

**POST-PANDEMIC COVID-19 AS THE NEW NORMAL:  
AN EDUCATIONAL PERSPECTIVE IN THE PHILIPPINES**

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Education has always been central to global transformation. It has changed the world because it has altered our attitudes and aspirations toward life and provided us with confidence, skills, and knowledge that we could not have obtained without it. It's like a new currency, as it can be exchanged for knowledge, skills, and, most importantly, removing obstacles. But we all know that to obtain these, you must be competent to attend and absorb the requirements. Will the educational outlook in the Philippines be as effective as it was two years ago if Post-Pandemic COVID-19 becomes the New Normal for effective learning?

As the world continues to reel from the recent outbreak of the flu and COVID-19 Pandemic, many are pondering their preparedness for a similar catastrophe. As it turns out, most people in and around Metro Manila, Philippines, do not have a particularly well-prepared response. This is due to society's lack of preparedness for emergencies. In addition, an often-overlooked aspect of the COVID-19 Pandemic is the vulnerability of our educational institutions. We recognize the importance of education to our future, but it appears no one has ever considered what will happen when all of our children are destroyed, especially their education.

The Philippines' government has prioritized improving the quality of its educational system by strengthening its institutions and investing in programs that will ensure that all students receive a high-quality education that equips them with the skills needed to compete in today's global economy – a substantial number of private school students transferred to public schools during this time. According to data collected by the

Department of Education (DepEd), an estimated 250,539 students were assigned from private to public schools prior to the start of the 2020-2021 academic year. DepEd estimated that approximately 380,000 students transferred from private to public schools at the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year. The COVID-19 Pandemic caused these economic effects, which included a decline in children's education due to a decrease in parental employment. According to Talabis Dylan et al., strict border control, early implementation of lockdowns, the establishment of quarantine facilities, effective public communication, and monitoring efforts were the defining factors that helped the LGUs mitigate the Pandemic's damage (2021). If these policies were standardized, countries would be better prepared for future health emergency situations, which would be the key to more secure school children's education.

The Philippines' response to COVID-19 was comparable to that of other nations regarding school closures and other measures to prevent the virus' spread. The Pandemic severely impacted the country's education system, with many schools closing for months and many more closing permanently due to a lack of students. Other countries also closed their schools, but not all of them kept their students at home for as long as the Philippines.

Some nations had limited school closures, or schools were closed for only a portion of the period. In Japan, schools were closed for two weeks, reopened for one week, and then closed for another two weeks. Germany's schools remained open for a portion of the Pandemic; they were closed from May 20 to June 3, reopened until June 17, and closed again from June 17 to July 1. Compared to other nations, the Philippines' government responded to the COVID-19 Pandemic with both active and indirect disaster risk management. To protect their most vulnerable populations and sustain their long-term development goals, these countries either upgraded their health systems or incorporated relevant innovations into their traditional strategies. In this new normal post-COVID-19, the Philippines must demonstrate a comparable sense of urgency and ingenuity, lest it falls behind its peers.

This year's education has been characterized by the emergence of innovative approaches and processing technologies. Always new paradigms are emerging. On the other hand, new technologies such as blended learning can be viewed as an educational innovation that will contribute to the future education system. In this new normal brought about by the COVID 19 pandemic and the fact that we're confined to our homes, one of the teachers in Bantigue Elementary School in Masbate Philippines, Teacher Sue Ellen Palingayan, remarked that it would be an innovation to be able to come up with new ideas as well as redesign our living space connecting to her students' classroom. It will not only please the learners' eyes but also give them peace of mind as they engage in everyday learning activities. The emergence of these technological advancements is contingent upon the capacity to implement these ideas at the time.

COVID-19 is a bilateral agreement between the Philippines and the United States to establish a new framework for cooperation in science, technology, and innovation. One of the primary objectives of COVID-19 is to address resource limitations, including human capital. Despite the efforts made by both sides to increase Filipinos' access to education, these efforts have not yielded positive results, particularly for adolescent girls. To understand why this is the case, the educational achievement of teenage girls in the Philippines varies across provinces due to a lack of access to basic services, such as schools for girls, a lack of gender-sensitive teaching methods, and the absence of incentives for teachers, such as a reward system or national certification exams. By law, every Filipino is entitled to free elementary education. However, millions of children, adolescents, and adults never enrolled in school or dropped out before completing their basic education for many reasons, mostly when the Covid-19 Pandemic hits.

The COVID-19 Pandemic has left an indelible mark on Philippine education, but it has also created opportunities for innovation. The tragic effects of the disease have prompted international assistance in financial and academic aid, which has opened the door to innovations in our educational system. In spite of the fact that the spread of

COVID-19 has slowed in the Philippines, it will take a generation for its effects to disappear completely. Thankfully, the COVID-19 Pandemic has presented unique opportunities for education in the Philippines to evolve into something new and improved that can prepare students for this new normal.

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