YOUNG STUDENTS’ PERCEPTION OF SELF-PACED LEARNING

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The advent of the Covid-19 pandemic sparks serious challenges in the Philippine learning structure. It causes a high level of anxiety among the learners themselves, teachers, and parents, and the whole community, they panic and did not know what to do. The traditional teacher-facilitated classroom learning is facing out and replaced by home-based self-paced learning. In the first few weeks of the home-based self-paced learning, students felt uneasy and lost especially the young learners. They missed the normal interaction with their peers, classmates, and teacher. The survey, conducted by the Department of Education (DepEd), face-to-face proves to be the first choice among Filipino learners.

The home-based self-paced or the self-learning module (SLM) learning somehow fast-track the young learners to acquire advanced cognitive behaviors with self-directed learning skills similar to the level of college students. The students are required to learn on their own, however, this learning setup is only most appropriate in the advanced communities. There must be a fusion of technology-supported learning practices that include, access to stable internet connectivity and a blended virtual learning environment.

The pandemic validated that the educational system in the Philippines is not 100% reliable and adaptable to a global crisis. Education is a key indicator of a country’s progress according to Jerome T. Buenviaje, University of the Philippines College of Education Dean. “Learning of the students should resume no matter what of the crisis, even if these modalities may not be the most effective these are alleviating measures to lessen learning gaps and other effects after the pandemic” (Buenviaje, 2021).
Despite the education being not 100% ready to support the learners' needs. The young learners themselves used the situation to establish a more appropriate self-directed learning process. Thus, the students are taking advantage of the home-based self-paced learning because it is more flexible which gives them more time to learn on their own and validated by the parents and the teachers. Young learner's adaptable skills also develop from the usual classroom setup (face-to-face) to self-directed learning through the use of self-learning modules (SLMs). The student’s role is active in the learning process through self-paced learning, more student engagement, and less teacher-student interaction.

In today’s situation of the educational system, everyone has affected, especially the young learners. The young learners' perception of this self-paced learning may vary, whether it is positive and negative, this has brought about enhancing the skills and capabilities of each learner i.e., to adapt to the current situation of the educational system for their holistic development.

My suggestion is to take advantage of home-based learning, the utilization of the technology, namely the internet and the computer must be factored in the self-learning at home. It's going to be expensive for us to realize this. We should need a helping hand from the national, local government, private entities, i.e., donations from private individuals or companies, cheap packages from the internet services, volunteers, and parents.

References:
