

THE PANDEMIC AND THE PHILIPPINE EDUCATION

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The suddenness of the pandemic has taken the world off-guard. Every sector in every nation coped with the massive changes, limitations, and restrictions of the pervasive virus. Undeniably, these modifications in the norms of the majority had affected not only the health department, the workforce, and the business owners, but also produced half-cooked learners, especially the young ones.

While the focal point of most countries in the production of a drug to counter the dreadful complications of the Corona Virus Disease, the education sector is vying for a quality education that can supersede the limitations in learning caused by the pandemic.

The Philippines, having been among the developing countries, is one of the most affected by the abrupt changes caused by the pandemic. Its health sector was not ready to cater to a massive case of patients due to the virus; lack of hospital facilities, lack of health personnel, and lack of health and safety protocols mandated, are among the difficulties encountered by the nation. In addition to this was the vast drawback in the education sector: one of which was that schools were not ready for distance learning. The Department of Education took a massive leap as they address the obstacles one by one.

Having been accustomed to the traditional face-to-face classes, teachers were trained intensively on various teaching and learning modalities in order to still grasp the “quality education” goal of the department. With such enlightenment, teachers were then instructed to diminish lengthy lessons into Self-Learning Modules (SLMs) that are aligned with the newly restructured curriculum guide, the Most Essential Learning Competencies. These SLMs were locally contextualized to address the cultural learning gap and to be able to provide students with lessons and examples that can be easily

observed in their daily lives as they will be staying at home for the pandemic school year. While being geographically distanced, students and teachers were able to showcase learning through the various activities involving the four macro skills.

At the elementary level, learners were encouraged through Zoom conferences, phone calls, and Video chats to ensure that learning still takes place, especially since it will serve as the foundation for the learning of the student. It will determine whether the student will be able to cope with the spiral lessons as provided by the Curriculum Guide for the K-12 Program. As simple as identifying the colors, up to more complex ones such as reading the basic sight words, and reciting a poem, teachers can assess the learning that has taken place and the gap that still needs to be addressed and furthered by the guidance of the teacher and the parent.

Despite the extra challenge posed by the pandemic, the Department of Education, along with its teachers, was able to surpass barriers to distance learning for the school year 2020-2021. This goes to show that with enough passion and perseverance, no virus can hinder the learning and knowledge to be imparted to the younger generation.

References:

<https://www.savethechildren.net/blog/keeping-literacy-alive-during-covid-19>