ENHANCED BASIC EDUCATION CURRICULUM PROMOTES GOOD MANNERS AND RIGHT CONDUCT

by:

Rafael A. Ramel
Teacher II, Lamao National High School

The reinstituting Good Manners and Right Conduct (GMRC) has been a clamor among legislatures (Cabayan 2019). With the alarming behavior of the youth, initiatives on the revival of GMRC to basic education have been proposed. This is rooted in a constant complaint about the youths’ misbehaviors and untoward actions since incident reports and cases are getting worse (Barela et al. 2018). These were associated to youths’ infallible rights spoiling them which directly affecting their behaviors at home, school and even in the community. With this, representatives drafted the senate bill known as the Comprehensive Values Education Act. This bill once approved aims to revive the subject GMRC in the present Philippine curriculum.

The inclusion of character education (CE) to all subjects which started in the school year 1991 to 1992. This was through DepEd Order 90 and DO 91 that CE and Values Education (VE) began to be incorporated in all subjects taken in basic education (Quisumbing 1994). The provision stated that thirty (30) minutes daily would be allotted for values education in grades level 1 to 4. Likewise, instruction made use of Filipino as the medium of instruction for the students to fully understand the lessons. Furthermore, competencies have to revolve around the four (4) major themes focusing on the acceptable norms of behavior, rational thinking and value judgment developed through an experiential approach.

The move for the revival of GMRC is grounded on the justification that DepEd needs for curricular reform especially for the VE wherein GMRC has to be given the strong emphasis to develop students to become better individuals through concrete
character-building activities. It was bragged that the majority of the public teachers agreed for the reoccurrence of GMRC in the class. Moreover, parents positively accepted the proposal and pledge their cooperation in instilling positive behavior.

However, it is a misconception that CE has been neglected by DepEd. It was made clarified that CE, and VE or Edukasyon sa Pagpapakatao (ESP) are included in the curriculum. Furthermore, subjects in all learning areas contained instructions about good manners and right conduct. Likewise, while the students are learning the four (4) core subjects – English, Filipino, Mathematics, and Science, they are at the same time learning Filipino values. It is because teachers incorporate to these subjects, Filipino values that students ought to learn and apply in their lives. The mode of including these positive values empowered them through the consistency of values education (Shobha and Kala 2015). Thus, the main problem is not the curriculum but on the limitation of strong witnessing experience of the student through the people around them.

The ineffectiveness of present values formation cannot just be blamed on the curriculum. Its flaws were certainly the failure of values formation that starts in the students’ own houses, to the values that grown-ups are showing and practicing in the community (Dupont, Foley, and Gagliardi 2004). School is just a parcel of the students’ life. Though eight (8) hours are spent in school, this is not an assurance that they will be good or learn the positive behavior. What matters is how do they experience good manners and right conduct. Old Filipino saying explains the real problem. This states that “sa mata ng bata, nagiging tama ang ginagawa ng matanda.” Therefore, it is not a matter of putting additional subjects that would inculcate positive behavior to students. It is teaching them how to be good by providing them a clear and concrete example of being good (Meltzoff 2019). People around them have to show them how to be good.

In values formation, instruction is just a small part of the whole process. The bigger part of forming the values of the students is through modeling. It is through witnessing what is being taught. Modeling is the manner the student experience or witnesses the
values being taught. With the incorporation of values education, instruction of values is already satisfied. But what lacks is that they cannot have a clear example of good manners. Every time they see their mothers mocks every morning, they cannot learn how to be decent with their words. Every time they witness their fathers’ infidelity, they cannot learn how to be faithful. Every time the older people who do not respect elders, they cannot learn how to be respectful. Every time they experience indifference to their teachers, they cannot learn how to be selfless. Every time they see corruption in the government, they cannot learn how to have passion and concern for others. The problem is that students have limited access to people with positive behavior.

Ever since VE has been part of the Philippine Education Curricula. From the Basic Education Curriculum of 2001 to the Enhance Basic Education Curriculum of 2013, it has been prime consideration and top priority. Thus, the present education curriculum sees CE in a holistic approach. Likewise, it inculcates the four (4) core values that are maka-Diyos, maka-tao, makakalikasan and makabansa. Its inclusion empowered more the educators by allowing them to include to their lessons the Filipino values that each student ought to acquire and possess. This is to build a more sustainable community that imbodies truth, justice, freedom, love, equality, and peace. Hence, this could be only realized if the new generation sees the relevance of acquiring, and witness the old generation realize these values in a real-life situation. Nonetheless, no matter how many laws and subjects to be added in the curriculum, nothing will change if untoward actions persist that contradicts to the Filipino culture known to be religious, resilient, hospitable, family-oriented, respectful, communal spirited and nationalistic (Adanza 2014).
References:


