

Embracing Diversity: Rethinking Inclusive Education at De La Salle-College of Saint Benilde

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative study, employing focus group discussions as the primary research method, delves into the imperative of inclusive education at De La Salle College of Saint Benilde (DLS-CSB), aligning with its "Benilde for All" vision. Guided by the Center for Inclusive Education (CIE), the research identifies two core concerns: the necessity to heighten awareness about inclusive education and the urgency of implementing mandatory faculty training in inclusive teaching practices. Participants, including faculty members from the School of Multidisciplinary Studies, CIE staff, and administrators, offer diverse perspectives within the institution. Thematic analysis of the data reveals that a lack of awareness and insufficient faculty training pose significant challenges to DLS-CSB's commitment to accessible education. Recommendations include implementing awareness campaigns, establishing comprehensive guidelines integrated into institutional policies, and mandatory faculty training programs. The proposed "Benildean for All Framework" emphasizes stakeholder awareness, enhancing the CIE manual, faculty development, academic support for students with specific learning needs, and addressing social barriers to inclusivity. The ultimate goal is to transform DLS-CSB into a model of inclusivity, championing the rights and dignity of all members, regardless of abilities or disabilities. This research contributes to the ongoing discourse on inclusive education and provides actionable steps for fostering a supportive and accessible learning environment at DLS-CSB.

Keywords: inclusive education, Benildean for all frameworks, inclusive teaching practices, social barriers

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1. Introduction

As articulated in the "Benildean For All Framework" dated August 23, 2019, the institution is steadfast in its commitment to the vision of a "Benilde for All," with the primary objective of establishing an inclusive space for all members of the community. The Center for Inclusive Education (CIE), operating under the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Academics, serves as the guiding force behind the program's revision. The CIE's mission is to foster an environment where every community member can thrive, providing essential support, accommodations, and compassionate advocacy specifically designed for students with Specific Learning Needs (SLN).

The creation of the Framework was deemed necessary to address the inclusion-related realities of Benilde. Currently, there are members of the Benildean Community who are part of different marginalized sectors, may it be due to their clinical (e.g. psyche emotional and learning conditions), social (e.g. socioeconomic status and indigenous peoples), or physical (persons with physical and sensory disabilities) concerns. The BAF focuses on addressing the barriers to inclusion faced by the different marginalized groups in the Benildean Community. This strategy was adopted to address the reality that there are intersectionalities of sectors (e.g. indigenous person with a disability, low-income transwoman, etc.) and barriers (e.g. safe



spaces are generally needed by the LGBT community and people who are other than Catholic also need safe spaces for worship and prayer).

Two crucial concerns have emerged in this context. Firstly, there is a need to raise awareness about inclusive education among various stakeholders, including administrators, faculty, staff, and mainstream students. Secondly, there is a need to implement mandatory training and ongoing professional development programs for faculty members on inclusive teaching strategies, differentiated instruction, and creating inclusive classroom environments. This includes providing training on assistive technologies and resources to effectively support students with special needs. These concerns are driven by the transformative experiences encountered while teaching alongside students with special needs.

These concerns hold significance because the vision and mission of De La Salle College of Saint Benilde emphasize providing accessible education to economically disadvantaged and diversely gifted learners, with a strong emphasis on inclusive education based on the document Benildean for All Framework dated August 23, 2019.

With this in mind, the aim is to develop recommendations that foster awareness and sensitivity towards the diverse individuals within the community. This can be achieved through purposeful partnerships and comprehensive guidelines, which will bring about change across different sectors and offices. It is important to integrate inclusive education principles into policies, handbooks, manuals, and faculty training materials.

Recognizing the significance of inclusive education as a fundamental human right, as well as its global and national recognition, the institution acknowledges the need for changes and reforms within the educational system's structures. The ultimate goal is to ensure equal learning opportunities for all children, irrespective of their abilities or disabilities (United Nations, 2021).

2. Statement of the Problem

1. What measures can be taken to enhance the awareness and understanding of inclusive education among administrators, faculty, and staff of De La Salle College of Saint Benilde?
2. How can the college establish mandatory training and ongoing professional development programs for faculty that specifically address inclusive teaching strategies, differentiated instruction, and creating inclusive classroom environments?

3. Review of Related Literature

- What is Inclusive Education?

According to Ainscow (2020), inclusive education is a process that addresses and responds to the diverse needs of all learners, aiming to increase participation and reduce exclusion in education. It emphasizes the right of all children to receive a quality education that caters to their individual needs to the best extent possible. Inclusive education entails the inclusion of all students in regular classes within neighborhood schools, where they are welcomed and supported to learn, contribute, and participate in all aspects of school life.

- Barriers to Inclusive Education

Avramidis and Norwich (2002), in their literature review, found that teachers generally hold positive attitudes toward the inclusion of children with special needs in regular school programs. However, De Boer et al. (2011) observed that teachers' attitudes may be neutral to negative, influenced by the type and severity of students' disabilities. These researchers

concluded that educators often lack the necessary knowledge and qualifications to educate students with special educational needs, leading to a lack of self-confidence in their abilities.

- Lack of Confidence

Ahmmmed et al. (2013) and Bhatnagar and Das (2014) highlight the importance of appropriate teacher training on the individual needs of students with disabilities to enhance teachers' positive attitudes toward inclusion. Subban and Sharma (2005) suggest that increased training in the field of inclusive education can contribute to teachers' increased competence and confidence.

Knight (2002) emphasizes that teachers can actively engage in their own professional development by attending specialized training sessions. Robinson (2017) asserts that factors such as a well-designed curriculum, improved training on special education, cooperation among stakeholders, innovative teaching methods, and structured field experiences are crucial in building teachers' self-efficacy, confidence, and positive attitudes toward inclusive education.

- What is Differentiated Instruction?

Differentiated instruction (DI) is defined as the practice of matching students' approaches to learning with appropriate pedagogy, curriculum goals, and opportunities for demonstrating acquired knowledge (Spencer-Waterman, 2014). Tucker (2011) describes differentiation as the modification and adaptation of instruction, materials, content, projects, and assessments to meet the individual learning needs of students. According to Mulder (2014), differentiated instruction is an educational theory that employs various teaching approaches in the same classroom to accommodate the diverse abilities, needs, personalities, and experiences of individual students. Chamberlin and Power (2010) and Smit and Humpert (2012) describe differentiated instruction as inquiry-based, interest-based, learner-oriented, and activity-intensive.

Therefore, differentiation is an instructional approach that provides learners with multiple options, alternatives, and pathways for learning content, processes, products, and learning environments. Teachers are expected to employ differentiated instruction to teach all students, regardless of individual differences (Heacox, 2012; Spencer-Waterman, 2014; Watts et al., 2012).

Co-teaching is a valuable resource for inclusive classes, involving the collaborative instruction of both general and special education teachers. Against the backdrop of the ongoing development of the inclusive school system in Germany, Jurkowski, Ulrich, and Müller (2023) investigated the perspectives of secondary school co-teachers regarding the conditions essential for the successful implementation of co-teaching. Through qualitative content analysis, the study identified 13 categories encompassing teachers' statements related to the educational system, individual schools, and teaching dyads. Teachers expressed a strong belief in the benefits of co-teaching while emphasizing the need for essential resources such as time and equipment, as well as well-defined concepts for co-teaching and teaching in inclusive classes. Co-teachers emphasized the importance of shared responsibility for inclusive schooling, involving principals, school professionals, and external experts. In conclusion, the successful implementation of co-teaching appears to be a dynamic process of school development and professional growth, grounded in organizational structures and resources that facilitate collaborative practices (Jurkowski, Ulrich, & Müller, 2023).

In 2016, a pivotal moment emerged in relation to the future of the Education for All (EFA) movement and the legacy of the Salamanca Statement. Building upon the Incheon Declaration, which was adopted at the World Forum on Education in May 2015 (UNESCO, 2015),

UNESCO released the Education 2030 Framework for Action. This framework underscores the significance of inclusion and equity as fundamental pillars of quality education. It highlights the imperative to address all forms of exclusion, marginalization, disparities, and inequalities in terms of access, participation, and learning processes and outcomes. Consequently, it reaffirms that the international EFA agenda must encompass the educational needs of all individuals.

The importance of including disabled children is highlighted in the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which emphasizes that inclusive education entails a transformation in culture, policy, and practice in all educational environments (United Nations, 2006). According to the Convention, non-inclusion or segregation refers to the education of students with disabilities in separate settings, such as special schools or special education units within regular schools. The Convention calls for the cessation of segregation by ensuring inclusive classroom teaching in accessible learning environments with appropriate support, emphasizing the need for education systems to provide personalized educational responses tailored to individual students rather than expecting students to conform to the existing system.

A new commitment reinforcing inclusion and equity in education was expressed at an International Forum, co-organized by UNESCO and the Ministry of Education of Colombia in September 2019 to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Salamanca Declaration. As underlined by the theme 'Every learner matters', the Forum was an opportunity to revive the broadened notion of inclusion as a general guiding principle to strengthen equal access to quality learning opportunities for all learners. In a world of diverse learners from diverse economic backgrounds, education systems hold a unique position. They not only provide students with the skills and training to enter the workforce but also offer students from various socioeconomic backgrounds an opportunity to come together and learn from one another. Education policies should, therefore, focus on best practices in the classroom in inclusive learning systems and create a learning environment where all students, including those with physical and intellectual disabilities, have the tools to flourish.

Before the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, students with disabilities faced barriers in accessing quality education, and many were excluded from education programs altogether. During the pandemic, enrollment of students with disabilities fell. Of the nearly 240 million students with disabilities worldwide, 40% are more likely to have never attended school, 47% were more likely to be out of primary school, 33% out of lower-secondary school, and 27% out of upper-secondary school (United Nations Children's Fund [UNICEF], 2022). The numbers are staggering and must be tackled if countries are to make an equitable and inclusive post-COVID-19 recovery. Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) members and East Asian countries face a dual challenge: (i) many countries in the region are developing and their economic growth might be unable to support increased funding for education, and (ii) many countries continue to struggle to provide equitable opportunities to all students returning from school closures. However, the region must ensure that students with disabilities, who already face several barriers to accessing quality education, are not left behind. Taking its foundations from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), ASEAN Community Vision 2025, and the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework (ACRF), this report presents current practices of inclusive education in Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic (PDR), Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Viet Nam from ASEAN, and in China and Mongolia.

The seven domains of inclusive education as described in UNICEF's (2020) Education for Every Ability anchor the country profiles. The domains are (i) a whole-system approach; (ii)

curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment; (iii) supported teachers; (iv) a learning-friendly environment; (v) effective transitions; (vi) partnerships; and (vii) data and monitoring (UNICEF, 2020).

The country profiles cover information across several domains, but information on all domains and all countries remains limited (Singh, 2022). All 10 ASEAN countries and the 2 East Asian countries aspire to create inclusive education systems for students with disabilities. The countries have committed to international and regional documents and national and sub-national frameworks, laws, and policies that promote inclusion and the moral duty to uphold all rights of persons with disabilities. Progress on meeting the commitments can be slow, but it is being made across the region. The report shares current practices in inclusive national and local education in schools. While many countries are making a great effort to include students with disabilities, they also have many gaps and lack understanding of inclusion. The report provides cross-cutting recommendations that can be implemented before and after school reopening, and a framework for action specifically for schools, ministries, and ASEAN Member States (AMSs) to implement the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

The whole report presents an overview of inclusive education practices across several Southeast Asian countries. In Brunei, there is a focus on equal access to quality education for students with disabilities, although concerns are raised about segregating students in separate rooms. Cambodia has existing policies and strategic plans for inclusive education but faces challenges in enrollment rates and addressing barriers. Indonesia has developed a comprehensive plan emphasizing collaboration among stakeholders, attitude change, and increased teacher education. In Lao PDR, there's implementation of the National Policy on Inclusive Education, with efforts to reform mainstream curriculums and support for students with disabilities. Malaysia has a legislative framework supporting access to education for individuals with disabilities but encounters challenges in fully implementing inclusive education. Myanmar lacks a clear definition of inclusive education and is in the process of transitioning toward it. The Philippines has made significant progress, ensuring access to quality education for students with disabilities through various laws and initiatives. Singapore aims for an inclusive society, with ongoing teacher training for students with special education needs. Thailand faces challenges in fully implementing inclusive education, including inadequate teacher education and inflexible assessment systems. In Vietnam, the emphasis is on inclusive education in the 2010 Law on Persons with Disabilities, with efforts to replace specialized schools with support centers (Singh, 2022).

A Non-Government Organization (NGO) in Kazakhstan introduced a pilot project to support schools through school-based resource centers for inclusive education as requested by the Ministry of Education and Science (MoES). This initiative came about as a way to support the State Program for the Development of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2016-2019 (MoES) that set the goal of having 70% of mainstream schools inclusive by the end of 2018. The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine how school-based resource centers are assisting in the development of creating conditions for inclusive education in mainstream schools of Nur-Sultan City. Data was collected using 22 one-to-one interviews with resource center staff, teachers, parents of SEN students, school specialists and principals thus giving voice to all stakeholders. The main findings of the study were the positive impacts of resource centers in contributing to the continued development of inclusive education in Kazakhstan. Other findings revealed areas for further improvement in order to sustain and grow this initiative. These findings have implications for further detailing policy outlining a focused and practical plan for the continued development and reform of inclusive education beyond the

capital city (Helmer, J., Kasa, R., Somerton, M., Makoelle, T. M., & Hernández-Torrano, D. 2023).

Inclusive education communities and systems are based on how teachers can use their knowledge, skills, and social awareness to meet the increasingly diverse needs of the learners within their classrooms. International research suggests that teachers often feel underprepared to meet the needs of all learners and are largely ill-prepared to know how best to teach and include children living with a chronic illness. The findings from a mixed-methods study involving 55 New Zealand primary school teachers are reported here. Drawing on this study, this paper presents teachers' experiences on how they got to know these children as individuals. Teachers reflected on how they sought the children's own voices to better understand the implications of their illnesses for living and learning. The paper presents teachers' experiences on how they embraced the opportunity for their own professional learning and development, and for some teachers, the joys of working with these inspirational children. The themes 'don't stress', 'learn everything you can', and 'work as a team' are presented. This paper argues that teaching a child living with a chronic illness is a privilege. It is an opportunity for teachers to develop knowledge and skills that will benefit their practice with all children (Adams, N., & Bourke, R. 2023).

4. Methodology

In conducting this research, the researcher employed focus group discussions (FGDs) as a qualitative research method. FGDs allowed the researcher to gather rich insights and perspectives from participants through group interactions and open-ended discussions, enhancing the depth of qualitative analysis.

4.1. Participants

The participants in the focus group discussions were purposefully selected to ensure diverse perspectives and experiences relevant to the topic on Inclusive Education. Participants were recruited based on their area of expertise and experience in handling students with special learning needs. They were provided with a clear explanation of the research objectives, the voluntary nature of participation, and the measures taken to protect their privacy and confidentiality. Using pseudonyms, such as 'Key Informant 1, 2, and 3,' instead of the actual names of respondents, is employed to safeguard participants' privacy in research. This approach aims to maintain confidentiality, ensuring that the identities of participants are not disclosed. A total of three (3) participants took part in one (1) focus group session via zoom.

The following are the key informants of the Focus Group Discussion.

1. Key Informant 1
Dean of the School of Multidisciplinary Studies
De La Salle- College of Saint Benilde (26 years in service)
2. Key Informant 2
CET Head/ Former Area Chairperson Theology/Philosophy Area
Doctor in Special Education
De La Salle- College of Saint Benilde (24 years in service)
3. Key Informant 3
OIC - Director
Learning Support Case Manager
Center for Inclusive Education (CIE)
De La Salle College of Saint Benilde (9 years in service)

4.2. Focus Group Discussion Questions

1. As a teacher/administrator/staff of De La Salle-College of Saint Benilde, how has the inclusive education program influenced your teaching/administrative approach?
2. With the current program of the Center for Inclusive Education at DLS-CSB, what other concrete recommendations can you give in terms of the following aspects:
 - a. Policy Making
 - b. Teachers Training
 - c. Parents Involvement
 - d. Other Stakeholders

4.3. Data Collection

The focus group discussion was conducted through the Zoom video conferencing platform last April 24, 2023 and The Zoom session was recorded with the consent of participants to ensure that no valuable insights were missed during the live discussion. Efforts were made to maximize the quality of data collected and maintain the integrity of the research process. The recorded data was transcribed, and the researcher employed a thematic analysis approach to analyze it.

5. Research Findings

Employing pseudonyms, such as 'Key Informant 1, 2, and 3,' in lieu of the actual names of respondents is a widely accepted and effective practice to safeguard participant privacy in research. This approach serves to maintain confidentiality, ensuring that the identities of participants are not disclosed. The use of pseudonyms is particularly valuable when dealing with sensitive topics or situations where participant anonymity is crucial to ethical considerations.

5.1. FGD Question 1

As a teacher/administrator of De La Salle-College of Saint Benilde, how has the inclusive education program influenced your teaching/administrative approach?

5.1.1. Participants Responses

Key Informant 1: "A significant achievement was made because administrators and teachers did not encounter difficulty transitioning from learner-centered to inclusive education to outcomes-based education. The premise and viewpoints were unified, making it easy to embrace inclusive education."

Key Informant 2: "It has a great influence, the inclusive education program, it has intensified my teaching, I became more conscious of the different abilities of the students, and at the same time I became more conscious of the pedagogy(activities), my instructions(test), and my curriculum through individualized learning (Differentiated Instruction)". "If I need to tweak my lesson for the students, I'll do it, my mindset was off shift gear, on the spot-I change activity just to accommodate a student who has a special need".

Key Informant 3: "The Inclusion initiative of Benilde helps me see and focus more on the strengths of the students, even those I work with. I primarily focus on their abilities, not their disabilities. As an administrator, I assess where they need assistance, and that's where I make adjustments, whether through individual or group consultations or on a case-by-case basis."

5.1.2. Results

Table 1.

Themes and Patterns on Incorporating Inclusive Education Principles into Teaching and Administration

Key Informant 1	Key Informant 2	Key Informant 3
Transition to Inclusive Education Key Informant 1 highlight a smooth transition from learner-centered to inclusive education. Unified perspectives made it easy to embrace inclusive education.	Increased Awareness of Student Abilities Key Informant 2 emphasizes heightened awareness of different abilities, leading to adjustments in pedagogy and individualized learning.	Focus on Strengths Key Informant 3 underscores the importance of focusing on students' strengths rather than disabilities, aligning with a broader theme of positive impact.
Pattern Across Themes: All participants express a positive impact on teaching practices, including increased awareness, adjustments, and a focus on strengths.		

5.2. FGD Question 2

With the current program of the Center for Inclusive Education at DLS-CSB, what other concrete recommendations can you give in terms of the following aspects: (a. Policy Making, b. Teachers Training, c. Parents Involvement, d. Other Stakeholders)?

5.2.1. Participants Responses Regarding Policy Making

Key Informant 1: "There must be a portion of CIE in the student handbook and faculty manual". "insert the word "inclusive in the Vision-Mission of Benilde", "Grading policy of Benilde must be inclusive, by maintaining the "INC" (Incomplete) grade which one proof that we are inclusive and it will be part of the grading system".

Key Informant 2: "What kind of environment do we have?" "What kind of environment do we have?- "My vision really is that from the entrance to the exit, from the security guard right at the start, when you enter Benilde, you shouldn't feel stressed. It should already be in the mindset of all stakeholders that we are inclusive."

Key Informant 3: "It took years to come up with the Benildean Inclusion framework-through the input of the community, faculty, and students to have our own identity so there must be an orientation of all stakeholders about the policy of inclusive education". And, "Strictly follow the policy of Benilde to maximize the program".

5.2.2. Results

Table 2.

Themes and Patterns on Policy Making

Key Informant 1	Key Informant 2	Key Informant 3
Incorporating CIE in Handbooks Key Informant 1emphasizes the importance of including portions related to Comprehensive Inclusive Education (CIE) in both the student handbook and faculty manual.	Inclusive Environment Key Informant 2 focuses on creating an inclusive environment from the entrance to the exit of Benilde. The emphasis is on ensuring that stakeholders, including security guards, embrace an inclusive mindset to reduce stress.	Development of Inclusion Framework Key Informant 3 highlights the effort invested in creating the Benildean Inclusion framework, involving the input of the community, faculty, and students. There's an emphasis on the need for orientation for all stakeholders regarding the inclusive education policy.
Inclusive Vision-Mission Proposes the insertion of the word "inclusive" in the Vision-		

Key Informant 1	Key Informant 2	Key Informant 3
Mission of Benilde to reflect a commitment to inclusive education. Inclusive Grading Policy Advocates for an inclusive grading policy, suggesting the maintenance of the "INC" (Incomplete) grade as evidence of inclusivity in the grading system.		Strict Adherence to Policy Stresses the importance of strictly following the policy of Benilde to maximize the effectiveness of the inclusive education program.
Patterns Across Responses: Policy Integration All three participants highlight the importance of integrating inclusive education policies into various institutional documents such as handbooks, mission statements, and grading policies. Mindset and Environment Key Informant 2 and 3 emphasizes the need for an inclusive mindset among stakeholders and the creation of a supportive, stress-free environment within the institution. Orientation and Communication Both Key Informant 1 and 2 discusses the necessity of orientation for stakeholders, indicating a focus on effective communication and understanding of inclusive education policies.		

5.2.3. Participants Responses Regarding Teacher's Training

Key Informant 1: "Teachers training on inclusive education should not just be an invitation but a requirement for teachers, especially newly hired teachers".

Key Informant 2: "CIE initiatives were very good based on research CIE administrators were commended by the students in terms of their accommodation but when asked about teachers' accommodation, students who were interviewed had no reaction so we should further intensify teacher's training".

Key Informant 3: "From the start, it is a requirement but some part times have different professional responsibility". "The same recommendation on teachers' training, through the CFAD initiatives especially part-timers, is to bring back the policy of giving training every term through a getaway package as a venue to embrace inclusive education and organizing a town hall activity as a means to reinforce the inclusive education agenda set forth by the Center for Inclusive Education (CIE). "

5.2.4. Results

Table 3.

Themes and Patterns on Teachers Training

Key Informant 1	Key Informant 2	Key Informant 3
Mandatory Teacher Training Advocates for making training on inclusive education a requirement, particularly for newly hired teachers.	Positive Student Feedback on CIE Initiatives Notes positive feedback from students regarding the accommodations provided by CIE administrators. Need to Intensify Teacher Training Highlights a gap in student reactions to teachers' accommodations, suggesting a need to intensify training for teachers.	Existing Requirement for Full-Timers Acknowledges that training is a requirement from the start but acknowledges challenges for part-timers with different professional responsibilities. Recommendations for Training Initiatives Proposes specific initiatives, including bringing back training for part-timers through a getaway package each term and

Key Informant 1	Key Informant 2	Key Informant 3
		organizing town hall activities to reinforce the agenda set by the Center for Inclusive Education (CIE).

Patterns Across Responses:

Consensus on Training Importance

All three participants express the importance of teacher training in inclusive education.

Differing Perspectives on Requirements

Key Informant 1 sees it as a mandatory requirement, while Key Informant 3 notes that it is a requirement from the start but acknowledges challenges for part-timers.

Student Feedback and Teacher Training

Key Informant 2 points out a contrast in student reactions to administrators and teachers, suggesting a need for further teacher training.

5.2.5. Participants Responses Regarding Parents Involvement

Key Informant 1 and 2: "Parental guidance must be given consideration".

Key Informant 3: "Parents' involvement must be maximized to middle men by going to the CIE personnel because parents sometimes are too demanding in terms of asking for accommodation up to the point that they go straight to the Deans and even to the President to voice out their concern and it gives a different impression to teachers."

5.2.6. Results

Table 4.

Themes and Patterns on Parents Involvement

Key Informant 1 and 2	Key Informant 3
<i>Importance of Parental Guidance</i> Both Key Informant 1 and 2 emphasizes the importance of considering parental guidance in the context of inclusive education.	<i>Maximizing Parental Involvement</i> Key Informant 3 acknowledges the importance of parents' involvement but suggests that communication channels should be channeled through CIE personnel to avoid direct interactions with Deans or the President. <i>Concerns About Direct Approaches</i> Expresses concerns about parents going directly to higher authorities, suggesting it may give a different impression to teachers.

Patterns Across Responses:

Unified View on Parental Guidance

Both Key Informant 1 and 2 shares a common theme of emphasizing the importance of considering parental guidance in the context of inclusive education.

Differing Views on Parental Involvement Channels

While Key Informant 1 and 2 advocates for considering parental guidance, Key Informant 3 suggests a specific channeling of communication through CIE personnel to manage expectations and avoid direct interactions with higher authorities.

5.2.7. Participants Responses Regarding Other Stakeholders

Key Informant 1 and 2: "All stakeholders should be aware of inclusive education, there must be a clear orientation from our security guards, helpdesk, our canteen personnel, and other partner's communities".

Key Informant 2: "As CET Head, I will recommend that the settings of grades in BigSky must be changed, and the zero or R(Repeat) must be omitted because it gives a depressing mood to the students".

Key Informant 3: “There is a need for necessary awareness on inclusive education among other stakeholders”.

5.2.8. Results

Table 5. Themes and Patterns on Other Stakeholders

Key Informant 1	Key Informant 2	Key Informant 3
<i>Comprehensive Awareness Campaign</i> Both Key Informant 1 and 2 stresses the importance of comprehensive awareness of inclusive education. They advocate for clear orientation not only for teachers but for all stakeholders, including security guards, helpdesk personnel, canteen staff, and other partner communities.	<i>Recommendation for Grade Settings</i> King Informant 2, in his role as CET Head, recommends changes in the settings of grades in BigSky. Specifically, he suggests omitting zero or "R" (Repeat) to avoid creating a depressing mood for students.	<i>Necessary Awareness Among Other Stakeholders</i> Key Informant 3 echoes the importance of awareness but emphasizes the need for necessary awareness among other stakeholders beyond teachers.
Patterns Across Responses:		
<i>Unified Emphasis on Awareness</i> All three participants stress the need for awareness of inclusive education, demonstrating a unified perspective on the importance of spreading knowledge beyond just teachers to various stakeholders.		
<i>Specific Recommendation for Grade Settings</i> Key Informant 2 provides a specific recommendation regarding the settings of grades, suggesting a more positive approach to grading to avoid negatively impacting students' moods.		

5.3. Data Saturation

Table 6.

Data Saturation based on the Themes from Table 1-5

Question / Theme	Data Saturation	Results
<i>Importance of Teacher Training in Inclusive Education</i>	Saturation reached	No new insights
<i>Policy Integration for Inclusive Education</i>	Saturation reached	Consistent views on policy integration
<i>Role of Parental Guidance in Inclusive Education</i>	Saturation not reached	Additional insights may be explored
<i>Awareness of Inclusive Education Among Stakeholders</i>	Saturation reached	Consensus on the need for awareness
<i>Grade Settings in BigSky</i>	Saturation not reached	Further exploration may be needed

Note. This table illustrates data saturation has been reached for the three themes on Importance of Teacher Training in IE, Policy Integration in IE, and Awareness of IE among Stakeholders while the Role of Parental Guidance in IE and Grade Settings in BigSky show saturation is not reached and additional or further insights and exploration is needed.

5.4. Policy Recommendations

Table 7.

Policy Recommendations

Goal/Pillar	Description
1. Enhancing 1. 1. Stakeholder Awareness	Develop and implement initiatives to raise awareness among stakeholders, including parents and community partners, about the importance of inclusive education and its benefits for students with specific learning needs.
2. Strengthening the CIE Manual	Review and update the Center for Inclusive Education (CIE) manual to provide clear guidelines and procedures that support inclusive practices

Goal/Pillar	Description
	throughout the institution. Ensure the manual reflects best practices, addresses governance barriers, and promotes the involvement of stakeholders.
3. Faculty Development Program	Establish a comprehensive faculty development program focused on inclusive education. Offer training and support to faculty members in the areas of curriculum development, instructional techniques tailored to diverse learners, and effective management of grades and assessments to ensure inclusive practices in the classroom.
4. Academic Support for Students with Specific Learning Needs	Enhance the learning support unit by providing adequate resources, personnel, and accommodations to meet the diverse learning needs of students. Designate case managers to provide personalized support, coordinate services, and foster collaboration among teachers, students, and parents.
5. Addressing Social Barriers	Develop policies and programs that address social barriers to inclusion. Promote a positive and inclusive school culture by fostering understanding, respect, and acceptance among students, teachers, and the wider community. Encourage activities and initiatives that celebrate diversity and promote inclusive attitudes

6. Discussion of Findings

Based on the findings from the focus group discussions (FGDs), this research proposes a revision of the Benildean For All Framework, positioning it as the guiding principle in the Center for Inclusive Education (CIE) Office. The study has identified two primary concerns that surfaced during the FGDs: the critical need to enhance awareness about inclusive education and the urgent necessity of implementing mandatory faculty training in inclusive teaching practices. The FGDs delved into the impact of these concerns on De La Salle College of Saint Benilde's (DLS-CSB) overarching mission, which centers on providing accessible education for a diverse student body.

Key recommendations arising from the FGDs encompass strategies for elevating awareness, establishing comprehensive guidelines, and integrating inclusive education principles into institutional policies and faculty training materials. The research indicates the significance of stakeholder awareness, the importance of enhancing the CIE manual, and faculty development. There's a need for academic support tailored to students with specific learning needs and the necessity of addressing social barriers to inclusivity.

The study reached data saturation for the themes of the importance of teacher training, policy integration, and awareness of inclusive education among stakeholders. Data saturation was not reached for the themes of the role of parental guidance in inclusive education and grade settings in BigSky, indicating the need for further insights and exploration in these areas.

Finally, this research serves as a guide for DLS-CSB to evolve into a model of inclusivity that upholds the rights and dignity of all its members, regardless of their abilities or disabilities. The recommendations put forth in this study aim to facilitate the realization of this vision by fostering an inclusive learning environment and promoting equal opportunities for all students.

6.1. Benildean for All Framework (Revised Version)

The name "Benildean for All Framework" was chosen as this reflects the goal of the framework. It gives emphasis to Benildeans, as members of the community, creating an environment which serves everyone.

Through the Center for Inclusive Education (CIE) a unit under the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Academics (OVCA) of De La Salle-College of Saint Benilde which main goal is to ensure that Benilde is an inclusive space for all the members of the community by

providing support and reasonable accommodation to students as well as advocate and promote sensitivity to the members of the College.

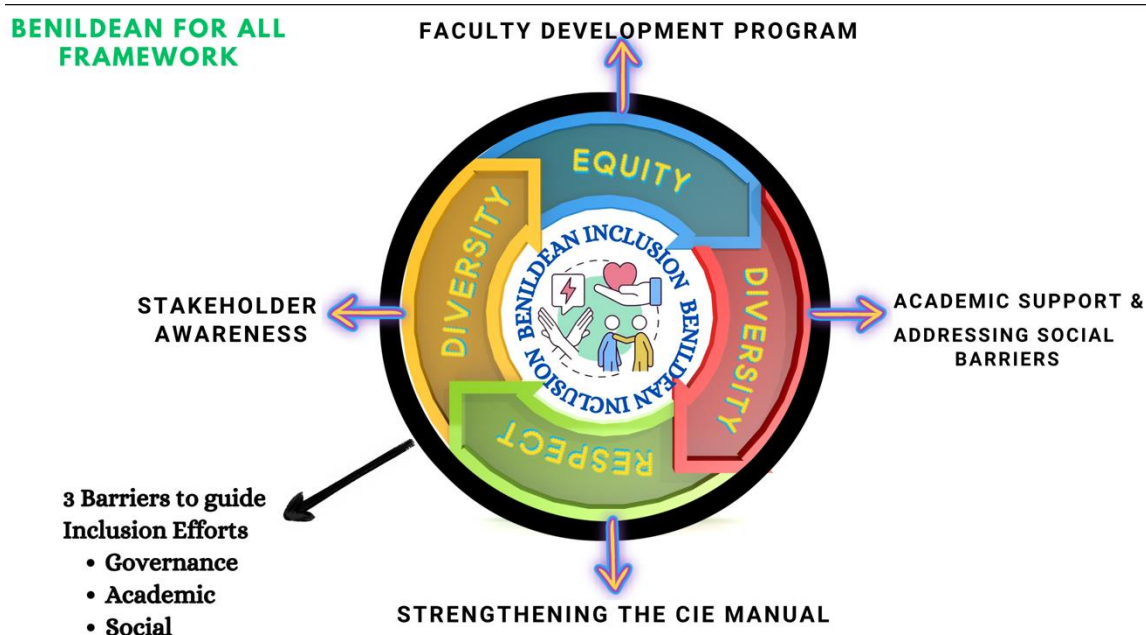


Figure 1. Benildean for all Framework (Revised Version)

Note. Inspired by the Lasallian Mission, the newly revised version of the framework of De La Salle-College of Saint Benilde aspires to be a model of an inclusive community (BENILDEAN INCLUSION) by upholding the dignity and rights of all persons. Guided by the pillars of Inclusive Education (Stakeholder Awareness, Strengthening the CIE Manual, Academic Support & Addressing Social Barriers and Faculty Development Program), the Benildean Inclusion Values of Respect, Solidarity, Equity, and Diversity will break the barriers to inclusivity and move towards a just and humane society.

6.2. Objectives of the Center for Inclusive Education

- To provide support services to students with specific education needs and other physical and sensorial disabilities in the areas of learning and socialization;
- To provide reasonable accommodations to our students to bring them from application, graduation, and to some extent even internship placement and employment;
- To build an awareness of and sensitivity towards diverse individuals in our community and creating and sustaining partnerships related to inclusive education; and
- To ensure that different sectors and offices develop and implement guidelines on inclusion and include these in their respective policies, handbooks, and manuals.”

Three barriers, were identified to guide the College in its inclusion efforts. These are:

1. **Governance Barriers** are hindrances to inclusion which are related to how the College is managed.
 - a. Physical Barriers or tangible infrastructures that hinder access such as the lack of ramps, signages, gender-neutral comfort rooms, and the like;
 - b. Resources such as the lack or absence of allocated budget, human resources, technology, and the like;
 - c. Organization and Administration or the lack or absence of support from top administrators; and
 - d. Policies or the lack or rigidity of legislation on inclusion as well as the lack of understanding of policy makers.

2. **Academic Barriers** are obstacles related to teaching and pedagogy. Under this group is, but not limited to, the Curriculum sub-barrier or the lack of flexibility of the curriculum of the College.
3. **Social Barriers** are environmental roadblocks to interaction and independence.
 - a. Attitudes and Societal Norms or the existence of negative feelings, perceptions, behaviors, stereotyping, stigma, prejudice, and discrimination arising from differences in abilities, culture, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, and all possible description;
 - b. Language and Communication or the lack or absence of technologies and or strategies which are needed to deliver a message such as Braille, text to speech programs, and the like; and
 - c. Socio-Economic Factors or the lack or absence of access to financial resources by an individual.

7. Conclusion

In conclusion, the implementation of inclusive education at De La Salle College of Saint Benilde necessitates a multi-faceted approach that addresses various facets of awareness, policy, curriculum, instruction, and support. The findings from the focus group discussions (FGDs) have indicated data saturation in key themes, specifically the importance of teacher training, policy integration, and awareness of inclusive education among stakeholders. However, saturation has not been reached for the role of parental guidance in inclusive education and grade settings in BigSky, suggesting a need for further exploration in these areas.

The recommendations put forth, including ongoing faculty development programs, stakeholder awareness initiatives, the enhancement of the CIE Manual, and the provision of academic and social support for students with specific learning needs, aim to create an inclusive learning environment that values and accommodates the diverse needs of all students. It is crucial for the institution to prioritize the faculty development program as it empowers teachers with the skills and knowledge necessary to meet the diverse learning needs of students. This approach can have a positive ripple effect throughout the institution, promoting collaboration, student engagement, and academic achievement.

By embracing inclusive education, De La Salle College of Saint Benilde can fulfill its commitment to being an inclusive space for all members of the community. By valuing diversity, removing barriers, and promoting equal learning opportunities, the institution can create an environment where every student can thrive and reach their full potential.

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Appendix



Figure 2. Benildean For All Framework (Old Version)