

## THE CRITERION OF QUALITY IN EDUCATION

The improvement of a college should primarily find expression in the fine quality of its products. This element is identifiable in the vigorous growth of the intellectual ability of its students and in their acquisition of a discriminating sense of values. Such a resulting condition is in general a reflection of the challenging attitude of the college teachers towards scholarship and their dedication to the cause of education as a pursuit for effective brain power and as a process of developing integrity of thought and personal conduct

The formal procedure and methods of teaching should serve as operating techniques for guiding the mental and emotional development of the learner towards higher stages of maturity. They could be varied and diverse. For as the saying goes there are many and different roads to Rome. There are straight and direct pathways; and there are step by step approaches, passing through rugged, arduous, and formidable obstacles, but all leading or pointing ahead toward some beckoning goal of fulfillment.

But methods, devices, and procedures are not the end of educational instruction. Neither should they be given as much importance and value to the student as the substance of education and science and as the purpose of educational development. They only provide the means of teaching; and the mere adoption of any of them does not necessarily bring about fruitful results. It is through their actual, serious, and intel-

ligent application that their merits could be judged and their effectiveness tested.

But there must be some objective proof, some authentic evidence, of the successful realization of the purposes of teaching methods and learning procedures. The effectiveness of instruction and study is best shown by the ultimate outcome of its intelligent and persistent observance.

It is the attainment of quality performance for the purpose it is intended that counts. It is the acquisition of a disciplined mind and a responsible character. Has the student improved his knowledge of language, or mathematics, or history, or science, or economics, or any other subject he has taken? Or better still, has he learned how to make a more effective use of his senses, his imagination, his perceptive faculties, his critical power or creative ability? Has his college work and performance broadened his moral views, his mental horizon, his aesthetic sensitiveness, and his emotional attitude towards man and man's personal strivings and social preferences?

Methods and procedures are intended to bring forth the right answers to these questions. Properly employed, they may lead the learner to a thorough understanding of the content of their courses of study and a critical appreciation of their meaning in relation to their personal aspirations and reasonable expectancies in their place in the economic and social order.

But the attainment of quality in the educational record of a student may not be taken for granted. It has to be tested by a fair and unbiased examination and observation of accomplished tasks and developed traits. It needs to be tested through some form of valid assessment and evaluation of acquired practices of study and dedication to work. It is the student's achievement of superior performance in such tasks and what such performance reveals in the refinement of

his sense of values, the vigor of his critical faculties, and the adequate formation of his mental habits that count in the last analysis. Obviously, no method of testing and measuring may be expected to show accurately the reality of all these qualities of mind and character. Given their subjective nature, it is enough for a test to reveal indubitable traces of their distinctive potentialities for fuller development in the course of time.

All these acquired qualities and talents form the composite and distinctive hallmark of genuine quality in learning, in education, and in practically all other branches of human endeavor. They are exceedingly more useful and valuable than the mere acquisition of information and the reproduction of second-hand knowledge. They are the valid symbols of the educated and progressive individual. Their development should be the aim of the teacher and the purpose of a college. It is high time that general recognition of this test of quality in education be given by Filipinos anxious for intellectual and cultural advancement as the chief vehicle towards national progress. — *Vicente G. Sinco.*