

PREVAILING TRUTH, THE ARTILLERY OF TOMORROW

by:

Leah D. Marcelo

Teacher I, Luakan National High School - Annex

The first effort to protect the future from oppression is to teach about its yesterday. The naked truth, from which everyone shields their eyes and ears from, dulls the sense of compassion, and ultimately steals the opportunity of a just and humane country. This truth – the most evaded and warped form of reality – shall foremost prevail in academic institutions. When the seeds of knowledge that are planted on every student's mind are rotten, the systematic problem of mis-and-disinformation runs deeper to the extent of exhibiting its dominance in the psychological and cognitive aspect of the youth. It is in the participation of both students and teachers, school and technology to subdue the tyrannical predicament the Philippines is facing today.

The second effort is to shed focus on the teaching of social studies. Social studies are an essential component of education since it helps students become informed citizens. Students can become responsible people by comprehending the sociopolitical and economic circumstances of their nation and the rest of the globe, as well as their rights and responsibilities as members of society. The goal of social studies is to educate people so they can be productive citizens. Teaching social studies to schoolchildren enhances the likelihood that they will rise to be more responsible and informed people who will live moral and ethical lives. However, when the school curriculum diminishes the significance of teaching social sciences, how can its values be engraved to the minds of the students?

The Department of Education's (DepEd) 2017 adjustment of the Contemporary Issues curriculum has alarmed advocates of transformative education who are members of the Educators Forum for Development (EFD). The streamlining of Grade 10 Social Studies ignores democracy and other governance lessons (IBON Foundation, 2017).

According to the organization, the measure successfully omits subjects important to students' understanding of and attitudes toward problems that have plagued Philippine society up until this point. The lessons from the May 2016 curriculum guide were rearranged in the April 21, 2017 revised curriculum draft for Araling Panlipunan Grade 10. The following topics were deleted: political dynasties, graft and corruption and territorial conflicts (i.e. South China Sea/West Philippine Sea issue). According to EFD, the contemporary issues course is meant to build on fundamental educational ideas that shape Filipino students into socially conscious and responsible young people who are active members of their families and communities.

However, the 2017 revision, according to EFD, ignores how non-democratic and unfair practices currently influence Philippine politics and economics, which can only be addressed by a democratically engaged populace. The objective to mold globally competitive Filipinos is a necessary goal; however, the school curriculum should not be compromised and be designed to fit just only the sole demands of this ambition. The organization said that the Philippine educational system prevents teachers and students from assisting in social transformation and becoming forerunners of real economic development and good governance by failing to expose social realities and explore relevant alternatives. What will happen to a country whose future doctors, engineers, lawyers and government officials do not know the chronicles of history and social issues that their professions have been fighting?

The last effort is to establish control in the digital media. Aside from academic institutions, the next source of information is within the worldwide web or posts that are shared on social media platforms. It is not enough that social studies are taught in school, it should have a constant exposure among students, who are generally the most digitally active population of our country. The victory of mis-and-disinformation came from its little-by-little introduction and exposure to otherwise unaware users of the media. When the schools cannot provide such information, their references will be from sources that

are unvalidated. Lastly, academic institutions must actively fight the spread of fake news and false information. It is not sufficient that they remind students to be critical, the perpetrator shall be ceased. The Philippines is in an age of dramatic changes in the digital community. We must seek the truth with the weapons we have now. As teachers, as proper citizens of the country, it is our responsibility to build a nation of truth and justice.

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