PICTURING PHILIPPINES STATE OF EDUCATION IN THE GLOBAL PANDEMIC

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The opening of classes on September 13 of the current year was on its second year of new normal implementation utilizing the blended learning approach. It may have been a remarkable accomplishment in the department to push through learning continuity in the middle of Covid-19 health threats but the absence of the actual teaching-learning process cannot be compensated with any other delivery modes.

Prior to Covid-19, shortages in classrooms, chairs, electric fans and even teachers has become the picture of Philippines educational system. These factors were believed to jeopardize the elusive quality education.

This state of education has become common because nothing much has been done through the years to eradicate the problem. Lack of budgetary allocation in the department was said to be the cause of the plague. In year 1997, the country encountered financial crisis where limited to zero growth policy where allocated on public development including education.

It is without inkling that a more severe educational burden will surfaced at the emergence of Covid-19 global pandemic. To put a stop to the spread of the virus, schools have been shut all over the globe with billions of learners out of the classroom.

Dramatic changes in the educational set up occurred where online learning and other modalities served as the vehicle of DepEd’s learning continuity plan. However, being out of school for a period of time posed short term and long term effects on learners.
Online schooling requires lesser time and lesser time means lesser learnings. This is greatly disadvantageous with slow learners who need extra time and attention in order to cope up with the lesson. Such situation will develop into lack of belongingness which is likely to evolve into more behavioral problems.

With the fear of getting infected by the virus, personal interaction with others had become limited, hence, learners are becoming accustomed to the virtual kind of life which eventually leads to timidity. What they expressed in online platform are left unsaid in personal life. There is this feeling of embarrassment whenever they will try to express themselves in face to face encounter.

Home schooling also added to the increased stress level of parents who have assumed the role of teachers at home. Although it is said to be that parents are the first teachers of every children, but to be in that position literally during this time is something that is not easy to bear. Struggles are real to parents who manage to work from home and at the same time look after their child’s home learning together with other household responsibilities. This is more challenging to parents with kids in primary level. Learners in the grade school requires more assistance, more learning strategies and most of all, more patience. Needless to say, the involvement of parents in their child’s education is very crucial at this very moment.

Unfortunately, the longer the time that the learners are out of school deprives them of essential learnings responsible for their all-around development. Online learning may offer a great deal of advantages but real time experiences can only be provided by the traditional face to face education.

The image of Philippines educational system is somewhat blurry up to this moment where the attempt to open schools and prepare the learners to go back to the usual learning course, remained unsuccessful due to the continuous increased in the number of covid cases in the country. Alongside, with the heightened level of pressure of
online learning and boredom in modular modality, DepEd continues with its battle to combat the many challenges causing adversity in the system.

While we are waiting for the return to normalcy, Department of Education must emerged out of this turmoil by constantly finding ways to new educational approaches and innovations.

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