

WHERE ARE WE GOING?

by:

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“Meron po tayong na-cite na study doon sa ating presentation sa Pangulo, and this is a published paper already na there are really, truthfully learning losses sa mga bata kapag sila po ay nasa online classes or nasa distance learning... Nakalagay pa doon na it is more pronounced and learners are disadvantaged at home. So ang ibig sabihin po noon, it is worse doon sa ating pamilya na naghihirap (We have cited a study on our presentation before the President, and this is a published paper already, that there are really, truthfully learning losses among children when they are in online classes or distance learning. It also indicated that it is more pronounced and learners are disadvantaged at home. Meaning, it is worse for poor families),”

— Vice President and DepEd Secretary Sara Z. Duterte

This has been the dream of most of the parents to see students interacting with their teachers and classmates. After 2 years of modular and blended learning, students are now gradually getting back to the classrooms as the in-person schooling starts to be implemented to public school all over the country.

It is notable that during pre-pandemic, schools are being challenged on how to provide quality accessible education for all amidst the lack of resources in all aspects of education. Teachers taught their respective classes with minimal resources at hand including the technology-based equipment. This has been one of the predicaments of the teachers in providing quality education where schools need to adapt various technology-based approach mode of teaching using ICT.

In addition, opportunities were stolen for many students during the pandemic. Problems arise especially to poor families because they could not afford to provide internet connectivity and even gadgets. Students struggle using modules at the confines of their homes. They lack guidance in terms of understanding the context, theories, and principles they need to learn. Parents and family members act as the in-person teachers during the modular and blended modality. With this, parents took responsibility in managing the learning process of their children.

Further, assessment of learning has been one of the challenging aspects since the skills are not properly evaluated during the blended modality. However, it provides avenue for students and teachers to facilitate the teaching and learning outcomes despite the challenges and risk brought by the pandemic. This is due to the resiliency of the school, its management, teachers, parents, stakeholders, and the students themselves. It has proven that through collaborative efforts of the government and the schools, no pandemic can hinder the delivery of accessible basic education across all levels.

From home-based to classroom based, from module to face to face, from self-learning to experiential learning, & from home schooling to directed approach, these shifting phases were very challenging, but definitely rewarding. The road is too rough and uncertain, but teachers are adaptive so as education stands on its ground firm and salient.

It is very evident that not all are privileged---some are rich and others are poor, while few afford private education during pandemic, others cannot. It is noticeable that all of us whether we are poor or rich, we still experience challenging situations. That, pandemic do not choose life status. Like access to education, everyone was assured of the privilege to complete basic education. Thus, the DepEd makes sure that the right of every Filipino to quality, equitable, culture-based, and complete education will be served.

Moreover, with the collaborative efforts of everyone including learners, teachers, non-teaching personnel, leaders, government agencies, parents and volunteers, education crisis has been gradually addressed. Through bayanihan efforts, the problem of “learning losses in online and distance learning” has been resolved.

With the vast effect of COVID-19, classes are being shifted to various modalities including pure modular and blended approaches. Due to the resiliency and collaborative efforts of the government such as facilitating nationwide vaccination, the country including the Department of Education is heading towards in-person classes all over the country.

The resumption of face-to-face classes become an avenue for teachers to fulfil their commitment and duty as learning facilitators bringing with them the values and moral lessons they obtained during the 2-year lockdown. It serves as a source of inspiration and motivation to help our learners beyond what is expected from us, teachers. This pandemic brought diverse challenges in terms of delivering quality and accessible education for all.

Where are we going? This statement will always be a hanging question as the current situation continuously challenge the education sector. But, with the values, commitment, passion, and dedication of the teachers, no crisis can stop us from believing that education will continue amidst very challenging situations.

References:

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