

NOURISHING THE FUTURE: COMBATING MALNUTRITION IN SCHOOL

by:

OLIVER T. MAGTALAS

Teacher III, Limay National High School

Malnutrition remains one of the most pressing problems of the country that affects students' physical and cognitive development. To combat the problem, feeding programs and various projects were conducted to help students receive proper nutrition and to relieve hunger that they suffer.

Based on the 2024 Global Hunger Index (GHI) report, the Philippines ranks 67th out of 127 countries in the world and resolving this issue requires collaborative efforts from the government, schools and families. It takes a community to fight malnutrition among students which starts from home with the help of schools and other government agencies.

It is impossible to attain holistic development for some of the students who suffer malnutrition. It hinders their physical growth and intellectual development affecting their performances in school. One of the main factors of student's malnutrition is poverty and the social status of the family they belong to. Some families from low-income class can't afford to provide nutritious foods for their kids.

Meanwhile, Limay National High School through the initiative of Values Education Department conducted the feeding program entitled, "Food for Thought and Heart: Developing Values Through Nutrition Programs", which aims to provide nutritious foods and to address the hunger issue for the Grade 8 students. It also promotes the value of empathy, compassion and responsibility and encourages to appreciate the importance of support from the community.

Moreover, the program helps the students to improve their nutritional status since it provides nutritious foods that they might not receive from their home. It also enhances their focus that will boost their academic performance and better learning outcomes. Nutritious foods help students to strengthen their immune system which will serve as their armor to protect their body from sickness. Feeding program improves healthy habits to those learners who are exposed to a good diet in schools and homes.

Feeding programs are one of the proactive steps taken by the schools to address the hunger issue. It is important that the government should provide long-term solutions to combat malnutrition to improve students' well-being and academic performance.

References:

<https://www.globalhungerindex.org/philippines.html>