

OPENING A NEW ROAD TO LIFELONG LEARNING

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INTRODUCTION

The Philippine government is now starting to implement the Enhanced K+12 Curriculum, adding two more years in high school education.

PROBLEM

- Critics contend that the additional senior high school will exacerbate current shortage of teachers, classrooms, and other inputs to education.
- It will also lead to more drop outs

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- It will also lead to more drop outs especially among those who can no longer afford to go to school and those who need to earn income as soon as possible in order to help their families.

PROPOSED SOLUTION

A national Distance Education (DE) program offering junior and senior high school.

KEY REFERENCES

- Abrioux, D. A.M.X, & Ferreira, F. (Eds.), *Perspectives on Distance Education: Open schooling in the 21st century*. Vancouver, BC: Commonwealth of Learning.
- D'Antoni Susan (Ed.). *The Virtual University*. UNESCO.

PROPOSED DE INSTITUTION

- Ferreira (2009) emphasized that open schools that have remained part of a civil/public service do not do very well.
- Establish a national institution offering independent and self-learning for secondary education separate and autonomous from the Department of Education.

PROPOSED DE INSTITUTION

- The Board and not the Secretary of Education decides on policy, programs and finances of the institution.
- The members of the Board will be appointed by the Secretary of Education.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

- The institution shall have a decentralized operation.
- It shall operate in all regions of the country with tutorial centers (participating schools) in almost all cities and municipalities.

SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

- Funds from the national government
- Tuition from 'paying' students
- Project grants
- Sale of copyrighted materials
- Sharing of resources with host schools.

DELIVERY MODE

- Self-directed, print-based learning materials complemented by multimedia.
- regular face-to-face contact facilitated by part-time tutors in host schools.

DE CURRICULUM

- Open schools (should) focus on the curriculum that prepares learners to secure sustainable livelihoods (Murangi, 2009).
- Young adults and out-of-school youths are very interested in skills acquisition and that technical and vocational subjects are highly favored by them (UNESCO)

DE CURRICULUM

- It is recommended that the DE curriculum should be the same with the conventional schools, but intertwined with a vocational and entrepreneurship courses.

SUPPORT SERVICES

- Library support
- Program advising
- writing and mathematics assistance
- information literacy skills building
- Schocroft (2009) also recommends organizing student events to allow face-to-face celebrating and socializing.

CONVINCING THE SKEPTICS

- In the Philippines, only guidelines and policies on DE for Higher Education exists.
- Structures for registration, regulation, quality assurance of DE for secondary schools must be established by the Department of Education.

RECOMMENDATION

- A separate institution must be created for our country's secondary-level distance education.
- The said institution shall operate with grants from the government but shall be governed autonomously by a Board.
- The curriculum shall be the same with conventional schools but enhanced with technical and vocational courses.

RECOMMENDATION

- The courses shall be print-based and complemented with face-to-face instruction.
- Support services shall be provided to make learning exciting and meaningful.