RESPONSE TO A PAINFUL REVIEW OF PHILIPPINE EDUCATION

by:

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Education lifts a nation-building gear to achieve its objectives. Through education, the illumination of society and culture is made. To provide competent and skillful human resources that will be able to carry out day-to-day tasks according to the standards and regulations that are set by society, education plays a responsible undertaking. It also halts the limitations made by the differences in various societies and cultures by encouraging the citizens to come together for progress and development be possible.

Through the years, education has been used as an instrument for colonization from the start. Our colonizers never intended to use education to liberate the minds of the early Filipinos but for us to be good followers. We have embraced the “gift” given to us by the Americans and have been performing their intended role for us very well until now. Here in the Philippines, it was believed that education is our passage to get out of poverty and that the lack of it as a sure way to failure. That is why responsible Filipino parents see to it that their children complete their schooling but the majority of the Filipino families’ budget isn’t enough to send their children to college. In relation to this, column by Felipe B. Miranda, a political scientist and public opinion expert, from Philippine Daily Inquirer entitled “A Painful Review of Philippine Education” disclosed that not education per se but the paper diploma one receives makes a crucial difference as poor Filipinos try to land whatever job there is in a normally depressed job market. In the private sector as well as in many civil society settings, unscrupulous persons and agencies are quick to spot and work the huge market for milled diplomas. They waste little time in putting up substandard high schools and colleges all over the country.

The quality of education today has gone down its level. There are not enough teaching materials provided by our government to aide learning inside the classroom.
Customarily, Filipino students do not get their textbook that they can bring home and they have to share it with their classmates so they can participate in class. The number of students in a class shows that there is a lack of facilities offered by many of our schools in the country. English is used as a medium of instruction in our schools alongside our national language which is Filipino. Also, the big number of high school graduates go directly to work in society. Nevertheless, most of our high school graduates do not have the skills required to be hired by companies. This problem is being dealt with by DepEd through the addition of Senior High School in the K to 12 program which aims to prepare future graduates for work. Students need time for them to properly understand a lesson. K to 12 provides students to have more time understanding the lessons, not just cramming them for a latter exam and forgetting them when the exams are over. K to 12 gives them a chance to learn more, to enjoy learning calmly and enjoyably, and understand them better. In the current administration, education is not given the highest budget allocation which reflects their position in the importance of education in the present situation of our country.

There are a lot of problems regarding the Philippine education system that we need to face but our Department of Education should look at the factors listed above when they reflect on their current policies. DepEd has already taken several measures to solve these problems. There is the Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) which aims to use the native language of children in their early stages of education, and the K to 12 program which aims to produce globally competitive graduates. Almost all of the countries in the world are having K to 12 as their basic education program. As a result, all of them have better education that we, Filipinos, might not have been able to acquire if the proposal was not made by the DepEd. The Philippines was ranked one of the lowest in education last year.

The incumbent government is taking big leaps in our education system which may dictate the future of our country. And in this process, they may need to make important
decisions to be able to solve some problems. We must not forget to remind them that above everything else we must prioritize the quality of education that the young Filipinos will get. And the government and its constituents must help each other hand-in-hand to achieve the best kind of education we can give to them.

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