SAFEGUARDING MENTAL HEALTH: PROVISION FOR PSYCHO-SOCIAL SUPPORT IN EDUCATION DURING PANDEMIC

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The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted our lives so much to the point that many of us experience anxiety and restlessness in the wake of these quarantines and lockdowns.

With utmost concern, the Department of Education, through DO No. 14, s. 2020, empowered the school officials and teachers in training, reporting, and responding to mental health issues that may likely develop in employees and the learners. Necessary intervention and support that may be provided for them are also specified along with materials that can be utilized to address such concerns. However, the extent of support and implementation is yet to be identified.

Considerably, the learners are more susceptible to mental health issues as they are prone to stress, especially in this time of pandemic where they feel isolated, restless, incapacitated, and understandably burdened by the situation. In safeguarding mental health for learners, it is important that the learning environment recognizes and responds to the academic stresses as well as life problems of the learners that may potentially affect their learning.

De Leon and Pecson (2017) accorded further that learners are in the best condition when they feel secured, unharmed, and well-taken care of. Such a conducive learning environment means that learners can find and promote peace, collaboration, a higher form of learning, respect for others, and equality. What teachers can do is to provide a supportive and inclusive learning environment that addresses the emerging problems many learners wrestle with during this difficult time.
Under the new learning delivery modalities (LDMs), parents and teachers are expected to partner in monitoring the progress of learners and providing a conducive learning environment, either at home or via online platforms. Learning should not be stressful and burdensome for learners; it should be convivial and adaptable. Hence, considering the profile, preferences, needs, and interests of the learners may conceivably spell a big difference in the way education is delivered and achieved for their voices are accounted for in the learning process.

Gone are the days when learners are just left under the jurisdiction of the schools and parents have little regard for the child’s academic progress. Now more than ever, partnership, and cooperation of all stakeholders of education are of utmost importance to help the learners be the best version of themselves. Adults and other community members can form a unique and strong support system that could help learners in triumphing the travail and privation brought about by this pandemic.

References: