TRANSCENDING DISABILITY THROUGH TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATIONS AND SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

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We live in the century where equality has become a very important principle in our world and no less fortunate people, including disabled persons, are being discriminated. It is also good to note that the science and the modern world have started producing aids for people with disabilities (PWDs) to help them cope with the fast changing society. As American biophysicist Hugh Herr said, “A person can never be broken or disabled because today people can always transcend disability through technological innovation.”

Herr, who is now using robotic ankle foot prosthesis after losing his legs in his difficult climb on the Mount Washington, became inspirational after he developed his own equipment to be able to live life to the fullest again. Technological innovations for PWDs like what Herr developed are breakthroughs that promote equality.

In the Philippines, innovations that empower PWDs are very welcome, especially in the educational institutions. Some of the breakthrough innovations are advanced hearing aids, robotic prosthesis, communication devices for victims of cerebral palsy, driverless car and navigation system for visually impaired, stair-climbing wheelchair, smart phones etc. Moreover, clinics, centers, and special education program that provide aids and help train people with disorders are established in the schools.

The Department of Education has been supporting the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Salamanca Statement on Inclusive Education and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Framework on Education for All. Part of the programs to comply with the UN and UNESCO policies is the implementation of the Special Education Program Alternative Learning System for Persons With Disabilities. The two programs encourages all
educational institution to train PWDs according to their needs and adjust to their leaning capabilities. Most of the teachers are also helping in preparing PWD to take part in the real industries and find jobs that would suit them.

Meanwhile, PWD and hearing centers nationwide help people with hearing impairment to choose the best hearing aid kind and style for them. Among the things that the centers teach deaf people are the everyday functions of hearing aids and how they can get used to it. Aside from aids, hearing centers also conduct regular health check up for deaf. Meanwhile, clinics ad educational institutions for visually impaired and other PWDs are also open. Patients and students are being taught how to communicate and provided with advanced technologies for reading and communicating. There is already a Braille smartwatch and finger reader for reading text and giving real-time audio feedback and translation. There are also therapy institutions for victims of amputation.

Significant effects in the lives of PWD students have been recognized by the DepEd, encouraging the agency to strengthen its educational program for them. There are a number of institutions that help PWDs in the country. The institutions and centers show how the US support the life of persons with disabilities.

References:


