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# Driving What's Next: The De La Salle Lipa Social Innovation in Quality Education Initiatives

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***Abstract*—**'Driving What's Next' is a strong campaign of the new administration of De La Salle Lipa in promoting social innovation in quality education. The new leadership directs social innovation in quality education in the institutional directions and initiatives to address real-world challenges with real-world solutions. This research under study aims to qualify the commitment of the institution to extend the Lasallian quality human and Christian education to all, as expressed in the Institution's new mission-vision statement. The Classic Grounded Theory methodology is employed in the process of generating concepts in reference to the documents, a series of meetings, focus group discussions and other related activities that account for the conceptualization and formulation of the new mission-vision along with the new education innovation framework. Notably, Driving What's Next is the emergent theory that encapsulates the commitment of giving quality human and Christian education to all. It directs the new leadership in driving social innovation in quality education initiatives. Correspondingly, Driving What's Next is continually resolved through four interrelated strategies also termed as the institution's four strategic directions, namely: (1) driving social innovation in quality education, (2) embracing our shared humanity and championing social inclusion and justice initiatives, (3) creating sustainable futures and (4) engaging diverse stakeholders in our shared mission. Significantly, the four strategic directions capture and integrate the 17 UN sustainable development goals, making the innovative curriculum locally and globally relevant. To conclude, the main concern of the new administration and how it is continually resolved, provide meaningful and fun learning experiences and promote a new way of learning in the light of the 21st century skills among the members of the academic community including stakeholders and extended communities at large, which are defined as: learning together and by association (collaboration), learning through engagement (communication), learning by design (creativity) and learning with social impact (critical thinking).

***Keywords*—**De La Salle Lipa, Driving What's Next, social innovation in quality education, DLSL mission - vision, strategic directions.

## I. Introduction

THE old classroom model does not fit our changing needs. It is a fundamentally passive way of learning, while the world requires more and more active processing of information [14]. In a digital-driven world, gone were the days that teachers are sages on the stage; rather, students are expected to learn at a pace not mandated to them [22]. Bergmann and Sams [4] emphasize that our classrooms are now laboratories of education where students take responsibility for their own learning. Learning is no longer an imposition on their freedom but rather a challenge to be unpacked and explored. Thus, as the teacher gives up control of the learning process, the students take the reins and the educational process becomes their own. This trend calls for educational institutions to revisit and redefine their curricula to provide relevant and meaningful course offerings at the same time promote a more holistic learning experience. Hooker [12] mentions that the essential skills for this next generation of learners include the ability to think critically about real-world problems and come up with creative solutions. Moreover, it is emphasized also that students must be able to work both independently and collaboratively to effectively communicate their understanding. Similarly, it is deemed necessary that leaders from different sectors urge students to show mastery of skills like evaluation, analysis of information, creativity and problem solving [19]. However, Price [17] argues that the world cares less about what you know, and more about what you can do with what you know.

During the transition stage, school year 2015 - 2016, the De La Salle Lipa's new administrative team, through the leadership of the new President, had set and articulated the new directions of the school with the campaign, *"Driving What's Next"*. The campaign captures the very essence of direction and initiatives of the institution leading towards a 21st century educational institution. Correspondingly, the campaign gives birth to the new direction as defined in the new institutional mission-vision,

> "Inspired by our faith in God, by the Catholic Tradition and by the charism of St. John Baptist De La Salle, innovator par excellence, we, together and by association, are committed to give quality human and Christian education to all, building a society founded on equity and justice and on sustainable and inclusive development."

Basically, the new Mission-Vision is a reflection of the Lasallian Core Values of Faith, Service, and Communion in Mission. First, Faith as defined by faith in God and Catholic Tradition through the inspiration of the Founder; second, Service as expressed in providing human and Christian education to all; and third, Communion in Mission as manifested in building a just, inclusive and sustainable community. De La Salle Lipa, in its quest to realize its mission-vision by providing meaningful, fun and relevant learning experiences to all, seeks to define the main concern of the institution relative to its educational platform and how is

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Open Science Index, Educational and Pedagogical Sciences Vol:12, No:6, 2018 publications.waset.org/10009139/pdf

the main concern continually resolve. The researchers explore the data gathered from the Letter of the President to De La Salle Lipa Community [2], a series of meetings, focus group discussions, and educational framework to generate a theory explaining the phenomenon under study.

Accordingly, three research objectives frame the study namely: (1) to determine the basic social process reflecting the main concern; (2) to generate a theory explaining the phenomenon, which drives the institution; and, (3) to understand the strategy reflecting the main concern. Furthermore, it answers the following questions: (a) What is actually happening during the transition period? (b) What is the main concern of the new administration in initiating innovation in the institution? (c) How is this concern continually resolved in the institution? Thus, this research under study offers a new theory relative to the direction and initiatives of the institution.

## II. Method

Classic Grounded Theory is employed to generate theory relative to the main concern of the new administration. The researchers maximize the basic tenet of grounded theory which is *"all is data";* thus, includes whatever else may come the researchers' way in his substantive area of research is data for grounded theory [8]. In this research under study, the main source of data is generated from the Letter of the New President to De La Salle Lipa Community on the occasion of the Feast of our Founder and Patron Saint John Baptist De La Salle dated May 15, 2016 [2], and supplemented by other data in relation to the substantive area of interest. Constant comparison, being the cornerstone of grounded theory, is instrumental in the analysis of the data [5]. Correspondingly, the researchers get close to the phenomenon through coding method: Open, Selective and Theoretical Coding and by analyzing the coded data following questions: (1) What category does this incident indicate? (2) What property of what category does this incident indicate? (3) What is the participant's main concern [8], [9]? By constantly comparing incident-to-incident, the researchers are able to establish concepts classified as: Lower Order Categories, Higher Order Categories, Sub-Categories and Core Category. Glaser [10] enumerates three (3) types of comparison namely: (a) incidents are compared to incidents to establish underlying uniformity and its varying conditions; (b) concepts are compared to other incidents to generate new theoretical properties of the concept and the hypotheses; and, (c) concepts are compared to concepts for the purpose of establishing the best fit of many choices of concepts to a set of indicators.

## III. Findings

In this research study, there are 140 concepts generated from the Letter of the President to De La Salle Lipa Community. These concepts have been analyzed utilizing the grounded theory coding process - Open Coding, Selected Coding and Theoretical Coding and clustered into Lower Order Categories, Higher Order Categories, Sub-Categories and Core Category. In the initial process, concepts are integrated and subsumed into 35 lower order categories. These concepts are continuously analyzed and compared, which resulted to 14 higher order categories; thereby, generating the four sub-categories namely: (a) Driving Social Innovation in Quality Education; (b) Embracing Our Shared Humanity and Championing Social Inclusion and Justice Initiatives; (c) Creating Sustainable Futures; and, (d) Engaging Diverse Stakeholder in Our Shared Mission, out of which emerged the core category - Driving What's Next. Fig. 1 shows the development of categories.

| Lower Order Categories | Higher Order Categories | Sub-Categories | Core Category |
|---|---|---|---|
| Educational Innovation, Quality Education, Driving What's Next, Partnership, Curriculum Innovation, Formation of Values, Transition, New Pedagogy, Technology, Social Impact | Initiating educational innovation, Promoting quality education, Driving What's Next, Creating Social Impact | Driving Social Innovation in Quality Education | Driving What's Next |
| Communion in Mission, Shared Humanity Inclusion, Quality of Life, Faith in Action Justice and Compassion, Equity, Solidarity Inspired Mission | Embracing shared humanity, Promoting quality of life, Championing inclusion, advocating justice initiatives | Embracing Our Shared Humanity and Championing Social Inclusion and Justice Initiatives | |
| Stewardship, Circular Economy, Waste Management, Food and Nutrition, Global Standards, Sustainability, Renewable, Energy, Power Conservation | Pioneering circular economy, Launching sustainability, Valuing stewardship | Creating Sustainable Futures | |
| Living the Tradition, Shared Mission, Stakeholders, Fellowship, Lived Mission, Communion in Mission, Partners | Engaging stakeholders, Promoting fellowship, Instituting communion in mission | Engaging Diverse Stakeholders in Our Shared Mission | |

Fig. 1 Development of Categories

The relationship of concepts in the order of sub-categories generates the core category - Driving What's Next that accounts for the main concern of the new administration relative to the new direction and initiatives of the institution. The four sub-categories resolve the main concern, Driving What's Next. The theoretical coding enables the researchers to

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see the relationship between/ among the concepts under the sub-categories and core category. Through the coding family, the relationship between the core category and sub-categories is identified under Strategy Family [8]. In the context of De La Salle Lipa under the new administration, the four sub-categories are strategies of the institution to realize the new direction and initiatives highlighted in the core category, Driving What's Next. Fig. 2 represents the integration of the emergence of the theory - Driving What's Next.

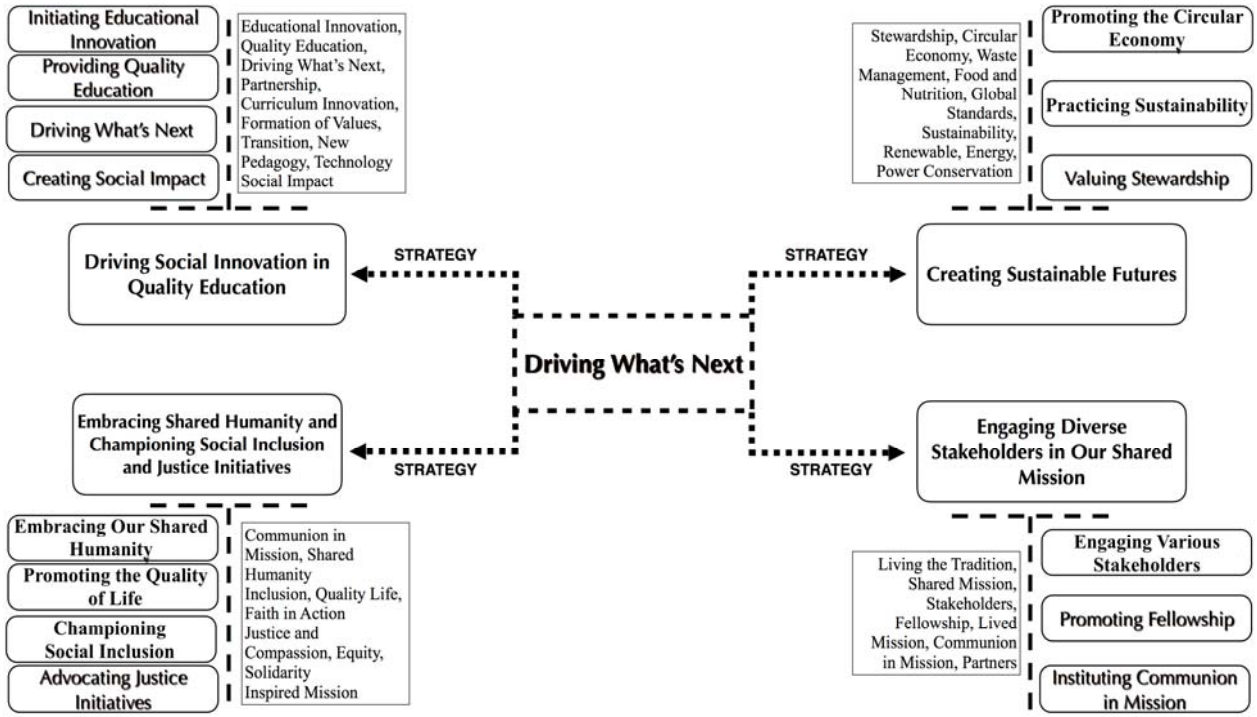



Fig. 2 Integrative Conceptual Framework of Driving What's Next

## IV. Discussions

Driving Social Innovation in Quality Education is defined as the first strategy of the institution to actualize its Mission-Vision, highlighted in giving quality human and Christian education to all. Moreover, it directs the campaign, Driving What's Next, in initiating innovation in the curriculum which eventually intensify the culture and commitment of the institution. Driving What's Next as a campaign is leading towards the preparation of the learners for the future; correspondingly, Price [16] strongly emphasizes that,

> "for the curriculum to prepare children to face the future, it needs to speak to children positively at every point. There is much talk about raising aspiration in young people; this is far more than helping children to believe that they can 'be anything that they want to be', far more than achieving high grades or reaching higher levels. Aspiration: at the root of the word is 'spirit' and the curriculum should be about aspiration of the spirit, of contribution and worth. If society is to be effective and people are to be fulfilled, it is their spirit and outlook on life that will be as vital as the knowledge and skills they acquire. Indeed, important knowledge and skills are more likely to develop when worth and spirit are secure."

Accordingly, the word 'education' is derived from the two Latin words, *"educare"* and *"educere"*; the former means *"to train or to mold"* while the latter means *"to lead out"* [3]. The word *"educare"* is paralleled with the first strategic intent, **Educating for Equity and Justice**, enclosed in the Mission-Vision. As an educational institution, De La Salle Lipa is geared towards providing students with information relative to what is happening in the society at large; hence, it gives a holistic view of the global issues, specifically the perennial social problems that afflict the community at large, namely: economic inequality, hunger, violence and other forms of injustice that weaken social cohesion. Thus, the more complex the world becomes, the more creative we need to be to meet its challenges [18]. Notably, the designed quarterly themes emphasize its context relative to the following topics such as: *(i) Championing the Dignity of Human Person and Valuing Human Life; (ii) Advancing the Quality of Life of People; (iii) Fostering a Culture of Peace, Inclusive Development and Stewardship of Creation; and (iv) Promoting Shared Resources and Social Responsibilities.* Meanwhile, the word *"educere"* is aligned with the second strategic intent, **Educating for Sustainable and Inclusive Development**, also expressed in the last phrase of the Mission-Vision. The continuous quest for the development of individual and society at large drives the institution to initiate academic and community programs defined in the **Community-based Action Projects addressing Strategically-Themed learning Objectives through Networked Environments**

Open Science Index, Educational and Pedagogical Sciences Vol:12, No:6, 2018 publications.waset.org/10009139/pdf

**(CAPSTONE) Initiatives**. CAPSTONE Initiatives drive the institutional direction of addressing real world challenges with real world solutions. The process of CAPSTONE Initiatives is developmental in nature enclosed in a quarterly basis with corresponding learning outcomes, namely: (1) First Quarter: Observation, (2) Second Quarter: Project Development, (3) Third Quarter: Implementation, and (4) Fourth Quarter: Evaluation. A solid education today demands not only a strong foundation or "core," in content knowledge but also the ability to apply it to the real world, and both are essential to develop broader competencies like critical thinking and problem solving [13]. This initiative is embedded in designed curriculum as a platform for a novel and innovative way of learning as defined in the following: (a) Learning Together and by Association (Collaboration); (b) Learning through Engagement (Communication); (c) Learning by Design (Creativity); and, (d) Learning with Social Impact (Critical Thinking). Afsal [1] mentions that the said initiative does not only provide innovative solutions in the classroom but leveraging the same mentality and set of solutions to drive social inclusion and justice initiatives in the country. Moreover, the said strategy is a condensed and contextualized version of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals numbers 4 - Quality Education and 9 - Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure [21].

Embracing Shared Humanity and Championing Social Inclusion and Justice Initiatives is identified as the second strategy of the institution to realize Mission-Vision expressed in providing quality human and Christian education to all and building a society founded on equity, justice and inclusive development acknowledging the diversity and dignity of all individuals. In the letter addressed to the De La Salle Community, the President mentioned that,

> "Our Christian traditions, being derived from Judaeo-Christian traditions follow the same path for achieving personal and communal harmony and peace. When we break with these values – when we become less compassionate, unjust and shun righteousness, discord and disharmony sets in, Evil begins to have a foothold" [2].

As an educational institution, De La Salle Lipa continuously reflects a commitment to service in the light of social justice and common good, observing the principle of subsidiarity, delegating responsibilities and decisions to communities and emphasizing the responsibilities for one another particularly the poor and the vulnerable. In the context of Driving What's Next, it bridges the gap between De La Salle Lipa as an educational institution and the community at large through working in solidarity with the community in contributing to the unique mission of God's saving work by sharing time and resources in the service of the children entrusted to the institution's care. Correspondingly, the institution adheres to its mission guided by the Lasallian Guiding Principles [11], namely: (a) Converging with the Community: Lasallian institutions must develop among its members greater recognition of the realities of human suffering and the stewardship role that each share in protecting the integrity of God's creation and creating a humane and just community; (b) Collaborating with the Community: Lasallian institutions must work in solidarity with peoples and institutions that share the conviction in denouncing and working towards the elimination of unjust practices and social structures; (c) Championing CAPSTONE Initiatives with Social Impact in the Community: Lasallian institutions aspire to create educational works of quality that will be *"signs of God's Kingdom and instruments of salvation to all mankind"* [11]. Also, the said strategy is an abridged version of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals numbers 1 - No Poverty, 2 - Zero Hunger, 5 Gender Equality, 8 - Decent Work and Economic Growth, and 10 - Reduced Inequalities [21].

Creating Sustainable Futures is listed as the third strategy to affect the Mission-Vision highlighted in building a society founded on sustainable development. As an educational institution, De la Salle Lipa is geared towards making conscious efforts to adopt Global Sustainability Standards to protect the planet and its people; in the same manner, achieve financial sustainability in its operation. The President of the institution is very strong in saying that;

> "We aim to attain Global Standards for Sustainability by 2020 along with our desire to have 40% of our power from renewables by 2022. Further, we shall plan to become self-sufficient in power by 2031" [2].

Wong [24] states that as educational institutions, community colleges play a central role in the sustainability movement and in battle for climate change. Also, it is a call for teachers to integrate sustainable development into new curriculum plans and to develop and share effective teaching and learning strategies to student understanding of the issue [20]. In the context of Driving What's Next relative to Creating Sustainable Futures, De La Salle Lipa finds its inspiration in the Encyclical Letter Laudato Si: On Care for Our Common Home. The said document accounts for the *"Integral Ecology"* illustrating the purpose of human existence as expressed in the following questions: (1) What is the purpose of our life in this world? (2) What is the goal of our work and all our efforts? (3) Why are we here? In the same manner, it acknowledges our values towards the rest of the creation as manifested in the following questions: (1) What is our role in sustaining our planet especially for the children who are now growing up [6]? (2) What need does the earth have of us [7]? Thus, the planet and its citizens have experienced different kinds of abuses resulting in pollution and climate change, loss of biodiversity, decline in the quality of life and the breakdown of society and rise in global inequality. Accordingly, the commitment to create sustainable futures is a mandate of the institution to all Lasallian Partners and students to become stewards of God's creation. In *Laudato Si*, Pope Francis clearly states that we are connected; concern for the environment is grounded on love of neighbor and commitment to address the emerging problems of society. [7]. The said strategy encapsulates the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals numbers 3 - Good Health and Well-Being, 6 - Clean Water and Sanitation, 7 - Affordable

Open Science Index, Educational and Pedagogical Sciences Vol:12, No:6, 2018 publications.waset.org/10009139/pdf

and Clean Energy, 11 - Sustainable Cities and Communities, 12 - Responsible Consumption and Production, 13 - Climate Action, 14 - Life Below Water, and 15 - Life on Land [21].

Engaging Diverse Stakeholders in Our Shared Mission is the fourth strategy to manifest the Mission-Vision in working together and by association. In his letter to the community, the President clearly states that,

> "Imagine what we can all do together when we share what we know with each other and allow our talents and resources to come to bear upon the Mission and works we have in this region. Today, I come before you in the spirit of that common heritage that binds us together as your servant in this shared ministry of service: to give a Christian and Human Education to the young people that God continues to entrust to our care" [2].

The shared ministry of service through education goes beyond four walls of the classroom and still beyond the campus. The institution embraces diversity and asserts its niche as a catalyst for transformation of the society through strategic partnership. Wilson, Vyakarnam, Volkmann, Mariotti, and Rabuzzi [23] assert that there is an urgency to bring together different stakeholders from various sectors to share the best practices of each sector; thus, working together to design new approaches for entrepreneurship education. De La Salle Lipa as an educational institution believes that engagement with diverse sectors of the society brings about the spirit of solidarity seeking together the common good and wellbeing of all. In the context of Driving What's Next, the said strategy enables the institution to collaborate and establish strong partnership with Industry Partners, Government Sectors, Private and Public Institutions Business entities both local and international to fully mobilize education institution in the current trends of the society at large. The strategy summarizes the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals numbers 16 - Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions and 17 - Partnership for Goals [21].

Driving What's Next is the main concern of the new administration. It is a strong campaign realizing the four strategies, which is named as the De La Salle Lipa's Four Strategic Directions focused towards the realization of the 17 United Nation Sustainable Development Goals. Fig. 3 illustrates the alignment of the said strategies.

| DLSL<br>Four Strategic Directions | UN Sustainable Development Goals |
|---|---|
| (1) Driving Social Innovation in Quality Education | #4 Quality Education<br>#9 Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure |
| (2) Embracing Our Shared Humanity and Championing Social Inclusion and Justice Initiatives | #1 No Poverty<br>#2 Zero Hunger<br>#5 Gender Equality<br>#8 Decent Work and Economic Growth<br>#10 Reduced Inequalities |
| (3) Creating Sustainable Futures | #3 Good Health and Well-Being<br>#6 Clean Water and Sanitation<br>#7 Affordable and Clean Energy<br>#11 Sustainable Cities and Communities<br>#12 Responsible Consumption and Production<br>#13 Climate Action<br>#14 Life Below Water<br>#15 Life on Land |
| (4) Engaging Diverse Stakeholder is Our Shared Mission | #16 Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions<br>#17 Partnership for Goals |

Fig. 3 Alignment of Four Strategic Directions with UN SDGs

Correspondingly, it is reflected in the De La Salle Lipa's Strategy Map. Fig. 4 shows the illustration of Institution's Strategy Map.

The strategy map shows that De La Salle Lipa, as an educational institution, operates under the umbrella of its Mission-Vision and serves in the light of the Lasallian Core Values: Faith, Service and Communion in Mission. At the core of the map is the Four Strategic Directions which drives its Strategic Intent - Educating for Equity and Justice and Educating for Sustainable and Inclusive Development and commits to continuous development of its Core Process - People, Policy, Platforms and Finance. The campaign manifests the strong desire to move to the next level as it is clearly stated:

> "The greater challenge and responsibility, perhaps then, in the spirit of renewal and openness, is to demand from ourselves not to be contended with the tried and tested, not to get used to the comfortable and easy, not to be satisfied with the old and reliable, but to discover new ways of doing things, to embark on new beginnings, to move beyond the horizon, to go another mile, to think out of the box - maybe even to unlearn some favorite methods - perhaps to go boldly to where nobody has ever gone before, as one of the greatest sci-fi series, Star Trek, so audaciously proclaims. Perhaps we need to do these not only because the young people we teach now are much more suave and sophisticated than we think, or because they actually know more that we care to admit, but also perhaps because of the vastly greater body of knowledge and innovations that are there to discover as technology could allow us today" [2].

McLeod and Lehmann [15] speak about rethinking education and what it means to be educated in a time of rapid change, and thereby, preparing for a new generation of

learners within a new information environment for a future that we cannot clearly describe. Driving What's Next campaign prompts significant, meaningful and relevant changes in the whole educational system of De La Salle Lipa. It captures the very essence of the Mission-Vision and defines the commitment to the Lasallian mission of teaching minds, touching hearts and transforming lives by providing quality human and Christian education to all.

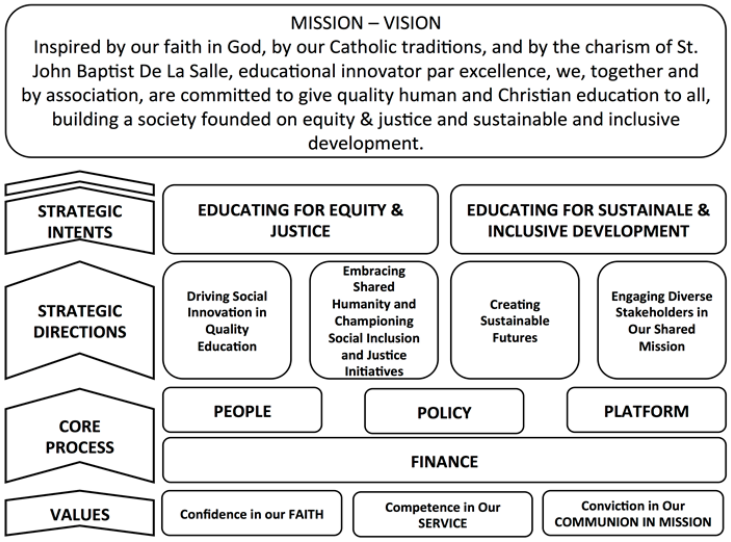



Fig. 4 Institutional Strategy Map

## V. Conclusion and Future Work

Based on the results of the study, the following conclusions are drawn:

(a) During the launching of innovation in the educational operation of the institution, Driving What's Next is the emergent theory that accounts for the main concern of the institution and the new administration. It becomes the campaign to commence innovations initiatives in the institution in the aspect of curriculum, culture and commitment.

(b) Driving What's Next as the main concern of the institution and the new administration has been continually resolved by four significant and interrelated strategies namely: (1) Driving Social Innovation in Quality Education; (2) Embracing Shared Humanity and Championing Social Inclusion and Justice Initiatives; (3) Creating Sustainable Futures; and (4) Engaging Diverse Stakeholders in Our Shared Mission. The four strategies were later coined as the Four Strategic Directions, which account for the direction and initiatives of the institution.

Correspondingly, the following recommendations are taken for considerations:

a. that Driving What's Next as the main concern may cultivate a deeper understanding of the philosophy of education and the direction of the institution,

b. that the integrative framework may account as baseline data in the formulation of the policies and guidelines of the four strategies for the institution,

c. that future researchers may explore the impact of the implementation of the four strategies in the over-all operation of the institution.

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