

## CURRENT ISSUES AND CHALLENGES IN EDUCATION

by:

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For the first time since the establishment of the new K to 12 curriculum, the Philippines took part in an international assessment of basic education. The Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) is a triennial study of 15-year-old students from around the world in three subjects: reading, mathematics, and science. The result shows that the Filipino students have the lowest reading scores and the second lowest both in math and science. In the Philippines, fifteen-year-old students are nearing the completion of junior high school, proving strongly that basic education in the Philippines has major challenges in the early years. It also shows that even before the pandemic, there were worrying signs of an education crisis in the Philippines.

According to a study conducted by Dr. Andrew L. Tan Data Science Institute (ALTDSI) of De La Salle University (DLSU), Filipino students who scored poorly in reading comprehension in PISA in 2018 are mostly from low-income families with family and school environments that do not encourage growth mindsets. From this information, it only shows that students belonging to lower income groups may find academic requirements as a burden as they prioritize work to make ends meet for their family. Though the relation between socioeconomic status and educational achievement is not new, these findings support the importance of a child's surroundings and resources in inspiring them to learn and grow.

Reading and Comprehension are essential in a child's understanding of concepts in math, science, and other subject areas. If students failed to acquire these skills, they may tend to score low in those areas as well. These are learners who have already

admitted to having reading difficulties, which contributes to their motivation to learn. In addition, teaching variables such as frequent teacher feedback, asking students their thoughts on the reading material, and teacher enthusiasm may also affect in the students' skills. Meanwhile, the lack of ICT tools, which is typical in public schools and low-income households, made interactive learning impossible.

It is stated in the 1987 Philippine Constitution Article XIV Sec. 1 that the State shall preserve and promote the right of all citizens to quality education at all levels, and shall take reasonable actions to make education accessible to all. We have already observed that the socioeconomic status of the students has a significant impact in the students' performance. Increased scholarship grants, student loan programs, subsidies, and other incentives given to deserving students in both public and private schools, particularly the underprivileged, will be extremely beneficial. This can help them to focus more in their studies as they do not have to worry on other expenses. It is also included in Sec. 5 that education must be given the highest budgetary priority, and that enough salary and job satisfaction and fulfillment must be provided to guarantee that teaching attracts and retains its rightful share of the best available talents. I have also mentioned about some of the teacher variables that contribute to the low performance of the students. We want to keep sharing information while also expanding our own. If we can have right compensation, we will experience less physical and mental fatigue, and be able to continue teaching with a more positive attitude. We are grateful for our salary however it is very challenging to budget when the cost of essential commodities is too high. I know that there are much-pressing issues in the country right now, but we, teachers also deserve the attention. With better teachers, we can nurture a brighter generation, and our hope can always be geared to a renewed government.

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