JOB-SKILLS MISMATCH

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If you ask a today’s pupils what they want to be when they grow up, the usual answers are, “To be a Doctor” or “To be an Engineer”. And if you follow it up with the question “Why?, they reply in chorus, “Gustong makatulong sa mahihirap”. Theoretically, if they follow their dreams out of that premise, they will all end up working in charity or DSWD.

Wrong choice of future careers is why we have a lot of unemployed or under employed graduates. Our needs for the fields that are available are left unfilled, hence, they are all crowded in the unemployment circle. Because of the non-availability of work for which they are qualified, they pack their bags and go abroad to find appropriate jobs. Far from the country, these qualified graduates oftentimes were exploited out of their need to find immediate placement. My brother who is working in the UAE once told me that it is not uncommon to find Filipinos working as something else relative to their qualifications. He added that there are instances wherein qualified teachers are working as waiters, CPA graduates as gasoline station attendants and engineering graduates as ordinary mechanics.

Although employment rate has gone up for the year 2018 (thanks to the infrastructure boom under the Build, Build, Build program of the Duterte administration) and the construction expansion in the private sector, underemployment still needs special attention.
Underemployment refers to the condition wherein workers are working less than 40hrs per week. Much is still needed to be done to address problems in the labor market that are preventing individuals from finding jobs that correspond with their skills. Realignment of the labor force as dictated by market needs must be studied in order to fully harness the capabilities of the graduates.

Senator Joel Villanueva, erstwhile head of TESDA, in a senate press release, called on the government to address the job-skills mismatch given the current economic activity in the country. Senate Bill No. 1431 which targets the future job seekers to be provided with the right skill sets to obtain in-demand jobs was passed on third and final reading.

Educators must open the eyes of their students early on that it is no bed of roses ahead. With a growing population, competition is high wherein they must be on top of the heap to be competitive in their chosen fields. Students must be exposed to all fields of discipline that are available and with less competition. Education is getting more and more expensive but is still the best investment a person can have and the wrong choice of career could either spell a boom or a bust.

References:

