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<u>Panel Session III</u>

Harnessing human resource development in the digital economy through relevant science and culture interventions

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1. Human Dilemma

   It has always been a challenge for the human race to properly understand and deal with the vast universe of natural and social phenomena. It seemed that the logical thing was to put them into groups and subgroups, divide them into subjects and categories and sub-categories, under the care of specialists who built up different worlds of specialized knowledge

2. Specializations of knowledge

   Origins of disciplines of knowledge:

   - In order to understand the reality of human experience.

   - To find solutions to problems such as diseases

     ----The branches of knowledge in Europe developed from the desire to understand God-created universe in the context of Christian theology.

3. Characteristics of "Polarised" Education

   - Categorization of knowledge in 19th century Europe based on study of natural science and secular social knowledge like laws and politics

   - It is unfortunate that the education world divides human knowledge into 2 parts---Natural Sciences on one side and Arts and Humanities on the other

   - This means there is no middle ground to study but in fact Culture or Societies-in-Nature are in the middle ground.

   - To study Earth or Nature by itself without societies is inadequate. To study societies without reference to nature or the physical environment is also inadequate.

   - To understand "culture" is the right approach in the quest for SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals)

4. What is Culture?

   - Ways of living that reflect all forms and manners of human creativity, inventions, beliefs and spirituality sustained over time It functions in the middle connecting nature, people and technology.

   - CULTURE IS A BASIC NEED (Prince Claus Fund):

Culture encompasses ways of life that have maintained the richness of the earth for thousands of years for its population to enjoy.

- Sustainable Development Goals that we are yearning now are the results of the right balance of living in nature.
- The 1987 Brudtland report defines Sustainable Development as "Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs".
- The aims of cultural studies: Learning about local wisdom, learning about the infinite values of nature, understanding social diversities, understanding the value of subsistence living, sustainability and spirituality.

5. "Interdisciplinary" or "multidisciplinary" approaches and holistic thinking

- Interdisciplinary implies crossing the boundaries of academic disciplines.
- Sustainable development goals cannot be achieved without crossing academic disciplines.
- "The Big Picture" vision is necessary in the process of embracing different disciplines or approaches.
- Students must be brave and willing to cross intellectual and social boundaries and face new unfamiliar knowledge. Interdisciplinary work would try to integrate relevant facts or procedures to bring about a new synthesis.
- Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) is a vision of education that seeks to empower people to assume responsibility for creating a sustainable future.
- Interdisciplinary approach is necessary as no one science can provide satisfactory explanations and solutions to issues of global dimensions

6. Digital Technology as a tool in understanding human societies

- Southeast Asia is one of the most internet-addicted regions on earth with the Philippines topping the global list with an average of 10 hours and 2 minutes of screen time every day. The country was joined in the top five by Thailand and Indonesia…while Japan comes in last (the *Guardian* February 1,2019*).* Most time spent on social media.
- The digital technology seems to be used for social and cultural interactions more than economic transactions (ie digital economy).
- This social phenomenon shows that the younger generations are learning how to communicate with each other across vast distances and through language barriers and ethnic differences.

- This is a good sign that they will acquire the skill in grasping social information that combines Nature and People.
- This may augur well that interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approaches could be rapidly handled through Digital Technology.

7. Cultural Resource Management

- Digital technology has become the platform for human communication and transactions that go beyond buying and selling.
- This presents to educators vast opportunities to reach out to new frontiers of knowledge, especially to integrate human needs with the cycles of nature for sustainable development.
- Cultural Heritage Management is a major concern in cultural resource management as heritage is fragile and vulnerable, especially in times of military conflicts.
- The education sector should be involved more in the task of looking after social legacies and heritages of all kinds that reflect creativity and identity---whether in Fine Arts, Performing Arts, Architecture etc.
- Cultural knowledge and skills are invaluable in the 21st century.

8. Cultural Heritage Protection

- Cultural heritage refers to the depth of a community that has made both tangible products as well practices and belief systems that laid the social and cultural foundation of the community.
- For a society to move forward into the future, it should have a proper understanding of its ancestors' values and identity that deserve to be protected and carried forward into the future.
- The wealth of formation and knowledge still extant should be maintained and studied by both educators and students alike who have vast opportunities to reach out to new frontiers of knowledge, especially to integrate human needs with the cycles of nature for sustainable development through information technology and digital channels.
- Cultural heritage studies should therefore be one of the main academic subjects in schools so that young people will better understand the value of their local heritage and the environmental background of their communities.

9. Heritage and Innovative Economy

- It is now recognized that "innovation" and not "capital" is the driving force of the 21st century.

- Knowing plant properties will connect a student to his/her community. Next would be to have the innovative skills to make the plants relevant in the present-day society.
- Craftsmanship is a skill that can be learnt by a thorough understanding of how to make a good use of the artifact in your hands and the nature of your community.
- Southeast Asian societies are full of examples of textiles, wooden sculptures, ceramics and metal works that could inspire new works of art that are linked with the past masterpieces that are recognized as part the community iconic identity.

Conclusions

- It is the duty of each community to reveal and make known its cherished principles and customs so that others may understand and respect them better.
- As a centre of world civilizations and useful knowledge, the Asia/Pacific Region has the responsibility to actively participate in cultural understanding, heritage preservation and management with other world centres.
- Cultural education should be better integrated into the school educational philosophy and pedagogy because it could inspire innovative designs and new answers to the local communities' problems.