LENIENCY IS A NECESSITY

by:

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One of the common recurring themes in social media posts regarding the education in the new normal is its complexity, and how it imposes dozens of challenges and hardships - a predicament which is not only experienced by teachers.

Various stakeholders have been ranting about the same situation, and the most affected are the end consumers of the teaching-learning process - the learners. With all the shift and changes in the process and nature of learning, students were left blindly walking in the continuation of the school year 2020-2021.

It is undeniable that there are a lot of efforts from the Department of Education, and its teachers. The department revisited the curriculum, implemented and prescribed different learning modalities, even conducted different orientation and trainings for the preparedness of students and parents in engaging in the new normal in the curriculum. However, these efforts do not seem to be enough in alleviating the stress experienced by the students.

The continuation of the school year left the learners struggling with the demands of doing education on their own, or lucky are those who are supervised by their parents and guardians. The effectiveness of the scenario has still been questioned by many. The early evidence to this one is the hesitation of parents to enroll their children which resulted to the drop of enrollment rates. As cited by Navarosa (2020), there were a 70% drop in the enrollment rate in the initial announcements in response to the announcements of the continuation of school year 2020. Although the data improved as the Department of Education proposed different plans and made the public aware of the
flow of the new normal in education, the early data is an indicator of uncertainty towards the school year.

On the other hand, one pressing problem that students face is the lack of internet connection in the country worldwide, aside from the issue of having slow internet speed on average. Navarosa (2020) cited that the internet connection in the Philippines is ranked eleventh slowest in upload and sixteenth lowest in download speed.

The difficulty in internet connections hinder online classes, especially synchronous ones, which might have provided a better avenue for teachers in guiding the learners in the actual teaching-learning process. The said scenario is one of the reasons why modular distance learning is one of the most preferred learning delivery modality. Without real-time guidance of teachers to the students, the learners are struggling.

The struggle that learners feel is not just because of “laziness” or other brandings that can be given to invalidate the suffering of the students. In line with this, teachers and other stakeholders are strongly reminded to implement “academic ease” to the students.

The simple phrase “academic ease”, when meaningfully executed, may alleviate the stress of hundreds of learners.

Teachers and other stakeholders are encouraged to be empathetic and go deeper than numbers. Members of educational institutions are tapped on their backs and gets a gentle reminder that apart from learning competencies, understanding the different underlying conditions of the learners, especially those who affect their performance and engagement in the new normal in education, is badly needed at the current scenario.

There are times when compromising and applying leniency are tagged as causes of lessening quality. However, with the sudden shift in how education goes, leniency is a necessity that lessens the students’ misery - a remedy that learners can receive for free.

References: