PSYCHOLOGICAL AND EMOTIONAL INTERVENTION FOR SUICIDAL TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

by:
Rendell L. Pacaba
Teacher III, Pinagsumilan Elementary School

In the recent news, DepEd and some politicians are now taking moves in probing on the reports of suicides among Filipino teachers. (Gonzales, 2018) According to statistics, nearly 800,000 people die due to suicide every year. This is with the thinking that for every suicide, there are more people who attempt suicide on the same period. it is already considered as the second leading cause of death for young people aged 15 to 29 years old. And it is not only true to rich countries but also for those in the low- and middle-income countries. In fact, 79% of suicides occur in this not so rich countries. (WHO, 2018) The organization also reported that the Philippines suicide rate were 2.5 for males and 1.7 for females over 100,000 populations in 1993. (Lie et al, 2012)

This are very alarming facts since experts are saying that more and more suicides are expected this coming years. Seeing and realizing the importance of mental and emotional health in today’s human life, it is also very important to see what our educational institutions can do to combat this life-threatening problem. With the mounting issue of depression, stress and emotional challenges among Filipino students [and teachers] that includes but not limited to, familial struggles, relational difficulties, financial stresses, discrimination and exclusions. (WHO, 2018)

There are many things that the organization is recommending to prevent and control suicides. However, in the school level there are two areas that we can see as attainable - early identification, treatment and care of people with mental and substance use disorders, chronic pain and acute emotional distress and the training of workers in the
assessment and management of suicidal behavior. (WHO, 2018) The first one is a potential skills training for our educators and school administrators. Every teacher or professor is encouraged to be equipped with this. They must have the ability to identify among the students and their fellow teachers who are those in the situation that might lead to suicides and be able to see and identify also those individuals who have the tendency of committing one. One-on-one conversations, special assessments and deeper relationships are just some of the areas that can be explored. Secondly, training of workers in the assessment and management of suicidal behavior is a much demanding work. It may be given to guidance counselors or hire life coaches that may be able to assist in this area.

In the end, the government and all educational institutions are challenged to further look on this possibilities. Students and teachers are being thought to face their lives squarely. Discerning on the needs and potentials of psychological and emotional intervention for them will be a great help on their life’s journey in and outside the school premises.

References:

