

ISSN 2278 – 859X

Asian Academic Research Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities

Volume 1

Issue 15

September 2013



Journal By:-

Asian Academic Research Associates

ISSN 2278 – 859X (Online)

Asian Academic Research Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities

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ISSN 2319-2801 (Online)

Asian Academic Research Journal of Multidisciplinary

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Asian Academic Research Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities
Year 2013, Volume-1, Issue-15 (Sep 2013)
Online ISSN : 2278 – 859X

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INTERVENTION PROGRAMS ON JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

KRISTINE D. AALA*, JENIE M. RAMOS, REUBEN MENDOZA***, EMERSON MAGNAYE****, MERWINA LOU A. BAUTISTA*******

ABSTRACT

This study aimed to determine the intervention programs on juvenile delinquency implemented by selected barangay in Batangas City. The study utilized the descriptive method of research and used a self made questionnaire as main tool in gathering data. The respondents of this research were Brgy. officials of selected barangays in Batangas City. In terms of Physical and Health, the program that is highly implemented is the Clean and Green Program while for education is the Free Education Program. Program on Material Recovery is perceived by majority of the respondents as highly implemented with respect to livelihood. In terms of the psychological, spiritual and development of on children in conflict with the law it was found out that parent-child interaction program was the highest. The continuous implementation of the programs is recommended for the effective rehabilitation and restoration of child in conflict with the law. Furthermore utilization and improvement of other programs would also be substantial in developing the character and personality of these children.

Keyword: Intervention Programs, Juvenile Delinquency

INTRODUCTION

Intervention refers to a series of activities which are designed to address issues that caused the child to commit an offense. It may take the form of an individualized treatment program which may include counseling, skills training, education, and other activities that will enhance his/her psychological, emotional and psycho-social well-being (Soriano, 2010). Juvenile delinquency has been a major problem affecting modern day societies. Juvenile delinquency is antisocial, criminal or illegal behavior and acts that have become common among children and adolescents. Recently many theories have been formulated to explain the reasons behind high rates of juvenile delinquency. Additionally, various agencies have developed different intervention programs in an effort to reduce this behavior. A combination of these theories and programs has provided a means of understanding this behavior and a platform for developing better intervention measures. Accordingly, social guidance and counseling of juvenile offenders is the most effective means of reducing juvenile delinquency as opposed to use of punishment (Mendel, 2002).

Cases of juvenile delinquency have been on the rise despite increased government effort to reduce them. There has been a controversy on how to handle juvenile offenders with some people arguing that they should be treated like adult offenders. The government has considered both public safety and the need to rehabilitate the juvenile offenders in its effort to fight this behavior. However, this has not been effective in reducing the cases of juvenile delinquency. All over the world, an examination of the juvenile justice system is being done. Among the areas of concern undergoing re-investigation is the philosophy of punishment involving juvenile offenders and the process of bringing them into the juvenile system of justice.

In the Philippines, the number of Filipino children in conflict with the law is skyrocketing. According to the Juvenile Justice Network, thousands of children are being arrested and detained each year. Most of these detained children in jails are mixed with notorious adult criminals, the boys abused and the girls raped. The distinctive effects which delinquency engenders on the child, his family and the community in which he lives have increasingly been felt as the Philippine socio-cultural, economic and political systems have been transformed.

In the Women and Children's Complaint Desk (WCCD), cases of youthful offenders are afforded their rights but there are still those who became recidivist and commit graver offenses. At first, these minors indulge themselves to petty thieveries, pick pocketing and snatching. Children are exposed to the hardship of living as seen in the streets. Most of them beg for food and money. They are exposed to different criminal dementers in the streets instead of going to school for their future. Streets are now their playground for these children. They play with their fellows beggars in the streets. As they grow up, they want more than a good play. They play with life and death because during their teenage years, they begin to look for more than their playmates in the streets, but for what they need to survive. Children and street is a common place for the society where mistakes are easily committed by non-adults in their quest to find their means to survive. Children in this situation becomes more vulnerable and more prone to committing crimes like pick pocketing, snatching and other street crimes to get their means to survive for the day. They are more influenced by what they see, hear and learn from things. We cannot blame them because it is what the world now but it would be a lot better if we help them learn from it by letting them to do it in the first place.

Barangay officials provide intervention programs to juveniles in their jurisdiction. It is designed to help with conditions that are recurrent in society and help identify problems and try to prevent future cases as early as possible. It is a kind of revolving program that apply the principle of "those that went before us" with information on tell-tale signs about the said condition, what to do if these signs arise and where to find the best possible need be.

This study is conceived by the researchers because they are bothered by the increasing number of juvenile delinquents based on the records of Batangas City Police Station. Moreover, the researchers want to awaken the minds of barangay officials whose tasks are not only to supervise and organize their barangay but also help children in conflict with the law with help rather than punishment.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study aimed to determine the intervention programs on juvenile delinquency implemented by selected barangay in Batangas City. More specifically, it sought to identify the intervention programs; to determine the impediments in the implementation of intervention programs and, to propose measures to improve/enhance the implementation of intervention programs.

MATERIALS AND METHOD

The research design utilized the descriptive method of research to determine the intervention programs on juvenile delinquency. The descriptive research described and integrates what exists. It is used to provide systematic that is a factual and accurate as possible (Shuttleworth, 2008). The respondents of this research were taken from barangay officials of selected barangays in Batangas City. The researchers utilized 6 Barangay Chairmen, 15 Barangay Councilors, 12 members of Barangay Police, 9 Barangay Health Workers, 1 Barangay Administrator, and 2 Barangay Secretaries with a total of 45 barangay officials.

The researchers used structured questionnaire to gather data and information from the respondents. The respondents asked to complete the questionnaire responded honestly, under the assurance that their identities kept confidential. It is composed of three parts. Part I of this tool is designed to obtain information on the profile of the respondents in terms of age, gender, and position in the barangay. Part II deals with the intervention programs implemented. And Part III deals with the impediments encountered in the implementation of intervention program. They are allowed to choose only one answer in all parts of the questionnaire.

The researchers presented the three-part questionnaires to their research adviser for approval. They also prepared a request letter to the barangay officials requesting them for cooperation and help for the completion of this study. The researchers then distributed the questionnaire individually to each respondent and they requested each respondent to take extra time and effort to answer the questionnaire completely. They asked to put a check in the

appropriate spaces corresponding to their choices. The respondents were briefly oriented about the purpose of the study before they were asked to answer the questionnaire and given facts for the purpose of obtaining the validity and reliable data. After a reasonable length of time, questionnaires were retrieved for tallying, interpreting and evaluating.

Data gathered from the questionnaire were tallied, computed, discussed and tabulated. To attain significant findings, frequency distribution weighted mean were used. All data were computed using SPSS version 18.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Respondents' Profile

Among the age bracket 41 to 47 years old got the highest frequency of 18 out of 45 respondents'. These ages have lots of experience. It's a study which is likely to ignite a debate at workplace — older employees are more productive than their young colleagues. Researchers have found that more mature staffers may be weaker and less agile than their junior colleagues but they more than compensate with their greater experience, ability to work in teams, and success at coping when things go wrong. "While older workers make more errors, perhaps due to declining physical attributes, they hardly make any severe errors, perhaps due to more experience. It is experience that prevents severe errors," the *Daily Mail* quoted the German researchers as saying (Fernandez, 2011).

In terms of gender, majority are male with 31 or 68.90 percent while female got only 31.10 percent. In both 2001 and 2011, Lawless and Fox uncovered a profound gender gap in interest in seeking elective office. Women of all professions, political parties, ages, and income levels are less likely than their male counterparts to express interest in running for office. The gender gap in political ambition is driven by women's lower levels of political recruitment and lower self-assessments of political qualifications. In addition, women perceive an electoral environment that is biased against them, which likely helps explain their greater aversion to participating in the nuts and bolts of a campaign. Finally, the fact that women remain the primary caretakers of the home and children adds a high degree of complexity to the decision to run office – complexity that most men do not face.

As to position in the barangay, most of them are barangay councilors (33.30), followed by barangay police (26.70) while barangay administrator got the least frequency. As for the seven barangay councilors, they all have their specific tasks that are assigned by their chairman. They are always on the barangay hall once a week to accommodate the people coming every now and then in their office. A kagawad helps enforce all local policies, projects, programs and procedures within the barangay. They contribute in devising a provision for the betterment and development of their area and the town's people. Their responsibilities include eliminating any illegal transactions such as drugs and drug addiction, preserving all infrastructures and properties, conserving cleanliness, encouraging the welfare of the youth and ensuring peace and order within the community. They are designated to be the legislative force of a barangay, meaning they are required to support and assist the barangay captain in executing all mandated procedures, programs and the like. All kagawads are expected to create ordinances or resolutions to help maintain harmony within the community.

Level of Implementation on the Intervention Programs in terms of Physical and Health Programs

The over-all assessment of the respondents' on the level of implementation was 3.20 and rated implemented. Clean and Green program got the highest weighted mean of 3.82 and interpreted highly implemented. The juvenile delinquents are taken to the social serve like cleansing the road, garden work and other construction work like building the public offices. They forget their misdoing and revengeful attitudes. They feel freed and mingled with other persons and engaged in work. They get chances of amending themselves and learning the skills of work what they work for. They released their past misdoings and relief them to make serene mind and all the repentant will forgiven and they are returned to normal civilized habits. This is ultimately beneficial for both the criminals and society in which social peace and justice are further well maintained (Paneru,2012).

On the other hand, other items were all rated implemented and Medical and Dental Mission ranked second with 3.33 followed by recreational activities. Anti-Smoking programs ranked the least with weighted mean of 2.53. In spite of the law prohibiting cigarette

advertisements and regulating the use and sale of cigarettes, the number of teenage smokers has gone up. According to a research conducted in 2005, 4 out of 10 students aged 13-15 years old smoke cigarettes. Moreover, based on a more recent study, one in every three Filipino teenagers aged 13 to 15 are already smokers. Despite the existence of Republic Act 9211 or the Tobacco Regulation Act of 2003, more and more teenagers had gone into smoking, and the numbers still continue to rise as the years go by.

Level of Implementation on the Intervention Programs in terms of Educational Programs

The total evaluation of the respondents on the level of implementation in terms of Educational Programs was 2.88 and rated implemented. Free education got the highest mean which is 3.47 while the lowest is mentoring programs with a mean of 2.56. The enactment of Republic Act 6655 or the Free Secondary Education Act of 1988 provided for free secondary education to youths in national high schools, comprehensive high schools, state universities and colleges, specialized schools, trade schools, technical schools, vocational schools, fishery and agricultural schools and other public schools. Free public education in the Philippines is mandated by the Constitution. Any person who violates this basic law will be prosecuted to the highest extent and will be imposed a punishment that is commensurate with the grievous violations he/she had committed. Parents from depressed areas welcomed this act when it was implemented. It's a big help because students can enroll without cash involved (Leones, 2001).

On the other hand, Mentoring can be one of the most cost effective solutions to juvenile delinquency. Mentors act as positive role models for youth who often lack such influences. The absence of role models has been linked to increased risk for drug and alcohol use, sexual promiscuity, aggressive behavior, and inability to maintain employment. Successful mentoring programs pair youths with role models who provide an influence that helps mitigate risky behavior (Beier, Rosenfeld, Spitalny, Zansky & Bontemp, 2000).

The theory behind mentoring is that it can impact different risk factors while simultaneously supporting various protective factors. Having a relationship with a mentor “can provide a youth with personal connectedness, supervision and guidance, skills training, career or cultural enrichment opportunities, a knowledge of spirituality and values, a sense of self-worth, and perhaps most important, goals and hope for the future (U.S. Department of Justice, 1998).

Level of Implementation on the Intervention Programs in terms of Livelihood Programs

The Livelihood Programs is rated as implemented with a composite mean of 2.62. Material Recovery Programs ranked as the highest having a mean of 3.20 and rated implemented while the Handicraft Activities ranked as the lowest having a mean of 2.18 and rated slightly implemented.

Children in conflict with the law engage in hands-on activities and service projects to raise awareness about recycling, composting and conservation while fostering environmental stewardship. In 1995, Republic Act 8044 otherwise known as the Youth in Nation-Building Act was approved creating the National Youth Commission to serve as the sole policymaking and coordinating body of all youth programmes and projects of the government. Youth Entrepreneurship Programme helps the young to develop entrepreneurial skills providing training and technical assistance for the youth's business development with the goal of creating a strong economic base of young entrepreneurs. According to the youth's interest, capability and skills, they are being helped to plan for income generating projects which will help them earn while inside the center and teaching them the value of saving money, teamwork, honesty, hard work and sense of responsibility (Grant, 2004).

Level of Implementation on the Intervention Programs in terms of Psychological, Spiritual and Developmental Programs

The level of implementation regarding the psychological, spiritual and developmental programs on child in conflict with the law has a composite mean of 2.62 and rated implemented. It was found out that parent-child interaction program was the highest with a mean of 3.11 and interpreted implemented. Most parents reported close bonds with their children, communicated with their children about important topics, and were acquainted with most of their children's friends. These findings were apparent even among parents of adolescent children (ages 12-17), who are often presumed to feel distant from their children. It is important to note that our analyses were based exclusively on parent-reported data for parents who live with their child. However, data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth also showed positive parent-child relationships for a smaller sample of adolescent respondents. Given the importance of positive communication and relationships for parents and for children of all ages, these findings

are reassuring. The findings also suggest that a minority of parents could use help in strengthening their relationships with their children (Bandy & Moore, 2008).

On the other hand, Spiritual enrichment got the lowest mean which is 2.22 and interpreted slightly implemented. CAS's 2001 report revealed that adolescent engagement in religion or spiritual practice may reduce juvenile crime by increasing disapproval of such behavior and providing support for not being involved in crime. Juveniles who have been arrested in the past year are almost one and a half times likelier never to attend religious services than teens who have not been arrested. Lack of spiritual belief and rarely attending religious services are linked to higher risk for substance abuse and delinquency. Teens who do not consider religious beliefs important are almost three times likelier to smoke, drink and binge drink, almost four times likelier to use marijuana and seven times likelier to use illicit drugs than teens who consider religion an important part of their lives (Grant, 2004).

Problems in the Implementation of the Intervention Program

It was observed that the respondents disagreed that there was a problem in the implementation of the intervention program since the obtained composite mean is 2.24. However, lack of constant monitoring of child in conflict with the law was the only problem observed which obtained a weighted mean of 2.53 and interpreted agrees. This result was an evident lack of accountability for performance within the juvenile justice system, specifically in the Local Government Unit, or even any ability to measure outcomes. The barangay officials are unable to provide constant monitoring of child in conflict with the law because there is no clear policy on how it will be done or implemented by them, hence monitoring is not constant and seriously implemented. It is due to the understaffing of concerned agencies making it improbable to conduct regular monitoring of children in conflict with the law (Macario&Comila, 2008).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Majority of the respondents are male, falls on the age bracket of 41 to 47 years old and mostly barangay councillor. In terms of Physical and Mental Health, the program that is highly implemented is the Clean and Green Program while for education is the Free Education Program. Programs on Material Recovery is perceived by majority of the respondents as highly

implemented with respect to livelihood. In terms of the psychological, spiritual and development of children in conflict with the law, it was found out that parent-child interaction program was the highest. Lack of constant monitoring of child in conflict with the law was the only problem observed.

Though there are various programs set by the government and non-government agencies, there is still a need to conduct regular assessments as to their applicability in meeting the needs of children in conflict with the law. Activities for the spiritual development of the child should be incorporated as this aspect is surprisingly lacking in the intervention programs employed. It is an important intervention to transform the total person of a child to become a God fearing person. The community should be involved in efforts for the protection of children through the conduct of sufficient advocacy and awareness programs. There is a need to prepare a memorandum of agreement between implementing agencies to ensure their proper coordination and establish a common monitoring system covering the various stages of the juvenile justice process. Continuous implementation of these programs for the effective rehabilitation and restoration of juvenile delinquents furthermore utilization and improvement of other programs would also be substantial in developing the character and personality of these children. That future researchers conduct similar or related study to validate or dispute the findings of this study.

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