



The Significant Component Factors for Juvenile Rehabilitation Residential School : A Case Study of Thailand

ปัจจัยองค์ประกอบสำคัญเพื่อการฟื้นฟูเด็กเยาวชนผู้กระทำผิด โรงเรียนประเภทพักอาศัย: กรณีศึกษาในประเทศไทย

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Abstract

The research was a qualitative study conducted in 2016. The purpose of the article was to focus on studying and analyzing the important component factors of the residential rehabilitation treatment for juveniles.

The result of the study found that there were five significant component factors of a residential school which included 1) Schooling: Informal and non-formal education system or special education that was suitable for the residents; 2) Working: Provision of a vocational skill training plan for every resident individually during rehabilitation program and at least one tailor-made vocational skill which the resident was interested and in demand of the market; 3) Community life: Building residents' self-esteem by participating in different kinds of community services and activities; 4) Spiritual life: Religious teaching and daily practices could strengthen



residents for reintegration into the society; and 5) Family life: Creation of an atmosphere of being a big spiritual family, so all the residents are members in this family with teachers as spiritual parents who love, respect, and appreciate them.

Keywords : Residential School, Juvenile Rehabilitation

บทคัดย่อ

การวิจัยนี้เป็นการวิจัยเชิงคุณภาพ ซึ่งดำเนินการในปี พ.ศ.2559 วัตถุประสงค์ของบทความนี้เน้นการศึกษาและวิเคราะห์ปัจจัยองค์ประกอบที่สำคัญของการฟื้นฟูแบบบำบัดประเภทพักอาศัยสำหรับเด็กและเยาวชนที่กระทำผิด

ผลการศึกษาพบว่า ปัจจัยองค์ประกอบสำคัญของโรงเรียนประเภทพักอาศัยมีทั้งหมด 5 ด้าน ประกอบด้วย 1) ด้านการศึกษา เป็นแบบนอกระบบและการศึกษาตามอัธยาศัย รวมถึงการศึกษารูปแบบพิเศษ ซึ่งเป็นระบบที่เหมาะสมกับเด็กที่พักอาศัย 2) ด้านการทำงาน ใช้การจัดอบรมวิชาชีพอย่างน้อยหนึ่งวิชาชีพที่ตอบสนองความต้องการของตลาดแรงงานสำหรับเด็กเยาวชนที่สนใจ 3) ด้านชีวิตชุมชน เป็นการสร้างความมั่นใจในตัวเองโดยมีส่วนร่วมในการช่วยเหลือสังคมและร่วมกิจกรรมในชุมชน 4) ด้านชีวิตฝ่ายวิญญาณ โดยใช้การอบรมทางศาสนาและการปฏิบัติธรรมให้เป็นประจำ ซึ่งสามารถทำให้จิตใจของเด็กมีความเข้มแข็ง เพื่อให้เด็กได้เข้าสู่ระบบสังคมได้อีกครั้ง 5) ด้านชีวิตครอบครัว โดยการสร้างบรรยากาศการอยู่ร่วมกัน เสมือนอย่างครอบครัวใหญ่ โดยมีครูเปรียบเสมือนเป็นคุณพ่อแม่ แสดงความรัก ให้เกียรติและชมเชยเด็กอยู่เสมอ

คำสำคัญ : โรงเรียนประเภทพักอาศัย การฟื้นฟูเด็กเยาวชนผู้กระทำผิด

Introduction

Juvenile Delinquency is one of the most serious social problems in Thailand. Both the statistics of the Department of Juvenile Observation and Protection (2014) and the Department of Probation (2016) show that juvenile delinquency is related highly to the problems of family, education, work and environment. Although the juvenile justice system plays an important role



to plan and develop appropriate strategies, there are many hidden threats to be solved.

Limitations of the juvenile justice system

There are many limitations in reducing the recidivism rate within the juvenile justice system. Firstly, there is an unbalanced proportion of staff to probationers due to an insufficient budget. Secondly, a lack of sufficient follow-up and evaluation is one of the most significant factors causing the rising recidivism rate of the offenders. Thirdly, for juveniles from alternative justice and diversion who come from broken home, poor and unsafe environment and no education opportunity for future development, education especially residential treatment is the first choice. But there are few approved educational institutions in Thailand making it difficult for the juvenile judicial departments to refer the juveniles to an appropriate institution.

Understanding residential treatment and rehabilitation for juveniles in Thailand

There are limitations of the judicial departments. In short, the Juvenile and Family courts (JFC), Department of Juvenile Observation and Protection (DJOP) and Department of Probation (DOP) are facing a great challenge of the rising Juvenile crimes and high recidivism rate.

Residential schools for Juvenile rehabilitation are in high demand. The juvenile cases in both School A and School B revealed that it was difficult for the DJOP, JFC and DOP to plan a rehabilitation program for the offenders. One of the main reasons is that there is not enough approved residential school/education institutions for diversion in Thailand.

This research aims at studying the significant component factors of the residential school for juvenile rehabilitation.

Definition of Terms

Residential School: Residential school means a school for juvenile rehabilitation with program under closed 24 hours care and supervision. It is one of the diversion networks for Juvenile alternative justice in Thailand.



Juvenile Rehabilitation: According to the Juvenile and Family Court law, "child" means an individual under the age of 15. "Youth" means aged more than 15, but less than 18. Juvenile rehabilitation means both the child and the youth, with varied offences, receiving rehabilitation treatment program which includes schooling, working/ laboring, community life, spiritual life and family life.

Objective

The objective of the research presented in this article was to analyze the significant component factors of residential school for juvenile rehabilitation treatment such as schooling, working, community life, spiritual life and family life.

Methodology

The sample was recruited by purposive sampling. The data collection was carried out by studying the documents and other form of media such as videos. In-depth interview and participant observation were also used. Content analysis was applied for analyzing data.

School A and School B were chosen as the samples because their characteristics were considered being residential schools for juvenile rehabilitation. From 289 participants, only 88 of them were selected as the samples. The data was obtained from six groups of people. They were (1) residents, (2) parents of residents, (3) ex-residents, (4) parents of ex-residents, (5) teachers and instructors, and (6) judicial officials related to School A and School B.

Conclusion

From the results of study, the significant component factors for juvenile rehabilitation were as follows:



1. Schooling/education with Informal and Non-formal Education or Special Education were suitable educational system for the residents and found effective. School A provided different kinds of creative and interesting teaching activities which elevated the residents' study motivation, especially the foreign teams' visitation and teaching English and Chinese languages. For School B, low motivation was found and most juveniles wanted to leave.

2. Working/ Occupational Training was important for residents to have a healthy work ethics and good attitude which would help them reintegrate into the community. School A emphasized on good working attitude, mainly focused on agricultural related work. They enjoyed working together as a team and helping each other. School B stressed on different kind of occupational training, especially the "Job Intern Project" which was a tailor-made internship before graduation.

3. Community Life provided a good platform for residential rehabilitation. Most of the residents in School A felt happy and lived together like a big family, helping one another and making more new friends. There were a lot of outdoor activities, such as soccer, youth camp which helped them to build up their self-confidence and self-image and to have better psychosocial development. Whereas, in School B, the feeling of being like a family was low and outdoor activities were comparatively few.

4. Spiritual Life was highly emphasized in School A. Most of the residents could experience the love and peace of God and the feeling of being respected through love from the teachers. Their behaviors were changed through spiritual programs and activities, especially with the visitations of Hong Kong teams. Some of the residents of School A also expressed that when conflicts happened, they learned how to forgive. For School B, residents seldom felt that they were being loved and respected. Instead, feeling of resentment towards the staff was observed through interviews. Most of the students paid no attention or interest in



religion class. Through interviews, the teachers did not put emphasis on the importance of spiritual aspect in rehabilitation.

5. Family Life was considered as one of the most significant component factors in residential rehabilitation. But in fact, the parents or guardians rarely visited the residents in both Schools. Most of the residents were lack of love from their families. School A experienced success in building a warm family atmosphere by having teachers live at the school. Teachers played the role of spiritual parents. For School B, most of the residents did not feel any family atmosphere or being loved and respected in the school. Most of the residents' parents and guardians at both schools were satisfied with the school training program and their children's performance. The parents at School B suggested that the school should have better communication with parents and parent meetings should be held regularly.

In conclusion, the findings showed that there are five significant component factors contributing to a suitable residential school for juvenile rehabilitation in Thailand.

Schooling: Informal and non-formal education system or special education is suitable for the residents; curriculum and teaching design should be "residents-centered" and fun; teaching according to residents' ability is appropriate. Medical assessment or social worker/ psychologists' psychosocial development recommendation of the juvenile before referral is necessary for individualized teaching plan.

Working: It is essential to provide a vocational skill training plan which is tailor-made for every resident individually with at least one vocational skill that the resident is interested in and is of considerable demand in the market. By working together with the residents, the instructors act as a model to show the importance of work ethics. The residents enjoy the work that is done and celebrate their achievement.



Community life: The residents' self- esteem can be built up by participating in different kinds of community services and activities. They grow up together with mutual love and respect which is necessary in their psychosocial development. In the school community, it is vital to create an atmosphere of appreciation that help them to appreciate the people and things around them..

Spiritual life: Religious teaching and daily practices can strengthen residents to reintegrate into the society; teachers should design lessons and activities with spiritual values; the influence and modeling of the teacher's spiritual life is the most significant factor in causing change in a resident's behavior.

Family life: It is important to create an atmosphere of being a big spiritual family. All residents are members in this family with teachers as spiritual parents who love, respect, and appreciate them. Teachers, along with their family living together at the school, bring a sense of trust and belonging to residents. "Home group" provides a safe and warm place for residents with teachers as home leaders.

Discussion

On the basis of the findings and literature reviews, the significant component factors of residential school for juvenile rehabilitation can be discussed as follows.

The significant component factors of the program: "Learning To Be" is a valuing process (UNESCO, 2002) which is also a holistic and integrated approach to values education for human development. This valuing process takes time. Residential school, on the one hand, can act as a platform for values education; on the other hand, therapeutic community treatment can be fully practiced in school. A juvenile named Nong Tao was an obvious case. Both DJOP and JFC of Lampang found no NGO residential school for



alternative justice. Finally, under probation order, Nong Tao was dismissed by his school and started drug abuse. DOP had no NGO network that was suitable for referral and finally Nong Tao was referred to School A. Judicial officials related to the Ministry of Justice accepted that residential school is a successful program for juvenile rehabilitation. This study showed that there are five significant component factors of the residential school for juvenile rehabilitation.

School can provide a good and safe environment for the residents to have a better psychosocial development. Quisumbing (1999) proposes a four-step process, which include Knowing, Understanding, Valuing and Acting. From the interview result of ex-residents and their parents, residents, mostly in the age range of 16-18 years old, knew and understood Biblical teachings. However, the teachings have not yet become the juveniles' values and actions, because their psychosocial development was not mature and developed enough to face reintegration. The valuing process takes a long time for the juvenile to have a worldview shift, from the old behavior mechanism to a new way of life.

Working, from the perspective of socialization, is used to enhance the sense of community, to build self-esteem and social responsibility, and to develop communication, organizational and interpersonal skill (NSW, 2007). Working occupies two hours a day of residents' time in School A. It helps residents to build self-esteem and a good work ethic, such as punctuality, responsibility, obedience, faithfulness, diligence and patience, because they will spend most of their time working after rehabilitation. They learnt not only "self-help" but also to help each other with love and not competing with others. School B emphasized occupational training. The requirement for graduation was that residents must pass the "Job Intern Project" outside which will help them to reintegrate into the community more easily (Fasai, 2016). Tailor-made occupational training plan is good for them as individuals.



Community life: Most juveniles come from broken family and experience failure or being expelled from school. They are labeled as bad students. As those who have negative labeling usually have lower self-image, they are more likely to reject themselves, and may even act more deviant as a result of the label. They reject the norms and values of mainstream society and instead turn to the norms and values of a delinquent subculture (Cohen, 1955). Peer group influence and modeling become significant in this stage of psychosocial development. So, providing a platform to create an atmosphere of a loving family with mutual understanding and respect, and appreciation for one another are important in the valuing process. In addition, by serving the community and participating in various community activities will help juveniles to build up their self-image and self-confidence.

In both School A and B the therapeutic community theory was practiced. In therapeutic community, the social environment, peer support and staff help to guide residents through the recovery process. The findings in School A showed that the residents have a better community life according to the principle philosophy of the therapeutic community in the context of Thailand (Mahakun, 1998). The behaviors of the residents in School A were changed through different activities and working in residence. They also experienced being loved and cared for as members in the family. It helped the residents to become a better person. The community life in School A stood out more than any other elements of the school and internal hierarchy created positive reinforcement.

Spiritual Life is considered as one of the most important components for the success of the residents' reintegration. Religion and spirituality have a significant role in both preventing and treating substance abuse. But it is always not the first priority in judicial process. This study found that though residents in School A had very good responses to the spiritual life and their behaviors changed. But they were slowly seduced to their old life pattern



and was not interested in going to church after they went back home. This echoed that even though residents knew and understood Bible teaching for two years, they have not yet reached the stage of valuing and acting. " The values are developed not by forcing (young) people to memorize words which they do not understand and are not interested in; rather by letting them talk, ventilate their issues, search for their own values, and eventually articulate their God within", said Andrew Greeley (UNESCO, 2002, p22). So, the length of stay is critical for the process of values education and spiritual formation. It is good for the Court to order the child to the residential school for a period until 18 years of age (Section 90, JFC Act, 2010).

Creating Family Life atmosphere in school is necessary. Echoed by ex-residents and their parents' interviews in School A and B, the study found that the lack of meaningful family involvement caused difficulty for reintegration of the ex-residents. Family should be the first education institution for a child. A father or mother should be an important role model to their child and establishes healthy self- esteem, but it is not always the case. Dysfunction family is one of the factors contributing to adolescent drug abuse and poor family relationship (Yip, 2010). Statistics of DJOP showed that a large number of offenders were from separated families and lived with single parents. This study found that School A had created a better atmosphere of family life and residents experienced being loved and respected by the teachers. Residents in School B experienced less or even no atmosphere of being a family between teachers and residents.

Recommendations

Since there are only two residential schools for juvenile rehabilitation in Thailand, residential schools of various religions should be established in different parts of the country. Secondly, Thai government should encourage non-government organizations and religious organizations to participate in



this type of program or giving grants for a research project that aims at promoting or attempting this type of school.

For further study, it is recommended that in order to reduce the rate of recidivism, besides the fixed informal and non-formal education, residential school should design an integrated special curriculum for human development which includes three perspectives: values education, principle philosophy of the therapeutic community and restorative whole school approach in Thai context.

Finally, all the component factors for the study should be emphasized and included in the residential school for juvenile rehabilitation, especially in the case of Thailand.

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