

Challenges in distance learning and future educators in the new normal and beyond

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Abstract: The present COVID-19 pandemic has brought extraordinary challenges and made an intense effect wherein it has brought havoc not only in the economic growth; social life of the people; but also, to the educational system all over the world as well. The outbreak of Covid-19 had sent shockwaves that had really affect a lot of people especially in the educational system around the world. COVID-19 also took a lot of opportunities not just to teachers but especially to students. However, the country is currently implementing innovative strategies and procedures on how to compromise the widespread of the virus that has already affecting millions of lives across the globe. Nevertheless, this paper presents different types of challenges, issues, and problems that are arising and directly affect both the teachers and the students in the new educational norm.

Keywords: Collaboration, COVID-19, Education, Neoliberalism, Security, Teaching, Traditional class, Virtual learning

1. Introduction

The world is now currently facing one of the most alarming public health emergencies which is the Corona Virus 2019 pandemic, started in the province of China and almost infected every country across the globe. Most people who are infected by this type of disease will experience mild to moderate respiratory illness and recover without requiring special treatment. Even though this type of virus is not an airborne disease, the public was still informed by WHO to observed social distancing, wearing of face masks, improve individual health care systems, regularly do hand-washing and surface cleaning (WHO, 2020b). This situation we are experiencing right now has affected a lot of people regardless of its nationality, gender and level of education.

The COVID-19 pandemic is not only a unique state in this time, but it is also certain phenomenon across generations, which is similar to the pandemic about 100 years ago. As time goes by, COVID-19 is said to be getting worse wherein it has brought havoc not only in the economic growth; social life of the people; but also to the educational system all over the world. The COVID-19 pandemic is above all else a wellbeing emergency. Numerous nations have chosen to close schools, schools and colleges. The emergency solidifies the issue policymakers are looking between shutting schools and keeping them open. The serious momentary disturbance is felt by numerous families around the globe: self-teaching isn't just an enormous stun to guardians' profitability, yet in addition to kids' public activity and learning.

The outbreak of COVID-19 had sent shockwaves that affect a lot of people especially in the educational system around the world. In response to the outbreak, educational institution in the Philippines were closed to staff, students and pupils, teaching and assessment being switched, at least temporarily and with varying success, to online platforms. COVID-19 affected my scholarly endeavors in a way that it took away all plans in experiencing teaching demonstrations that would help student teachers' future endeavors.

The Philippine government implemented health protocols and enforced lockdowns and community quarantine during those infectious months that led students and teacher to study and work from home which also the rise of using the online learning platform as medium of communication. The transition to virtual learning posed different challenges and difficulties for teachers and the students. Thus, both students and teachers are indeed no doubt; unprepared, unequipped and incompetent due to the abrupt transition of learning. Furthermore, this reflection paper has created to provide a clear lens as to what are these challenges

to the new normal Philippine education during this pandemic. Due to these reasons, the authors reflected on the current situation since reflections can serve as powerful testimonials (Toquero et al., 2021) to document the current crisis.

2. COVID-19 and neoliberalism in education

Brabazon (2020) discussed in an article that neoliberalism is normally perceived as a market-situated philosophy that is related with approaches of privatization, streamlined commerce, liberation, and public help cuts. The first neoliberal masterminds of the 1930s-1950s looked to devise a method of sorting out human communication that would boost opportunity, which they comprehended to be restricted to the capacity of people to settle on self-intrigued choices through the market.

In the course of recent years, there has been extensive variety in how neoliberal thoughts have been tackled by policymakers around the world, yet certain central standards are clear—and some of these shapes the way that colleges have reacted to COVID-19. The acknowledgement of these neoliberal presumptions will help staff both to scrutinize the way that COVID-19-time instructing is being actualized and to envision choices that don't put public exploration and training in danger. Neoliberalism has brought fundamental changes to the way schools of education prepare professional educators; among them is the pressure for schools of education to produce fast-track teacher preparation programs that bypass traditional requirements.

According to Baltonado (2012) research study, "Neoliberalism and the Demise of Public Education: The Corporatization of Schools of Education" that due to the privatization of public education, a new market has risen to prepare teachers educators and administrators for charter schools. Educating is moving on the web, on an untested and remarkable scale. Understudy appraisals are additionally moving on the web, with a ton of experimentation and vulnerability for everybody. Numerous evaluations have essentially been dropped. Significantly, these interferences would not simply be a transient issue, yet can likewise have long haul ramifications for the influenced partners and are probably going to build disparity.

2.1. Challenges to the new normal education

Mental health impact on students: The outbreak of COVID-19 had sent shockwaves that had really affect a lot of people especially in the educational system around the world. In response to the outbreak, educational institution in the Philippines were closed to staff, students and pupils, teaching and assessment being switched, at least temporarily and with varying success, to online platforms. COVID-19 affected students scholarly endeavours in a way that it took away all their plans in experiencing a lot of teaching demonstrations that would opt to help them with their future endeavours. Moreover, COVID-19 triggered their anxiety so bad that every time they have anxiety attacks, it caused them to actually stop doing their modules. Due to this, it became a hindrance for students to thoroughly focus on their academic endeavours.

Lack of available resources needed for online class: The shift to a new way of learning has exposed gaps in the country's education. Some are noting that this online learning caters only those who can afford and has the available resources, since not all has an equal access to certain technologies required to this type of learning approach. In addition, due to lockdowns issued by the government, thousands of families are experiencing financial difficulties that caused massive job loss, thus, some students are unable to continue their studies for this school year. Moreover, internet connection was also a challenge in the country as it's not giving enough effort to provide a good quality service to users which often led to disruption and disconnections. Students today are disintegrated into two classes – those who were born privileged and those who chose to thrive to survive.

Abrupt change in learning and teaching approach: Students were not the only one who struggled in the new learning set-up. In fact, teachers are also having a hard time with the shift to distance teaching. According to Rappler.com (2020), there are teachers who are still unable to receive the learning modules from Department of Education, even after three weeks prior from the opening of classes. Subsequently, teachers left only shorter time to review and strategize their lessons featured in the learning modules. Also, not everyone has the skill in using various types of technologies or gadgets which makes even worse for others to connect to virtual learning. Moreover, a month since the opening of classes, there were reports of atrocious cases of suicides done by several students in the country. These brought fears to some parents as most of the reasons are due to learning modules and requirements that was unable to submit on time. With this, teachers and the learners are now in a battlefield that only those who are vigorous can survive.

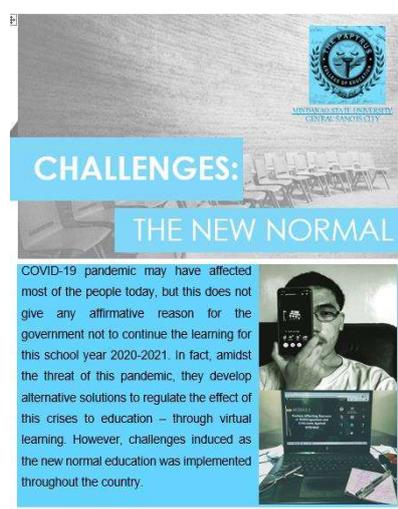


Figure 1: Education for all vs. against all odds

2.2. Redesigning in the teaching horizon

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, there have been new stressors that arose which highly affected how the teachers handle and conduct their classes with their students during this trying situation. There is a call for redesigning the educational system in alternative delivery platforms in the Philippines (Romupal et al., 2022). Through the help of certain online platforms like Google Classroom, Moodle, Zoom, and Google Meet, teachers were able to use these platforms to conduct classes at the present situation. According to Chakravadhanula et al. (2013) online education gained much more popularity in the recent time. Some of the recent advances in the field of open courseware are the rise of online portals which provide the schools the equal courses for millions of students all across the world and their potential to get better. These new portals have proven to be extremely useful for students from underdeveloped countries. These online tools enable the students and teachers to stay connected with each other and teachers were still able to monitor the learning of the students. Teachers were able to adjust to the demands and the needs of the students through blended learning in which teachers used different modalities of learning to conduct and give their lesson.

3. Conclusion

All over the world, COVID-19 pandemic has brought havoc not only in the economic growth and social life but also in the education system all over the world. Countries who are encountering this pandemic have reacted to various innovative ways, regardless of whether by quickly activating computerized assets or by building up these assets without preparation. This pandemic will not just test people's patience but would also challenge the leaders of each country to formulate certain strategies on how they could handle and cope up with this present situation. The educational system is one of the highly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. With the sudden transition from the traditional class to online learning, it brought up various effects to both teachers and learners. Countries who are encountering this pandemic have reacted to various innovative ways, regardless of whether by quickly activating computerized assets or by building up these assets without preparation. With such, schools at all levels have to address these concerns and carefully evaluate plans and procedures to cope up with the new normal setting. Collaboration and being resourceful are one of the most important strategies at this moment. As a student, do not take privileges as an advantage, instead, help one another and keep in mind that no one should be left behind in this trying times. The authors, therefore, recommends that the challenges presented in this paper must be grasped and should be taken seriously. This pandemic will not just test people's patience but would also challenge the leaders of each country to formulate certain strategies on how they could handle and cope up with this present situation that we are all experiencing right now. Furthermore, the real challenge herewith is on how to provide and deliver quality education amidst exceptional times, and on what extent are we going to do when another crisis hits in the future.

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