K TO 12 CURRICULUM’S RATIONALE IN THE EYE OF AN EDUCATOR
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In 2011, when the Department of Education (DepEd) under the leadership of then Secretary Armin Luistro introduced the proposed plan to enhance the previous educational system through the implementation of the K-12 curriculum, that agency was bombarded with both substantial and shallow criticisms. However, under the banner of genuine educational reform, it defended the proposal and proceeded according to plan. And now that the curriculum change is already on the implementation phase, criticisms are still thrown like tons of bricks. Therefore, it would, in trying to process any opinion critical to the implementation of the K-12 curriculum, be helpful to be reminded of its rationale—it’s raison d’être in the eye of an educator. At least three of these will be discussed in this paper.

The first rationale in implementing the K-12 curriculum has something to do with the mandate of the fundamental laws of our country. The K to 12 Deped Primer (2011) defines it as an educational reform to be realized by allotting two more years for senior high school or grades 11 and 12. However, the DepEd discussion paper (2010) states that the primary aim of implementing the K-12 curriculum is not to merely prolong the basic education program but to provide every Filipino with a 12-year basic education curriculum of high quality. And this aim is anchored on the provision of the 1987 Constitution which provides that, “The state shall establish, maintain, and support a complete, adequate, and integrated system of education relevant to the needs of the people and the society”. This constitutional mandate, Velasco (2012) argues, provides the corollary justification for the implementation of the K-12 curriculum.

The second rationale refers to the previous curriculum itself. As Velasco (2012) claims, it is a curriculum too congested in nature. Because of this, the students are not given enough time to accomplish the required performance tasks. Moreover, Quismundo (2010) observes that many secondary school students who graduated from the previous curriculum were inept of readiness either for employment or higher education. In other words, the K-12 curriculum, aside from being longer in terms of time frame, is also more effective in terms of decongesting the previous curriculum.

The third and last rationale for the implementation of the K-12 curriculum is alignment of our system of education with the global education system. Prior to the implementation of the K-12 curriculum, UNESCO reported that our country is the only one with a 10-year cycle. Furthermore, Quismundo (2010) argues that academically speaking, our students are at a
disadvantage. This academic disadvantage is reflected in an international platform. In 2003, our second year high school students ranked 41st among 45 countries in the Trends in International Math and Science Study (TIMMS) (Department of Education, 2011). By implementing the K-12 curriculum, our graduates will be provided with higher academic skills and competencies needed to cope with the global stage.

The aims of the K-12 curriculum are noble. It envisions learners who are developed in a holistic manner equipped with the necessary skills and competencies relevant to the 21st century trend. This enhanced education program, which is already at the implementation phase, has at its core the complete development of every student (DepEd Primer, 2011). Implied in these aims too is the consideration of every student’s need to understand their world and to harbour a strong devotion towards life-long learning.

By taking into account the above rationale for the implementation of the K-12 curriculum in our country, the criticisms, no matter how substantial are criticized too—not suspended. And as a civilized community, we are ought to resolve those criticisms in favour of the posterity.

References


