

Correspondence

Deontology against COVID-19: Everyone's responsibility in this time of pandemic

To the Editor:

Responding to the previous correspondences on the government's role at this time of the pandemic, particularly that of Cabatbat and Kahambing, where the request to increase¹ or triple² the Government's effort in Mental health concern, support for rebel returnees and others, in the midst of battling against COVID-19. There are designated offices task to prioritize these concerns but the time and occasion may not permit for them to fully function the mandate entrusted on their shoulder. Hence, an initiative and different approach may be made through a community-based support system.

A common saying capsulizes the point of this response, 'ask not what your country can do for you, but what can you do for your country'. Surely, this pandemic is not simply the Government's duty to combat the SARS-CoV-2. It's a shared responsibility. The simple act of following the implemented guidelines on minimum health protocol is good enough to be a responsible citizen. The inter-operability of the health standard, local or international, is in the hands of everyone's cooperation. One's duty and obligation to its country is always expected in situations like this pandemic. It's understandable that there are designated tasks that is beyond the layperson's capacity, *i.e.*, medical professionals, law implementors—that requires license and expertise. Nonetheless, no one is exempted to the danger brought about by this COVID-19. Even among the uniformed personnel, who are above the ordinary in their physique and mental health condition, some are hit by COVID-19 as recorded in the study of Velasco J M, et al.³ Minas⁴ (2012), on the other hand, had already attested to this low interest on mental health concern especially among LAMICs or the low-and middle-income countries. Minas said, while significant gains are recognized and noticed, 'there is still a very long way to go'. Recently, mental health is not simply observed among LAMICs, but also among countries in global north. Ueda et al.,⁵ presents the concern of Japan in its mental health concern on the recorded suicidal incidents in this time of COVID-19. Hence, as the world continues its battle against COVID-19, the community-based approach is needed to support individuals who are in their toughest

moment at this time may it be in mental health concern, financial difficulties, relationship struggle, and many more. Even in issues pertaining to rebel returnees at this time of pandemic, it needed to be viewed in a more communitarian-participation approach. For a closer look, the situation here will tell us that—everyone is vulnerable during this time of pandemic. But, the government, and even the global health governance (WHO), can only attend to a selected priority groups—'most vulnerable,' as of the moment (considering the availability of vaccines, etc.). With regards to the rebel returnees, we know that the best way to peace is not always militarization. Hence, empowerment is crucial in making the grassroots community participate in peace promotion and community building. Preserving the well-being of the rebel returnees, as stipulated by Kahambing, by way of giving the four opportunities to them will surely be good enough in facilitating their needs to be integrated fully to their community but the factors that hinders to the materialization of these opportunities were not mentioned.

The study of Bell, *et al.*, on mental stressors is a good consideration also of offering responses to the different needs of the community through interventions. In our situation of battling against COVID-19, with all the other concerns especially on mental health, etc., this becomes the duty of every citizen to take part in facilitating, or coming up with 'interventions which facilitate in helping behaviours'⁶ that promotes integral wellbeing to its recipients. At this time of Pandemic, the determiners of our perception, attitudes, and ideas must be anchored in values that better shape the world for others. This cannot be achieved by the government alone. Everyone must take part in building a better and COVID-free society.

References

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