

Looking Ahead

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What Has Gone Before:

A FEW years ago, the schools in Bulacan started a program of community improvement—to raise the standard of living of the people in the rural areas. The teachers with their pupils were seen sweeping the roadside on the highways, cleaning market sites and digging canals for drainage. These activities were followed by school visitations. Material improvements to a certain degree were visible. Reading centers were a common sight in the barrios, trash cans lined up the streets in the puroks and the construction of new latrine types of toilets was undertaken in many homes. However, projects did not attain permanency, for lack of proper understanding of their importance. This year, in cooperation with other agencies engaged in community development, the division started a program of community education thru a series of seminars for teachers and lay leaders throughout the province.

Encouragement:

In all these seminars, the Provincial Governor and the Division Superintendent provided the necessary stimulation and encouragement for the successful implementation of the community school program. The Governor commended the teachers for their spirit of leadership in helping the people improve their ways of living thru community projects. He encouraged the lay leaders, parent teachers association, barrio councils and civic leaders to support and cooperate with teachers and other agencies in the pursuance of the program of community development. The Division Superintendent laid down the principles on how the educative process may develop the school child, educate the out-of-school youth and adults and achieved community uplift. The Governor and the Division Superintendent agreed on an effective and unified program of action for the proper implementation of the community development program.

Presentation:

An effective community program needs a thorough understanding and support of both the teachers and lay leaders. Guest speakers with practical knowledge of community problems were invited to present the following topics:

- a. The role of the school in community development

- b. The community, its problems, needs and resources
- c. Development & enrichment of the curriculum
- d. Organization & Administration of the community school program
- e. The function of the health units in the rural areas
- f. Leadership, principles of coordination in community development
- g. The propagation of poultry and swine for better community living
- h. Ways and means of implementing the five areas of living.

Briefly, the teachers and the people of the community ought to know their problems, needs and resources, so that they can incorporate them in the development and enrichment of the curriculum for classroom instruction.

Methods of Approach:

Among the various techniques, the indirect or the curriculum approach is most appropriate in community education. Here, the teacher makes her plan of teaching in the light of problems and needs of his community. He prepares a unit of work commonly called curriculum unit. Classroom instruction is therefore vitalized. Skills, abilities and knowledges in the different subjects are enriched through the curriculum. Learning activities are tied up with the problems of the community, so that whatever is learned in the classroom will influence and affect the adult through the children and other school activities. At times, adults are invited in the classroom to observe some lessons in occupational activities either in the shop or in the home economics. While the children learn, the adults also get important information on new aspects of occupational activities, and on the other hand, there are times when the adults present in the classroom may have experiences not known by teachers and pupils, and here is when the adults may serve as resource persons. The teacher and the pupils learn from the rich experiences of the adults. This process of interaction is vital in our community schools. It has created among them a feeling of belongingness and a desire to learn more.

Group Activity:

On the second day of the seminar, the entire assembly organized themselves into smaller groups for

further study of problems in the different areas. They elected the chairman, the recorder and the observer.

During this group activity, they planned out possible solutions to community problems. Some of these problems were:

- (1) What the schools can do?
- (2) Who will stimulate the barrio council to action?
- (3) How to get the laymen and other organizations to cooperate in community development?

Re-action:

The success of the seminars given in all parts of the province was not only felt by the school teachers but also by the lay leaders. The discussion in the general assembly and the group work in committee meetings gave the conferees a more comprehensive picture of the goals of the community school. At first the teachers had the belief that the program of the community school along community improvement was an added burden and needed extra time to achieve material improvements. In the same manner, the lay leaders present believed that the community activities of the teachers were really additional burden. Attempts were made by the lay leaders to have teachers concentrate their activities on community improvements. But further discussion and inter-change of ideas made them arrived at the conclusion that community improvements alone would not give permanent achievements on the goal of the community school unless the improvements made are accompanied by the corresponding change of attitudes, knowledges and skills of the people of the community. The need of an educative process through the study of community problems from the schoolroom to the community and vice versa was felt. At this juncture, came the spark of idea, and a more favorable reaction that a new program of community development be prepared cooperatively by the teachers and the people of the community, through group study and group action.

Future plan:

For a more successful implementation of what the participants agreed in the seminar, a suggestive plan of community education has been proposed to be launched throughout the province.

- a. A pilot for each municipality will be selected by the municipal community development council for the holding of the barrio seminar under the auspices of the barrio council.
- b. Similar barrio seminars will be held in other barrios of each municipality for the enlightenment of the masses in community development.
- c. To launch an action program in the following areas of living:

Social-cultural:

1. Organization of literacy classes for the

irradication of illiteracy and the promotion of better ways of life

2. Establishment of multi-purpose community centers which may serve as the meeting place (government center) of the barrio council, the health center and the cultural and recreational center of the barrio.

Health and Sanitation:

1. Construction of individual and community toilets
2. Improvement of housing facilities and home beautification
3. Fencing and general cleanliness of yards and surroundings.

Socio-Economic:

1. Preparation and use of compost and other local facilities.
2. Demonstration farming (seed selection, margate and masagana, pest control, poultry, piggery) through the technical assistance of other government agencies.
3. Vegetable home gardening (sitao culture and other vegetables)
4. Two or three fruit trees (papaya, mango, banana, santol, caimito, oranges, etc.) in every home of teachers, pupils and government employees
5. Promotion of home industries (sewing, basketry, weaving, knitting)
6. Establish school and community nurseries

Civic and Citizenship:

1. Regular open forum on rights and obligations of every citizen.
2. Attendance to group meetings for the solution of community problems
3. Study of the constitution and by-laws of puroks, PTA's and cooperatives

Moral and Spiritual Life:

1. Faith in Divine Providence and obedience to the ten commandments of God
2. The home as the center of Philippine Society
3. Preserving Filipino culture and family solidarity

Evaluation:

1. Organize evaluation committee on barrio, town and provincial levels.
2. Prepare an evaluation instrument for the yearly evaluation of the program.
3. Conduct a social research project on the impact of the community school movement upon the life of the people in the rural areas.