

PHILIPPINE EDUCATION AMID PANDEMIC: THE OTHER SIDE OF THE COIN

by:

Edgardo B. Nazareno

Teacher II

The COVID-19 Pandemic will surely leave a mark in history. Its destructive repercussions sparked havoc in the world. In the Philippines, its adverse effects are still being experienced. Schools and universities are still closed for face-to-face classes (Allen, et al., 2020). The idea that everything will be back to the normal pre-pandemic situation for the country is still blurry.

For the educational system, the pandemic has drastically changed its normal course of instruction. The rapid shift from face-to-face classes to distance learning was done in a couple of months (Joaquin, et.al., 2020). The abrupt turn of things left us unprepared. Thus, it is not unexpected that the “New Normal” mode of learning is not perfect. It has its shares of shortcomings. It is difficult for both the teachers and the students. The economic effects of the pandemic were already thoroughly discussed in different studies, publications, and news articles. Numerous experts have already predicted the possible aftermaths of the pandemic for the education system of the country and its outcome on the future of the economy (Hanushek & Woessmann, 2020). With all this turmoil that the COVID-19 caused to the country and the education system together with its arrival almost two years ago, are there any positive things or effects that it has brought upon our students, educators, and the education sector as a whole?

In the ever-changing world of advancement, technology is the fast-moving vehicle that can drive a nation into progress. Being able to be transmitted from one host to another through close physical contact, the very nature of the virus necessitates non-contact or remote interactions between us for our society to continue to function. This is where the

convenience of technology aids us, particularly our students and teachers in continuing the knowledge-transfer process despite the presence of the deadly virus.

If COVID-19 has brought something light or positive to our educational sector, it is the skill to adapt to new technologies. In a short period, we have been introduced to online meeting platforms such as Zoom, Google Meet, and WebEx among others. We have learned how to use distance learning platforms such as Google Classroom, Canvas LMS, and other more in a couple of months. Our online research skills have greatly improved. We have optimized the use of video-sharing platforms such as TikTok and YouTube for learning or teaching. Social media and messaging applications such as Facebook, Facebook groups, and messenger are now being utilized for faster communication and announcement dissemination for schooling purposes. Tons of learning webinars can even be watched through Facebook Live. We have familiarized ourselves with the use of cloud storage, word processing, spreadsheet, and presentation programs such as the Microsoft Office Applications and the Google Suites.

We are continuously learning. We are continuously adapting to change, becoming better and sharper when it comes to the virtual world. Not to romanticize the struggle brought by the pandemic, and not to dismiss the reality that not all of us have the access to technology, but if the pandemic has contributed anything beneficial to our educational system, it is that it has forced us to be more flexible and adaptive to the ever-changing world of technology.

References:

Allen, J. R., Burns, N., Garrett, L., Haass, R. N., Ikenberry, G. J., Mahbubani, K., . . . Walt, S. M. (2020, March 20). ANALYSIS: How the World Will Look After the Coronavirus Pandemic. Retrieved February 5, 2022, from Foreign Policy:

<https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/03/20/world-order-after-coronavirus-pandemic/>

Hanushek, E. A., & Woessmann, L. (2020, September). The Economic Impacts of Learning Losses. OECD. Retrieved March 5, 2022, from

<https://www.oecd.org/education/The-economic-impacts-of-coronavirus-covid-19-learning-losses.pdf>

Joaquin, J. J., Biana, H. T., & Dacela, M. A. (2020, October 22). The Philippine Higher Education Sector in the Time of COVID-19. *Front. Educ.* doi:10.3389/feduc.2020.576371