K-12: FURTHERING FILIPINOS’ COMPETITIVENESS

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For a very long time in the Philippines, basic education is equivalent only to 10 years – six years for primary education and four years for secondary education. This is perhaps the reason why most Filipinos working abroad are not considered as “professionals” even though they are professionals in the country. Some doctors in the Philippines who chose to work abroad are not recognized as doctors but only as nurses because they lack some qualifications. Because in most countries in the world, basic education corresponds to 12 years – six years for both primary and secondary education. This means that the two years of basic education that the Philippines doesn’t have are very crucial. In order to solve this backlog, then-President Benigno Aquino III signed into law the K-12 Program or adding two years of basic education in the Philippines, hence, making it 12.

K-12 is the response of the country not just in the issue of basic education but also as an answer to globalization. Globalization is simply the integration of different aspects of a country’s society. It includes the integration of culture, economies, politics, language, and even education. So it basically means the crashing or borders that divide the world. This is made possible by technological advances that make it easier for people to communicate and to travel. Thus, it is not just people who can go from one place to another, but also ideas—ideas that help the world move forward.

These are the very reasons why K-12 is crucial and beneficial in the Philippines. With 12 years of basic education that offers different strands and tracks, Filipinos will not just be equipped of knowledge in line with their professions but also be equipped of skills they need for everyday lives. Now that there are lots of foreign investors and companies coming to the Philippines to expand their market, Filipinos can now have a stable job
without leaving the country because of the skills they acquired from the K-12 Program. Furthermore, now that there is a growing demand for man-power in the world, whether professional or skilled, Filipinos can now compete with their counterparts in the world. K-12 is not just revising the educational system in the Philippines. It also means making the Filipinos more competitive and more advanced in the global arena which in turn would lead to making their lives better.

One good thing about the K-12 Program that is absent in the previous educational system in the Philippines is the area of specialization incorporated to it. The additional two years, or what is called the Senior High School, allows students to choose from different strands that would help them in the program they are going to take in college. Some of these strands include Humanities and Social Sciences or HUMSSS, General Academic Strand or GAS, and Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics or STEM among others. These strands serve as the stepping stone of students in the career they are going to take in the near future. Not only would they have an advance knowledge on the profession they are about to take but it also gives them the idea of the in-and-out and how is it like to be in a specific field. This specialization technique permits the students to be at edge over other people and prepare them for their future.

This coming school year, 2018-2019, the first batch of those who have undergone the K-12 Program will now enter the tertiary level. In four to five years’ time, the fruits of the K-12 Program will reveal itself in the world. Only then would it be judged to be successful or not.
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