THE ANXIETY OF AN F2F STUDENT IN A GLOBAL PANDEMIC DIGITAL AGE

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Anxiety is a negative state in which the mind is being aroused increasingly by factors leading to distress, being worried, frustrated over something, overthinking and physical clumsiness, trembling, relational disturbances and social separation. Usually, the cause of it from one person to another is different but when the pandemic started in year 2020, it became the common source of anxiety for most students who are used to face-to-face classes, hence the term “F2F”.

Humans, as we all know are adaptive creatures as our natural response for survival. However, being adaptive is different for each person and being adapted takes time. If we look on the circumstance of a student who isn’t that mature enough to grasp immediate changes in the environment, then we can possibly conclude that the sudden hit of pandemic gave them a surprise on what will happen next on their educational setup with too much uncertainties. From the quick ending of school year 2019-2020 because of March Lockdown to sudden shift on synchronous and asynchronous or blended learning to stay at home as part of the guidelines of Inter-Agency Task Force to virtual meetings, recognition, graduation and others to physical separation from classmates and friends to being immersed more on social media as a way to get rid of boredom at home to procrastination for deadlines while the internet is not working properly to the possibility of having face-to-face classes once more, everything gives uncertainties to a student leading to increased level of anxiety. Abrupt shift doesn’t give enough time to a student who is still working himself to be adapted on a previous state.
Being used to something is hard to remove. A student is used to sleep late at night either from studying or watching late and wake up the next day late finding himself being late for school. Today, same situation happens at night, then being late for class in the morning but he doesn’t need to travel anymore because he only needs to open his computer or android phone however being online doesn’t guarantee a student’s presence because it may mean that the green button is online but the camera is off and the student is sleeping. Since everything is discussed online, activities, projects and group work become virtual also. Like Wi-Fi signal decreasing its strength for stable connection, so as the understanding between groupmates also decreases. Tasks are easy to accomplish when working together with the presence of each other yet today it’s hard to work together with different schedules at home like one’s family shall have dinner and the other one is already done or one student was asked to do something and the other is ready to discuss the task together because he’s free. Since, a student now stays at home all the time he has to share the internet connection with others in the family. Relational tension increases because of each other’s need inside their home.

Even a student is a social being. But there is now a virtual border that makes physical presence impossible and a pandemic that initiates us to physically distance ourselves, the sense of belongingness becomes at stake as we know that it is part of Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs. The sense of belongingness can lead to negative thoughts that will build the identity of a student.

Covid-19 is not the only pandemic faced by students all over the world, but anxiety as well. It must get the attention of everyone inside a student’s house or friends or classmate or teachers who is sane and cares enough to his mental health. Together, we can help a student not to overcome uncertainties because technically they won’t be overcome but to face them so that he can be maturely adaptive to whatever changes may come whether in school or in life.
References:

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