DOUBLE-EDGED SWORD OF THE K-12 CURRICULUM

by:
Noemi G. Ramos

Before the formal implementation of the K-12 curriculum in 2016, the Philippines has always used the Basic Education System. Up until now, critics still insist that the new reform program which adds two years to the old education system.

Four years after the Department of Education had shifted to a new educational program, there is still an unsightly amount of opposition. Despite all that the new curriculum has to offer, or what it is designed to accomplish, many are still want to desist on whether we are ready for this transition, or not.

Over the previous years, the Basic Education System presented all the basic competencies a student may need in a congested ten-year curriculum. Graduates from this curriculum are usually younger than 18 years old and are not legally prepared for job applications and entrepreneurship. The new K-12 program proposes a decongested twelve-year program that is designed to pinpoint all of the basic competencies in both Junior and Senior High Schools. Students of the current education system graduate at 18 years old, and are expected to be ready for job applications, entrepreneurship and an optional higher education.

The K-12 program gives opportunity for students to choose as free by as possible. Being ensured with Integrated and Seamless learning, also known as Spiral Progression, students may choose from three precursor tracks: Academic, Technical-Vocational-Livelihood, and Sports and Arts. Fresh graduates of this new system are seen more as a professional than with the previous curriculum because they are given relevant exposure to what their desired track is all about.
Though the new education system allows students to master the basic competencies of most fields, they would lack deeper understanding of the more complex branches of science and mathematics. The spiral progression exposes them to all the main topics and lessons of the core curriculum learning areas.

However, it hinders their critical thinking because the students will not be given the entirety of a learning area except the overviews. As a student, retaining all the simplest concepts from all the different branches of mathematics and the sciences, and contemplating them over a decongested 12-year basic education system is difficult. Most students, more often than not, will have to refresh their previous learning to continue to the more complex concepts.

Because the K-12 curriculum embraces a generalized system of education, it bears the risk and uncertainty of the students’ capability to upkeep their critical thinking if they are thought to pursue practicality. The current system will most likely produce students who are sensitive to change because they will be exposed to a gradual improvement in practical application. Through the new educational program, students will be prepared for actual professional work because of immersion, but may miss out on having enough instructional time on theories and learning about the harder sciences.

The 21st century learning values collaboration, literacy and practical application. But in the world that is dominated by technology, we need more minds that are creative, critical, and have out-of-the-box conceptualization. We may thrive with professionalism, but we are unconsciously killing our creativity. Is the sudden change in curriculum worth it? Only time will tell.
References:


Six Reasons Why the Philippines Should Switch to K-12 Curriculum. Retrieved from https://k12philippines.com