

K to 12 Challenges of Philippine Higher Education Institutions

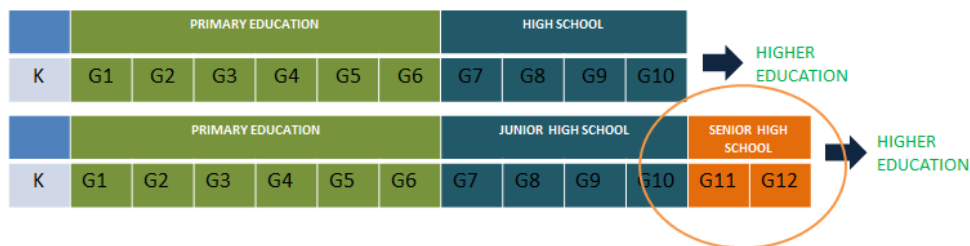
Jhona S. Camba, De La Salle University, Philippines, Jhona.camba@dlsu.edu.ph

The Philippine country welcomes challenges to become a significant part of the global community, and education is one of the factors to consider since it is still a top priority in the Philippine context. The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) strategic plan 2011-2016 stated that Philippine has a deteriorating quality of education. And it was 2010 when the Department of Education (DepEd) introduced the K to 12 education system to the country as an effective solution. K to 12 education system means kindergarten plus six years of elementary, four years of junior high school and two years of senior high school which is common education system all over the world. DepEd has issues and plans to face the implications of the new basic education system. On the other hand, higher education institutions are not yet geared up to K to 12's domino effect.

The future of higher education in the Philippines relies to the success of K to 12 basic education systems. It is said that the graduates of senior high school are well-prepared to enter higher education because they have a better understanding and it is not necessary for remedial courses; however, this also implies that they are ready for work. The concept of the graduates is both well-equipped for higher education and employment.

Given the situation, more knowledgeable high school students will enter the higher education. The higher education institutions must change their formation strategy. They must do research about the handling first year students that have ages around 17 to 19 with high level of intellectual capacity. Though other higher education institutions abroad have this formation concept for ages 17 to 19, the Philippine higher education institutions must work on how it will fit to Philippine culture.

K to 12 has also an implication to both basic and higher education curriculum. Mainly, basic education has development or revisions to its curriculum because of its additional senior high school level. For higher education, there is a possibility of major revisions or shortening of their college curriculum due to the changes in the K to 12 system.



The occurrence of K to 12 forced secondary schools and higher education institutions to modify their curricula. And higher education institutions are more affected than secondary schools in this aspect. The secondary schools will just add specialized programs while higher education institutions will modify the whole program as the new batch of incoming students have high level of intellectual capacity.

Moreover, there are issues that must be taken care of by higher education institutions immediately and one of these is what we call the two years enrolment gap during the transition period. Since K to 12 has started last Academic Year (AY) 2012-2013 there will be no graduates on March of 2016 and 2017 who are supposedly the freshmen and sophomore batches of higher education for AY 2016-2017 and AY

2017-2018. As academic years continue, this 2-year decrease in number of enrollees in higher education is a challenge to be faced by the higher education institutions in addition to the competition between education and employment after graduation.

The possible immediate response of the higher education institutions to address this decreasing number of enrollees is to offer senior high school level. They must get some portion of the senior high school market from secondary schools since secondary schools are also having a problem accepting senior high schools due to the physical capacity. It will end to a senior high school competition between the secondary schools and higher education institutions.

Today, Philippines higher education institutions together with the DepEd and CHEd are open-handedly contributing their efforts to make the K to 12 transition successful for the betterment of the future quality education of the country and become competent for global competitiveness. However challenges of the K to 12 transition and implementation convey massive changes to higher education institutions strategic plan both in public and private. It will bring more knowledgeable and mature first year students, force to change their whole curriculum, and lessen the number of enrollees.