

HOW CLIMATE CRISIS TAKES ITS TOLL ON EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM IN THE PHILIPPINES

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The global impact of climate change is getting worse at a very alarming rate according to a report of (UNICEF, 2025). The earth is 1.63 degrees warmer on average than it was during the pre-industrial time. In the report of UNICEF, it was shown that climate change exacerbates the learning crisis. Around 70 percent of 10-year-olds in low-and-middle income countries today cannot read and understand a simple text. This figure is in a global context. But how about when we talk about the effects of climate change in the context of the Philippine educational system.

Gone are the days when children enjoyed the summer heat and kids can still play outside their houses during summer vacation without worrying about getting heat strokes or other heat induced sickness. Because summer heat in the Philippines is getting worse every year. In a news roundup published by (Climate Change Commission 2025,) Philippines ranks third in unusual heat in Asia linked to climate change. Millions of Filipinos are suffering from the unprecedented heat crisis. The educational system is not excluded, in fact it is one of the most affected.

According to a report published by Reuters (Portugal et al., 2024) the Philippines scores among the lowest in the world in math, science, and reading partly because of the years of inadequate remote learning during the pandemic. But when the school year comes back to normal and students start going to school for full face-to-face classes, class suspensions are still unavoidable. During the years 2022 to 2024 in primary and secondary levels there were classes in the months of April and May because classes have never been adjusted to the normal schedule which starts every month of June and ends

every March. In the months of April and May extreme heat in the Philippines were recorded every year. So, to practice safety precautions DepEd has to cancel classes due to extreme heat.

This year, classes resume to their original schedule which starts every month of June and ends in March. Just four to seven weeks have passed, then again the Philippines was battered by heavy typhoons causing extreme floods all over Manila and Luzon. Again, another reason to suspend classes. Class suspensions were too many to count. And the sad reality is that the education gap of the younger generations becomes enormous. Remote learning might exacerbate the already challenged educational system instead of doing the opposite.

Also, the climate crisis is far reaching its toll to the educational system in the Philippines. Not only in terms of suspension of classes, but also from the infrastructure damages such as classrooms and other facilities, textbooks, and other learning materials. Climate crises can also cause significant financial losses in the Department of Education due to damages and destruction. It clearly undermines the educational opportunities of the Filipino children that might affect their future.

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