

DREAMS PERSEVERING AMIDST POVERTY CONQUERING: THE ABOLISHMENT OF THIS ESTABLISHED TRUTH

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There are enough resilient stories narrated in every graduation rite. Speeches on the podium flow like this: a list of hardships the student encountered in his academic year, the sacrifices his parents bore to raise him, the promise to repay what they had toiled, the innocence and eagerness of youth that calls onto his fellow graduates that they, too, can make it, and lastly, the recognition of poverty as one's stepping stone to victory. Resilience needs perseverance to supply the ambitious mind with much-needed fuel to attain victories, tackle the trampling hindrances that come his way, and defy the collective challenges all students face. There is a truth that persists in all these narratives: a child would strive to finish his education, for the corporate world is ruthless without this weapon.

Public secondary school classrooms in the Philippines are composed of a population from different walks of life. Some children come in with a hungry stomach and leave with an empty one. Working students who are raising themselves. Teenagers who have not yet reached the legal age have smaller mouths to feed than theirs. Adults who have stayed in the same grade level longer than normal. Teenagers who do not quite meet the qualifications and capabilities of their standard student level.

Material conditions help shape a student's perspective on his education. Some rise above the challenges their poverty brings them and use this socio-economic issue as a source of inspiration. For most children, however, their poverty prohibits them from focusing on education, often spending their time on finding means of survival. The same

applies to parents who send their kids to school but cannot provide other educational necessities such as school materials, allowances, transport fares, and miscellaneous fees.

We had long clamored for calls to recognize poverty as a hindrance. There should be improvement and support for both parents, children, and teachers from both the local and the national level. Scholarships, cash allowances, feeding programs, job opportunities, increasing the minimum wage, and even solving the booming inflation rate can ease the material setbacks our learning population faces. There will be resilient stories as long as dreams are persevering amidst extreme poverty, and it is the responsibility of the Department of Education to remove these obstacles in their way. Through this, we can mold Filipinos who are dreamers; who aim not for survival but for the attainment of their ambitions.

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