DEMOGRAPHIC DIVIDENDS: KEY TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

by:

Marvin R. Rodriguez
Teacher II, Bagac National High School-Parang

Many years in the past, the Philippines got its freedom, learned to stand on its own, faced all the struggles and hardships, but still, we keep our eyes open to change that has yet to come: a healthy life for every small unit in our society, the family. It has to come, maybe, if we can achieve "demographic dividends; the key to sustainable development."

"Change is the only thing that is constant in life", a quote by the famous Heraclitus that means there is a possibility that we can see the light in the coming of change. I believe, change and development is symbiotic; when there is a development, change will take place, and when there's a change it is because there is development.

Demographic dividend is a situation where there are increase in economy that is caused by the larger share of working-aged people than to the non-working people in a community. In these cases, the proportion of children is declining because of low fertility, and the proportion of elderly people is still small.

Our country is characterized as having a very young population. In illustrating our population it comes to look like a pyramid. In this case the lower portion has the biggest number that comprised the children and the adolescents. The middle part composed of the young adult and the working adults, and the old age.

Looking at it, the biggest number of our population that posed at the bottom part are the dependents. In the middle part, which is the second larger number of the population are the working group, but still the young adults are not necessarily working
if they are still in school, therefore, they remain a part of the dependent population. The upper portion that laid going up to the tip of the pyramid has the smallest number which is the old age. They can be dependents or independents depending on their living condition when they were adults.

In all countries, children and the elderly consume more than they produce. It is due to the needs of people in daily life is greater that their future needs. People tend to work for the present than to invest for the future.

And this is the real scenario in the Philippines population. So, working towards the goal of change for development to take place, all of us should take part to change our current population trends. There shall be no more unplanned marriage; no more unwanted pregnancy; no more abortion; no more HIV/AIDS. On the other hand, there should be more job opportunities; realistic high salary and wages for employees, improved medical/hospital services, quality and accessible education; and ultimately better life for all the Filipino people. This can be so if, we can change the demography of our current Philippine population.

Then, let us start today, not later, not tomorrow. But the question is, how can we achieve demographic dividend? How can we do it? Who will do it?

One way of achieving the so-called Demographic Dividends is through proper education among our students, proper sex education to be particular. It should be given more emphasis to counter the effect of social media among the youth. Our department can be an avenue to enlighten our students. As the integration of sex education is already passed by the senate, we, the education sector should support it by strictly teaching it to those teenagers for them to open up their mind and dream of a better future for them and to lessen unplanned pregnancy to mitigate the dependent and provide more working ages.
We can still develop amidst the negativities brought by the changes happening in our world, and that is by providing competent graduates for us to reach demographic dividend in the future.

References:

https://www.prb.org/rapidpopulationgrowthcrowdedcitiespresentchallengesinthephilippines/