

## ***Better Systems, Not Just New Buildings***

DR. JASON V. ANG

*School of Teacher Education, Biliran Province State University, Naval, Biliran 6560, Philippines  
Corresponding email: jason.ang@bipsu.edu.ph*

Over the years, we've seen new schools rise, classrooms painted fresh, and officials proudly cutting ribbons in front of newly built structures. These are often seen as signs of progress. But behind the bright paint and ceremonial celebrations, the same slow and uneven systems continue to hold back students and teachers alike. "Maganda ang bagong paaralan," people say, but if the systems inside don't change, students are still left to struggle.

Too often, the focus is on physical structures rather than the systems that make learning truly possible. Many public schools have new walls and gates, but still not enough books or trained teachers to fill those rooms. Students in these schools are still caught in classes too large, taught by teachers too tired to give every child the attention they deserve. As supported by Manlongat et al. (2021), large class sizes negatively impact the emotional and physical conditions of teachers, leading to stress and exhaustion. It's a truth we see again and again, a new building doesn't fix a broken system. Moreover, Filipino families sacrifice so much to send their children to school, often going into debt to buy uniforms and supplies. But what do they find when they get there? Teachers who must work with broken chairs and outdated materials, administrators who juggle paperwork without real support, and a system that leaves them all overworked and underpaid. Even the Department of Education struggles to keep up, saying "kulang ang pondo" when asked why the basics still aren't there.

Teachers do not enter the profession for wealth, they stay for purpose, for passion, and for the students whose futures they help shape. But purpose alone cannot pay the electric bill or replace a torn textbook. The silent sacrifices are rarely seen in policy papers or budget plans. A study by Solvason et al. (2023) noted that when educators are left unsupported, their passion becomes unsustainable, and the classroom becomes a place of survival instead of growth. True reform must consider not just what teachers can give, but also what they rightfully deserve in return.

It's not enough to put up new buildings If the same slow systems continue to waste time and resources. Funding must not only come for buildings but also for teacher training, better materials, and better pay. A study by Arzaga (2021) emphasized that students' academic performance, particularly in rural areas, is directly affected by the lack of quality educational resources and support systems. Teachers who are respected and well-compensated are more able to give their best, and students learn more when they see their teachers have the support they need. Financial support from both the national government and local officials should be focused on these basic yet essential needs—not just on impressive structures.

When the systems are truly fixed, when classrooms are equipped with proper books, teachers have real training, and funds reach the actual needs of learners, the change will be felt by every Filipino family. Students will feel motivated to learn, knowing their hard work will be supported. Teachers will feel valued and stay in the profession longer, sharing their knowledge with more heart. As revealed by Ustol (2025), effective classroom management and adequate resources significantly contribute to a better learning environment and teacher performance. Parents will no longer see education as just another expense, but as a real path for their children's better future. These are the changes that can transform schools from just empty promises into real places of hope and growth.

Filipinos know how to make do, but “diskarte” can only go so far when children still read from torn books and teachers still share cramped rooms. Let this be a clear message to those in power: fix the systems first. Invest not only in walls and roofs, but in the real work that happens inside. Support teachers, bring resources to classrooms, and ensure every peso spent on education goes to making sure no child is left behind. Hornsby (2013) stated that challenges in developing contexts go beyond infrastructure and must include reforms in teaching practices, class sizes, and support systems to achieve meaningful change. Let this be the time to finally see that real progress in education comes not from what we build, but how we make those buildings truly serve every learner.

## **References**

- Arzaga, Jaybie. (2021). An Evaluation of a Rural School's Grade 10 Student's Performance in K-12 Biology. *International Multidisciplinary Research Journal*. 3. 246-251. 10.54476/iimrj226.
- Hornsby, David. (2013). Teaching Large Classes in Higher Education: Challenges and Opportunities in a Developing Context.
- Manlongat, Marites & Castor, Arlene & Chavez, Rosana & Abila, Regie & Festijo, Irish & Fajilan, Trixie & Zuela, Joseph. (2021). Impact of Large Class Size on Teachers' Emotional and Physical Conditions. *International Multidisciplinary Research Journal*. 3. 11-21. 10.54476/iimrj230.
- Ustol, Redzmalyn. (2025). Classroom Management Practices among Elementary Schools Teachers at Patikul East District, Division of Sulu. *Journal of Education and Academic Settings*. 2. 1-19. 10.62596/nj30tr16.
- Solvason, C., Allies, S., Hodgkins, A., Weston, R., & Malomo, M. (2023). 'Occasionally there are moments of light': the challenges of primary school teaching in England, and the factors that motivate teachers to stay in the profession. *Education 3-13*, 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03004279.2023.2287547>

**ARTICLE DETAILS**

*EIR-0000005; Received: June 7, 2025; Accepted: June 10, 2025; Published: June 12, 2025*

**CITATION:**

*Ang, Jason V. (2025). Better Systems, Not Just New Buildings. Education and Industry Review: Essays and Critiques. DOI: 10.62596/eir.f57xv461*

**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.*