

Quantity or Quality in Education

By: Sophia Gonzales

Nearly 264,000,000 kids across the globe are lacking access to education and access to higher education. Delegates representing many countries gathered at the Model United Nations in San Antonio to brainstorm solutions that could address this disturbing statistic. Although many countries like Germany, Sweden, and Mexico argued that they have been funding educational programs, there is still not a direct path that all the countries can agree on. Some lean towards having more accessible schools across the globe, while others believe we need to strengthen current education systems to make an effective difference.

Some countries were especially strong in the belief that there should be more schools for students to attend and easier access to a nearby school. Australia suggested building more schools in rural areas as a way to offer easy access for students in low-income areas. During an interview, Honduras stated, "In areas where they need that education, there aren't schools there so then it is a matter of quantity." Many of the parents in low-income areas do not see the dire need for education when it is too distant and simply unnecessary when there is already a predetermined job and life for their child. Even if there are better quality schools, it wouldn't even matter if the school isn't nearby. Another issue concerning the number of schools would be availability or classrooms for the indigenous people where a school is not even offered in their native tongue. Mexico stated during an interview, "The implementation of better infrastructure, more infrastructure, educational infrastructure in rural areas are needed to ensure that indigenous communities are more included in the classroom". The building of more schools would offer more opportunities for everyone across the world whether they are from a huge city or a small village in the middle of nowhere.

The other part of the discussion wanted to have better quality education for the kids with fewer schools in the area. Nigeria stated, "Quality over quantity is key." Indonesia wanted to provide a higher level of learning for all teachers even if they are already qualified to develop higher quality education for students in lower-income areas. When asked how these programs would be funded Indonesia stated, "When educating these teachers we would get the funding from UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), IMF (International Monetary Fund), UNDP (United Nations Development Program), as well as the OOSCI (Out of School Children Initiative) which would take the demographics and data from their regions so we could properly educate the teachers we would add there."

Quality education would also mean increasing the standardization for schools currently and updating material based on the countries own needs and standards so the students can learn the relevant and necessary information. When asked how the curriculum would stay updated and

relevant, China explained how it would be updated country by country basis. Because different nations have different standards for their children, they are going to have different ideas that they want to be presented in the schools. It's also an issue of national sovereignty; we can't have one standardized thing and since some nations are going to be centered around different professions.

Still, many other countries believed there was a strong need for both quality and quantity. During the interview, China stated, "The delegate of China believes that if we are working on the quantity and building more schools, why not make it together when we make new schools they are the best quality. In the end, both quality and quantity are equally necessary to develop higher levels of education and easier access across the globe. As Honduras put it, "It's not a matter of one over the other, it's both working together."