

## WHAT MAKES PHILIPPINE EDUCATION UNIQUE?

by:

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Philippine education has started making its way to expand access and improve quality. The government believed education was the key to solving the problems of the country. Also, the need for human capital development has been the main reason for educational reforms which taught to be a solution to unemployment, poverty, and inequality. Philippine education has faced challenges but is still seen as one of the most developed in Asia in terms of completion rates, higher education participation, and adult literacy rate compared to far-developed countries such as South Korea, Hongkong, and Singapore (UNESCO, 2014).

What makes Philippine education unique? The Trifocalization of Education consists of: (1) Basic education which is mandatory from preschool up to 13 years (Kinder, 6 years of elementary, 4 years of Junior High School, and additional 2 years of Senior High School) has been managed by the Department of Education, (2) The Commission of Higher Education (CHED) has managed public and private higher institutions including undergraduate and post-graduate programs. Lastly, (3) TVET oversees the management of training such as company-based, community-based, and institution-based (TESDA's partner institutions).

The recent Philippine educational reform has produced competent and globally competitive individuals ready for local and international labor markets. The additional two-year in Senior High School have tracks such as Academic, Technical-Vocational, Arts, and Sports Tracks. Senior High School (SHS) exit points are College or Higher Education, Middle Skills Employment, and Entrepreneurship.

Aside from this, ALS (Alternative Learning System) is a program for Out-of-School Youths to be educated and trained in the skills needed for productivity, employment, and business opportunities. The ALS is an informal approach to education where learners are encouraged to self-study and it has a flexible learning modality based on student availability. Teaching can be conducted at community centers, at home, or managed by mobile (ALS) teachers. The government is committed that every Filipino child should be given the right to education.

Another milestone in Philippine education is that the government continuously expands access and participation in higher education and even improves the quality of education by allocating a huge percentage of the national budget to education for the hiring of teachers and staff, building and improvement of infrastructures, development of resource materials and support higher education and offered scholarships.

Aside from this, Philippine teachers are passionate and committed to their vocation. They have shown their dedication to work and helping learners learn even in the midst of difficulties and challenges faced in the education sector. Teachers are also known for their resiliency in the delivery of the teaching-learning process. Teachers were considered the modern heroes of today's education. They have assumed the role of second parents, counselors, guides, and many more.

Lastly, the Philippine Government with the Department of Education considered education as the key to solving problems of the country. Education is viewed as a means of producing competent and competitive individuals equipped with in-depth knowledge, skills, and competencies that will ensure the future productive workforce of the nation that will drive development forward.

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