DISTANCE LEARNING, A HELP OR AN ADDITIONAL BURDEN?

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For the purpose of bridging the gap of juvenile illiteracy between school children, DepEd Philippines after a lot of deliberation insisted to continue the academic year 2020-2021 despite the threats of Covid-19 through Distance Learning.

Distance learning intends to deliver knowledge and skills to students virtually or through printed modules, to be completed in the comfort of their own homes, safe from intimidations brought by the existence of the unseen enemy- Covid 19. Online Teaching and learning might be synchronous or asynchronous depending on the lesson, teacher’s strategy and how the situation calls for it. It is in dire need of stable internet connection and technological breakthrough gadgets such as personal computer, cellular phone, or laptop. Television and Radio – Based Learning are also options for distance learning wherein determined teachers pre-recorded their lessons before airing it on TV or Radio Channels. In addition is the Printed modules, wherein teachers print their lessons on booklet type modules hand it over to parents on a pre-scheduled date as their children try to comprehend it at home and answer all the activities included therein.

The idea of continuing education despite the global crisis is indeed good, actually its great! The education department still stick to their purpose of pugnaciously fighting juvenile obliviousness whatever hindrance and impediment is blocking the way. They cross huge oceans of deliberation, trial and error and planning just to make this work. Budget is doubled, Teachers are given extra and repeatedly mountain high paper works and kid-hunting jobs just to set the new scheme on fire. Effort is doubly exerted by the Education department just to assure that learning will still be carried out
whatever the situation is. However, they must consider all factors that may directly or indirectly affect their proposed education scheme for it to become at least 60-70 percent efficacious and glorious.

Little to huge maladies arise just before the pilot testing of different learning modalities for the new academic year. Some of which are posted on different social media sites of both parents and students, not to mention teachers and other school staff. Most if not all, see distance learning as an additional heavy-weighted burden rather than an aid. Outbursts are all over the internet for the insufficiency of printed modules, incapacity of parents to avail stable internet connection, lack of gadgets and lack of drive of students to learn because of the current situation. As the academic year continues, reports on suicides among teachers and students also arise pointing out to the new learning scheme they can’t fit into. Parents and guardians also shared sentiments of their children doing nothing else but answering modules from morning until night. Some students also claimed that acquiring knowledge through distance learning is more difficult than the usual face to face classes, that they conform only for the sake of it being a major requirement to pass the particular grade level.

To wrap it up, to this jiffy we can’t safely conclude if distance learning is a help or a burden to teachers, parents and students, for up to this very moment we are still fine-tuning and adapting to the so-called new normal. We are still on the process of makeshift, trial-and-error, rough-and-ready situation. Let’s figure it out for the months to come, along with the hope, anticipation and crossed fingers that everything will be fine and okey sooner than soon.
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