

CONQUERING ILLITERACY AND POVERTY

By:

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Education has been a major stepping stone in achieving success in life. The cliché, “Education is the key to success”, has been reiterated over and over again and has been proven throughout centuries. However, having a good education is being hindered by illiteracy and poverty—a poison that is continuously threatening countries, whether developed or developing countries. Being freed from such a bond is like untying a knot that has been neatly linked over and over again.

In the Philippines, an estimated 10.5 million families consider themselves poor, the results of the latest Social Weather Stations (SWS) survey showed. According to the results of the First Quarter 2016 SWS survey first published in Business World on May 27, 46% of respondents rated themselves as poor. Definitely, the need to end poverty is a must right now.

Nelson Mandela (2003), a political leader and a philanthropist, once said, “Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.” It opens up doors that lead to various opportunities. It teaches us to distinguish between right and wrong, it helps us see the right perspectives in life. Moreover, it provides us with the appropriate abilities and skills that can be used to progress in life. Having been among the major problems that loom and hinder the thriving, education gives us a chance to bounce away from poverty and to live the life we aspire to, not just the life we are born into.

On the other hand, illiteracy is a widespread virus that corrupts many nations. According to a study conducted by UNESCO (2015), not only is one-fifth of the world's adult population illiterate, but 100 million children are not attending primary school.

With the premature exposure to illiteracy, it is not a surprise that it is one of the major problems of society. High levels of illiteracy are hindering attempts to erase the world of poverty.

Even though reading and writing are one of the most essential skills, the majority of our fellowmen remain illiterate. In fact, it is one of the foremost problems bequeath by succeeding presidents. According to National Statistics Office (2013), the Census of Population and Housing stated that 97.5 percent or 69.8 million of the total 71.5 million persons aged 10 and above were literate, higher by 5.2% compared to the 92.3% in 2000. There are efforts to promote literacy by the government, different organizations, or even private individuals. Literacy empowers a person to interact within society and to discern and identify his abilities, which will lead to participation and contribution to the sustainable development of his society.

Illiteracy and poverty are not strangers in our country. We must continue striving for the betterment of education. With this, little by little, we may be able to defeat these hurdles into a progressive nation. It may be a slow process but once we reached the finale, the end product will be so much more worthwhile.

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