UPHOLDING VIRTUES IN A PUBLIC SERVICE
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Being in a public service entails with great expectations from the people you are serving to, and those expectations are often expected to be met through quality service. Gaining public trust is quite hard because public officials must possess skills and competencies that are needed for them to perform their jobs effectively. They are also expected to hold desirable characteristics that will win the hearts of their customers. Considering the welfare of the people must be the top priority and their responsibilities can be possibly carried out effectively by abiding with the code of conduct and ethical standards for public officials and employees.

To assure that the public servants will uphold their duties and responsibilities, the Republic Act No. 6713 otherwise known as Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees was implemented. According to Philippine Congress, it is “an act establishing a code of conduct and ethical standards for public officials and employees, to uphold the time-honored principle of public office being a public trust, granting incentives and rewards for exemplary service, enumerating prohibited acts and transactions and providing penalties for violations thereof and for other purposes.”

Since taxpayers are funding the public servants’ wages, it is a must for them to be loyal to their duties by serving for the betterment of the lives of people and not for their own interest. Republic Act No. 6173 was implemented in order to assure that public officials will not abuse their power and will not take advantage of their positions. It is also to assure that there will be fair service, honest compliance to obligations, and adhering to policies and guidelines on how to be a public servant.

According to Harvey (2018), “it is the duty of all public servants to ensure that the public’s money is spent as efficiently as possible and that programs are provided effectively, without discrimination or prejudice, with transparency and without waste of money or resources.” In this view, there should be transparency on how the public funds are spent and the projects declared should be visible so that the people will be given assurance that the public officials are working for the interest of the people.
However, in the Philippines, corruption among public officials are widespread. According to a CNN’s report on August 2019, Deputy Ombudsman Cyril Ramos reckons that the government might have lost to corruption around ₱1.4 trillion in the past two years. Ramos, using 2017 United Nations Development Programme’s estimates, said corruption loss in the Philippines equated to 20 percent of its annual government appropriation, with a total of P700 billion loss yearly.

Due to these incidents, the law should be firmer to address these issues so that the public funds will be utilized properly to honest and competent public officials. On a positive side, there are still a lot of public officials who are serving not for their own interest but for the advantage of the public. Being public servant comes with a lot of sacrifices and setbacks because it is hard to juggle pleasing people and at the same time assuring that they are upgrading their knowledge and skills to serve better. In the end, satisfied customers and great feedbacks are enough reasons for them to keep on being driven to serve the people wholeheartedly.

References:
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