

Educational Management beyond the Classroom and the Pursuit of Equity for Economically Marginalized Learners

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ABSTRACT:

Despite ongoing efforts to promote equity in higher education institutions (HEIs), economically disadvantaged learners often face systemic barriers that extend beyond the traditional classroom. While much of the existing research focuses on pedagogical reforms within formal instruction, there remains a critical gap in understanding how stakeholders' motivations and collaborative dynamics contribute to the creation of inclusive educational management practices and support systems outside the conventional learning space. This exploratory study addresses that gap by examining the motivations, experiences, and collaborative efforts of key stakeholders including academic personnel, students, parents, and community members in shaping responsive and accessible learning guidelines for economically challenged students in HEIs. Using purposive sampling, data will be collected from 25 participants through one-on-one semi-structured interviews. A reflexive thematic analysis approach will be employed to uncover emergent themes related to stakeholder engagement, shared responsibilities, and policy development. The study is expected to yield insights into the

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motivational drivers that prompt stakeholders to engage in educational support initiatives beyond classroom instruction. It also aims to identify effective collaborative practices and highlight systemic challenges faced during policy formation. The anticipated outcome is a set of practical recommendations for HEIs seeking to institutionalize stakeholder-informed, inclusive learning policies tailored to the needs of economically marginalized learners.

Keywords: Educational, Management, Motivation, Guidelines

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the imperative for inclusive education in higher education institutions (HEIs) has gained increasing attention, particularly in addressing the needs of economically disadvantaged learners (Marginson, 2016; UNESCO, 2020). While classroom-based pedagogical strategies have evolved to accommodate diverse learning needs, educational management practices beyond the traditional classroom setting remain underexplored (Zgaga et al., 2015; Divinagracia, 2024). A critical gap exists in understanding how stakeholders such as academic personnel, students, parents, and community members contribute to the development and implementation of responsive and accessible learning policies that extend support to underprivileged learners outside formal instruction environments (Carpentier, 2013; Wilson-Strydom, 2015).

The intention of this study is to address this gap by exploring the motivations and collaborative efforts of various stakeholders involved in shaping inclusive educational practices beyond classroom teaching. It recognizes that educational success for economically challenged students is influenced not only by classroom instruction, but also by a broader network of support mechanisms governed by institutional policies, community engagement, and family involvement (Bronfenbrenner, 2005; Tierney & Sablan, 2014; Bondoc Jr., 2023).

The background of this research stems from persistent challenges faced by low-income students in accessing equitable learning opportunities in HEIs. These challenges are compounded by limited stakeholder engagement in educational planning and policy-making processes that go beyond

academic content delivery (Sabic-El-Rayess, 2020; Garil, Abbas & Limen, 2024). Existing literature often emphasizes teacher-student dynamics within the classroom but overlooks the broader, systemic factors such as governance, community participation, and stakeholder collaboration that critically influence learning outcomes for disadvantaged students (McCowan, 2016; Trowler, 2014; Murro, 2024).

This study focuses on key concepts including stakeholder motivation, inclusive educational management, collaborative policy development, and support systems for economically challenged learners. The research explores two central variables: (1) stakeholders' motivations and perspectives, and (2) the nature and impact of stakeholder collaboration in policy formulation. Topics covered include the lived experiences of stakeholders, perceived roles in educational support, collaborative practices, and barriers in creating accessible educational guidelines (Ceneciro, 2025; Garil, Entong, Muarip et al., 2024).

Through an exploratory design involving semi-structured one-on-one interviews with 25 participants across academia, student bodies, parents, and community sectors, the study employs reflexive thematic analysis to generate meaningful insights. The expected outcome is a nuanced understanding of how stakeholder-driven approaches can inform the creation of inclusive, sustainable, and accessible educational management practices. The findings aim to contribute to institutional strategies that bridge systemic gaps in support for economically marginalized students and promote equity beyond the classroom setting in

HEIs (Boeren, 2019; Fraser, 2008; Garil, 2024; Carpio et al., 2024; Estoque, 2023).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Educational Management Beyond the Classroom. Educational management has traditionally centered on administrative and instructional practices within formal classroom settings. However, with the expansion of inclusive education and the push for equitable access in higher education institutions (HEIs), there has been a growing emphasis on managing learning environments that extend beyond traditional classroom boundaries (Bush, 2020). These expanded domains include student support systems, policy formulation, and institutional-community partnerships aimed at addressing socio-economic barriers (Kezar & Holcombe, 2019).

Challenges Faced by Economically Disadvantaged Students in HEIs. Economically disadvantaged learners face unique challenges, including limited access to financial resources, digital tools, academic support, and culturally relevant curriculum structures (Thomas & Quinn, 2007; Means et al., 2014). These barriers contribute to higher dropout rates and lower academic engagement. Institutions that implement responsive support systems, such as flexible learning guidelines and inclusive management practices, are more successful in fostering student persistence and academic success (Tinto, 2012; Zepke, 2013).

Stakeholder Motivation and Participation in Educational Management. Effective educational management, particularly for marginalized student groups, necessitates a deep understanding of stakeholder motivation. Stakeholders—students, parents, educators, and community members—bring unique perspectives and values that influence educational outcomes (Bryson, 2004). According to stakeholder theory, when the motivations of all stakeholders are acknowledged and integrated, policies are more likely to be relevant and sustainable (Freeman, Harrison, & Wicks, 2007; Mitchell, Agle, & Wood, 1997). Research also suggests that many stakeholders are motivated by social justice, community development, and institutional improvement (Epstein, 2001). Chavez,

Adalia, and Alberto (2023) found that parents play a critical motivational and instructional role in their children's learning, especially in second language development, demonstrating how stakeholder engagement extends beyond formal education settings.

Stakeholder Collaboration and Policy Development. Collaborative governance in educational settings has emerged as a strategic approach to designing policies that are both inclusive and effective (Ansell & Gash, 2008). In HEIs, cross-sector collaboration between academic and non-academic actors has led to the creation of community-driven initiatives, policy reforms, and resource-sharing networks (Kezar & Lester, 2011). These collaborations often yield strategies such as peer mentoring, open-access learning resources, and culturally responsive teaching. However, successful collaboration requires overcoming challenges like conflicting agendas, resource imbalances, and communication barriers (Dempsey, 2009). Murro et al. (2023) highlighted how parents with low educational attainment struggled to support their children during modular distance learning, emphasizing the need for collaborative systems that empower all stakeholders, regardless of background.

Responsive and Accessible Learning Guidelines. Inclusive learning guidelines should be developed with the input of those who are directly affected by educational inequities. Responsive guidelines are those that adapt to students' lived realities, including economic hardship and non-traditional learning needs (Bozalek & Boughey, 2012; Perna & Jones, 2013). Accessibility, in this context, encompasses not just physical or technological access, but also psychological, cultural, and pedagogical inclusion (Seale, 2013). Flexible learning structures, blended delivery, and wraparound support services are among the most promising strategies to promote equity. A recent study by Chavez et al. (2024) stresses the importance of policy awareness and institutional compliance among educators and low-wage earners, particularly in contexts where workplace and educational rights intersect.

Using Reflexive Thematic Analysis in Stakeholder Research. Reflexive thematic analysis offers a qualitative lens to explore how stakeholders'

motivations and experiences influence inclusive education management (Braun & Clarke, 2019). Unlike mechanistic coding approaches, reflexive analysis centers the researcher's interpretive role and situates meaning-making within social and institutional contexts. This method is particularly suited for understanding the complex, nuanced roles of stakeholders in shaping educational responses for economically challenged learners. Chavez, Adalia, and Alberto (2023) reinforce this by providing narrative insights from parents who actively co-construct their children's learning experiences evidence of the need for interpretive approaches in stakeholder analysis.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research design

This study employs an exploratory qualitative design, aiming to gain in-depth insights into stakeholders' motivations and collaborative roles in the development of inclusive and accessible learning guidelines for economically challenged learners in higher education institutions (HEIs). An exploratory approach is appropriate given the limited existing literature on stakeholder engagement in educational management beyond the classroom, particularly in the context of socio-economic disadvantage.

3.2. Population and sampling

A purposive sampling strategy was employed to select a diverse group of 25 stakeholders, encompassing four key categories: academe (such as faculty and administrators), students, parents, and community members. This heterogeneous

composition was deliberately chosen to capture a broad range of experiences, motivations, and perspectives aligned with the research objectives. Participants were selected based on specific inclusion criteria, which required active involvement in or exposure to educational planning, support, or delivery within or beyond higher education institutions (HEIs); firsthand experience with economically challenged learners; and a willingness and availability to participate in one-on-one interviews.

3.3. Instrument

The primary research instrument used in this study was a semi-structured interview guide designed to gather in-depth insights from stakeholders about their motivations and collaborative roles in developing inclusive educational practices for economically disadvantaged learners in HEIs. The guide was organized into two parts: the first explored stakeholder motivation and roles beyond the classroom, while the second focused on collaboration and policy development. Sample questions addressed motivations for involvement, personal contributions to inclusive education, and experiences with stakeholder collaboration. The guide was reviewed by experts and piloted with a non-participant to ensure clarity and relevance. Revisions were made based on feedback to enhance its effectiveness, and the same guide was used in all interviews to maintain consistency while allowing for flexible probing. Table 1 presents the list of guide questions used by this research study.

Table 1. Interview guide questions.

Objectives	Interview question
To examine the motivations and perspectives of stakeholders in contributing to inclusive and supportive educational management practices beyond the traditional classroom setting.	What motivates you to participate in the development of educational support systems for economically challenged students? How do you perceive your role in shaping inclusive educational practices beyond classroom instruction?

To investigate the role of stakeholder collaboration in shaping responsive and accessible learning policies for economically disadvantaged students in HEIs.

Can you share any experiences where your input helped address the needs of disadvantaged students outside formal teaching environments?

How would you describe the collaboration process between various stakeholders in developing learning policies for underprivileged students?

What strategies or practices have emerged from stakeholder collaboration that effectively support economically disadvantaged learners?

What challenges have you encountered in working with other stakeholders to create or implement accessible learning guidelines, and how were they addressed?

3.4. Data Gathering Procedure

Data were collected through semi-structured, one-on-one interviews, which allowed for consistency across participants while also providing the flexibility to probe deeper into individual insights. Each interview lasted approximately 45 to 60 minutes and was conducted in a secure and confidential setting, either in person or via a virtual platform, depending on the participant's preference and availability. The interview questions were organized around two main objectives: first, to explore stakeholders' motivations and perspectives on contributing to educational practices beyond classroom instruction; and second, to examine how stakeholder collaboration contributes to responsive and accessible learning policies for underprivileged students. Sample questions included, "What motivates you to participate in the development of educational support systems for economically challenged students?" and "How would you describe the collaboration process between various stakeholders in developing learning policies for underprivileged students?" All interviews were audio-recorded with the participants' consent and transcribed verbatim for analysis.

3.5. Data analysis

The study utilized Reflexive Thematic Analysis (RTA), as outlined by Braun and Clarke (2019), to

analyze the qualitative data. This approach emphasizes the researcher's active role in developing themes, moving beyond simple code counting to engage with the data in a meaningful and contextual manner. The analysis involved several key steps: familiarization with the data through repeated reading of interview transcripts; generation of initial codes; construction and review of emerging themes; refinement and definition of the final themes; and the production of a comprehensive report supported by illustrative quotes from participants. RTA was chosen for its flexibility and its suitability to the study's interpretive framework, which aims to understand the socio-cultural dimensions of stakeholder involvement in educational management.

4. RESULTS

Research Objectives 1. To examine the motivations and perspectives of stakeholders in contributing to inclusive and supportive educational management practices beyond the traditional classroom setting.

Question No. 1. What motivates you to participate in the development of educational support systems for economically challenged students?

1.1 *Education as a Tool for Equity and Social Justice*

Ten (10) respondents expressed that as an educator, they see firsthand how financial hardship affects student performance and attendance. What motivates them is the belief that education should be an equalizer, not a divider. Additionally, they mentioned that they want to help create systems where no student is left behind simply because they can't afford basic resources. This theme reflects the belief that education should bridge socio-economic gaps, not reinforce them. The motivation stems from a commitment to fairness, equal opportunity, and ensuring that financial hardship does not hinder a student's academic journey or success.

"As an educator, I see firsthand how financial hardship affects student performance and attendance. What motivates me is the belief that education should be an equalizer, not a divider."

"I want to help create systems where no student is left behind simply because they can't afford basic resources."

1.2 Empowering the Next Generation Through Parental Advocacy

Ten (10) respondents shared that they may not have a college degree, but they know how hard it is for children to study without the right support. Additionally, they mentioned that they get involved because they want to see every child especially those from poor families have a real chance at a better life through education. This theme highlights the motivation of parents regardless of their educational background to support equitable learning opportunities. It reflects a deep sense of responsibility and hope that education can offer their children a pathway out of poverty and toward a better future.

"I may not have a college degree, but I know how hard it is for children to study without the right support."

"I get involved because I want to see every child especially those from poor families have a real chance at a better life through education."

1.3 Community-Driven Support for Educational Continuity

Five (5) respondents expressed that they've seen too many bright young people drop out because of poverty. Additionally, they shared that what drives them is the hope that through

community initiatives and partnerships with schools, they can provide them with the tools and encouragement they need to continue learning and succeed. This theme underscores the role of the community in mitigating the effects of poverty on education. It reflects a collective commitment to creating support systems and partnerships that empower economically challenged learners to stay in school and achieve success.

"I've seen too many bright young people drop out because of poverty."

"What drives me is the hope that through community initiatives and partnerships with schools, we can provide them with the tools and encouragement they need to continue learning and succeed."

Question No. 2. How do you perceive your role in shaping inclusive educational practices beyond classroom instruction?

2.1 Advocacy and Policy Engagement Beyond Instruction

Ten (10) respondents expressed that they see their role as an advocate and bridge-builder. It's not just about what they teach inside the classroom, but how they help influence policies and programs that reach students who struggle outside of it. Additionally, they mentioned that that includes mentoring, improving access to resources, and collaborating with support units to remove barriers to learning. This theme emphasizes the educator's role in extending influence beyond teaching by actively shaping inclusive policies, mentoring students, and collaborating with institutional support systems to address learning barriers. It reflects a proactive commitment to systemic inclusion.

"I see my role as an advocate and bridge-builder. It's not just about what I teach inside the classroom, but how I help influence policies and programs that reach students who struggle outside of it."

"That includes mentoring, improving access to resources, and collaborating with support units to remove barriers to learning."

2.2 Parental Voice as a Catalyst for Inclusion

Ten (10) respondents expressed that their role may be simple, but it's important. They give

feedback to teachers and attend school meetings to raise issues affecting poor families. Additionally, they mentioned that they also share ideas on how schools can better support students who don't have internet, transportation, or meals. Inclusion starts when parents are heard. This theme highlights the vital role of parents in advocating for equitable educational support. It reflects how even modest contributions like giving feedback or attending meetings can drive inclusive practices when parents' perspectives, especially from marginalized backgrounds, are acknowledged and valued.

"My role may be simple, but it's important. I give feedback to teachers and attend school meetings to raise issues affecting poor families."

"I also share ideas on how schools can better support students who don't have internet, transportation, or meals. Inclusion starts when parents are heard."

2.3 Student Advocacy Through Peer Representation

Five (5) respondents mentioned that they try to speak up during student forums and surveys to voice the concerns of their classmates, especially those who are too shy or struggling financially. Additionally, they mentioned that they believe students like them can help shape inclusive practices by sharing real experiences and suggesting practical solutions. This theme captures the role of students as active participants in promoting inclusion by voicing the needs of their peers. It emphasizes the importance of lived experience, peer support, and student-led input in shaping practical and responsive educational practices.

"I try to speak up during student forums and surveys to voice the concerns of my classmates, especially those who are too shy or struggling financially."

"I believe students like me can help shape inclusive practices by sharing real experiences and suggesting practical solutions."

Question No. 3. Can you share any experiences where your input helped address the needs of disadvantaged students outside formal teaching environments?

3.1 Proactive Institutional Support for Student Welfare

Ten (10) respondents expressed that during the pandemic, they helped initiate a donation drive within the university to provide learning kits and mobile data for students who couldn't join online classes. Additionally, they mentioned that they also worked with the student affairs office to set up a referral system for counseling and food assistance. It made a real difference in student retention that semester. This theme highlights the educator's role in mobilizing resources and coordinating institutional support systems to address the holistic needs of disadvantaged students outside the classroom. It reflects a commitment to student retention through tangible, responsive interventions.

"During the pandemic, I helped initiate a donation drive within the university to provide learning kits and mobile data for students who couldn't join online classes."

"I also worked with the student affairs office to set up a referral system for counseling and food assistance. It made a real difference in student retention that semester."

3.2 Peer Empowerment and Community-Based Parental Support

Ten (10) respondents expressed that there was a time when many parents in their area were confused about how to assist their kids with modular learning. They volunteered to guide other parents in their barangay by sharing what they learned and helping translate instructions. Additionally, they mentioned that some parents told them they felt less alone because of it. This theme reflects how parents take on informal leadership roles within their communities to support others facing similar challenges. It emphasizes grassroots collaboration, shared learning, and the emotional impact of collective guidance during times of educational disruption.

"I volunteered to guide other parents in our barangay by sharing what I learned and helping translate instructions."

"Some parents told me they felt less alone because of it."

3.3 Community-Led Educational Access and Infrastructure

Five (5) respondents expressed that they worked with the barangay council to create a small learning center where students without internet could come and access modules or online resources.

Additionally, they mentioned that they also coordinated with local teachers to make sure the center followed safety protocols. It's still being used today. This theme emphasizes the proactive role of community stakeholders in creating sustainable, inclusive learning spaces. It highlights local initiative, cross-sector collaboration, and long-term support for disadvantaged students lacking digital or home-based learning resources.

"I worked with the barangay council to create a small learning center where students without internet could come and access modules or online resources."

"We also coordinated with local teachers to make sure the center followed safety protocols. It's still being used today."

Research Objectives 2. To investigate the role of stakeholder collaboration in shaping responsive and accessible learning policies for economically disadvantaged students in HEIs.

Question No. 1. How would you describe the collaboration process between various stakeholders in developing learning policies for underprivileged students?

1.1 Cultural Awareness and Adaptive Hospitality Practices

Ten (10) respondents expressed that collaboration is often challenging but necessary. It takes time to align the priorities of different groups teachers focus on pedagogy, administrators on logistics, and community groups on access. Additionally, they mentioned that but when they listen to each other and keep the students' needs at the center, they end up with stronger, more inclusive policies. This theme highlights the complexity and value of multi-stakeholder collaboration in policy development. Despite differing roles and priorities, successful partnerships are forged when all parties prioritize the common goal of student welfare and educational inclusion.

"Collaboration is often challenging but necessary. It takes time to align the priorities of different groups teachers focus on pedagogy, administrators on logistics, and community groups on access."

"But when we listen to each other and keep the students' needs at the center, we end up with stronger, more inclusive policies."

1.2 Meaningful Inclusion of Student Voices in Policy Development

Five (5) respondents expressed that sometimes they're just consulted at the end, which doesn't feel like real collaboration. But in cases where students are involved from the start like in town halls or working groups it really works. Additionally, they mentioned that they know what's happening on the ground, and their input can make policies more realistic and helpful. This theme emphasizes the importance of involving students early and actively in the collaboration process to ensure policies are grounded in real experiences and practical needs, rather than token consultation at later stages.

"Sometimes we're just consulted at the end, which doesn't feel like real collaboration. But in cases where students are involved from the start like in town halls or working groups it really works."

"We know what's happening on the ground, and our input can make policies more realistic and helpful."

1.3 Building Trust Through Genuine Stakeholder Engagement

Ten (10) respondents expressed that most of the time, they're not involved unless they push to be heard. But when schools actually invite them and ask for suggestions, it helps build trust. Additionally, they mentioned that they may not have all the technical terms, but they know the struggles their children face every day. This theme highlights how proactive inclusion and sincere invitations for input from parents foster trust and empower them to contribute meaningfully, despite not having formal expertise, because of their lived experiences.

"Most of the time, we're not involved unless we push to be heard. But when schools actually invite us and ask for suggestions, it helps build trust."

"We may not have all the technical terms, but we know the struggles our children face every day."

Question No. 2. What strategies or practices have emerged from stakeholder collaboration that effectively support economically disadvantaged learners?

2.1 Peer Support and Collaborative Initiatives Enhancing Student Retention

Ten (10) respondents expressed that they developed a peer mentoring program where senior students support underprivileged freshmen, helping them navigate academic and personal challenges. Additionally, they mentioned that this initiative came out of meetings with student leaders and community partners, and it's been really effective in boosting retention. This highlights how joint efforts among stakeholders led to mentoring programs that address both academic and personal challenges for disadvantaged students.

"We developed a peer mentoring program where senior students support underprivileged freshmen, helping them navigate academic and personal challenges."

"This initiative came out of meetings with student leaders and community partners, and it's been really effective in boosting retention."

2.2 Community-Driven Support Systems Addressing Basic Needs

Five (5) respondents expressed that they started a community food pantry at the school, organized jointly by parents, teachers, and local businesses. Additionally, they mentioned that it ensures that students who come to school hungry can still focus and learn. This idea wouldn't have worked without collaboration across these groups. This emphasizes how collaborative efforts among parents, educators, and local businesses created essential support services to help students overcome barriers related to hunger.

"We started a community food pantry at the school, organized jointly by parents, teachers, and local businesses."

"It ensures that students who come to school hungry can still focus and learn. This idea wouldn't have worked without collaboration across these groups."

2.3 Advocacy for Flexible and Inclusive Learning Policies

Ten (10) respondents expressed that through student forums, they pushed for more flexible deadlines and hybrid learning options. Additionally, they mentioned that these changes help those of them who work part-time or don't have reliable internet access. It feels like the school

is actually listening to their needs. This highlights how student collaboration and voice led to practical adaptations in learning structures to accommodate the diverse needs of economically disadvantaged learners.

"Through student forums, we pushed for more flexible deadlines and hybrid learning options."

"These changes help those of us who work part-time or don't have reliable internet access. It feels like the school is actually listening to our needs."

Question No. 3. What challenges have you encountered in working with other stakeholders to create or implement accessible learning guidelines, and how were they addressed?

3.1 Establishing Structured Coordination to Overcome Fragmentation

Ten (10) respondents expressed that initially, there was a lack of coordination. Everyone had their own approach faculty, admin, and community groups. It caused confusion and delays. Additionally, they mentioned that they addressed it by setting up a regular coordination meeting where they could align goals and clarify roles. It improved communication and accountability. This theme reflects how the challenge of disjointed stakeholder efforts was addressed through organized communication channels that fostered clarity, alignment, and shared accountability.

"Initially, there was a lack of coordination. Everyone had their own approach faculty, admin, and community groups. It caused confusion and delays."

"We addressed it by setting up a regular coordination meeting where we could align goals and clarify roles. It improved communication and accountability."

3.2 Empowering Student Voice Through Consistent Engagement

Ten (10) respondents shared that one of the biggest problems was not being taken seriously. Some decision-makers didn't think student opinions were valid. Additionally, they mentioned that after consistent participation and presenting data from student surveys, they earned more respect. Now, their feedback is actually included in planning

discussions. This highlights the challenge of being overlooked and how persistent advocacy and evidence-based input led to the recognition of students as valuable contributors in decision-making.

"One of the biggest problems was not being taken seriously. Some decision-makers didn't think student opinions were valid."

"But after consistent participation and presenting data from student surveys, we earned more respect. Now, our feedback is actually included in planning discussions."

3.3 Enhancing Parent Inclusion Through Accessible Communication

Five (5) respondents mentioned that it was hard to understand the education jargon used in meetings. Many parents felt intimidated and stayed quiet. Additionally, they shared that when the school began using simpler language and offering translations during consultations, more parents started to speak up and get involved. This emphasizes how breaking down language barriers and simplifying communication empowered parents to participate more actively in educational planning and support.

"It was hard to understand the education jargon used in meetings. Many parents felt intimidated and stayed quiet."

"But when the school began using simpler language and offering translations during consultations, more parents started to speak up and get involved."

5. DISCUSSION

This study explored the motivations, perspectives, and collaborative roles of key stakeholders—academe, students, parents, and community members in shaping inclusive educational management practices beyond the classroom for economically challenged learners in higher education institutions (HEIs). Findings from semi-structured interviews and reflexive thematic analysis revealed rich insights aligned with the study's two primary objectives.

Stakeholders' Motivations and Perspectives in Educational Support Beyond the Classroom. Stakeholders expressed strong personal, moral, and community-

driven motivations in supporting educational efforts outside formal instruction. For academic stakeholders, such as faculty and administrators, motivations were anchored in the belief that education should serve as a social equalizer, with several citing the visible impact of poverty on student engagement and performance. One recurring theme was "Education as a Social Equalizer", where participants saw their roles not only in academic delivery but in influencing policy, mentoring, and advocating for disadvantaged students.

Among parents and community members, motivations were largely rooted in lived experience and empathy. The theme "Lived Experience as a Catalyst for Involvement" emerged as many shared personal hardships that deepened their resolve to ensure that underprivileged students have equitable access to learning. Parents emphasized their roles as frontline observers of student challenges, highlighting how their practical suggestions often stemmed from everyday struggles with internet access, nutrition, or transportation.

Students, meanwhile, positioned themselves as advocates and peer supporters, often amplifying the voices of less outspoken classmates. The theme "Peer-Led Advocacy and Grounded Solutions" encapsulated the student role, suggesting that learner-driven insights are crucial in making policies more relevant and responsive.

Stakeholder Collaboration in Shaping Inclusive Learning Policies. The collaborative process among stakeholders was described as essential but often uneven. While some institutions made conscious efforts to engage stakeholders in early planning phases, others tended to include them late in the process, resulting in feelings of tokenism. This tension was captured in the theme "From Consultation to Inclusion: Evolving Dynamics in Stakeholder Engagement." Participants emphasized that meaningful collaboration required regular communication, shared goals, and recognition of all contributions regardless of technical expertise.

Notable strategies that emerged from collaborative practices included peer mentoring programs, food pantries, community learning

centers, and flexible learning arrangements. These initiatives, described under the theme “Grassroots Solutions through Multisectoral Partnerships,” reflect how inclusive education management can benefit from shared responsibility. Community leaders, teachers, students, and parents all played distinct yet complementary roles in addressing the multifaceted challenges faced by economically disadvantaged students.

However, the collaboration was not without its challenges. Several participants cited barriers such as inconsistent communication, lack of shared vocabulary, and hierarchical power dynamics. The theme “Bridging Gaps Through Coordinated Communication and Trust-Building” highlighted the importance of structured engagement formats such as regular inter-stakeholder meetings or simplified language use to enable more inclusive decision-making.

Implications for Educational Management in HEIs. The findings suggest that educational management in HEIs must extend beyond administrative oversight and classroom instruction to encompass the socio-economic realities of learners. By actively engaging stakeholders with diverse perspectives and motivations, institutions can develop more responsive learning policies. Importantly, the use of Reflexive Thematic Analysis allowed the research to center meaning-making within social, cultural, and institutional contexts, capturing the depth of stakeholders’ lived experiences and the nuances of their collaborative efforts.

In conclusion, fostering inclusive educational management requires not only systemic reforms but also sustained partnerships among students, families, faculty, and communities. The creation of accessible, flexible, and supportive learning environments is most effective when built from the ground up through dialogue, shared responsibility, and empathy.

6. CONCLUSION

This study highlights the critical role of stakeholder motivation and collaboration in shaping inclusive educational management practices for economically challenged learners in higher

education institutions (HEIs). Stakeholders including educators, students, parents, and community members demonstrated a strong commitment to equity, often driven by personal experiences and a desire to remove barriers to education.

Participants viewed their roles as extending beyond formal responsibilities, contributing through advocacy, mentoring, feedback, and grassroots support. Their involvement resulted in concrete actions such as peer mentoring programs, community food pantries, and localized learning hubs, especially during periods of crisis like the pandemic.

While collaboration among stakeholders posed challenges such as poor coordination, limited inclusion, and communication barriers these were addressed through regular meetings, student advocacy, and parent-friendly communication strategies. As a result, more responsive and accessible learning policies emerged.

Overall, the findings affirm that inclusive and effective educational policies are best developed when diverse voices are meaningfully engaged. Stakeholder participation must continue to be at the center of educational reform to ensure that all students, regardless of economic status, have equal opportunities to succeed.

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