



COMMENTARY

Personal Beliefs and Their Impact on Preventive Behaviors during Times of Pandemic: A Biomedical-Philosophical Reflection

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The World Health Organization (WHO) in its last report (09/10/2020) on the situation of COVID-19 at the global level, recorded 347,526 new cases, for a total of 36,361,054 confirmed cases; it also reported 5497 new deaths, for a total of 1,056,186 deaths [1]. In Colombia, on the same date, the National Institute of Health reported 8569 new cases of COVID-19, for a cumulative of 911,316 confirmed cases, likewise, 174 deaths were registered on the last day, for a total of 27,834 deaths related to the same disease [2].

Taking a glimpse at the exponential growth of these alarming numbers, as the result of an infection that has wreaked havoc around the world, it is imperative to think about what will hold us shortly. This situation has affected all social and productive sectors at the national and international levels, leading to high rates of unemployment, poverty, inequity, violence, among others, making the solution of this scenario the main current objective of the United Nations (UN) [3]. Today, the region of the Americas and the Caribbean is the main source of infection, leading to morbidity and mortality rates among the other continents [1].

Despite such shocking facts, some people refuse to accept the magnitude of the state of emergency, expressing conspiratorial ideas regarding SARS-CoV-2 in particular, the promotion and prevention measures stipulated by health institutions, the provision of ser-

vices by health actors (mainly those serving as the first line of contingency), screening tools for contagion control, use of basic personal protective equipment, and the support treatment provided by professionals [4]. These ideas not only generate a negative attitude towards being involved in the resolution of this matter but also precipitate an aggressive behavior against anyone who relies on scientific evidence. Conspiratorial beliefs are defined as arguments-less and absurd convictions, which are based on the participation of a perverse agent to fulfill a specific purpose and personal interest, rejecting more probable and better-founded explanations [5]. Coincidentally, these conspiratorial beliefs are more frequently seen in the region of the Americas and the Caribbean, the largest focus of infection worldwide. Social networks, religion, social groups, fake news, yellow press, and fraudulent professionals, make up the grouping of the main causes of disinformation that the UN and the WHO are currently fighting [6]. Sallam, et al. [5], found a strong association between this type of behavior and a low educational level, along with high levels of anxiety and insecurity [5]. Given that this situation is a real public health problem, it is necessary to reflect, beyond the evidence, what causes such attitudes?

We stand within individuals who, by generating contact, establish power relations with others, such power relations are linked to beliefs and judgments which



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guide the decision-making of such individuals, called actions, which turn them into social beings. In the current context, they stem from a phenomenon called a pandemic, and this can be interpreted in different ways depending on the structural and national context. The private life of the individual is understood as a space for metaphysical thoughts which seek to give meaning to the reality of a human being, thus, the human being is a social being and therefore must not overshadow that space with metaphysical thoughts, that is, that social or political practices must be linked to political thought and that a metaphysical vision of reality must not be established as a law of the state, since there would never be a consensus on metaphysical aspects that help the homo sapiens to have a starting point to explain their experiences. Hence its primary function, the pandemic has shown, on a scientific basis, that modern states carry within themselves a political thought, even if for some it is not so [6].

Bearing in mind that to do politics is to take sides or to choose a position, the individual who takes a position, whether metaphysical or scientific, carries with him the political action beyond the validity of his positions as to the social happening, going against the premise that the philosopher Adela Cortina proposes "people respect each other, ideas do not, ideas must earn respect" [7,8], such a premise expresses something very interesting, and that is, if the individual is immersed in such a society where the pandemic is scientifically accepted, this acceptance based on unobjectionable evidence against his metaphysical ideals (derogatory thoughts that seek to justify their social irresponsibility), immediately invalidates their argument and this cannot be socially accepted, since the directives of the state are not subject to metaphysical interpretations. It is therefore concluded that political action is not the same as social action, for the reason that social action is directed to the benefit of the whole society, while political action is only linked to being part of such society, the previously mentioned should not allow the individual with a political but not a social role to take part in state decision-making, for example: In the decision-making of a leader over the

country he leads, the right to vote should not be for all individuals, this is because, although they are part of society, their intellectual incompetence, and level of bias over the state, make their actions not social but merely political. Following this order of ideas, it can be said that we are all political beings, but we are not all social beings, a supremely complex dilemma, which undoubtedly, must be addressed by the state and educators effectively and intensely.

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Authors Contribution

All authors have contributed for this manuscript.

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