COVID-19 HAS BLOWN THE INDUSTRIAL MODEL OF EDUCATION

by:
Ana Rosette S. Garcia

On the year 2020, amidst the global pandemic, many schools opened later than June and some closed their doors temporarily while others shut their institution for good. While the global pandemic poses many uncertainties on the lives of many workers, it’s effect on students’ learning will not be hidden. Many are questioning when they will return to school. Though all of us ask “when”, we also ask the question “what and how will it be?”. The status of education today has set to a new direction of “Social and Emotional Learning”.

Many families have been affected by COVID-19: parents lose their jobs, parents’ salaries are not enough to buy laptop or android phone, children asking what their future will be because of the status of education in all levels, what job will await them in the future, and family tough times including relational conflict and additional roles to perform at home. Teachers then should pay attention to the social and emotional needs of the students because they too are suffering. We can do this by helping these students realize their purpose and what is that purpose, that this pandemic is not a closed door for them but the one that can open the door of many possibilities for them, after all the pandemic is not the end for them. One teacher in Minnesota put this on her email “During this time, social-emotional learning work isn’t just another thing to add to an educator’s plate. This is the plate.”

The pandemic shows the need for higher priority on teachers’ well-being. Most of the time, a teacher is frustrated and anxious because of the lack of support of the administration to the challenges of meeting the diverse needs of the students. Frustration and Anxiety increase more as the new challenge arises from teaching remotely. Now
parents need to step-in and fill the role the teachers once done inside the classroom. The underappreciated work of teachers before has given respect and honor, because it is never easy, actually it is always demanding of time and effort and always challenging.

Teachers are knowledge dispensers and disciplinarians no more because the pandemic develops many teachers into a coach and mentor paving a way for an open communication using social media platforms. Before, a student cannot approach the teacher quickly because of his strong identity or appearance, now the virtual space allows the students to approach the teacher with confidence. Again, open communication opens the doors to meet the social-emotional needs of the students if used wisely. This is human connection, a bidirectional relationship.

Since students and teachers meet only for few times a week than what is usual before, lesser tests are given to the students but more activities. This means more autonomy and fewer top-down demands as teachers give what is essential to the students. Teachers can design the activities based on what the child needs while inside the comfort of their homes.

Katie Barr, principal of Maria Carillo High School put it this way “COVID is presenting a unique opportunity in education. For the first time in 150 years, we get to blow up the industrial model of education.”

Reference:

• Analyzing the Impact of COVID-19 on Education Professionals. Luis Espino-Diaz, Gemma Fernandez-Caminero, Carmen-Maria Hernandez Faculty of Education Sciences, University of Cordoba Published: July 14, 2020