

Beyond the Margins: The Silent Exclusion of Gifted Learners in EDCOM II

Tyrone O. Gil Jr.

*College of Education, University of the Philippines, Quezon City, 1101, Philippines
Corresponding Email: togil@up.edu.ph*

"Where are the gifted learners in the national education agenda?". The Education Commission II (EDCOM II) is a national initiative mandated by Republic Act No. 11899, tasked with undertaking a comprehensive assessment of the Philippine education sector and recommending transformative reforms. The significance of having an EDCOM II in today's milieu has never been more important. While EDCOM II's reports and policy recommendations extensively address various challenges within the Philippine educational system, they conspicuously lack specific and targeted provisions for gifted learners. As I reflect on the initial EDCOM II report, reflective questions arise: Where is the data on gifted learners? Are we recognizing their presence within our student population? And what resources are we allocating to support their unique educational needs?

The National Association for Gifted Children comprehensively describes gifted and talented learners as those who demonstrate outstanding levels of aptitude or competence in one or more domains (Türkman, 2020). They are often misunderstood and face a unique challenge in a typical classroom setting. Most of our learners who are advanced in STEM most likely are placed in a special program for science or in one of our Philippine Science High Schools (Laili et al., 2020).

For the past years, there has been a lack of advancement and advocacy for Filipino gifted learners. There is no clear law that institutionalizes the policies, programs, and services for gifted learners. While the Department of Education has department orders that acknowledge the extraordinary and creative minds of gifted learners, an absence of a robust law fails to solidify its actualization. Recently, the enactment of RA 11650, or the New Inclusive Law, made a positive impact on the realization of an inclusive education for learners with disabilities. However, RA 11650 uses the term "learners with disabilities," which only includes individuals facing difficulties and does not acknowledge gifted learners. In fact, there are no provisions under RA 11650 that enhance the education for the gifted learners. This oversight underscores a systemic gap in recognizing and addressing the needs of exceptionally

talented students, potentially hindering their intellectual and creative development. The current educational landscape in the Philippines, as reflected in the EDCOM II reports, fails to adequately address the needs of gifted learners and reveals a critical gap in our national education strategy.

The absence of policies addressing the gifted learners has dire consequences. The educational system, designed to cater to the average student, often leaves gifted learners unchallenged and uninspired. In 2022, House Bill 1422, or an Act Establishing the National Program for the Filipino Gifted, was proposed by Representative Ramon Guico Jr. of the Fifth District of Pangasinan. It was a bill that mandates the Department of Education to create a National Program for the Gifted that will cater to the needs and development of intellectually or potentially gifted learners. However, the bill remains to be as stagnant as our nation's initiative in nurturing the minds of our gifted learners. While the nation sets aside the importance of investing in our Filipino gifted learners, we are also wasting the potentials and talents of these learners who could have helped towards national development.

It is, without a doubt, crucial to tackle the numerous challenges within our educational system that demand immediate attention, including enhancing teacher training, refining curriculum development, improving infrastructure, and strategically allocating funding. EDCOM II's focus on these broad issues is understandable, but it should not come at the expense of neglecting the unique needs of gifted learners. It is my sincere hope that our nation will recognize the neglect faced by gifted learners and understand that investing in their potential could unlock solutions to the complex challenges confronting our nation today and, in the years, to come. If inclusive education genuinely aspires to let every child succeed, it must also embrace those who are exceptionally advanced, who are too often forgotten. Again, where are the gifted learners in the national education agenda?

References

- Laili, N., Sabila, N. S., Vibraena, V. M., Junaidi, A. R., & Dewantoro, D. A. (2020). Gifted Education in ASEAN. <https://doi.org/10.2991/assehr.k.201112.002>
- Larroder, A. C., & Ogawa, M. (2015). The development of a self-evaluation checklist for measuring Filipino students' science giftedness. *Asia-Pacific Science Education*, 1(1). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s41029-015-0002-0>
- Pawilen, G. T., & Manuel, S. J. (2018). A Proposed Model and Framework for Developing a Curriculum for the Gifted in the Philippines. *International Journal of Curriculum and Instruction*, 10(2), 118. <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1207237.pdf>
- Türkman, B. (2020). The Evolution of The Term of Giftedness & Theories to Explain Gifted Characteristics. *Journal of Gifted and Creativity*, 7(1), 17–24. <https://dergipark.org.tr/en/pub/jgedc/issue/52403/645722>
- Yassin, S. F. M., Ishak, N. M., Yunus, M. M., & Majid, R. A. (2012). The Identification of Gifted and Talented Students. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 55, 585. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2012.09.540>

ARTICLE DETAILS

EIR-0000044; Received: August 7, 2025; Accepted: August 9, 2025; Published: August 11, 2025

CITATION:

Gil T. (2025). *Beyond the Margins: The Silent Exclusion of Gifted Learners in EDCOM II. Education and Industry Review: Essays and Critiques*. DOI: 10.62596/eir.jbbj2v32

COPYRIGHT

Copyright © 2025 by author(s). *Education and Industry Review: Essays and Critiques* is published by Stratworks Research Inc. This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>), allowing redistribution and reproduction in any format or medium, provided the original work is cited or recognized.