EDUCATION IN THE MIDST OF GLOBAL PANDEMIC

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The face-to-face interactions between the teachers and the students, along with the vibrant and healthy learning environment within the classroom, are vital in providing quality education. However, the global pandemic and its nature of transmission, has altered the people's behaviors, relations, and lifestyle affecting the entire education sector and its way of teaching their students.

With the 1st case of COVID reported at the start of March 2020, the Philippines immediately underwent an Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ). The country is declared at a state of calamity for six months to prevent local transmission of the disease. In addition, all non-essential commercial enterprises, schools and universities, public transit facilities, malls, retail centers, churches, and other faith-based organizations were ordered to close by the ECQ. In essence, the ECQ meant the suspension of the freedom of movement.

The Department of Education has also had to adjust to the new situation where face-to-face interaction and mass gatherings are prohibited. Teachers and administrators were put to the task of revising and adapting modules and requirements from the confines of their homes as they shifted to alternative or remote teaching modalities, both synchronous and asynchronous. Synchronous modalities require students to access the internet and electronic devices to conduct classes in learning platforms such as Google Classroom, Zoom, Canvas, and Moodle. Meanwhile, asynchronous modalities are for students who have limited or unreliable access to the internet. Via asynchronous modality, parents of the students must pick up modules at schools for them to answer at home.
Though the new learning system has left many confused and frustrated, the Department of Education, along with members of the academe and professional groups, conducted various training activities, mentoring sessions, and webinars that include topics for online teaching, new effective distanced-teaching methods, and psychosocial first aid and support for students and faculty.

The COVID-19 epidemic has ushered in a new era of difficulties, dilemmas, and possibilities. It is up to us to adapt and convert the problems and issues into opportunities for our country and the global community to thrive and prosper.

References:
