

De La Salle Santiago Zobel School
Senior High School
STEM Academic Strand

A study on interactions and relationships among students of former honors' class
and current mixed student sections

Submitted to
Mr, Floro B. Ellosa, Jr.

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Abstract

The research titled "A study on interactions and relationships among students of former honors' class and current mixed sections" aims to find the social aspect of interactions and relationships of students from the honors class section experienced by members of the school institution of De La Salle Santiago Zobel. This research does not only compile previous findings of other authors in terms of the background of education in relation to honors classes as well as experiments or observations seen from honors classes and its other varieties. It is our aim to answer the question of *"What were the effects of the honors class arrangement to honors class students in relation to their interactions and relationships amongst one another?"*

This study also aimed to find patterns in responses from alumni and staff who have experienced the honors class when it was still in effect as well as the stands and opinions of current students of the educational institution in relation to the social aspects as well as other factors revolving the honors class. In the process of the research, it has been found that although generally motivated in academics, the social aspect of the honors class students indicate that discrimination was an internally felt or present factor that was experienced by the individual rather than externally evident towards them among their peers.

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Generally it is found that socialization was a key determinant that was observed to be lacking between the honors class students and those of the regular class, as honors students tend to mingle more with those of the same class while regular class students did the same. However, it is noted that in general, the relationships among the batches are without trouble, and that most of the pressure and differences in treatment were more evidently experienced from teachers and parents.

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Chapter I: Introduction

Background of the Study

According to Partha Ghosh, a research scholar in the United Kingdom's department of education, the study of the classroom aspects like environment and classification of students has been tapped more frequently by researchers, teachers, and others with interest in the school systems in more recent years as means of finding the optimal aspects for students to learn. It was then said in the 1970 book *Future Shock* by Alvin Toffler, where he decried the "Industrial Era School", that the modern day classrooms under the K-12 system is largely based of the industrial-age factory model of education. This is the system wherein there are seat-time requirements for graduation as well as a salary for educators based on their educational credentials and seniority. From this, the layout of the classroom where the idea of assembling masses of students to work under teachers at a centrally located school was created in order to produce the kind of adults industrialism needed - in the age of a world of repetitive indoor crowded living conditions, collective discipline and the regulation of time by a whistle and clock and not by the cycle of the sun and moon. In that given day and age, there was no record of having any discrimination among the academic or learning abilities of the students in these facilities.

In the Philippines, prior to the widespread of education brought about by the Americans, only the rudiments of education were given to the children. This means that the teachings given to the younger population at the time was geared towards the needs of the community rather than other aspects of knowledge and application. It was when the Philippines was inhabited by various foreign countries that the educational system underwent drastic changes and additions to mimic the educational systems or teachings brought by them. Segregation of any kind was more evident when the Spanish Western Educational System was taken in, as there was no co-education system that was present during their times, having boys and girls study in separate schools. The college systems of education - our high schools today - were open to the Filipinos by the missionaries. However, the university education was only open to the people in the 19th century, a gap from the 17th century when it was first established in the country, were open only to the Spanish and those with Spanish blood. There was also no integration of the Spanish language in the educational systems for the colonists to have a more solid security for their plans with the Philippines, preventing the leakage of information.

When the Americans colonized the Philippines, their take on education was on a more reciprocative and highlighted basis compared to the Spanish, as they inhibited the goal of "educating and training in the science of

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self-government". Unlike the previous colonizer, the Americans propagated the English language, having the American soldiers at the time to be the first teachers of the Filipino people. Segregation that was observed in the previous era was seen as less evident, as they had opened free primary education and abolished compulsory religious instruction around 1901, as well as offered opportunities to take up higher education in American colleges and universities. The Commonwealth government also allowed for the more evident presence of the Filipino people in the grand scheme of educational progress, as President Quezon created the National Council of Education in 1936 as an advisory body on educational matters.

However, when the education was put under the Japanese Regime, various aspects of segregation became apparent as they had made use of schools and churches as a means of propaganda tools. In response to taking over the Philippines from the Americans, the Japanese began prohibiting the use of the English language as well as any American-affiliated symbols or media. Although they, unlike the Spanish, were open to propagating the Japanese language and culture to the Filipinos, they made use of the church by bringing in Japanese Catholic priests to promote the idea of Japan being a friend of all Asian populations, including the Filipinos. During their time, the class size was also increased to a number of 60 students per room.

As decades have gone by in the aspect of education, various changes and additions have come and gone within the curriculum. The existence of honors classes was implemented in various but not all institutions, this being most prevalent in American or International Schools. The Honors class, according to the glossary of Educational Reform, is described to be a class wherein the most advanced or proficient in academics are placed. More often than not, honors classes and courses are more likely to cover educational material that are more advanced or detailed than other classes of the same age group, tailored to their educational ability. Generally, students who are enrolled into honors classes or courses get a greater weight, recognition and responsibility, giving them an upper hand if prerequisites are met compared to their peers. On the other hand, there also came to light the existence of the Advanced Placement classes.

The difference between honors classes and AP classes according to ECA's Questions and Answers About Honors and AP Courses is that honors courses and classes are developed by teachers for the needs of talented students, paralleling the curriculum offered in the regular class but with a larger depth in topics as well as additional topics, being separate from the regular classes and having extra projects and seminars supplementing a regular course. On the other hand, AP classes is meant to prepare students for the College

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Board more than it is for the academic challenge. Most universities award college credits based on AP exam scores.

Taken from the official website of the institution, De La Salle Santiago Zobel is a school found in Ayala Alabang Village, Muntinlupa City. The Catholic institution for boys and girls is one of the schools set up as far back as 1978 by the De La Salle Brothers in the Philippines, as a response to an influx increase of students in the grade school department of the former De La Salle College - the now De La Salle University - Manila. In 1978, it was initially opened to prep until grade 6, opening up grade 7 in the following year.

According to individuals who have closely witnessed the honors classes when it was still in effect, majority of them do not remember or never knew the reasons as to why this system was removed, but are able to concretely remember their experiences as a student, staff member or mother of a child who was there at the time. This thesis aims to find if there were such effects on the social aspects in the lives of the students at the time of honors classes in terms of their interactions and opinions with one another, as well as a probable finding as to why it was removed along with other questions surrounding the honors classes as experienced by the institution of De La Salle Santiago Zobel. The findings of such research will serve as our basis if indeed, whether it is

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commendable to return the honors classes or not in the aspect of student relationships and interactions as a response to the various inquiries of parents and staff still existing until today.

Objectives of the Study

This thesis revolves around the concept of social interactions and relationships and the findings of such with regard to the honors class section from the thoughts and opinions of those who have experienced it and aims to answer the question, *"What were the effects of the honors class arrangement to honors class students in relation to their interactions and relationships amongst one another?"*. The focus with regard to this is around the social aspect of the student in those times compared to post 2006, this meaning that the study focuses on the qualitative aspect. The purpose of this study is to find the advantages and disadvantages of the existence of honors class in accordance to the social relationships of the students in the aspects of student culture, opinions on one another and the interactions between honors students and regular students. The means by which this study found the answers to these is through the contact and interview with alumni who have experienced the 2006 honors class curriculum as an honors class student or a regular class student, and their opinions in relation to the social aspects. This was also done through the interviewing of teachers and staff who were there at the time, as well as

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organizing interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGD) with students from after the 2006 Honors class to find a feedback on their opinions. Through this study, we aim to accomplish the following objectives:

1. To find out the history of the honors class (*How it first began, when it was taken out, why it was taken out, etc.*)
2. To collect the experiences of alumni and staff members through the facilitating of in-depth semi-structured interviews
3. To analyze the general response towards the interview questions among all the interviewed individuals
4. To be able to establish a common ground with most if not all experiences and opinions of the interviewed individuals
5. To determine the answer to posed question based on the analysis, to state whether or not the honors class is advisable to reimplement and to explain why this is so based on research as well as the content of interviews

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Definition of Terms

Interactions - An occasion when two or more people communicate with or react to each other. (*Cambridge Dictionary, n.a.*) In this study, interactions is to be described as more fluctuating and varied upon occasion compared to relationships.

Relationships - The way two or more people are connected, or the way they behave toward each other. In this study, relationships are described to be more gradual, stagnant or constant compared to interactions, and is related to the friend groupings of the time. (*Cambridge Dictionary, n.a.*)

Honors class - According to Halverson, an honors program is a planned set of experiences through which the academic needs of talented and able students are better served than they can be within the regular classroom, as a means to encourage and challenge the high-achieving student. (*Halverson, 2013*)

Scope of Limitations

As the study aims to find the social interactions of students from honors classes and regular classes from the year 2006 and earlier, it is to say that the strict findings of information with regard to such in De La Salle Santiago Zobel will take a considerable amount of time. Interviews with various affected parties like the staff present at the time and students at the time are deeply considered, although lapses in memory may be evident as the study focuses on an aspect of

the school almost more than ten years ago. Our study is limited to the number of people we will be able to interview at hand, and will focus on qualitative research in these small groups, as surveying those from 2006 at this day and age is for the large part, difficult and does not assure legitimacy of information if not consulted personally. The basis of this thesis is on the FGDs where students today may interact and give substantial opinions concerning the Honors class as well as in-depth interviews with individuals who have experienced the honors classes itself as students, staff members or even mothers at the time. If not found, the thesis may lack the explanation as to why it was taken out in the first place, one of the important pieces of information for the research.

On the study itself, various forms of research from others have been collected and compiled to find a connection if not effect of the social aspects of having honors classes. These researches pose various important aspects in the research process, including the background of the honors classes, various ways of the implementation of the honors classes, as well as the results or findings from previous studies or experiments conducted in relation to honors classes or ability grouping. This will serve as a reference in the latter part of the research, in the finding of common ground and similarities with the findings of this research.

Chapter II: Review of Related Literature

This chapter of the research discusses various previous works done by other professionals conducting their own ventures similar to our subject matter, keywords revolving around such are “honors class”, “ability grouping”, “tracking”, and so on and so forth as all previously stated terms contain the similar characteristic of grouping those with higher academic ability together. These works include studies in terms of the history of the aspect of ability grouping and honors classes, experiments related to ability sectioning, as well as opinions and recommendations for future research, surveys on homogenous sectioning that may affect other factors concerning the students in question, comparisons of the homogeneous and heterogenous sectioning on aforementioned factors and proposals to use a certain sectioning based on factual reasoning.

It is imperative to review the following literature as it provides a solid foundation and background to the essence of the research to be presented. It is with the understanding of how these kinds of segregation based on academic ability became apparent that we are able to observe if for one, the intention of the implementation of such educational reforms is met, second, if the weights in the aspects of benefits versus consequence, third, to be able to delve into the social benefits and consequences apparent by existing researches, and lastly yet most

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importantly, if these findings hold true to the area or scope of the current research's study - De La Salle Santiago Zobel to be discussed in the latter parts of the study.

According to C.E. Seashore's *Sectioning Classes on the Basis of Ability* from 1922, as cited in the American Association of University Professors' *Academe* from 1979 to 2013, the purpose of sectioning students in accordance to their academic ability is generally to be able to find the most beneficial environment to students who are more gifted than others on average, as well as to fundamentally create a student environment fit for the students' capabilities in terms of quantity, quality, content and method of work, as these aspects are the most radical fundamentals in the needs of high and low students.

Also, in C.E. Seashore's *School and Society* (1922), he states that at the time it was being proposed as a system in education on a larger scale, people like him who vouched for the sectioning on the basis of ability based their stand on psychological findings, and concluded that he was in favor of it as he had been observing the method. He states towards the end that if one was not in favor of this arrangement, they cannot refute his own findings and claims without trying the ability grouping method themselves.

The National Education Association (n.d.) presents an article titled "Research Spotlight on Academic Ability Grouping", clarifying and expounding on the existence of ability grouping. According to the article, ability grouping, also known as tracking, is the practice wherein children are sorted according to their talents in the classroom. The practice begins at an early age, being divided harmlessly in the elementary school level as "Bluebirds" and "Redbirds", although this method of division became more apparent when the same students enter secondary school and beyond. The NEA gives a statement that labels given to students, most especially to those of the lower tracks, allow a diet of lower expectations and thus lower motivation towards school as they move from grade to grade, realizing which track they stand on. The division evolves for the students in high school in the name of "College Preparatory" and "Vocational". Generally, this methodical educational practice of ability grouping came around the turn of the 20th century as a means to prepare the students for their "appropriate" place in the workforce - students on higher tracks are described to be with high abilities and skills, thus given intense, rigorous academic training while students on lower tracks were provided with a more vocational education. (Cooper, 1996). The method of ability grouping in terms of classes and not within class are classified as between-class grouping - the segregation of students into different courses, classes or curricular tracks on the bases of their academic achievement.

Another source clarifies the differences between tracking and ability grouping. Gamoran (1992) states in "Is Ability Grouping Equitable" that the terms "curriculum tracking" and "ability grouping are sometimes used interchangeably. In the context of this review of related literature, the definitions follow as such. Track pertains to the broader, programmatic divisions which separate students for all academic subjects. Examples of this include dividing students into academic, general and vocational programs. On the other hand, ability grouping is described by Gamoran to refer to be the process wherein students are typically divided in accordance to their academic ability, but is more often pertaining to the division in particular subjects rather than an entirely different class altogether. The same source demands for there to be a reduction in the use of tracking and grouping, stating that the more rigid the tracking system, the more researches come to prove that there are no overall benefits in school achievement, and that there are serious detriments in the concept and existence of equity. Another demand is for the improvement of the use of ability grouping, requesting that for it to be more effective, the locking in of teachers and students with track assignments is to be avoided - meaning that there should be rotationals done instead of a more permanent assignments to lessen the concept of inequity as it does not remain stagnant.

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According to the Experimental Studies of Homogeneous Grouping: A Critical Review by Ruth Ekstrom (1961) from the Educational Testing Service, some educators strongly recommended homogeneous grouping on the basis of ability, although some others opposed it. James Conant has recommended ability grouping in required high school subjects and in subjects elected by students with a wide range of ability. It was however argued that grouping individuals by ability does not ensure improved achievement, which is one of the major gains desired from this technique. He asks by what means should they present as evidence in evaluating the effectiveness of homogeneous groupings.

Gene Glass of Arizona State University (2002) presents a research on grouping students for instruction like ability grouping in the fifth chapter of the Education Policy Studies Laboratory titled "Chapter 5: Grouping Students for Instruction", and presents the few benefits and risk in both high class and lower class ability groupings beyond the scope in terms of academics. According to the research, the system of sorting students into homogeneous ability and achievement groups is nearly as old as universal compulsory education in the United States, and can range from "reading groups" to segregation of students between school districts at the other. Gene Glass states in the first parts of his paper that "While the one extreme may be a matter strictly of professional pedagogical judgement, the other extreme may represent the impact of broad

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social forces outside the control of any one educator or group of professionals.” (Glass, 2002). It was said that the pedagogical justification for homogeneous grouping centers is for teachers to be able to focus more instruction at the level of all the students in the groups, thus not wasting time for students with higher academic abilities who could easily understand elementary explanations and concepts that students who are slower or have lower academic ability need to recall. In the last quarter of the 20th century, Homogeneous groupings in the form of tracking received severe criticism at the time - highlighting James Rosenbaum's *Making Equality* (1976) and Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis' *Schooling in Capitalist America's* (1976) papers, these of which state that ability grouping is “not just perpetuating but creating disadvantaged for poor and minority students.”

Keeping Track by Jeannie Oakes (1985) was also mentioned in the previous argument, prompting debates in concern to the effects of homogeneous grouping - levelling charges of stigmatizing students, and consigning them to inferior and “dumbed-down” instruction. Thomas Loveless states on behalf of Homogeneous grouping that “The primary charges against tracking are that it doesn't accomplish anything and that it unfairly creates unequal opportunities for academic achievement. What is the evidence? Generally speaking, research fails to support the indictment”. Further in Gene Glass' research, he attempts to see

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the standpoint of the issue by taking in the findings of Sociologists. Gamoran (1987) saw in results that students in the lower tracks or ability groups were less likely to attend college than students within the higher ranks, and that in general, the tracks for the lesser academically able received "a poorer quality curriculum, less experienced teachers, and teachers with lower expectations for their students' performance" - in which Glass finds to be in line with the observations with other researchers such as Gamoran (1987), Oakes, Persell (1977) and Rosenbaum (1980).

Utah's Celia Baker (2014) has a report containing a stand by Pennsylvania psychologist Mary Ann Swiatek stating that ability grouping has particular benefits for gifted students. The report also mentions recalls in the existence of ability grouping and tracking in the United States, showing us that most recently in the year 2009, NAEP data shows that 7 of 10 4th-graders were in ability-based reading groups. Researches done on the aspect of ability tracking - or the placing of students in separate classes based on ability is closely linked or related to social and racial inequalities according to Tom Loveless, who is an author of the Brown Center report, as it had been noticed that Black, Hispanic and poor children dominate remedial classes while middle-class white children populated the honors courses in the United States. His report stated that in the social aspect of ability tracking, "They reproduce and perpetuate

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inequalities.” and that this method mirrors the inequalities of the broader society, exposing children directly to such at a younger age. South Carolina law professor Derek Black believes that despite teachers having the best intentions for the academic improvement of the students, the perception of the segregation method is not objective, as hidden biases revolving around race, ethnicity and socioeconomic status is underlain and is not beneficial to the students in the aspect of interactions and relationships with other individuals in the long term.

Black also brings into concern that he has no qualms in the possibility that ability grouping could be used for a better purpose when correctly implemented, but that the underlying effects beyond academic aspect is not to be ignored. “The basic harm is the stigma,” is what he said. “... Often, there's a richer curriculum in the upper level. That's where teachers want to be, so kids in those classes end up with more-qualified teachers.”, meaning that there is a bias for teachers to desire conducting a class of students with higher ability, leaving students with lower levels of ability to have less capable or less qualified teachers, despite them needing special instruction. The statements and claims by Derek Black were said by him to be a product of his own experiences, as he was part of the higher bracket of ability that propelled him to show that he was a smart kid as one among the chosen higher bracket. Despite this, he states that even if it was beneficial to him, he knows and believes that the students who received the other

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side of the coin - or the lower bracket will not have the same experience as him and that it wasn't fair for them. Bowden, a famous author who had a similar experience said that, "If anything, it made me more determined to demonstrate that I was a smart kid - that I could learn and do well," then "But some kids maybe wouldn't respond that way. Labeling a kid, even unintentionally, is not a desirable thing to do."

Selma Testa from Pennsylvania State University constructed a study titled "Perceptions of Teachers and Students Regarding the Middle School Honors Program" back in 2010, wherein a sample population was made representing an equal number of honors and non-honors participants. In accordance to the study, two surveys were sent out then studied, confirming the college and high school findings regarding honors students such as the reasons for and against their enrollment, satisfaction with the program, and the over-representation of female as well as white students in the honors class. As of 2010, the number of middle schools in the United States that adopted honors programs have considerably increased, although lacking the necessary research in suit of it. According to Testa, it is necessary for there to be researches as there are various differences in characteristics between college students and middle school students in the aspects of social, mental, and physical development, as it would help institutions better facilitate these classes in accordance to their age groups. When looking at

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the long-term effects provided by the honors program, it was described that students who were placed into honors programs for even just the first two years of college had shown drastic differences in the overall career ambitions in comparison to students who did not experience such. Students from honors classes were also said to exhibit both higher academic achievement as well as higher academic self-concept than those without. For the high school sector, a lack of research into the honors courses in the United States has been reported by Herr, compared to the larger number of substantial studies geared towards Advanced Placement Courses (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB).

The Institutional Research and Planning Office (IRPO) of DLSZ had conducted a survey regarding Faculty Expectations in the school year of 2001 - 2002. A portion of the survey involves their thoughts on student performance, particularly the comparison of "low-achieving" and "high-achieving" students. 46% of the grade school teachers and 51% of the high school teachers always experience that interacting with low achieving students promotes self-esteem in them. 51% of the grade school teachers and 49% of the high school teachers responded that sometimes, one cannot avoid criticizing low-achieving students for the delay they cause for the class. 61% of the high school teachers agreed that the school should only accept students who have the capability to perform according to school standards. 77% of the high school teachers and 35% of the

grade school teachers agreed that the school has a deficiency in its process of selection and admission of students during enrollment, evidenced by the presence of low achieving students. To the question "I find it easier to have friendly and responsive interactions with high achieving as compared to low achieving students", 47% of the high school teachers generally agreed to this while 53% generally disagreed to this. It is highly evident that there is a difference of outlook, perception and treatment between low-achieving students and high achieving students by the faculty.

A related paper by the IRPO was made to find out the perception of students about the honors class. This research looked onto the topic of how homogenous students perceive the honors classes and the equity in education in DLSZ. The survey composed of questions about what the students feel about the honors classes and if they agree if it should be continued. The study showed that over 40% of participants of all year levels agree that the honors class have better study habits. All the four levels likewise agree that the honors class are intellectually above average. The second, third and fourth year participants strongly agree that the honors class are grade conscious, while the fourth year agree. First, second and fourth years however were all uncertain whether the honors class had better communication skills than the rest of the batch. 44% of third year participants disagree. The data gathered in that paper may show how

the other students see the honors class and their attitude of them is. It is implied with the data gathered that the honors class had a more closed off attitude to the rest of the students. It is found that most of the participants to the survey think that the honors class has more opportunities to grow academically. In addition to this, the survey had a section where the participants may write down the ideas/concepts they have about the honors class. There were positive comments such as "can be smarter than us," "hardworking/patient," "they shy away from others," "tend to overwork themselves." and negative comments such as "mayabang," "they have their own world" "they think they are better students" "perfectionist."

According to the Survey of Students Identified-As-Gifted in De La Salle Zobel done by Dr. Roldan back in 1996, high school students from the honors class were more vocal about their concerns in terms of pressure exerted on them by their parents to perform well in school, and the lack of trust between them and their parents. Towards the educational institution themselves, the common concerns exhibited by high school students were about teachers, the negative effects of the program on students, and suggestions for change. Elementary students pleaded for administration to observe if the teachers were in fact, inspiring student development. High school students were more aggressive on the matter, it being states that they wrote of teachers who "put [them] down" for

their mistakes, show favoritism, exertion of unnecessary pressure, and having high expectations of them. They describe to have observed and experienced the negative effects of the feeling of alienation, feelings of isolation, feelings of jealousy, a sense of unfairness and segregation. Following this, it was stated that the high school students appealed to the administration for the abolishing of the honor's program and to replace it with an honor's program per subject and a program better catered to the whole student body.

From researching past related studies, it is then important to find how these previous findings are comparable to the current research's accumulated data, in order to find any common ground or patterns in the general study of honors class and other variations of it. The next parts of this research proper will discuss the means by which the research facilitated the collection of data, as well as the findings themselves.

Chapter III: Research Methodology

The purpose of the Research Methodology is to aid the researchers in the process of validating their data via the proper means to collect data. This aspect of the research is important as it is the lifeblood or what gives the most substance in the purpose of the research and what they intend to find. There are various parts of the methodology that would give light to the means of obtaining information - this being the research approach and design, study population and sample, data collection method and instrument as well as data collection procedure.

Research Approach and Design

In accordance to the study, the nature by which this research must be tackled would be through the Phenomenological approach. The phenomenological approach revolves around the intention of the research to be able to understand the meaning of a phenomenon as perceived by the those who have experienced it. Unlike the ethnographic approach, which aims to interpret a culture sharing group, the study requires the studying of the essence of the experience, as we focus on the opinions and experiences of current and former students in the presence of the honors class in terms of their relationships and interactions with one another rather than their culture altogether.

Study Population and Sample

The research aims to obtain information via the use of Homogeneous sampling. As the name implies, this means of sampling is done by bringing together subjects or individuals or similar backgrounds and experiences, such that it properly corresponds to the intention of the paper. For the research, the demographics would be the populations of alumni who experienced the honors class, the staff who experienced the honors class, and finally the current students who did not know about the honors class, all of which are found to be in or coming from the school of De La Salle Santiago Zobel. The reason why these are chosen is because these are the several subjects wherein we may be able to receive most substantial information, especially on the part of alumni as well as the staff who have experienced it. The participants were chosen based on first, if they meet the criteria of having experience with the honors class as a staff, family member or a former student. For the students of the current school year, they were randomly selected from the class of 11C. Almost if not all information will be taken from the Focus Group Discussion and interviews to be conducted throughout the making of this research with the mentioned groups of people as they will talk about the various opinions and experiences of the groups with regard to the existence of the honors class. Previously done studies relating to the paper were indicated in the RRL section of the research. It is to be expected that the information given by those who have experienced the honors classes

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have no guarantee to be 100% valid, considering the lapse in time from when they experienced it, which is approximately ten to eleven years ago as it was taken out during the year 2006.

Data Collection Method and Instrument

The data was recorded by gathering a group of five people for the Focus Group Discussions. On the other hand, data was recorded for interviews by consulting an agreeable time slot between the interviewers and the interviewees. Both the Focus Group Discussion and interview was recorded via the Voice Memo application in a blue iPhone 5C for accuracy of quotations and analysis. The focus group discussion of the current students from 11C was facilitated by the research group members on March 3, 2017 from 11:20 to 11:42 am, taking up 22 minutes in total for the entire session to be transcribed afterwards. At the very beginning of the Focus Group Discussion, the research team provided an introduction or background regarding the honors class which was removed after the year 2006, to give them prior knowledge of the topic before the FGD officially begins. Afterwards, we asked the questions and allowed the participants to answer one by one to be able to obtain the most input, then allowed them to converse with one another afterwards for the exchanging of ideas. After all questions were answered, the researchers gave a summarized overview of the whole discussion, as well as findings from previously done researches as the

participants of the discussion were interested to learn more. On the other hand, along the course of the week of March 6 until March 10 was when the in-depth interviews with alumni and staff held. All in all, three people were interviewed for both the alumni and staff category. Again, the same group of researchers informed the people to be interviewed beforehand, and promised confidentiality. They were recorded for the purpose of being transcribed thereafter for the interpretation of data.

Data Collection Procedure

The group held interviews with staff from De La Salle Santiago Zobel who have experienced the honors class system whether as a teacher, a parent or an alumni. The interview questions, like the questions for the FGDs, will be semi-structured in nature. This is so because we already have a set of questions to serve as guidelines for the interview beforehand, but we also intend to stray away from the questions in the case that we find it appropriate in order to obtain clarifications and more information. Both the interview and FGD will be recorded through audio message or recording for the purpose of accuracy in terms of quotation and information which will be noted down afterwards for analysis. It is to be remembered that everything shared within the FGD will be confidential and the recording itself will only be accessible to the researchers of the thesis. The answers to the interviews will also be confidential.

In summary, we may say that data collection was carried out through the facilitation of a FGD with current students of 11C, as well as through interviews with various individuals who have experienced the Honors class as either a parent, alumni, or staff. The interviews have a set of questions that may be deviated from when found necessary to obtain more information, and the interviews will be recorded to be transcribed and analyzed with the rest of the interviews for this research's purposes. The correspondence of the person's personal information will not be tagged along with their response for the purpose of confidentiality and security of the participants. Again, it is to be reminded that the data collected from those who have experienced the honors class may be observed in foresight to have discrepancies, as it is taken into heavy consideration the lapse in memory as the last time the honors class was remembered to still be in effect was 2006, which was approximately eleven years prior to the processing of this research study. We will then proceed from this to substantially present and analyze the responses we have received over the course of the research from the FGD and the in-depth interviews to come to a concrete conclusion.

Chapter IV: Data Analysis

This chapter presents the responses from the interviews conducted to alumni and former staff as well as the focus group discussion of those currently studying in De La Salle Santiago Zobel School. Their responses are vital for the understanding the varying perspectives to the situation of honors class in the school before and would clarify any unknown details on the matter. This chapter will be divided into three sections, with the sections corresponding with each subgroup, namely alumni, staff and current students.

In the process of analyzing qualitative data, we have first and foremost not done any data reducing in the process of compiling and analyzing the responses. This is due to the apparent relevance found throughout the whole process of analyzing the acquired data. Second, this aspect of the research will be highlighting the identification of meaningful patterns and themes. The process of such is a fundamental keypoint of the research to be able to fulfill not only the previously stated objectives of the study, but also for the succinct statement in conclusion to the research itself. Third, the data display used in the presentation of our findings is done in tabular form, for the purpose of displaying the findings and responses among the individuals in relation to the questions raised in the

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course of the FGD or the interview in a clean and understandable manner to serve a better purpose of relaying information.

Presentation of Data

Staff

The researchers conducted an interview with former staff that handled the honors class. This is to get the background of what it was like during the honors class program. The participants are referred to as Staff A, Staff B, and Staff C. The respondent Staff B and Staff C had experience with teaching the honors class while Staff A had experience as a guidance counselor at the time.

Staff A	Yes. Was the guidance counselor of the honors class.
Staff B	Yes. Handled the honors class.
Staff C	Yes. Handled the honors class.

Table 1a. Responses for the question: Were you in or ever handled an honors class?

Staff A	The ranking.
Staff B	Their stanine grades in major subjects
Staff C	First 42 in student ranking.

*Table 1b. Responses for the question: Do you know the criteria for an individual
to be fit to be in the honors class?*

In this question, we find a small difference in responses. Staff B, unlike the rest, state only that the criteria lies on the grades in the student's major subjects - although we may also interpret this to be also in terms of their grades in general, thus also pertaining to the rankings.

Staff A	Very competitive environment.
Staff B	Students are anxious with scores. They are too grade conscious at times.
Staff C	The teachers are harder to manage. The pressure is also on the teachers so it puts unneeded pressure on the students.

*Table 1c. Responses for the question: In what ways do you believe that the
honors class is NOT beneficial to the honors class students?*

All responses have a relation to pressure placed on the students of the honors class, in different variations. Staff A highlights the environment of the students, while Staff B highlights the response towards grades and Staff C gives more importance to the treatment of teachers and in turn, the pressure passed from teacher to the honors class students.

Staff A	Initially, there is competition because there are parents monitoring their performance, but after a while, the students get closer together. I did not see any competition but if there was any, it was friendly competition.
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Staff B	I have not had an instance where I saw an honor student deliberately distance themselves from others but this is actually done by regular students, possibly out of "hiya". Many honor students were actually popular for not just their intelligence but also their social skills.
Staff C	They definitely have competition amongst themselves, especially the top 5. With regards to the interactions amongst the other classes, there wasn't much socialization since the honors class was always together.

Table 1d. Responses for the question: What would you say about these students interactions? Do they get along with one another? Have competition against themselves?

The responses in this question had differences. For Staff A, they believe that competition was present because of the parents, but this did not prove entirely detrimental in the way the students react to one another. Staff B described to have no instance where honors class students intentionally distancing themselves, and believes that it was more of the other students who tend to keep away. Staff C states that they most definitely had competition and added on that socialization wasn't a strong suit for the honors class with others, since they were more often exposed to each other.

Staff A	Some teachers would prepare more challenging tasks for the honors students.
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Staff B	I personally would always feel challenged to have a different set of activities to give between the honor's and regular class.
Staff C	The honors classes was made so that the best of the best in the batch can take on more challenging tasks. This means that they are given different things to work on rather than the normal lessons the rest of the batch receives.

Table 1e. Responses for the question: Was there any imbalance on the handling or expectations of the honors classes for you or your peers compared to the regular classes? Why or why not?

All of the participants said that there was a difference in handling the honors classes, but this was mainly with the intention of doing so in terms of academics, to correspond to the function of the honors class themselves to be able to nurture students with higher academic ability.

Staff A	N/A
Staff B	I do not exactly remember the process on who should be assigned to the class adviser, but I have observed that those who are given the privilege teachers who are mostly the more senior or experienced faculty members.
Staff C	If I remember correctly, the vice principal would assign the adviser of the honors class. I think it is just so that there wouldn't be any inequality to who gets to handle the honors class. But I think that the more senior teachers would be assigned because of their experience.

Table 6. Responses for the question: Was there competition amongst yourselves over who would handle the honors class?

Almost all of the responses given was that the teachers handling the honors classes were selected mainly on their experience as a senior in their field.

Staff A	The honors students became more motivated with their academics to stay at the top.
Staff B	Once the students are in the honors section, the expectations are so high that they will always do their best to live up to these expectations.
Staff C	Since my daughter was part of the honors classes, it really showed that it gave her confidence and the motivation to stay in that class.

Table 1f. Responses for the question: How do you believe being part of the honors classes affected the students' general outlook on academics and school life?

Despite all believing beforehand that pressure was placed on the honors classes, all participants also believed that the arrangement of the honors class still motivated the students to be better to retain their position and gain more confidence.

Alumni

Three alumni were able to be interviewed for this research. They all currently have a position within the DLSZ staff. The respondent referred to as Alumni A has been a part of the honors class in the entirety of his/her stay as a

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student when one was viable to be within (Grade 7 to 4th year). The individual that will be referred to as Alumni B has had lived through the honors class, but has never been a part of the section. The last interviewee, Alumni C has had honor's sectioning but then was removed partway through their stay as a student.

Alumni A	Have to be part of the Top 40 of the batch
Alumni B	General Average of 97 or 98, Have to be part of the Top 40 of the batch
Alumni C	Have to be part of the Top 40 of the batch

Table 2a. Responses for the question: Are you aware of the criteria for the individual to be fit to be in honor's class?

General consensus for the criteria for an individual to be qualified to be part of the honor's class, for the interviewed alumni, is that they have to be part of the top 40 of the batch.

Alumni A	More advanced lessons
Alumni B	The opportunity to become very close with other like-minded people
Alumni C	Cooperative efforts with like-minded people

Table 2b. Responses for the question: In what ways do you believe the honor's class is beneficial to honor students?

Alumni B and C find that there is a benefit, whether socially or academically, of being together with like-minded people while Alumni A sees an advantage in receiving advanced lessons.

Alumni A	Socialization
Alumni B	Socialization. On the last year, many of those within honors class requested to be transferred out for the sake of interacting with other students.
Alumni C	<i>No Answer</i>

Table 2c. Responses for the question: In what ways do you believe honors class was not beneficial to the honors students?

From the response of the participants, the foremost disadvantage of honors class is the socialization. They believe that being in a block section limits the number of people to interact with compared to regular classes having new classmates every year. Alumni B even stated that there were students who intentionally requested to be transferred out of their honors class with the aim to be able to interact and socialize with other students.

Alumni A	Yes from Grade 7 to senior year
Alumni B	No
Alumni C	No

Table 2d. Responses for the question: Were you in the honors class during your time?

Reiterating the profile, Alumni A was part of the honors class during the entirety of his/her stay, Alumni B had experienced the honors class but was not a part of this, and it was removed part way through Alumni C's stay and because of this never had the chance to experience this.

Alumni A	My parents did not push me. They were proud that I was part of honors class but in the end it was my decision to be an honor student.
Alumni B	Being part of honors class was a big deal but my parents were not big on grades. As long as I passed they were alright. With the way I was brought up, I did not have to be part of the honors class.
Alumni C	It depended more on me than my parents on whether or not I would be able to excel or not.

Table 2e. Responses for the question: What did your parents say or do about this? Do they take into high regard whether or not you are in honors classes?

What makes you say so?

None of the alumni's parents put grave importance in being in the honors class or in grades, and are found to be supportive to them with the outcomes. Also, most responses showed that a large part of the alumni's motivation came with self-satisfaction with their grades.

Alumni A	More difficult tasks than regular students, Treated as the "cream of the crop"
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Alumni B	Teachers treated the honor students as the special ones, exclusive, being exposed to the special treatment
Alumni C	The feeling that they were very different from us

Table 2f. Responses for the question: In your position, do you believe that there were any imbalances or discrepancies in terms of treatment towards you and the other section classification? Why or why not?

All of the participants stated that the imbalances lied on the treatment due to the title of the honors class. Alumni A as someone who was part of the honors class, stated that they had more difficult tasks. Most of the responses stated that they were given special treatment generally from the teachers.

Alumni A	No, I had friends both in and outside honor's class
Alumni B	No.
Alumni C	No.

Table 2g. Responses for the question: Do you believe that your group of friends or barkada was highly influenced by the status of honors classes or regular? Why or why not?

All participants said that the status of being an honors class students did not influence their group of friends.

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Students

A group of five students who are currently from Grade 11 experienced a Focus Group Discussion in accordance to this study. The purpose of involving current students who have little to no experience of the honors class is to be able to gather their input to have a basis for an outsider's point of view, as well as to find their standpoint on how it would affect them if it was reimplemented. The students were debriefed prior to the focus group discussion proper on a brief background of the study, and allowed to exchange ideas over the table to one another to allow a more substantial general response as a group with marginal experience and knowledge with the subject, allowing them to enrich each other's ideas and opinions.

Student A	I think it's when all the smart people go in one class.
Student B	I know that people with similar grades, like higher grades go into one class and those with similar other grades go into their own respective classes that people place them in.
Student C	<i>Agreed with Student B.</i>
Student D	<i>Agreed with Student B.</i>
Student E	So you hit a certain threshold in your grade, then you're plot into a class where people who have also hit that threshold are placed in.

Table 3a. Responses for the question: So what do you know about the honors' class?

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All of the current students believe that those within the honors class display higher grades than the rest.

Student A	I think that it will be problematic because well, if all those having a hard time go into one class I have a feeling there will be detrimental effects on the performance of the students because there wouldn't be any good role models there. The people you surround yourselves with would definitely affect your behavior and your attitude.
Student B	It'd be hard since there's no smart people to rely on when doing your projects because you know you probably don't know how to be able to do good work. - They might also think they're more superior than other people in all aspects.
Student C	There's also the fact that the people in other classes would probably think too much of the honors classes and give them pressure, and it could actually hinder their performance. - Those in the honors class might also think they're more privileged than those who aren't - not all, but some - they might think they're better than other people because they are in a better class.
Student D	It would be beneficial because for those who aren't honors students might be more motivated, like having no honors students in their classes might push them to step up and because of course, probably how many projects in the term would they rely on someone who's a reliable leader and all that, and if they are without people like that they would be able to become that person themselves.
Student E	I think it's a good idea to have an honors class. I'm not encouraging changing our regular curriculum without adding to it but it's fine to have one because it's really not hard to do well in high school. You just have to submit everything unless you're really not that able, then you're probably going to put in the honors class. So as someone who would probably be in the honors class, the problem with being mixed in with others is because they don't try - they push all their work onto the

	supposedly smart people. In this perspective, there is this school for smart people, so probably no one there really has this problem because all of them are competent and hardworking and an environment like that isn't so bad.
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Table 3b. Response for the question: Do you believe that this arrangement would have an outweigh of benefits or will there be more problems or difficulties that will be evident? Why do you think so?

In this question, it is seen that the focus group was divided into two as they try to weigh out the benefits and difficulties. Three out of the five participants stated that it would give a hard time, for different aspects. Student A states that this wouldn't be beneficial to the regular class students as there would be no role model that a honors students would portray in their class, probably shifting the attitudes of the regular class students. Student B states that it would be hard for the regular students as they would need someone to rely on or someone to help them in class-related activities, especially when they don't really know what to do. Student C finds it important that the pressure placed on honors classes may be detrimental to the students within them in their grades, and also states that some from the honors class may feel a sense of superiority as members of the honors class. Student D and E both believe that having an honors class would be beneficial for both the honors students and the regular class students, as this would leave an impression of independency from honors students for the regular class students and push them to become their own leaders.

Student A	My parents don't really care.
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Student B	Parents would just get mad at me everytime.
Student C	Honestly I think they'd get mad if I don't get in.
Student D	Assuming that I'll be there, I think my parents don't really push me to being in the top 10. They're still supportive even if I get a lower ranking, but honestly I think that they're sometimes passive-aggressive about it, and and so if I get lower they're like "Oh, you're not in the honors class.. Hm." But in general, they try to be supportive.
Student E	I guess it really depends on your upbringing. Coming from the standpoint of someone from the top 10, my parents wouldn't really care anymore but of course, you'd want your kid to be in the honors class because you might think they're not academically able if they're not, which would be kind of true because as I said, if you fail in high school, that's probably because you're lazy.

Table 3c. Responses for the question: Do you believe your parents would take honors class seriously? Would they make an issue out of it?

Majority of the participants stated that their parents do not place into great importance the status of whether or not their child is in the honors class, and majority of the participants for this also follow up that even if their parents are not verbal about it, they would still note or mind if their child is in the honors class. The rest of the participants state that their parents would make it an issue if their child was not part.

Student A	If I were not part of the honors class, I would be motivated to try harder and if I do get into the honors class, then I'd be motivated to stay there, so yeah.
Student B	<i>Agreed with Student A.</i>

Student C	<i>No input.</i>
Student D	I agree with Person A. but I also think that for me personally, I don't know if it would really affect how I would perform, I think that in the end it doesn't matter because in terms of group mates I'm often groupmates with people like Student E, so I don't think I would be affected.
Student E	I think that either way, you would be motivated, you would be pushed to try I guess but it depends on you as a person, because if you're in the honors class you would be, because the threat of being dropped out is scarier and more motivational than the prospect of getting in honestly because it's sadder if you drop out.

Table 3d. Responses for the question: Do you think that being part of the honors class would motivate you or would it cause more negative factors?

Majority of the participants states that they would be motivated in the case that they are placed in the honors class. Student D states that they are unsure how it would change their performance as the groupings experienced currently wouldn't be any different. Student E adds on that the motivation to stay in the honors class is tied in with the fear of being dropped out of the honors class.

Student A	<i>Agreed with Student E.</i>
Student B	I agree with Person E. It's more of the teachers who will have higher expectations for the honors students and make it harder for them, possible stressing them out even more.
Student C	Definitely going to be stricter, I agree with everyone else.
Student D	<i>Agreed with Student E.</i>
Student E	If you were in honors class then of course the environment would be a lot different like in AP classes in America or

	philippine science high schools in general. What is expected of you is much more stressful and they tend to give harder tests, teachers tend to be harder, but I think, depending on the school environment, your peers will see you as the same. Comparing myself to my friends from other sections - they're not more stressed but there's no difference in expectation amongst peers, but among teachers and tests, it's definitely going to be hard
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Table 3e. Responses for the question: What do you believe are the differences in expectations between honors class and regular class students?

According to the question, all the participants agreed that there are differences in the expectations of the honors class in comparison to regular class students. All of them agree with Student E that the pressure wouldn't be placed on the honors class by their peers but more of by teachers through their academic requirements like tests. Student B adds on that there would be a larger stress for the students. Teachers would in turn be more stricter and give harder tests.

Student A	It wouldn't really affect my friends - somewhat, somewhat - but like, I think I'm doing fine in high school and I have below average friends academically so yeah it wouldn't really affect my friends but definitely the people that you surround yourself with would definitely affect your attitude as stated before, so it might also affect the people you go with.
Student B	I remember what Student E said a while ago that even though she is more stressed, she still talks to her friends in a strand that's easy - it's somewhat like that - it won't really affect your friendship if it's a real friendship.
Student C	Honestly I don't think it would really affect me as you can see,

	the types of friends I already have right now, whether you're actually smart or not, nothing it really going to change because either way, we still hang out.
Student D	If you've been in an honors class for the majority of your school life, then of course there are people coming in and people coming out and there are people who will sadly never be there, but then you know it's normal - anyway, there might be people you'll never meet but at the same time, there is still orgs and sports and other stuff where you can meet more people so i don't think it should really affect your group of friends
Student E	If you're in that honors class for most of your life then of course you're going to make most of your friends from your class but then, you know, in school you have a different set of friends in class and a different set of friends that you hang out with outside of class and of course you're going to have a lot of different out of school activities, or other school activities as Student D said. Like the friends that you make in organizations and stuff are closer than the ones you make in class, so although you'll have a strong set of friends from your honors class or whatever, you can still hang out with the people outside the class, it just depends on the other factors.

Table 3f. Responses for the question: Do you think if you were honors class or not, it would affect the friends you have currently?

The participants all believe that it is in the situation, it is very likely most or the closest friends of an honor student would be fellow honor students. It does not, however, necessarily mean that they would be the only friends that they would make. There are a number of different school activities such as sports and organizations that would allow honor and regular students to interact with each other. They also believe that grades are not the determining factor in a friendship and there are a number of other variables to also consider.

Student A	<i>No input.</i>
Student B	For some who just dropped out of the honors class you'll feel very inferior compared to them because you just dropped out and someone took your place so, it'll make you feel more discriminated compared to them - just some, not all though.
Student C	Yes, I mean, the feeling that when you're in either a higher class or a lower class you'll either feel more superior or less superior.
Student D	<i>No input.</i>
Student E	Based on what I see in Zobel now, which is like STEM being the honors class it's not that much discrimination it's more like, we make fun of eachother but it's not serious discrimination like we don't actually think we're better than one another. It's not like we treat our friends there in HUMSS like it's so easy for them, since it's not their fault their strand is easier.

Table 3g. Responses for the question: Do you believe that there'll be any unspoken discriminations to honors class students than to regular class students?

According to the responses, most of them believe that there would be no feeling of discrimination from others, but more of is something felt by the individual themselves. Student B states that a student who is dropped out of the honors class would naturally feel more inferior than others, falling from a higher place. Student C states that the class they are in would determine the person's sense of superiority or inferiority in the batch. Student E states their input on current experience of the K12 curriculum that among peers, there is no serious

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discrimination among the peers as who they are, but there exists playful comments on one another among strands.

Student A	I'm not sure, I don't know.
Student B	Like maybe they feel that there has been some discrimination mainly for the younger kids, like it teaches them to discriminate like they're in the honors classes they'll always experience the same classmates and they want them to experience a new environment with different people, that's what I think.
Student C	<i>Agreed with Student B.</i>
Student D	<i>No input.</i>
Student E	I honestly think they don't care if there is discrimination in our school, since they probably changed it because of legislative reasons and that they're lazy to sort people after, like there were GEM classes after which is almost like, a partial version of being in an honors class, and you know that if you're in the GEM class they'd have to fix the schedule and maybe they were lazy to do that, and they just wanted to follow what other schools were doing,

Table 3h. Responses to the question: Knowing all of this, why do you think they removed the honors class to begin with?

According to the responses, Student B believes that the reason for the removal of the honors classes lies on the social aspect of the feeling of discrimination, especially for the younger kids to be exposed to such factors at an early age. However, another opinion was presented by Student E that this wouldn't be the case, and would more of lie on more practical or physical

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reasons like paperwork and the probability of experienced hassle on schedule differences, as well as a probable reason that they wish to follow other schools.

Analysis

In the analyzing of our data, we have found the following patterns. In determining the characteristics of an honor class student, staff, alumni and current students are aware that it requires a high ability in academics. However, the current students are not aware of the factor of being within the top 40-42 bracket in student ranking to qualify as a honors class student that the alumni and staff are aware of. The results show that the alumni exhibit the highest understanding of the characteristics of an honors class student, all of which stating that one must be within the top 40 in student ranking. Also, it is apparent among all participants that there is pressure present in the honors class for academics, this being evident in the cited aspects of parental views, classroom environment, grade consciousness, teachers and overall academic requirements. It is then known that the general intention of the institution is to be able to present a more academically challenging environment for the students.

In the social aspect of the lives of the students, it is observed that though it is more likely for honors students to mingle with others from the same class, they still make an effort in mingling with other students, an experience cited by an

alumni that people would transfer out of the honors classes in senior year to mingle with regular students. Both the staff and alumni believe that socialization is the prime disadvantage of the honors class, as the students are more often exposed to one another than other regular class students throughout the years. Current students however, do not believe that they would have any problems socializing or mingling as they highlight the existence of external factors like organizations and other extracurriculars. All alumni and staff express that there shouldn't be a need to reimplement the honors class curriculum even with revisions, one stating that this wouldn't be applicable to a K12 curriculum that prioritizes abilities deviating from just academics. For current students, the opinion on having honors classes is divided between having a better working environment and enriching self-independency and difficulty due to not having a role model or good leader for academic requirements.

Noting the findings in the patterns from our research, it is then plausible to create conclusion stemming from this in response to our objectives. This will be furtherly discussed in the final chapter of conclusions and recommendations, wherein we will highlight what would be better for future endeavors relating to this research.

Chapter V: Conclusion and Recommendations

Through the course of this research, the data we have gathered and to be summarized are analyzed and interpreted in order to synthesize a conclusion.

Conclusion

We could then conclude from the data we've received that although honors class students were generally motivated, they did not exhibit nor experience any discriminations from their peers, it is apparent that being in a class for several years would affect their socialization and the mingling with their peers, them being described to more often than not associate with those within their class. Findings from the data gathering show that feeling of discrimination in the social aspect is more apparent as an internal factor felt by individuals rather than externally exhibited by others towards them or vice versa, showing that the general relationship among students within and outside the honors classes are without trouble. The differences in treatment and behavior towards honors class students relied more on other factors beyond their peers, this being described as the view of parents, classroom environment, grade consciousness, teachers and in academic requirements, as expectations are more of displayed or given pressure on by parents and teachers.

Recommendations

It is to be highly recommended to enrich the content and scope of the research by allowing a larger sample size, as this research has only three participants for alumni and staff, as well as five participants for current students. Allowing a larger sample size would greatly benefit the processing and finding of the patterns in the questions regarding the honors classes, as well as find possible deviations from a more comprehensive yet substantial set of patterns.

It is also recommended to take in great consideration the discrepancies in data especially on the background of the honors class, considering that this research takes place around eleven years after the last year of implementation, making the received data stated to be not a hundred percent accurate. The finding of previous researches more closely related to the study would also highly benefit if more are given for the sustainability of the study.

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