

Evaluating the Implementation of Inclusive Education at Holy Name University and Its Role in Strengthening Stakeholder Collaboration

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Abstract—This study evaluated the implementation of inclusive education and institutional support mechanisms for students with special needs at Holy Name University using a quantitative–descriptive evaluative research design. Guided by Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Systems Theory and the Collaborative Consultation Model, the study examined how stakeholder collaboration contributes to inclusive educational practices. Respondents included guidance counselors, classroom teachers, special education (SPED) teachers, and parents selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire and analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency counts, weighted means, and standard deviations. Findings revealed a moderate level of implementation of inclusive education practices, indicating that while institutional support mechanisms exist but are applied inconsistently across academic units. Stakeholder collaboration was found to be inconsistent, highlighting gaps in coordination and communication. The study underscores the need for strengthened institutional policies, improved professional development, and structured collaboration frameworks. These findings contribute to the development of sustainable, inclusive, and school-based support systems aligned with national education policies.

Keywords— Higher education; inclusive education; institutional policy; school-based support mechanisms; stakeholder collaboration; students with special needs.

I. INTRODUCTION

Inclusive education has become a central agenda in global education, emphasizing equitable access, participation, and support for learners with diverse needs. International policy frameworks advanced by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization underscore that inclusive systems require not only access but also coordinated institutional practices and sustained stakeholder collaboration (UNESCO, 2020; Ainscow, 2020). In the Philippine context, Republic Act No. 11650 mandates higher education institutions to institutionalize inclusive practices through accessible learning environments and comprehensive support services (Republic Act No. 11650, 2022; Commission on Higher Education, 2021).

However, empirical studies indicate that implementation in higher education remains uneven, often constrained by limited faculty preparedness, insufficient professional development, and fragmented collaboration among stakeholders (Ainscow, 2020). Anchored on Ecological Systems Theory and the Collaborative Consultation Model, inclusive education is

conceptualized as a systemic process shaped by dynamic interactions among educators, families, and institutional structures.

Consistent with these perspectives, findings from Holy Name University indicate a moderate level of implementation and inconsistent stakeholder collaboration, suggesting that while foundational mechanisms are present, their execution remains uneven across units. These gaps highlight the need for strengthened institutional coherence, structured collaboration frameworks, and enhanced capacity-building initiatives. Thus, this study evaluates the implementation of inclusive education and stakeholder collaboration to inform the development of a more integrated and sustainable institutional framework.

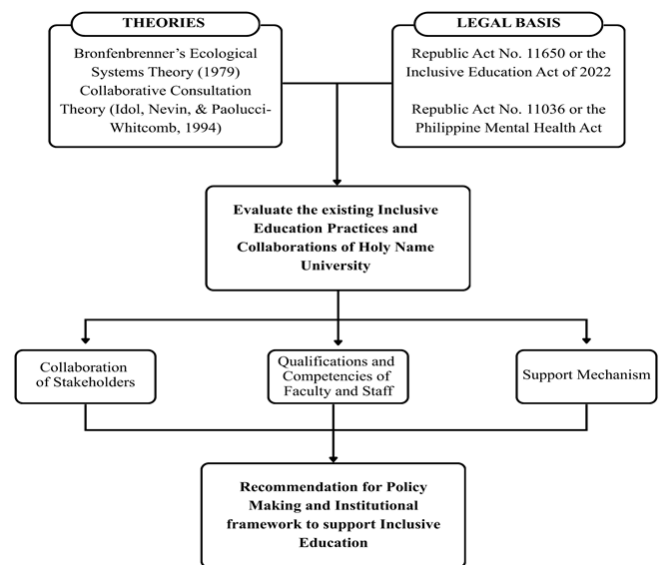


Fig. 1. Conceptual Framework

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This research aims to answer the following questions:

1. What are the different cases, activities, and processes addressed by the guidance and counseling intervention programs of Holy Name University?
2. To what extent are the faculty members and staff competent and qualified in implementing inclusive education, in accordance with CHED and DepEd standards, in terms of:

- 2.1. Faculty members, including SPED teachers; and
- 2.2. Guidance counselors and guidance advocates?
3. What support mechanisms are provided for key stakeholders—parents, faculty members, and support staff—in the implementation of inclusive education, in terms of:
 - 3.1. Stakeholder participation and collaboration;
 - 3.2. University policies and institutional frameworks; and
 - 3.3. Facilities and instructional and counseling materials?
4. Based on the findings of the study, what framework may be formulated to strengthen inclusive education and stakeholder collaboration at Holy Name University?

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A. Research Design

This study employed a quantitative–descriptive evaluative research design to assess the extent to which key stakeholders—guidance counselors, Special Education (SPED) teachers, classroom teachers, and parents or guardians—collaboratively support students with special needs within an inclusive education framework. This design is appropriate as it enables a systematic and objective evaluation of existing institutional practices without manipulating variables.

The study was conducted at Holy Name University, focusing on institution-based inclusive education practices that extend beyond external referrals and emphasize sustained, school-based interventions integrated into academic, guidance, and administrative processes.

The study was anchored on Ecological Systems Theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) and the Collaborative Consultation Model (Idol et al., 1994), which emphasize the dynamic interaction of institutional systems and shared stakeholder responsibility in supporting learners with special needs.

B. Research Environment

The study was conducted at Holy Name University in Tagbilaran City, Bohol. The institution was selected due to its active implementation of inclusive education practices and comprehensive student support services, including guidance and counseling, psychological assessment, and parent engagement.

The university provides a structured environment where institutional policies, academic programs, and support services are designed to accommodate diverse learners. It also promotes collaboration among key stakeholders, making it an appropriate setting for evaluating inclusive education practices and stakeholder engagement.

C. Research Participants

Participants were selected using criterion-based purposive sampling from four stakeholder groups: 12 classroom teachers, 4 SPED teachers, 5 guidance counselors (or guidance advocates), and 6 parents or guardians.

Inclusion criteria were as follows:

- Currently employed or actively engaged in their respective roles
- With at least nine (9) months of relevant experience
- With direct involvement in supporting students with special needs

Additional criteria included:

- Classroom teachers must have handled inclusive classes within the last three years and be full-time faculty
- Parents must be legal guardians of currently enrolled students with special needs and actively involved in their child’s education

Participants who did not meet the criteria, were unavailable, or submitted incomplete responses were excluded. This ensured the relevance, reliability, and contextual validity of the data collected.

D. Research Instrument

The study utilized a researcher-developed structured survey questionnaire as the primary data-gathering tool. The instrument was designed to assess:

- Institutional support mechanisms
- Guidance and counseling interventions
- Curriculum inclusivity
- Stakeholder collaboration
- Competence and readiness of faculty and staff

The questionnaire employed a five-point Likert scale to measure perceptions of effectiveness, accessibility, and collaboration.

To ensure content validity, the instrument was reviewed by three subject matter experts. Items were aligned with the study objectives and standardized across stakeholder groups to ensure consistency in responses.

This structured instrument enabled a systematic and quantitative evaluation of inclusive education practices without requiring direct student participation.

E. Data Gathering Procedure

Data collection followed a systematic and ethically grounded process. Approval was secured from the University Ethics Review Board, and permission was obtained from the university administration.

Participants were selected based on established criteria and were provided with formal invitations and informed consent forms. The purpose, procedures, and voluntary nature of participation were clearly explained.

Data were collected during the second semester of School Year 2025–2026 using the structured questionnaire. Each participant completed the survey within approximately 20–30 minutes.

All responses were handled confidentially. Data were stored in password-protected files, and participant identities were coded to ensure anonymity. Participation posed minimal risk, and participants were allowed to withdraw or skip questions at any time without consequence.

III. PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

In contemporary education, inclusive education is a global priority, ensuring equitable access for students with diverse needs (UNESCO, 2020; Ydo, 2020). Its effective implementation in higher education, such as at Holy Name University, relies on coordinated efforts among SPED teachers, classroom teachers, guidance counselors, administrators, and parents. Such collaboration promotes shared expertise, coordinated interventions, and holistic student support (Forlin & Chambers, 2017; Sharma & Sokal, 2021). However, variability in stakeholder engagement, professional preparation, and institutional support often affects the consistency of collaborative practices (Ainscow, 2020; UNESCO, 2020). This study examines stakeholder perceptions of inclusive education, focusing on collaboration, professional competencies, administrative support, and resource availability.

Table 1 shows recorded cases of students with special needs from 2023–2026 across basic and tertiary education, including ISPED enrollees. Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) was most prevalent, followed by learning disabilities, while other developmental and mental health conditions emerged primarily in later years. The data reflect both growing institutional awareness and gaps in systematic profiling, as

records prior to the current academic year were limited and often informal. Mental health conditions may be underreported due to stigma or limited counseling engagement (González, 2021).

The University’s Center for Guidance and Counseling Services currently offers psychological testing, individual counseling, and parent conferences for students with special needs. While these services support students reactively, gaps in awareness, access, and systematic interventions highlight the need for proactive and structured programs, in line with Republic Act No. 11650 mandating inclusive support systems in Philippine schools.

Table 2 presents teachers’ perceptions of inclusive education and stakeholder collaboration. SPED and IBED teachers indicated moderate to high levels of agreement regarding collaborative planning, parental involvement, and problem-solving approaches (mean scores ranging from 3.25 to 4.50). Ratings for professional development, training, and administrative support were moderate, suggesting areas for improvement in equipping staff with the competencies necessary to implement inclusive practices effectively. Overall, the data indicate that inclusive education practices are established at multiple levels but may benefit from more systematic support mechanisms to enhance consistency and effectiveness (Forlin, 2021; Loreman, 2020).

TABLE I. Number of Reported Students with Special Needs Cases in the University Within the Last Three School Years

CASES	2023-2024		2024-2025		2025-2026	
	IBED	TERTIARY	IBED	TERTIARY	IBED	TERTIARY
Autism	32	0	30	0	28	2
Learning Disability	4	0	5	0	5	0
Down Syndrome	0	0	2	0	3	0
Hearing Impairment	0	0	0	0	1	0
Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)	0	0	0	0	2	0
Bipolar Disorder	1	0	1	0	1	3
Major Depressive Disorder	1	0	1	0	0	1
Depression	1	0	0	0	0	4
Persistent Depressive Disorder	0	0	1	0	0	2
Blind	0	3	0	3	0	2
Generalized Anxiety Disorder	0	0	0	0	0	1
TOTAL	39	3	40	3	40	15

TABLE 2. Teachers’ Perceptions on Inclusive Education Practices and Support for students with special needs

No.	Statement	SPED Teachers			IBED Teachers			Tertiary Teachers		
		Mean	SD	Interpretation	Mean	SD	Interpretation	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1	Guidance counselors and SPED teachers collaborate with classroom teachers to plan and monitor support for students with special needs.	3.75	0.96	Agree	3.75	1.2	Agree	2.75	1.71	Neutral
2	Teachers are regularly informed about each student’s individualized learning plan and interventions.	4.25	0.96	Strongly Agree	4	0.9	Agree	2	1.15	Disagree
3	Parents or guardians actively communicate and participate in discussions about their child’s learning needs.	4.25	0.96	Strongly Agree	4.38	0.7	Strongly Agree	2.5	1.29	Disagree
4	Collaborative meetings with guidance counselors and administrators improve student support outcomes.	4.25	0.96	Strongly Agree	4	0.8	Agree	2.75	1.71	Neutral
5	Collaborative problem-solving is used to address student learning and behavioral challenges.	4.5	0.58	Strongly Agree	4.13	0.6	Agree	3	2	Neutral
6	Teachers receive adequate training in inclusive education practices aligned with CHED and DepEd standards.	3.25	1.26	Neutral	3.38	1.2	Neutral	2.5	1.29	Disagree
7	Colleagues demonstrate competencies to effectively support students with special needs.	3.5	0.58	Agree	3.88	0.8	Agree	2.75	1.71	Neutral

No.	Statement	SPED Teachers			IBED Teachers			Tertiary Teachers		
		Mean	SD	Interpretation	Mean	SD	Interpretation	Mean	SD	Interpretation
8	Professional development opportunities are sufficient and relevant to enhance inclusive education skills.	3.25	1.26	Neutral	3.88	0.8	Agree	2.5	1.29	Disagree
9	The university provides adequate staffing to meet the needs of inclusive classrooms.	3.25	0.5	Neutral	3.71	1.1	Agree	2.5	1.73	Disagree
10	Intervention programs, curriculum adaptations, and policies are consistently applied in classrooms.	4	0.82	Agree	3.88	0.8	Agree	2.5	1.29	Disagree
11	Administrative support is responsive and facilitates the implementation of inclusive education strategies.	2.75	0.5	Neutral	3.63	0.9	Agree	3	2	Neutral
12	Teaching resources, materials, and technology are adequate to support inclusive learning.	3.25	1.26	Neutral	4.13	0.8	Agree	3	2	Neutral
13	Collaborative teamwork among teachers, counselors, and administrators is encouraged and effective.	3	0.82	Neutral	4.38	0.5	Strongly Agree	3.5	1.29	Agree
14	Evaluation and feedback mechanisms are used to improve teaching practices and student support.	3.75	0.5	Agree	4.25	0.7	Strongly Agree	3	1.83	Neutral
15	The school environment is welcoming and conducive to learning for students with special needs.	3.5	0.58	Agree	3.88	1	Agree	3	1.83	Neutral

TABLE 3. Guidance Counselors' Perceptions on Inclusive Education Practices and Support for Students with special needs

No.	Statement	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1	Classroom teachers and SPED teachers collaborate regularly to plan interventions for students with special needs.	3.25	0.96	Neutral
2	Parents or guardians are actively involved in planning and monitoring their child's individualized support plan.	3.00	1.41	Neutral
3	Joint meetings among guidance counselors, teachers, and administrators are held regularly to discuss student progress.	2.75	1.50	Neutral
4	Collaborative problem-solving is systematically used to address challenges faced by students with special needs.	3.20	1.48	Neutral
5	Roles and responsibilities of guidance counselors, SPED teachers, and classroom teachers in supporting students with special needs are clearly defined.	3.60	1.14	Agree
6	Faculty and staff receive adequate training in inclusive education practices aligned to CHED and DepEd standards.	2.60	0.89	Disagree
7	Guidance counselors are equipped with the necessary skills to support students' emotional and academic needs.	3.80	0.84	Agree
8	The university provides sufficient personnel to implement inclusive education programs effectively.	3.25	0.96	Neutral
9	Intervention programs for students with special needs are structured, implemented, and regularly evaluated for effectiveness.	2.40	0.89	Disagree
10	The university's curriculum is adapted appropriately to address the diverse learning needs of students.	2.80	0.84	Neutral
11	Administrative policies actively support inclusive education and promote students with special needs' well-being.	2.60	1.14	Disagree
12	Adequate resources and facilities such as assistive technology and counseling spaces are available to support students.	3.80	0.84	Agree
13	Communication among guidance counselors, teachers, and administrators is clear, timely, and effective in supporting inclusive education.	3.80	0.84	Agree
14	The university regularly evaluates the effectiveness of inclusive education programs and staff performance.	3.00	1.00	Neutral
15	The university promotes a culture of inclusion that values and supports students with special needs.	3.40	0.55	Neutral

TABLE 4. Parents' Perceptions on Inclusive Education Practices and Support for Students with special needs

No.	Indicator	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1	Teachers and SPED staff collaborate effectively to support my child's learning and development.	5.00	0.00	Strongly Agree
2	Guidance counselors communicate regularly, provide timely support, and are accessible for my child's academic and emotional needs.	4.50	0.84	Strongly Agree
3	School staff are trained and competent in implementing inclusive education practices according to CHED and DepEd standards.	4.83	0.41	Strongly Agree
4	I am involved in decisions regarding my child's individualized support plan and my ideas are listened to.	5.00	0.00	Strongly Agree
5	Collaboration among teachers, counselors, and administrators benefits my child's overall well-being.	5.00	0.00	Strongly Agree
6	Intervention programs are structured, consistent, and adapted to meet my child's specific learning needs.	4.83	0.41	Strongly Agree
7	The school curriculum is adjusted appropriately to meet my child's learning needs.	4.83	0.41	Strongly Agree
8	The school has rules that make sure all children feel welcome and supported.	5.00	0.00	Strongly Agree
9	Adequate resources, facilities, and learning materials are provided to support my child's learning.	4.83	0.41	Strongly Agree
10	Teachers and staff participate in professional development and training to improve support for students with special needs.	5.00	0.00	Strongly Agree
11	Communication between school staff and parents is clear, timely, and effective.	5.00	0.00	Strongly Agree
12	Administrative support ensures the effective implementation of inclusive education initiatives.	4.83	0.41	Strongly Agree
13	My child feels safe, welcome, and included at school.	5.00	0.00	Strongly Agree
14	The school regularly assesses and improves inclusive education practices to enhance student outcomes.	5.00	0.00	Strongly Agree
15	The school promotes a positive culture of inclusion and respect for students with special needs.	5.00	0.00	Strongly Agree

Table 3 reflects guidance ounsellors' perceptions of inclusive education and stakeholder collaboration. Counselors reported that collaboration with classroom and SPED teachers is present but may not yet be consistently applied (M = 3.25,

SD = 0.96). The use of collaborative problem-solving to address student challenges was rated moderately ($M = 3.20$, $SD = 1.48$), and parental involvement received a neutral rating ($M = 3.00$, $SD = 1.41$). Role clarity for guidance counsellors emerged as a strength ($M = 3.60$, $SD = 1.14$), whereas structured intervention programs ($M = 2.40$, $SD = 0.89$), professional training ($M = 2.60$, $SD = 0.89$), and administrative support ($M = 2.60$, $SD = 1.14$) were identified as areas needing development. Resources and communication mechanisms were rated favorably ($M = 3.80$, $SD = 0.84$), suggesting that functional support structures are in place. These findings highlight both the foundational elements of inclusive education and the opportunities for strengthening proactive, structured approaches to support students with diverse needs (Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011; Ainscow, 2020).

Parents' perceptions (Table 4) indicate consistently high satisfaction with inclusive education practices, including teacher collaboration, guidance counselor engagement, parental involvement, curriculum adaptation, and school climate ($M = 4.50$ – 5.00). These ratings suggest that parents recognize and value the institution's efforts in supporting students with special needs. Parental feedback underscores the importance of continued collaboration and systematic approaches to sustain and enhance inclusive practices (Dyson et al., 2020; Ainscow, 2020).

The findings demonstrate that Holy Name University has established key elements of inclusive education, including identification of students with special needs, collaborative practices, and supportive counseling services. However, the data reveal opportunities for strengthening systematic student profiling, proactive intervention programs, professional development, and administrative facilitation. Strengthening collaboration among teachers, counselors, administrators, and parents will be essential to provide equitable, continuous, and holistic support, consistent with national inclusive education policies and international recommendations (UNESCO, 2020; WHO, 2021).

IV. DISCUSSION

This study evaluated the implementation of inclusive education at Holy Name University, focusing on guidance and counseling interventions, stakeholder collaboration, faculty competence, and institutional support for students with special needs. The university implements the Integrated Special Education (ISPED) program, which offers varying levels of inclusion: individualized instruction within ISPED, partial participation in mainstream classrooms, or full integration into regular programs. These arrangements reflect a commitment to equitable education while addressing diverse learner needs (Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2019; Ainscow, 2020).

The study was grounded in Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory, emphasizing the influence of multiple environmental systems—family, school, and community—on student development. The Collaborative Consultation Model guided the analysis of cooperative problem-solving among stakeholders to address academic and psychosocial needs.

A quantitative descriptive–evaluative research design was employed. Structured questionnaires were administered to guidance counselors, SPED teachers, classroom teachers, and parents. Descriptive statistics—including frequency counts, weighted means, and standard deviations—were used to assess stakeholders' perceptions of guidance programs, faculty preparedness, institutional support, and collaboration.

Institutional records from 2023–2026 revealed a diverse student population with developmental, learning, sensory, and mental health conditions. Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) was the most prevalent, followed by learning disabilities and mental health concerns. Most cases were in basic education, with a rising number in tertiary programs, reflecting expanded access and the need for inclusive support services. Systematic documentation by the Guidance Center began only recently, and earlier records were incomplete, highlighting the need for coordinated profiling and data management.

Findings of the study indicate a moderate level of implementation of inclusive education practices across the university. Teachers generally reported agreement on collaborative planning, parental involvement, and classroom support for students with special needs; however, professional development opportunities, administrative facilitation, and staffing support were rated only moderate, suggesting areas for improvement. Guidance counselors reported that collaboration mechanisms and intervention programs exist but are not consistently structured or regularly evaluated, while training opportunities aligned with inclusive education standards were perceived as insufficient. In contrast, parents expressed very high satisfaction with the university's inclusive practices, particularly in terms of teacher collaboration, communication with guidance counselors, parental involvement in decision-making, and the overall inclusive school environment.

Overall, the study provides evidence-based insights into both the strengths and gaps of the university's inclusive initiatives, highlighting the need for strengthened institutional coordination, systematic student profiling, structured intervention programs, and sustained professional development for faculty and staff. These findings provide a foundation for developing institutional policies and programs aligned with Republic Act No. 11650 and for strengthening stakeholder collaboration in support of inclusive education.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Institutionalize Student Screening and Profiling: Implement systematic screening during admissions and maintain a centralized database for students with special needs (Artiles, Kozleski, & Waitoller, 2011).
2. Develop an Inclusive Education Policy: Clearly define roles, procedures, and support mechanisms to ensure consistent service delivery and compliance with national law.
3. Establish an Inclusive Education Coordinating Committee: Create a multidisciplinary team to plan, monitor, and coordinate support services (Mweendalubi & Matafwali, 2026).

4. Develop a Guidance and Counseling Intervention Framework: Incorporate early identification, individualized counseling, collaborative case management, referrals, and progress monitoring (Mbodila & Ndebele, 2025).
5. Strengthen Professional Development: Offer continuous training on inclusive practices, differentiated instruction, mental health awareness, and accommodations for students with special needs.
6. Enhance Stakeholder Collaboration: Institutionalize regular case conferences, intervention planning meetings, and communication platforms (Senge et al., 2000).
7. Strengthen Parent Engagement: Implement structured parent initiatives, including orientations, consultations, and support groups (Henderson & Mapp, n.d.).
8. Implement Continuous Monitoring and Evaluation: Establish indicators, periodic assessments, and annual reporting to ensure data-driven improvements (Obcial et al., 2025).
9. Future Research: Explore long-term impacts of inclusive education, effectiveness of institutional policies, and comparative studies across universities.

These recommendations aim to strengthen inclusive education at Holy Name University through systematic, program-based, and proactive support, ensuring equitable access and comprehensive services in line with national legislation.

VI. CONCLUSION

Inclusive education at Holy Name University is partially implemented. Foundational practices such as stakeholder collaboration, parental engagement, and guidance services exist, but implementation is inconsistent across academic units.

Systematic student profiling is critical for early identification, individualized intervention, and continuous monitoring. Professional development, structured intervention programs, and institutional coordination require strengthening to enhance the effectiveness of inclusive education practices.

Overall, the university demonstrates promising practices but requires enhanced coordination, institutional capacity-building, and policy alignment to comply with national mandates under Republic Act No. 11650. A structured Policy and Intervention Framework is necessary to ensure coordinated support for students across ISPED and mainstream programs.

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