



THE ECONOMIC VALUE OF TRADE AND INDUSTRIAL EDUCATION

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Production on a commercial basis is not the primary objective of the trade schools. However, commercial production as an incidence to trade and industrial education has many advantages to the training program. Production provides an occupational atmosphere to the school, a condition which is desirable and necessary for an effective and efficient shop instruction.

The fact that the best training jobs are real jobs and/or those approximating to the commercial jobs shows that this incidental phase of trade and industrial education contributes to the primordial objective of training the individual for an effective entrance to a trade or occupation.

Besides its educational value, a properly administered commercial work also contributes social and economic values both to the school and to the student. In addition to the acquisition and mastery of operational skills in the production of consumer goods, the student will experience some of the common situations attendant to employment in a trade. Through these situations the student will develop a participating experience in, and a clear understanding of specialization, a working knowledge of the relationship between labor and capital, and a better attitude towards the social implication of being an economic producer. This is an integral part of the training of workers and the trade schools

should provide as much situations and facilities possible towards the attainment of this phase of training.

Production makes possible the employment of students during their off-school hours thereby they do not only make use of the spare time for the mastery of the operational skills but also "earn while they learn." The experience that these students acquire in production work will give them pride and confidence in their ability to make use of their practical training in the trade school.

There is no doubt as to the economic value of this by-product of trade and industrial education. During the school year 1947-48, eleven trade schools reported a gross production of P545,177.91 despite the fact that these schools were inadequately financed and poorly equipped. During the same school year, the Iloilo School of Arts and Trades made a production amounting to P176,329.47, the biggest among trade schools. With varying volumes of work, these trade schools engaged in the commercial fabrication of school, office and home furniture and equipment, repairs of various types of appliances and vehicles, construction and repairs of buildings, and many other jobs which utilize student labor either on paid or "gratiz" basis, and from which a net of P123,877.45 was turned in to the special trust funds of the schools

concerned. This money is now invested in the permanent improvement of the trade school. For instance, the Nueva Ecija Trade School, in its commercial operation during the school year 1948-49, was able to make a net profit of P20,973.02 which was added to its special trust fund. Out of this income, the amount of P12,000.00 was invested in modern shop tools and machinery. Moreover, out of the profit from commercial operation, a few trade schools were able to put up or supplement their operating capitals.

During the school year 1948-49, twenty-three trade schools reported a partial production of P752,767.80. Twelve of these schools reported a net profit of P108,966.68. Although no estimate can be given as yet relative to the gross production for the school year 1949-50, the budgets for the special trust funds submitted for approval for this school year disclosed that a net profit of P170,362.78 was realized by nine-

teen trade schools. All the trade schools, with the exception of the Philippine School of Arts and Trades, are engaged in commercial production with varying volumes of work.

The economic return derived from production work should not be taken as an encouragement for the trade schools to engage in large scale production, or should the encouraging amount of profit being reaped be construed to mean that the trade schools are capable of operating on a self-supporting basis. The primary aim of trade and industrial education is the turning out of skilled and intelligent workers. This aim, therefore, should not be subordinated to the production of commercial products. However, commercial production although it is an incidental part of the training of skilled workers, as it has been shown, is an indication of the contribution of trade schools in the building of our national economy.



The Office of Ambassador Cowen, in a letter dated August 31, 1950, to Senator Geronima T. Pecson, informed the latter of the arrangements made by him in securing the services of technical men, at no cost to the Philippine Government, to give technical assistance to the vocational program of our schools, specially the Philippine School of Arts and Trades. The group consisted of one professor and five teachers. Part of this group are already in the Philippines.

INDUSTRIAL ARTS: A VITAL LINK TO COMMUNITY LIFE

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Much has been said and written about the improvement of community life through education. Much more has been written about the objectives of education; to wit, the National Council of Education formulated its ten educational objectives for Philippine youth; the Joint Congressional Committee on Education has its ten objectives for the Philippine educational system; the Division Superintendent of Schools' Convention in 1947 added one more objective to the ten of the NCE; and, to top all these, the Constitution has the five guide-posts to Philippine Education. Our political, economic, social, and educational leaders have been generous with their indorsements of a functional education for the youth of the Republic, a kind of education that would be instrumental in tapping the dormant wealth of the country and in fostering nationalism.

Industrial arts, as a phase of general education, plays a vital role as an eye-opener of the child towards a wider and richer panorama of life. It aims to usher the child through informative and manipulative activities to a richer and more meaningful acquisition of fundamental skills, functional industrial and social information, and healthy attitudes towards appreciation of art and work. Creativity and inventiveness are the living core upon which it builds its educative values.

Criticisms have been hurled at us for an *unfunctional education*—an education that leans too much on classical academism forgetting

that what we need is a practical one. Many deplore the fact that in spite of our educational offerings, the Filipino youth remains unmoved by the economic undertow that threatens to wreck his socio-economic life. But by the very nature of human growth the child follows his biological and social development and will have to go out from the four walls of the school to face the realistic stiffness of life, fraught with the cross-currents of socio-economic problems. His life, as every one knows, will not be a continuous sequence of abstract reading lessons, insubstantial arithmetic problems, or comprehensive accumulation of geographic facts. Casual observation reveals that many men live and die without even experiencing to travel in a town or a province outside from theirs. We have never awakened to the fact that we had been giving an overdoze of book-learning, an overemphasis on methods and technique of teaching forgetting all the while the adjustment needs of the child. Of course, we have no quarrel with the introduction of all the academic offerings but we maintain that due emphasis should be made towards the implementation of industrial arts education. Sharpening one's wits alone through academic subjects cannot guarantee socio-economic stability in a community. For first of all, we must satisfy the primordial needs of life—food, shelter, clothing. Simple analysis unveils the truism in these needs—the necessity of vocational education for community life.

Industrial arts is not vocational

education, but it serves as a vital link towards *functional education*. Given a generous implementation, it acquaints effectively the child, through the intelligent study and use of tools and materials, with the realistic environment of the community. This experience, it is believed, will influence to a certain extent his out-of-school life. It is not, as some are prone to believe, only *mere* manipulation of tools, repair of toilets, mending of broken door and window sashes, and the like. Neither is it only a mere *manual* training designed to discipline boys in their formative age. Rather, it is a functional subject that can effectively coordinate the three R's of elementary instruction. The wrong notion that it is purely manipulative should be disregarded and a healthier concept be used. A reading, language, spelling, or arithmetic lesson can be made more meaningful if it lifts its substance from an experience closest to the child's interests.

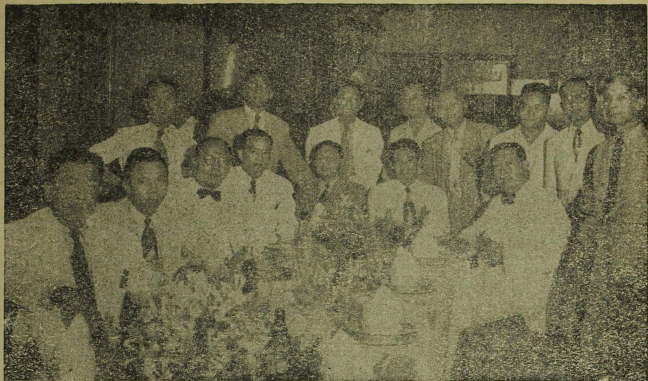
Spencer's definition that "education is a preparation for life" needs then, little modification. Although we don't totally discount this educational philosophy, we believe that Dewey's concept of "education as life" answers much more readily our needs for a functional Philippine education.

Formalized instruction similar in almost all its ramifications has been going on everyday from the isolated islets of Batanes to the coral reefs of the Sulu seas without considering the regional socio-economic growth, development and needs of the people, existence of occupations that are vital guideposts of community living, and the cultures and mores arising from the agricultural-industrial development of the community. Has a survey been made as to how deep this system of instruction has permeat-

ed community life and influenced the development of a verile Filipino youth?

Industrial arts instruction in the Philippines, with its flexible objectives since 1903, fits readily into the development of a culture that will put the country on the map. It does not only consider the development of present industrial "arts" but it also helps preserve the heritage of Filipino "art"—like intricately woven baskets, mats, woodcarvings, etc. Persia is known for her beautiful rags, Japan for her craft-articles, etc. Through industrial arts we can readily develop a distinct *arts and crafts* culture purely ours. We have an abundance of industrial materials. Bamboos could be taken everywhere. Pandan, buri, and others are available in rural backyards. But are these being utilized to the optimum? Are they being used to serve our needs? Are our children taught to appreciate their values? Our craft-articles which ought to be in abundance have been turned to mere curios with prohibitive prices because we have consistently longed for objects from the other side of the fence with a total disregard of those in our own yard.

Something really should be done to acquaint the youth with our own industrial products and materials. If ever, therefore, our education at the early years of the child in school is intended to make more meaningful the life of that child, it must not neglect the industrial arts phase. Industrial arts instruction, however, held in dilapidated shops or under a tree with broken tools, if available at all, and handled by a teacher who also handles all the other academic subjects, does not give healthy signs of helping in the socio-economic improvement of the community.



PICTURE TAKEN OF THE PARTY GIVEN BY THE PPSTA IN HONOR OF THE MEMBERS OF THE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, ON AUG. 7, 1950, AT THE KEG ROOM, JAI ALAI
Sitting from L to R:—Congressmen Jorge Abad, Florante Roque, Cipriano Allas, Panfilo Manguera, Tito Tizon, Manuel T. Cases, and Dr. Escario.

Standing same order:—Congressman Tible, Superintendents of schools Vitaliano Bernardino Jose, C. Aguila, Gregorio Lardizabal, Antonio Maceda, Juan C. Laya, Roman Lorenzo and Isabelo Tupas. Not in the picture are Congressmen Ladrado and Medina Lacson de Leon.