

## THE CONVOLUTION OF ACTUAL TO VIRTUAL EDUCATION

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The abruptness and unexpectedness of the pandemic have caught the entire educational society off-guard. The major modifications that the Novel Corona Virus Disease (COVID-19) brought have made curriculum-makers work double hours—in dire need of a new educational system that can bridge the gap between the traditional face-to-face classes into the “new normal”.

Despite continuous efforts to address the needs of today’s crisis, UNESCO’s reports on the affected student population around the world were at 87%; still a staggering figure to conquer. (UNESCO, 2020) Lockdowns and restrictions were imposed; hence, band-aid solutions were unceasingly suggested such as virtual classrooms to lessen the exposure to the virus. Having been launched even before the pandemic, distance learning has been strengthened and further fortified to maintain quality education regardless of the situation at hand.

Undeniably, as the world resorted to virtual education, its many advantages are uncovered. Distance learning allows learning to take place in the comfort of the learners’ homes. In addition to this, expenses are lessened as the need to travel is eliminated. However, in developing countries like the Philippines, the suddenness of the shift from actual classes into virtual learning has been a challenge. With the instability of internet connectivity, as well as ample technological skills, students and teachers struggled to adapt to the “new normal” education. But these scarcities can never hinder the passion of teachers to educate their students during these trying times. The Department of Education encouraged the utilization of television, radio, and other online platforms to

deliver lessons. Subsequently, textbooks and modules were the resources used by learners who were not as privileged as the others.

Such determination from teachers, with the support of the department, has indeed materialized various distance learnings through online classes, radio/tv, printed modules, and a combination of some of these called “blended learning.” This also cutbacks some inequalities among privileged ones and those who are less capable to cope with technological needs.

Coming to a full two-year-pandemic, the education system has somehow coped with the sudden changes. Yet, the fact remains that first-hand experiences are vital in a student’s learning which can only take place in face-to-face classes. Moreover, there is a richer understanding of lessons through actual classes as compared to virtual classrooms which demotivate student interaction since they cannot physically see their classmates and their teacher.

To sum it up, virtual education is much harder since the traditional educational environment is gone. Nevertheless, the continuous threat of the COVID-19 restricts actual classes in classrooms; the safety of every student and teacher is still of utmost priority.

#### *References:*

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