EDUCATION AND ECONOMIC MIGRATION

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For many years now, Philippines along with China and India had been a major source of skilled and non-skilled workers to most countries. Almost 10% of the entire Philippine population is deployed around the globe. This is driven by the desire of Filipinos to earn more money in less time compared to what they would earn in the Philippines aptly called economic migration.

Earnings of Overseas Filipino Workers (OFW’s) helped mitigate the impact of financial crises and perennial natural disasters that have rocked the country’s economy. In 2016 alone, US$26.9 billion money transfer was received by the country, according to Central Bank figures.

Nowadays it is not uncommon to learn that a lot of Filipinos who have sought high yielding professions could be found everywhere and one of these is Hong Kong. The streets of Hong Kong especially in Hong Kong’s Statue Square, is where you will find most of economic migrants. Scattered by groups, but connected with common language, they find weekends as their time to meet and greet new and old friends alike.

It is quite disappointing to learn that some were professionals back in the Philippines before they came to Hong Kong to work as housemaids or something else. Some of them are teachers, pharmacists, physiotherapists etc. which we can consider as wasted talents and expertise.

Wage disparity is the main reason of accepting much lower category jobs not to mention jobs which are unrelated to their qualification as what their diplomas say. The
lure of earning three times of the salary in the Philippines which could be earned in Hong Kong is enough reason to leave. Despite leaving a family to relatives or someone else, they have to take the risk in search for a better life.

Economic migration is the main contributor to the brain drain phenomenon in our country. Losing competent teachers in search for greener pastures means losing good educators that should mold our students. That translates to losing years of experience and training thereby degrading our educational system. While it is true that the dollars sent by OFWs helped our country in many ways, the government must do something to mitigate the situation. Who wouldn’t prefer to stay in the country if you are living comfortably and surrounded by the people you love?

References: