the literature review spanned from 2014 to 2023. Initially identifying 126 relevant publications, 28 research articles were deemed pertinent to the study objectives. The findings of this investigation unveil the significant impact of art education on various aspects crucial to the educational journey of learners with disabilities. Specifically, art education is shown to positively influence motivation

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levels, foster increased engagement in learning activities, and facilitate more effective learning outcomes. Building upon these insights, the study proposes a conceptual framework designed to cultivate inclusive classrooms. By synthesizing the empirical evidence gleaned from the analyzed literature, this research aims to inform educational practitioners, policymakers, and stakeholders about the transformative potential of art education in creating genuinely inclusive learning environments for all learners, including those with disabilities.

1. Introduction

In contemporary educational discourse, the pursuit of inclusiveness has emerged as a fundamental principle, recognizing the diversity of learners and acknowledging the unique needs of those with disabilities. The need for education to be inclusive has grown in importance as society's perceptions of diversity have changed (Cerna et al., 2021).

Drawing, painting, sculpture, and other creative expressions are just a few of the visual arts that are taught and learned through an organized and methodical process known as art education (Random House Unabridged Dictionary, 2023). Art education has been shown to have various benefits, including improving self-efficacy, self-concept, and creativity, as well as fostering social skills and the ability to interact with diverse groups (Schneider & Rohmann, 2021). According to Gerber and Horoschak (2012), art education helps students with special needs by developing a range of skills and competencies essential to their overall development. It improves motor abilities, encourages active participation, and strengthens social, cognitive, and communication proficiencies (Al-Yahyai et al., 2021). In the visual arts in particular, which comprise a portion of art education, it functions as a medium for teaching students with special needs and neurotypical students, providing opportunities for social engagement, self-expression, and skills development (Deasy, 2002). Student transitions into community life are accelerated by art instruction, which also increases students' self-determination and has a favorable impact on their social and intellectual development (Gerber & Horoschak, 2012). Art education fosters cognitive capacities, social engagements, and emotional expression through the combination of art and cognitive processes. As a result, it contributes considerably to the general well-being of students with special needs (Al-Yahyai et al., 2021). Recognizing the inclusive nature of art education, it becomes particularly relevant in the context of learners with disabilities. Individuals with disabilities encounter disparities in their day-to-day experiences, facing limited opportunities to engage in high-quality educational experiences, as highlighted by UNESCO (2015). These disabled students often find the need for assistance during specific times or in particular aspects of their lives, typically through informal means or within the dimensions of educational and social services (Gross, 2021). This lack of support for students with disabilities can result in under-education, limited training, poverty, and high unemployment rates. According to Dewey and Thompson

(2022), students with disabilities may encounter discrimination, experience a dearth of information, contend with subpar transition plans, and face a lack of acknowledgment for parental involvement within the school environment. These factors can compound and intensify the existing challenges they face.

The term *disability* is a specialized term with varying meanings tailored to the specific policies or programs in which it is employed. According to Francis and Silvers (2016), the way disability is perceived changes depending on the methodologies employed to study it and the contexts in which it is discussed. As articulated by the Americans with Disabilities Act (1990), the term disability refers to when an individual: experiences a physical or mental impairment that significantly restricts one or more major life activities; has a documented history of such impairment; or is perceived as having such an impairment. According to Derby (2016), it refers to a condition or state of functioning that hinders an individual's ability to perform activities in a manner considered normal for a human being.

Contemporary perspectives emphasize a social model of disability, which goes beyond the medical aspects and considers how societal attitudes, structures, and policies contribute to the exclusion or marginalization of individuals with impairments (Barnes, 2019). Disability is not solely an individual's health condition but also a result of the interaction between the person and an environment that may or may not accommodate their unique needs and abilities (Francescutti et al., 2011). The International Classification of Functioning, Disability, and Health (ICF) offers a thorough framework for delineating health and issues related to health, encompassing disability. Within this framework, disability is viewed as the intersection of body functioning, health conditions, and contextual factors (World Health Organization, 2007). This shift aims to promote inclusivity, equal opportunities, and the recognition of the diverse capabilities of people with disabilities.

The ICF enhances our comprehension of how individuals with various disorders function and participate in activities, as well as how contextual factors can either facilitate or adversely affect their functioning. Naami and Mort (2023) discussed how a specific health condition or disorder can influence body functioning, activity, and participation. Environmental factors such as social, physical, transportation, and information barriers and personal factors such as education, gender, social background, and profession additionally demonstrate the influence of contextual factors. In essence, the ICF integrates both the social and medical models of disability.

In 1976, the social model of disability, initially proposed by advocates from the Union of the Physically Impaired Against Segregation (UPIAS) (Shakespeare & Watson, 2010), gained further support from scholars such as Oliver (1990), Oliver and Barnes (1998), Shakespeare and Watson (2010), Barnes (1991), and Finkelstein (1980, 1988). Proponents of the social model of disability recognize that impairment can impose limitations on the functioning of individuals with disabilities. However, they assert that individuals with disabilities are primarily

disabled by their environment and other systemic factors rather than solely by their inherent impairments (UPIAS, 1976). Examples of disabling environmental factors include societal structures, values, culture, built environment (Geffen, 2013), inadequate access to healthcare, transportation, and physical and institutional barriers (Barnes & Mercer, 2005; Naami, 2014). The social model emphasizes the importance of removing barriers to promote the inclusion of individuals with disabilities in mainstream society (Naami, 2014; Shakespeare & Watson, 2010).

1.1 Study Rationale

The historical roots of art education intertwine with the realm of disability research and pedagogy, and contemporary progress in both art education and disability studies demonstrates a parallel commitment to advancing inclusivity for students with disabilities. Recent developments in these fields reflect a shared objective, namely the promotion of inclusive educational practices that cater to the diverse needs of students with disabilities (Derby, 2016). According to UNESCO (2021), education stands as a fundamental human right crucial to the Education 2030 Agenda, where nations are committed to "*ensure that education is inclusive and equitable, while also creating opportunities for lifelong learning for everyone*" (para. 1). However, achieving universal access and ensuring equal educational benefits for individuals, regardless of gender, age, race, ethnicity, ability, location, or other social characteristics, remains a considerable challenge. To realize the objectives outlined in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, prioritizing the effective implementation of inclusive educational policies and programs is imperative. Despite concerted efforts to embrace diversity, the educational community grapples with the challenge of effectively integrating learners with disabilities into mainstream educational settings. Traditional pedagogical approaches often fall short in catering to the diverse learning styles and needs of disabled individuals, leaving a discernible void in the pursuit of genuine inclusivity. To ensure that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development for education inclusiveness is achieved, it is crucial to provide a systematic review that carefully analyzes previous studies on education and learners with disabilities. To achieve this, this study is guided by the following research questions.

1. How does art education promote inclusiveness for disabled learners?
2. Does art education motivate and engender disabled learners' interest in learning activities?
3. What are the barriers to effective learning in art education classrooms among disabled learners?
4. What pedagogical strategies and frameworks can promote effective learning of disabled learners in art classrooms?

2. Methodology

The methodology employed in this study encompassed a systematic review, utilizing a rigorous and methodical approach to thoroughly investigate, evaluate, and synthesize the existing literature on *how art education matters in inclusiveness for disabled learners*. The systematic process of data collection and analysis adhered meticulously to the PRISMA (preferred reporting items for systematic reviews

and meta-analyses) guidelines, as delineated by Tugwell et al. (2020), Komalasari et al. (2023), and Bamiro et al. (2023). According to Salisu et al. (2024), the PRISMA technique offers significant advantages. Above all, it makes it easier to formulate specific research questions and encourages a methodical approach to conducting research. Second, it facilitates the development of strict inclusion and exclusion standards. Third, PRISMA aims to conduct a thorough evaluation of a large body of scientific literature under predetermined time constraints (Raimi et al., 2024; Rus et al., 2023; Utaminingsih et al., 2023). According to Qureshi et al. (2020), applying the PRISMA approach improves review article reporting, which helps researchers ensure that their reporting is up to par. It is imperative to acknowledge that the focus of this review is limited to published articles. By embracing this methodological framework, the study facilitated the extraction of evidence-based insights, enabling the derivation of well-founded conclusions and the formulation of informed recommendations for both future research endeavors and practical applications.

The three phases of the systematic search approach that were employed in this study are identification, inclusion, and exclusion.

2.1 Identification Phase
The identification phase was employed to acquire pertinent articles from renowned databases for this systematic review, including but not limited to Google Scholar, Semantic Scholar, Web of Science, and Scopus. The selection of these particular databases was driven by their significant impact and well-established reputation in academic circles. The article search was based on keywords connected with the Boolean operators "OR" and "AND", specifically "Art Education AND Disabled Learners", "Art Education AND Disability", "Art Education AND Inclusiveness", and "Art Education AND Inclusiveness". Table 1 below shows the keywords employed for the search in this study.

Table 1: Search keywords

Database	Keywords
Google Scholar	"Art Education AND Disabled Learners", OR "Art Education AND Disability"
Web of Science	"Art Education AND Disability" OR "Inclusiveness"
Scopus	"Art Education AND Inclusiveness"
Semantic Scholar	"Art Education AND Inclusiveness"

2.2 Inclusion Phase
The research publications that were identified were subjected to the inclusion phase. Every article obtained during the identification phase was examined to make sure it supports the goals of our study. The inclusion criteria (Table 2) entail the selection of English-language articles without any discrimination based on nationality, thereby representing the worldwide reach of our study. The temporal range was limited to 2014 – 2023 so that the most recent papers relevant to the research were included.

2.3 Exclusion Phase

To determine if the downloaded journal articles were appropriate for inclusion in our review, an evaluation of their titles and abstracts was done in this phase. Only articles that satisfied every requirement proceeded to the next review phase. Books, book series, book chapters, conference proceedings, and non-English articles were all excluded (Table 2).

Table 2: Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Criterion	Included	Excluded
Types of literature	Research articles	Conference proceedings, book chapters, books
Language choice	English language	Articles not in the English language
Country	Global	
Span of years	2014 – 2023	2013 and earlier

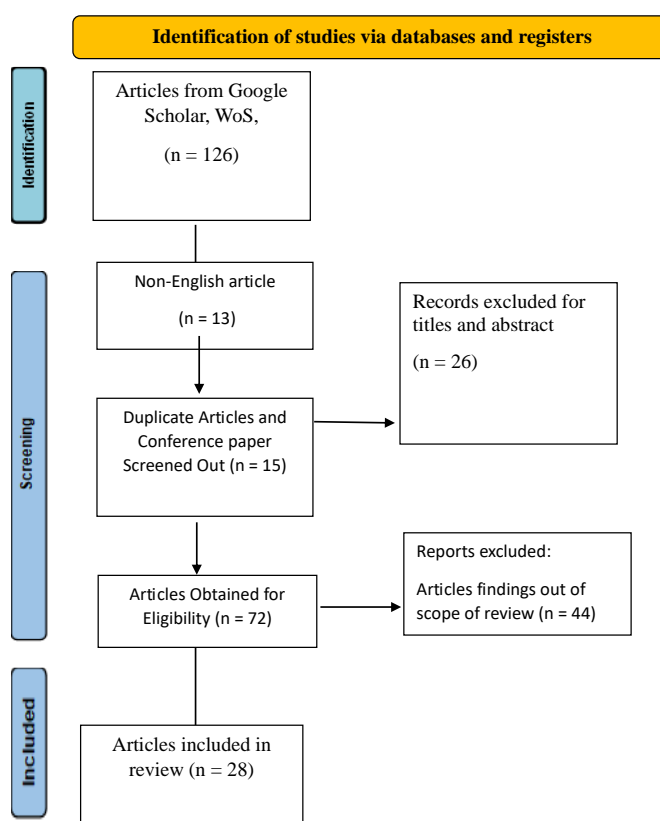The PRISMA flowchart used in this review is depicted in Figure 1.

Figure 1: PRISMA flowchart

3. Data Extraction Table and Analysis

The reviewed literature that is relevant to the objectives of this research study is summarized in this section (see Table 3). Additionally, a thorough analysis of the collected data is carried out, which includes the extraction of specifics, such as author names, year of publication, research methodology used, study location, research findings, and name of the corresponding journal.

Table 3: Data extraction table

S/N	Author/s (Year)	Country	Method	Findings	Journal
1	Suleymanov (2015)	Azerbaijan	Qualitative	Challenges include the need for a precise understanding of academic achievement, complexities in applying inclusive education concepts, navigating diverse teaching method theories, addressing social interaction challenges.	Electronic Journal for Inclusive Education
2	Meral (2015)	Turkey	Qualitative	The complexities of achieving full inclusion within the broader educational system, and the presence of active discrimination, particularly against girls with disabilities or intellectual disabilities, are seen as barriers to effective learning in art education classrooms among disabled learners.	European Journal of Special Needs Education
3	Sabayleh and Alramamneh (2020)	Jordan	Quantitative	The findings emphasize challenges in the areas of educational technologies, the center itself, characteristics of students with autism, and the perspectives of teachers, which challenges are the barriers to effective learning in art education classrooms among disabled learners.	Cypriot Journal of Educational Science
4	Dewey and Thompson (2022)	USA	Qualitative	The challenge lies in adapting art education materials and methodologies to ensure they are accessible and beneficial for every student.	Liberal Studies
5	DeCleene (2015)	USA	Qualitative	Physical and intellectual access to arts programming as well as a need for clear modifications and accommodations to maximize meaningful learning are seen as the barriers to effective learning in art education classrooms among disabled learners.	University of Wisconsin-Madison
6	Müller et al. (2018)	USA	Quantitative	The multi-sensory nature of arts instruction offers multiple access points to the curriculum, providing an alternative and engaging means of learning and self-expression.	Early Child Development and Care
7	Escaño et al. (2021)	Spain	Qualitative	Art education actively fosters inclusiveness for disabled learners through cooperative learning principles and a socio-constructivist perspective.	International Journal of Art & Design Education

8	Campbell (2017)	UK	Qualitative	Art education promotes inclusiveness for disabled learners by fostering a reflective and adaptive teaching approach.	Journal of Pedagogic Development
9	Allahverdiyev et al. (2017)	Cyprus	Qualitative	Art education serves as a transformative force in promoting inclusivity for individuals with special needs, fostering identity, confidence, and social integration, providing individuals with special needs a platform for self-expression.	International Journal of Educational Sciences
10	Alter-Muri (2017)	USA	Qualitative	Art education empowers autistic students in the art classroom to communicate more effectively, enhance social, cognitive, and behavioral skills, and improve motor development and sensory awareness.	Art Education
11	Derby (2016)	USA	Qualitative	Through the inclusive and encouraging environment that art education fosters, disabled students feel appreciated, inspired, and empowered to express themselves.	Studies in Art Education
12	Keifer-Boyd et al. (2018)	USA	Qualitative	In the context of this study's findings, art education demonstrates a commitment to disability justice principles by fostering an inclusive environment. This inclusive space goes beyond mere acknowledgment, actively incorporating the perspectives and experiences of disabled learners into the core fabric of educational practices.	Studies in Art Education
13	Kallio-Tavin (2020)	Finland	Qualitative	The inclusive art classroom, with its progressive postmodern visual culture curriculum, serves as a unique pedagogical environment that not only engages students in learning but also enhances their social interactions.	International Journal of Education Through Art
14	Erim and Caferoglu (2017)	Turkey	Quantitative	Based on the research findings, most of the participating teachers believed that visual art education plays a crucial role in the development of mentally challenged children. They also expressed the view that visual arts classes contribute positively to the enhancement of motor skills and the improvement of hand-eye coordination.	Universal Journal of Educational Research

15	Ramatea and Khanare (2021)	South Africa	Qualitative	Art education helps to understand and improve the well-being of learners with visual impairments.	International Journal of Qualitative Studies on Health and Well-Being
16	Malley and Silverstein (2014)	USA	Qualitative	Art education, particularly when integrated with special education considerations, plays a crucial role in motivating and engaging disabled learners.	Arts Education Policy Review
17	Hashemian and Mohammadi (2015)	Iran	Qualitative	Based on the study, it is evident that art education, particularly in the form of music therapy, has a positive impact on the growth of social skills in intellectually disabled children.	Open Journal of Pediatrics
18	Halder et al. (2023)	India	Qualitative	The findings imply that art education plays a crucial role in motivating and fostering the interest of disabled learners in learning activities.	International Journal of Research and Review
19	Penketh (2017)	UK	Qualitative	The study findings indicate that art education actively promotes inclusiveness by embracing diversity.	Disability & Society
20	Reason and Ward (2022)	UK	Quantitative	Art education can serve as a powerful means to promote inclusiveness for disabled learners, fostering a more equitable and accessible learning environment.	The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance
21	Wexler (2016)	USA	Qualitative	Art education motivates and engages disabled learners by providing a space for self-expression, challenging traditional norms, and fostering inclusive learning experiences.	Journal of Social Theory in Art Education
22	Allen (2019)	USA	Qualitative	Art education provides a powerful means for disabled learners to actively participate in the learning process, contributing to their overall motivation and interest in education.	Journal of Curriculum Theorizing
23	Allan (2014)	UK	Qualitative	Art education is positioned as a motivating and engendering force for disabled learners by providing a space for self-expression.	Cambridge Journal of Education
24	Begeske et al. (2023)	USA	Qualitative	The barriers to effective learning in art education classrooms among disabled learners include a limited	Arts Education Policy Review

				focus on special education and lack of inclusive field experiences.	
25	Derby and Karr (2015)	USA	Qualitative	The study suggests that incorporating disability studies material into art education courses has the potential to motivate and engage disabled learners in learning activities.	Disability Studies Quarterly
26	Makris (2020)	Greece	Qualitative	The study underscores that art education., particularly in the form of artistic ensembles, serves as a powerful and positive teaching tool that significantly impacts the lives of mentally disabled individuals.	Psychology
27	Sibanda and Sibanda (2022)	Zimbabwe	Qualitative	The pedagogical strategies and framework proposed in the study revolve around continuous teacher training, practical-oriented and active learning methods, collaboration with stakeholders, resource acquisition, and the creation of a responsive learning environment.	British Journal of Multidisciplinary and Advanced Studies
28	Roche and Whitburn (2019)	UK	Qualitative	The study emphasizes the significance of creating quality arts education experiences that provide opportunities for students to share their knowledge confidently.	Journal of Literary & Cultural Disability Studies

3.1 Analysis of Research Articles Methodology

In the extensive review of the literature, a significant subset, totaling 24 articles, utilized qualitative research methods to explore their respective research inquiries, constituting 86% of the studied articles. Conversely, three studies chose a quantitative methodology to scrutinize the intricacies of the subject matter, accounting for 10% of the overall studies reviewed. Meanwhile, one study embraced a mixed method approach, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative methods, representing 4% of the articles reviewed in this research. The distribution of methodology used is visually presented in Figure 2 below.
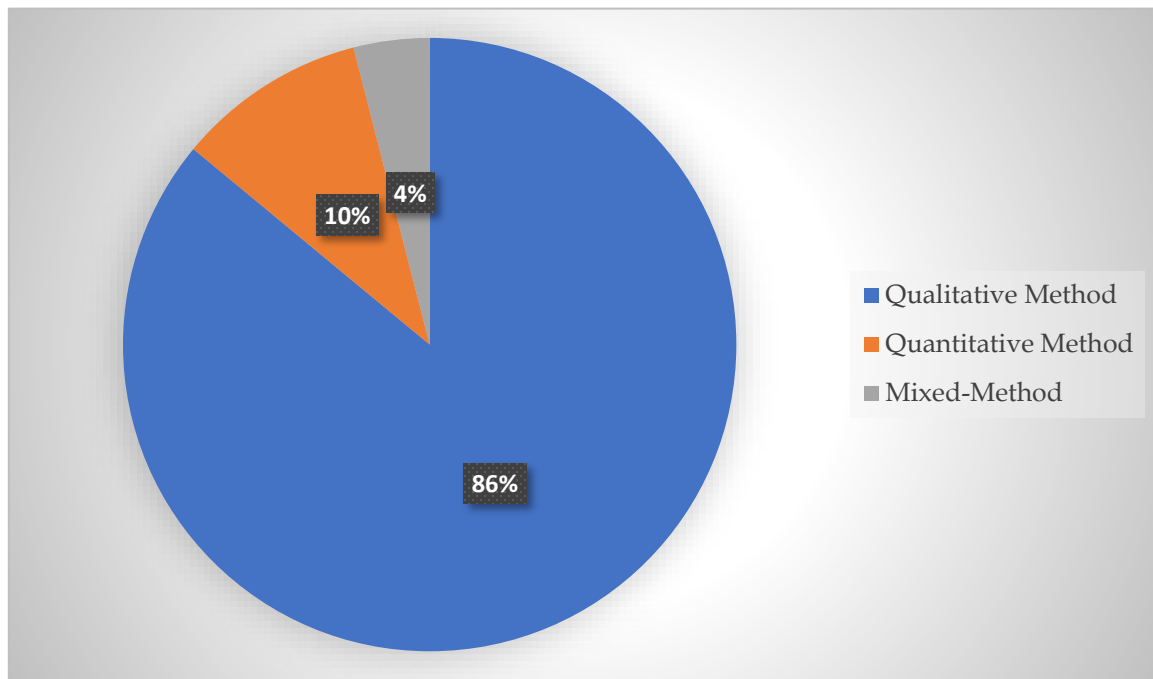

Figure 2: Methodology analysis of reviewed studies

3.2 Publication by Year

The selected scholarly articles spanned the period 2014 to 2023, affording us the opportunity to investigate the progression of key trends, emerging methodologies, and noteworthy shifts in research focus. This temporal scope offers a comprehensive perspective on the subject matter, affording insights into the nuanced developments over time. Noteworthy patterns include the prevalence of five articles in 2017, followed by four articles each in 2015 and 2020. In contrast, 2021 and 2022 each contributed three articles, while 2014, 2016, 2018, and 2019 featured two articles each. The year 2023 is represented by a solitary paper. A detailed depiction of this temporal distribution is presented in Table 4 and visually represented in Figure 3, facilitating an in-depth understanding of the research landscape throughout this impactful chronological span.

Table 4: Year of publication of reviewed studies

Year	Number of articles
2014	2
2015	4
2016	2
2017	5
2018	2
2019	2
2020	4
2021	3
2022	3
2023	1
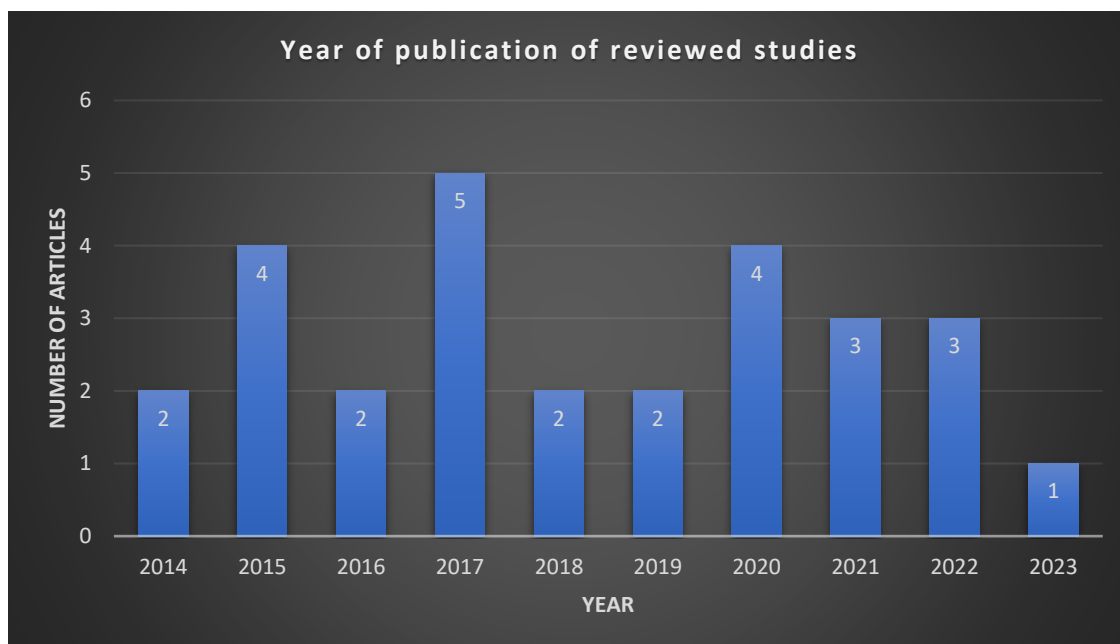
Figure 3: Publication by year of reviewed studies

3.3 Research Study Location

The global significance of our study is underscored by the diverse geographical origins of the chosen research articles, each contributing to the exploration of whether art education matters in inclusiveness for disabled learners. Notably, the United States emerged as a prominent contributor, with 15 studies enriching the research corpus. Other countries making significant contributions include Azerbaijan, Turkey, Jordan, Spain, the United Kingdom, Cyprus, Finland, South Africa, Iran, India, Greece, and Zimbabwe. This wide array of contributing countries reflects a truly international perspective. This extensive representation ensures a comprehensive and inclusive investigation into the relationship between art education and inclusiveness for disabled learners, incorporating insights from varied cultural,

social, and economic contexts. Figure 4 below visually illustrates the global distribution of these contributions.
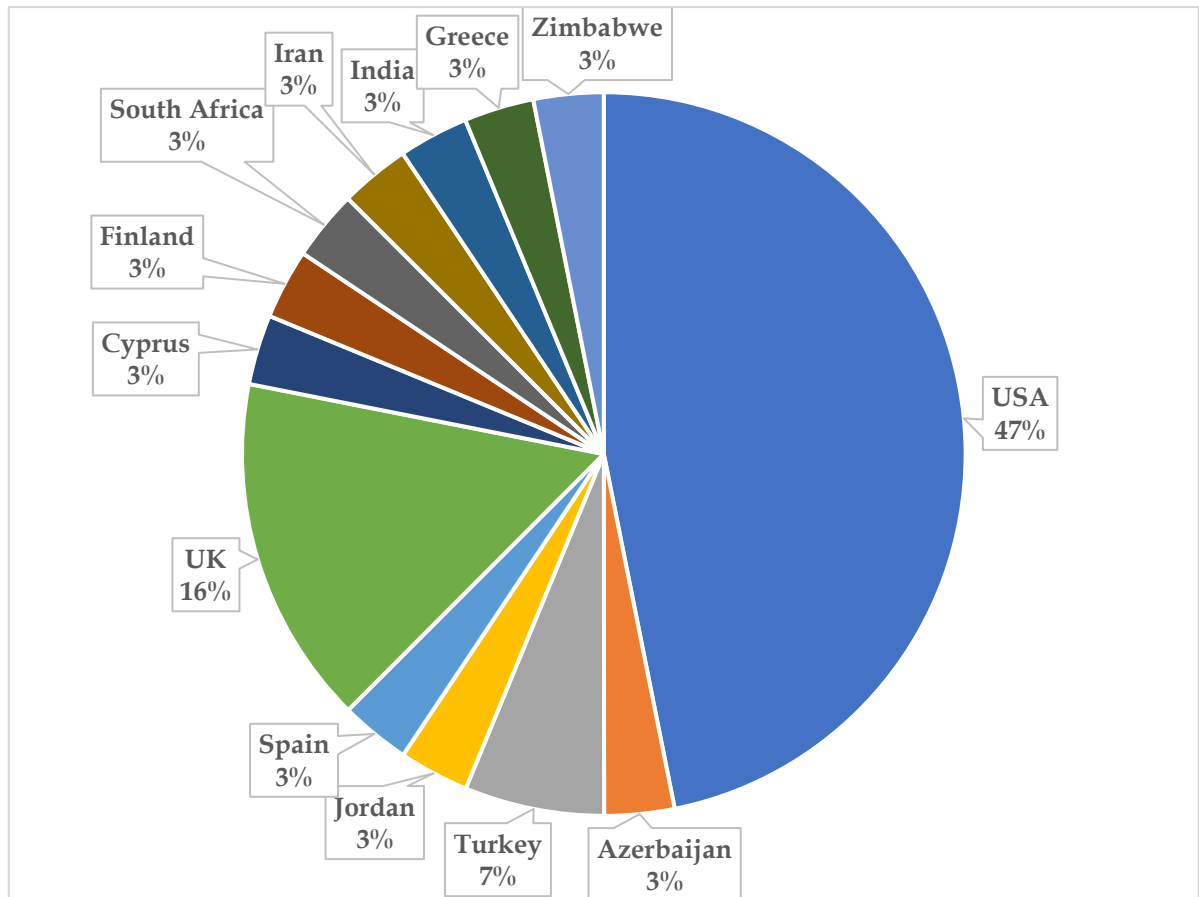

Figure 4: Distribution of research study location

3.4 Authors' Country Affiliation
Figure 5 below shows the affiliation of the authors of the reviewed articles for this study. Most of the authors are from the United States of America, followed by the United Kingdom and Turkey.
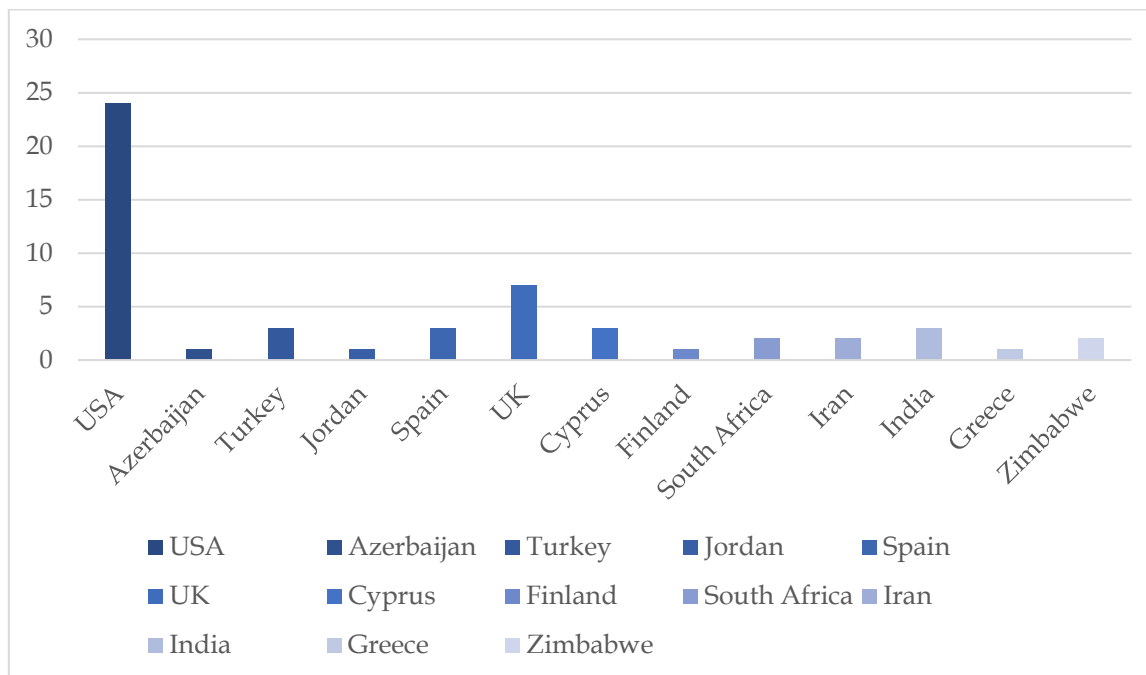
Figure 5: Country affiliation of authors of reviewed studies

4. Discussion of Results

This systematic review delves into the intricate relationship between art education and inclusiveness for disabled learners, aiming to provide profound insights derived from a meticulous synthesis of existing literature. By undertaking a comprehensive analysis of studies spanning various contexts and methodologies, this review sought to unravel the multifaceted impact of art education on fostering inclusiveness within the realm of disabled learners. This section is dedicated to a thorough examination and interpretation of our findings, shedding light on the nuanced dynamics that define the interplay between art education and inclusivity. Through the synthesis of diverse perspectives and empirical evidence, our systematic review endeavored to contribute valuable knowledge to the discourse on the pivotal question: Does art education matter in inclusiveness for disabled learners?

4.1 Research Question 1: How does art education promote inclusiveness for disabled learners?

The transformative power of art education in fostering inclusiveness for disabled learners is vividly exemplified in various studies, each shedding light on distinct aspects of this multifaceted relationship. Müller et al. (2018) illuminated how art education, epitomized by the Inclusive Arts Program (IAP), catalyzes promoting inclusiveness for disabled learners, particularly those with social cognitive challenges. The intentional integration of social-emotional learning (SEL) within the IAP underscores how art education can be tailored to address the unique needs of disabled learners. Discussions around artists' thoughts and feelings become a conduit for nurturing "theory of mind", emphasizing individual perspectives. This

adaptability of art education is further emphasized in Escaño et al.'s (2021) Art Education and Human Development project, where the strategic implementation of art education actively fosters inclusiveness. Grounded in cooperative learning principles, this project emphasizes social interdependence, identity development, and cultural hope, showcasing the role of art education in promoting social equality. Building on these insights, Campbell (2017) offered a reflective and adaptive approach to art education, emphasizing the importance of accommodating diverse learners. The shift from visual to vocal expressiveness in response to a visually impaired student's needs demonstrates a commitment to accessibility and inclusivity. This adaptation highlights the transformative potential of art education, reinforcing the importance of adjusting teaching methods to ensure engagement for disabled learners. Moreover, Allahverdiyev et al.'s (2017) study delved into the principles of special education, positioning arts education as a cornerstone for the holistic development of all children, particularly those with special needs. This underscores the multifaceted impact of arts education, not only supporting cognitive and motor skills but also contributing to the development of identity, confidence, and social integration for individuals with special needs. Beyond skills development, the study emphasizes the role of arts education in providing a platform for self-expression, communication, and engagement, showcasing its transformative potential.

Art education emerges as a powerful tool for promoting inclusiveness, particularly for individuals on the autism spectrum, as evidenced in the study by Alter-Muri (2017). The benefits extend across a broad spectrum, showcasing heightened levels of creativity and expression. Art educators, armed with an understanding of the diverse skills within this spectrum, play a crucial role in assisting autistic students. Distinct strategies, combined with reinforcing skills through art education, empower these students to enhance communication, social, cognitive, and behavioral skills, while also improving motor development and sensory awareness. Building on this understanding, Derby's (2016) study demonstrates that art education acts as a catalyst for promoting inclusiveness for disabled learners. Through an initiative that actively engaged students in critiquing ableism, the study showcases the transformative impact of incorporating disability studies perspectives into art education. The project went beyond critiquing ableism, delving into core notions of the normal and the able/not-able constitutional divide. The positive outcomes suggest that art education, enriched with disability studies perspectives, can actively foster inclusive attitudes and awareness.

Keifer-Boyd et al. (2018) further posited that art education, aligned with disability justice principles, seeks to create an inclusive space that actively incorporates the perspectives and experiences of disabled learners. This alignment aims to break down traditional barriers, promoting a more inclusive and equitable art education that genuinely embraces the diversity of learners, including those with disabilities. In a similar vein, Kallio-Tavin's (2020) study emphasizes that art education promotes inclusiveness by offering a space for disabled learners to explore artistic interests and build meaningful social connections. The insights suggest that art education extends

beyond conventional practices, actively contributing to the creation of inclusive learning environments that celebrate diversity and empower disabled learners to participate actively in the broader educational community.

Erim and Caferoglu's (2017) research findings highlight the crucial role of visual art education in promoting inclusiveness for children who are mentally retarded. Visual arts classes are recognized not only for developing motor skills and hand-eye coordination but also for fostering an inclusive environment. This inclusivity is indicated by the positive impact on motor skills and coordination, showcasing how art education becomes a powerful tool in breaking down barriers and fostering inclusiveness. The study by Ramatea and Khanare (2021) emphasizes the importance of art education in Lesotho using collaborative and participatory methods, such as collages, to improve the well-being of learners with visual impairments. This approach promotes inclusiveness by providing a platform for disabled learners to actively engage, express themselves, and contribute to the learning community, fostering a collaborative and inclusive environment.

Collectively, these studies paint a comprehensive picture of art education as a dynamic force, adaptable to the unique needs of disabled learners and actively contributing to creating inclusive environments. Whether through intentional integration of SEL concepts, adaptive teaching approaches, or principles of special education, art education emerges as a transformative tool that goes beyond individual skill development, fostering a sense of belonging and empowerment in society.

4.2 Research Question 2: Does art education motivate and engender disabled learners' interest in learning activities?

The role of art education in motivating and engaging disabled learners is a consistent theme across various studies, showcasing the diverse ways in which art contributes to their learning experiences.

Motivation: Art education emerges as a potent motivator for disabled learners across several studies. Alter-Muri's work (2017) highlights how specific strategies in art education, combined with skill reinforcement through artmaking, empower disabled learners. This empowerment leads to enhanced communication skills, social interaction, cognitive abilities, and behavioral skills. Similarly, Keifer-Boyd et al. (2018) argued for a re-conceptualization of terms within the field, aligning with disability justice and anti-oppression pedagogies, thus motivating disabled learners by fostering inclusivity. Kallio-Tavin's study (2020) emphasizes the transformative impact of art education on students with emotional disabilities, showing how an inclusive art classroom can significantly motivate learners by engaging them in learning and enhancing their social interactions. These findings collectively underscore how art education can be a catalyst for motivation among disabled learners, sparking joy, pride, and renewed interest in the learning process.

Engagement: The collaborative efforts between art therapists and educators play a crucial role in engaging disabled learners, ensuring that art activities embody best practices and create an environment conducive to active participation (Alter-Muri, 2017). Additionally, Kallio-Tavin (2020) emphasized peer learning, collaboration, and less structured environments in art education as contributors to motivating disabled learners, fostering social connections, and providing a dynamic space for exploration and skills development. Ramatea and Khanare (2021) further highlighted how participatory methods such as collages actively involve learners with visual impairments, emphasizing their agency and contribution to well-being and education. These insights underscore the role of art education in fostering engagement, participation, and inclusivity among disabled learners.

Learning outcomes: The findings of Erim and Caferoglu (2017) underscore the significant role of visual art education in motivating children who are mentally retarded, contributing to their overall development, including improved motor skills and hand-eye coordination. Similarly, Malley and Silverstein's (2014) conclusion suggests that integrating art education with special education considerations motivates and engages disabled learners, leading to inclusive educational experiences and enabling them to achieve their fullest potential. The positive impact of music therapy on social skills growth in intellectually disabled children also highlights how art education contributes to skills development and enhances the overall learning experience (Hashemian & Mohammadi, 2015). These studies collectively demonstrate that art education not only motivates and engages disabled learners but also contributes significantly to their learning outcomes and holistic development.

In summary, art education affects inclusiveness for students with disabilities in many different ways, including motivation, engagement, and learning outcomes. The studies presented highlight the transformative experiences that may be produced in art education through customized tactics, teamwork, and inclusive practices, empowering students with disabilities and promoting their overall growth.

4.3 Research Question 3: What are the barriers to effective learning in art education classrooms among disabled learners?

Decleene (2015) examined the obstacles that hinder disabled learners from learning well in art education classes and found that several interrelated factors make it difficult to provide inclusive and meaningful art education experiences. Some of the main obstacles are the lack of integrated research across the fields of special education, art education, and learning sciences; the scarcity of arts-based resources for students with severe disabilities; and the lack of knowledge about specialized art classes intended for individuals with significant disabilities. Meaningful learning is made more difficult by hurdles to access, both intellectual and physical, as well as the requirement for explicit accommodations and changes. Decleene (2015) emphasized how important it is to consider a wide range of viewpoints, including educator and parental feedback, to fully address these hurdles. Suleymanov's (2015) research

explored the various obstacles encountered by students with disabilities in art education settings, exposing complex issues. These include negotiating multiple teaching-technique ideas, managing evaluations in inclusive art education settings, resolving social interaction issues, and the necessity of having a precise grasp of academic accomplishment. The study also draws attention to more general issues with inclusive education, like negotiating new developments in education and related obstacles. Barriers have multiple dimensions, which are influenced by the duties and obligations of instructors and assistants, collaborative and co-teaching methods, and curriculum modifications in art education. While taken as a whole, these factors highlight the complex obstacles that disadvantaged students face when trying to learn effectively in art education classes within the context of inclusive education.

Accordingly, Meral's (2015) exploration of challenges in art education classrooms for disabled learners in Turkey exposed significant barriers. These include the complexities of achieving full inclusion within the broader educational system, discrimination affecting access, the absence of a clear registration system, and the interconnection between disability and poverty. The study emphasizes the need for nuanced strategies tailored to art education classrooms, addressing discrimination and poverty as central challenges. The identified barriers underscore the nuanced landscape of art education classrooms, necessitating tailored interventions for equitable and meaningful learning experiences for disabled learners in Turkey. In addition, Sabayleh and Alramamneh's (2020) study suggests potential barriers to effective learning in art education classrooms for disabled learners, encompassing issues related to technology incorporation, the overall educational environment, unique needs of disabled students, and teacher preparedness. Addressing these challenges could contribute to fostering a more inclusive and supportive art education environment.

The study by Dewey and Thompson (2022) highlights potential barriers, such as the lack of an inclusive curriculum and instruction methods tailored to varied needs, inadequate educator support, and delays in early intervention services. These barriers, if addressed through inclusive curriculum development, robust support structures, and timely access to intervention services, can enhance the inclusivity of art education classrooms. Worthy of mentioning is the study of Begeske et al. (2023), which identified barriers such as a limited focus on special education, lack of inclusive field experiences, inadequate teaching strategies, the need for collaborative efforts, limited exposure to diverse settings, and the absence of a comprehensive curriculum tailored to students with disabilities. These barriers collectively pose challenges to fostering effective and inclusive learning environments for disabled learners in art education. Roche and Whitburn's (2019) study highlights potential barriers related to framing ability/disability, teachers' attitudes and assumptions, and limited perceptions of expertise. The risk of fixed identifiers and framing of the curriculum without considering diversity may hinder the creation of an inclusive and supportive space for disabled learners in art education classrooms. In summary, the

barriers to effective learning in art education classrooms among disabled learners, as outlined in the article, include the framing of ability/disability as fixed identifiers, teachers' attitudes and assumptions, and limitations in the perception of expertise in the arts. The article underscores the need for a pedagogical approach that recognizes and embraces diverse ontologies to foster an inclusive and supportive learning environment for all students.

4.4 Research Question 4: What pedagogical strategies and framework can promote effective learning of disabled learners in art classrooms?

The study by Roche and Whitburn (2019) suggests frameworks and pedagogical approaches that support impaired students' successful learning in art classes. Focusing on educational provisions for diverse ontologies, questioning fixed identities of ability/disability, and fostering an inclusive and supportive environment are important strategies. It emphasizes the importance of providing high-quality arts education experiences that inspire students to interact with a wide range of artistic mediums, discover many cultures, and proudly express their knowledge. According to the study, actively seeking out different viewpoints in artistic endeavors helps to create a pedagogical framework that goes beyond rigid ideas of ability and inability. All students, regardless of their talents or impairments, are to benefit from a more inclusive, encouraging, and stimulating learning environment thanks to these measures.

The focus of Roche and Whitburn's (2019) study is on ableism education through the inclusion of disability studies content in the curriculum. The pedagogical approach exposes students to the problems experienced by people with disabilities through a variety of curricular materials, including research papers, documentaries, video clips, and short stories. Creating a critical and safe environment is important, and it takes time to strike a balance between criticality and empathy. The suggested transformational pedagogy promotes student engagement by having their artwork displayed in public. The study conclusion makes a strong case for the ongoing application of pedagogical techniques that introduce students to the idea of ableism through a variety of course materials in a secure learning environment.

The study by Sibanda and Sibanda (2022) offers pedagogical techniques for successful learning for students with disabilities in art classrooms. The importance of ongoing professional development is emphasized to provide teachers with the knowledge and skills necessary to provide inclusive art instruction. The goal of practical-oriented solutions is to increase the participation of physically challenged students in the art curriculum through experiential learning and hands-on activities. To provide support services and training, cooperation with stakeholders is prioritized, including the Ministry of Education and therapists. To remove obstacles to successful learning, active learning strategies, including project-based learning and customized programs, are advised. The report promotes sufficient resources, adaptable materials, and accessible facilities, highlighting the significance of resource acquisition and

accessibility, and lastly, developing a flexible learning environment for students in special education.

This study offers a thorough range of pedagogical approaches and frameworks for encouraging inclusiveness and successful learning for students with disabilities in art classes. These include accepting a variety of ontologies, developing inclusive arts education programs, actively seeking out diverse viewpoints in artistic endeavors, and incorporating resources related to disability studies. Other approaches include constructing secure and critical learning environments, providing ongoing teacher preparation, working with stakeholders, utilizing active learning techniques, acquiring resources, and developing responsive learning environments.

Figure 6 presents an inclusive classroom framework devised based on the literature reviewed. This pedagogical framework has been carefully designed to create and improve efficient learning environments in art classrooms for students with disabilities. According to Sibanda and Sibanda's (2022) strategic plan, educators require strong backing from stakeholders, with the Ministry of Education playing a major role. The goal of this cooperative effort is to provide essential support services and customized training for art educators to promote an inclusive learning environment. One significant obstacle identified by the framework is the lack of appropriate and ongoing training for art teachers. In keeping with the pedagogical strategies outlined in the Dewey and Thompson (2022) study, the main points of emphasis are ongoing professional development for teachers, the application of active and practical learning approaches, the promotion of stakeholder collaboration, the acquisition of resources, and the creation of a responsive learning environment.

This framework acknowledges the challenge that a less accessible classroom presents to the successful learning of students with disabilities, as suggested by Roche and Whitburn (2019). It stipulates that one of the most important ways to improve and promote an inclusive art school is to have classrooms that are made to fit everyone, regardless of their background, age, or physical ability. Acknowledging the intrinsic support requirements of learners with disabilities, the framework incorporates perspectives from Roche and Whitburn (2019) to emphasize that establishing an environment that is inclusive and supportive is essential to creating a more engaging learning environment, which benefits all students, regardless of their abilities or disabilities.
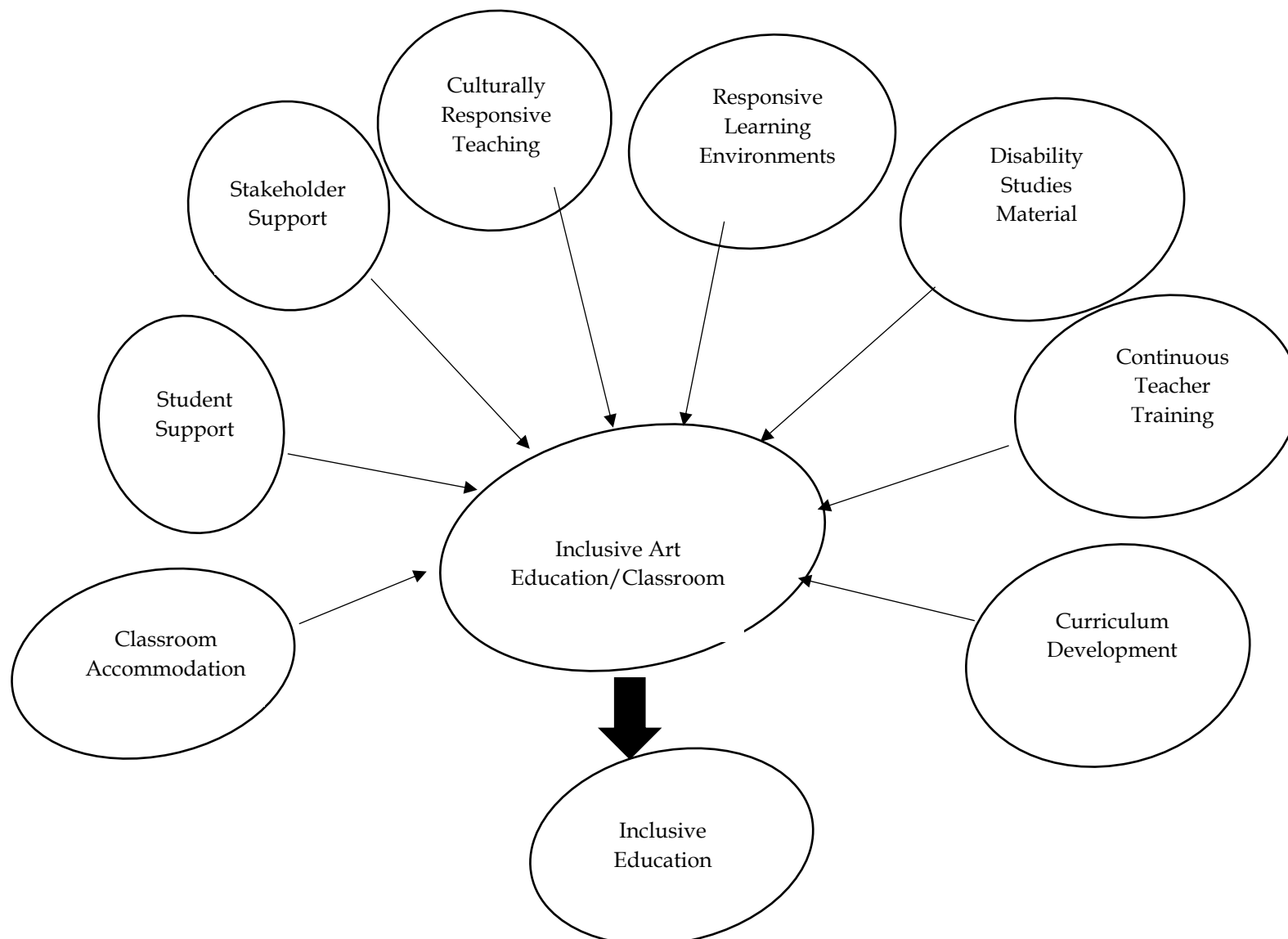
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Culturally Responsive Teaching

Responsive Learning Environments

Stakeholder Support

Disability Studies Material

Student Support

Continuous Teacher Training

Inclusive Art Education/Classroom

Classroom Accommodation

Curriculum Development

Inclusive Education

Figure 6: Inclusive classroom framework devised based on literature reviewed

Additionally, the framework tackles the inflexibility that comes with a curriculum hurdle that was clarified by Roche and Whitburn (2019). It promotes thorough curriculum development strategies meant to inclusively take into account the particular requirements of students with disabilities. The framework promotes itself as a crucial tool in accomplishing the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals by supporting inclusive art education and classrooms, therefore fostering an inclusive education for all. This extensive framework serves as a valuable manual that may be used to improve and enhance the educational experiences of students with disabilities in art classes, making a significant contribution to the worldwide effort to promote inclusive education.

5. Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to conduct a thorough and methodical review exploring the role that art education plays in promoting inclusivity for students with disabilities. The goals were to identify common barriers to effective learning in art education classrooms for disabled learners, explore how art education promotes inclusivity for disabled learners, and analyze how it can motivate and cultivate interest in learning activities among this population. Lastly, the study outlined pedagogical strategies, while building a framework to improve effective learning in art classrooms for disabled learners. Based on a thorough literature search using the PRISMA approach, we have established that art education is essential for promoting inclusivity among students with disabilities. Additionally, the study showed that art education encourages learners with impairments to take an authentic interest in their studies in addition to providing them with motivation. The study methodically found barriers to successful learning in learners with impairments' art education classes. Simultaneously, pedagogical strategies were identified, and a framework was suggested to promote inclusive art instruction and learning environments. These findings have important ramifications for educators, learners, legislators, educational institutions, and all parties involved in creating a welcoming learning environment. It is imperative to recognize, nonetheless, that this research was qualitative in nature and based on a synthesis of earlier studies that included a small dataset of 28 publications. This limitation highlights the need for more thorough empirical investigations in the future and is indicative of the paucity of research on this subject.

6. Practical Implications for Educational Practice and Policy

The thorough and methodical assessment of this study clarifies the critical role that art education plays in promoting inclusivity for students with disabilities. The implications of this study for educational practice and policy are quite significant, especially in leveraging art education to enhance inclusivity for disabled learners.

1. **Pedagogical strategies and frameworks**: In addition to offering a framework for fostering inclusive art education, this study has identified pedagogical approaches. These techniques can be used in teaching to make art classrooms for students with disabilities more hospitable and motivating. These techniques can be used by educators to modify their teaching approaches and

guarantee that all students, regardless of ability, have access to and enjoy art education.

2. **Teacher training and professional development**: Educational institutions can fund professional development courses and training for teachers that emphasize inclusive art teaching methods. With the information and abilities gained from this course, teachers will be able to support students with disabilities in art classes and create a welcoming environment that caters to their requirements.

3. **Policy design and advocacy**: The results of this study can be used by policymakers to develop policies that promote and encourage art education as a strategy for fostering inclusiveness in the greater educational environment. Stakeholders involved in advocacy can also use those findings to support the inclusion of frameworks and approaches for art education in larger initiatives meant to foster inclusive learning environments.

4. **Investment in art education programs**: Programs for art education can be adequately funded by schools and other educational institutions to guarantee that students with disabilities have access to them. Schools can improve the educational experiences of students with disabilities by providing them with opportunities to fully participate in artistic endeavors through the allocation of resources to art education.

5. **Integration of technology**: Using technology in art education can improve accessibility for students with disabilities even further. For instance, students with a range of abilities can participate more completely in the learning process and express themselves creatively through art activities that are more interactive and accessible through the use of digital tools and adaptable technologies.

6. **Collaboration and community engagement**: The promotion of inclusivity in art education can be strengthened by collaboration between educators, art therapists, advocates for people with disabilities, and community organizations. For students with disabilities, inclusive art programs that are designed and implemented in collaboration with local communities and stakeholders can produce more significant and lasting results.

A more inclusive and encouraging learning environment for disabled students studying art can be created by stakeholders by putting these tactics into practice and incorporating the findings of this study into policy and practice.

7. Recommendation
Although this study was exploratory in nature, it is important to approach the conclusions cautiously and acknowledge the need for additional research and validation. It is recommended that future research utilize organized surveys or interviews to obtain primary data directly from educators and students. Using this method will help to comprehend the topic in a more sophisticated way. In summary, this study offers insightful information, but it also acts as a springboard for further

empirical research that will lead to a deeper comprehension of the relationship between inclusive art education and learners with disabilities.

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