

The Long-Term Effects of Rehabilitation Program for Children in Conflict with the Law

Elizabeth S. Manuel

Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology, Philippines
elizandromanuel@yahoo.com
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0433-3780>

Abstract— This study determined the effectiveness of rehabilitation programs provided for in Republic Act 9344 for children in conflict with the law. Twenty one rehabilitated youth admitted from June to October 2018 participated in the study. All of them are permanent residents of Cabanatuan City, Central Luzon, Philippines.

Results showed that diversion program, vocational training, livelihood skills training, fun games and sports development were perceived to be more effective than other methods while cleanliness drives are effective as it is understood as a punishment rather than restorative. The effective program provided formal and non-formal education, better ways in dealing with one's emotions; explore one's strengths and weaknesses and economic empowerment. According to program implementers, challenges faced in the program were casework and limited financial assistance. Rehabilitated youth reported to have adapted a better perspective in life and are coping with problems well. Follow-up programs must be conducted to ensure the success of children in their community as well in school.

Keywords— Rehabilitation, rehabilitation program, children in conflict with the law, justice system, diversion program, vocational training, livelihood skills training, sports development, descriptive design, Philippines.

I. INTRODUCTION

Garrio (2017) stated that the criminal justice system in the Philippines – characterized by very poor and inadequate facilities, inhumane conditions, inefficient handling and resolution of cases, among others – has often failed for adult offenders and more so for children who have come into conflict with the law (CICL). These children, who are likely to have experienced abuse, abandon and neglect in their own homes and in their immediate environments, are now forced into harsh and dehumanizing situations within the adult criminal justice system that expose them to further abuse and tarnish any hope for them to be reintegrated into their families and communities and become responsible and productive citizens. According to the Juvenile Justice Study.com (2013), although several studies have been done on children's justice, most of these had very little quantitative data. Statistics usually focused on children who are in prisons, while other studies used secondary data. Some studies attempted to present the national situation, but fall short of providing an analysis of the different local contexts. Moreover, the perspectives of the children were seldom highlighted. While the direction of the recommendations arising from the studies seems clear in

terms of national policies, concrete recommendations that can be carried out at the local context were not clearly articulated. Given these, we decided to embark on the three studies precisely to inform the work that our partners are doing at the local level, where the impact on the lives of the children is more evident.

Addressing issues of children in conflict with the law requires a holistic and integrated approach. More and more, Children with conflict of the Law (CICL) are viewed with suspicion and as a threat, and delinquent children and youth are seen primarily as offenders who should be punished and not as children and youth who present clear needs and concerns. We need to correct this perspective and approach the issue with a clear rights perspective. Said (2010) concluded that children are arrested and detained by police, tried by magistrates, and sent to institutions, including prisons, under systems of justice which in many cases are set up for adults. Although there are explicit international guidelines on the proper administration of juvenile justice and on community-based conflict resolution and rehabilitation of child offenders, children's rights and special needs are being ignored. These children are alleged to have come into conflict with the law of the land;

however, no allowances are made for the fact that it is often the law that is in conflict with their survival behavior and the reality of their lives. According to Resource Centre (n.d.), large numbers of children in conflict with the law are socio-economic victims, denied their rights to education, health, shelter, care and protection. Many of them have had little or no access to education; many are working children. Some children have left their homes and taken to the streets to escape from violence and abuse at the hands of their families. Some are forced to make a living on the streets, in order to survive. Others have been abandoned by their families and left to fend for themselves and sometimes for younger siblings. These children, who are abandoned and destitute, are also at high risk of sexual exploitation, trafficking and becoming involved in substance abuse and the drug trade through peer influence or the influence of adult criminals. For children in conflict with the law, the processes of arrest, trial and custody destroy their childhood as a result of being denied their right to, for example, family life, education, care, protection and play. Many of them have little chance of rehabilitation and reintegration into society: discrimination against children who have been in conflict with the law, together with deprivation and poverty, limit their opportunities for developing into active and contributing adult citizens (Parven 2011).

To ensure that children who have been marked as at risk of accessing the community's juvenile justice system and children in trouble with the law who have been removed or seek a diversion to custody from criminal justice officials provide the necessary legal assistance, community-based preventive and recovery programs, including appropriate social support services and life skill and education, to help them avoid criminal activities in the future. To ensure that juveniles in custody, receive adequate life skills, civil or justice education, legal therapy and pre-release and post-release social support programs so that they have the necessary skills to return effectively into the society and are protected from re-offending. Creating civic support for children at risk and children in connection with the law by creating resources for municipal authorities and educating parents, teenagers and other community members on the rights and laws of children, juvenile justice and prevention of crime. To provide access to free legal care and advocacy programs for minors in trouble with the law and to their service providers for free legal advice (Hong Kun and Sopath, n.d.)

In view of the references cited above, this study aimed to determine the effectiveness of rehabilitation programs and

their effects on rehabilitated Children in conflict with the Law. It sought to answer the following: 1. how may the respondents' profile be described in terms of 1.1. Age; 1.2. gender; and 1.3. Programs that have been undergone; 2. Are Rehabilitation programs effective in rehabilitating Children in Conflict with the Law?; 3. How may Diversion and Intervention programs affect the respondents in terms of 3.1. Emotional; and 3.2. Psycho-social.

II. METHODOLOGY

The researchers employed a descriptive survey method validated by a quantitative method in the form of a questionnaire. Descriptive research is conclusive in nature, as opposed to exploratory. This means that descriptive research gathers quantifiable information that can be used for statistical inference on your target audience through data analysis. As a consequence, this type of research takes the form of closed-ended, which limits its ability to provide unique insights (Penwardern, 2014). According to Kumar (2014), as cited by Subia, et.al. (2019) and Jocson, et.al.(2019), “descriptive research systematically describes a situation, problem, phenomenon, service or program, attitude toward an issue or simply, it provides information on a subject”. The research was conducted in different barangay in Cabanatuan City, Nueva Ecija, Philippines. The respondents of the study who were chosen purposively (Subia, 2018) were the rehabilitated children in conflict with the law and who finished and undergone the rehabilitation programs implemented on them such as; diversion and intervention.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Profile of the Rehabilitated Respondents'

1.1 Age

Table 1.1 Age of Respondents

| Age | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------|-----------|------------|
| 9-12 | 1 | 4.76 |
| 13-15 | 8 | 38.1 |
| 16-18 | 12 | 57.14 |
| Total | 21 | 100 |

Table 1.1 shows the ages of the respondents. There is a total of 21 respondents, 1 of 21 respondents has the age of 9 to 12 that comprises 4.76 percent of the population, 8 respondents have age ranging from 13 to 15 that comprises 38.1 percent of the total population, 12 respondents have the age of 16 to 18 that comprises 57.14 percent of total population.

1.2. Gender of Respondents

Table 1.2 Gender of Respondents

| Gender | Frequency | % |
|--------------|-----------|------------|
| Male | 18 | 85.71 |
| Female | 3 | 14.29 |
| Total | 21 | 100 |

Table 1.2 shows the gender of respondents. Eighteen (18) out of 21 are male which comprises 85.71% of the total population, while 3 out of 21 respondents are girls which comprise 14.29% of the total population.

1.3 Programs that have been undergone

Table 1.3 Programs

| Program | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------|-----------|------------|
| Intervention | 17 | 80.95 |
| Diversion | 4 | 19.05 |
| Total | 21 | 100 |

Table 1.3 shows the Programs that the respondents have undergone. 17 out of 21 respondents undergo Intervention Program which comprises 80.95% of the total population, while 4 respondents undergo Diversion Program which comprises 19.05% of the total population.

2. Effectiveness of Diversion programs

Table 2.1 Effectiveness of Diversion

| Activities under the Diversion Program | Weighted Mean | Verbal Interpretation |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------|
| Case Monitoring -a person or piece of equipment that warns, checks, control or keeps a continues record of something. | 4.5 | Very Effective |
| Follow up and continuous counseling - to help children to resolve the social or personal problem. | 4.5 | Very Effective |
| Peers Education - is the teaching or sharing of health information, values and behavior in educating others who may share similar social backgrounds or life experiences. | 4.0 | Effective |

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|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-----------------------|
| Values Formatting - A personal value is absolute or relative and ethical value, the assumption of which can be the basis for ethical action | 4.5 | Very Effective |
| Formal education assistance - the process of receiving or giving systematic instruction, especially at a school or university and the provision of money, resources, or information to help someone. | 4.5 | Very Effective |
| Cleanliness drives - the children that always clean in personal appearance. | 4.0 | Effective |
| Community service activities - voluntary work intended to help people in a particular area. | 4.0 | Effective |
| Sport development activities - This is to work with the community groups and individuals to increase particularly in sport and physical activity of all kinds. | 4.75 | Very effective |
| Fun and Games - amusing and enjoyable activities. | 4.75 | Very Effective |
| Vocational training - children that attend industry courses at the industry training center to develop complementary practical skills relating to the occupation at hand. | 4.75 | Very Effective |
| Livelihood skills development - refers to their means of securing the basic necessities food water shelter and clothing of life. | 4.75 | Very Effective |
| AVERAGE WEIGHTED MEAN | 4.45 | Very Effective |

Table 2.1 shows the ratings of the effectiveness of the Diversion Program as perceived by the respondents. As presented in the table Sports development, Vocational Training, livelihood Skills Development, and Fun and Games got the highest mean among the items with 4.75 which is verbally interpreted as Very Effective. On the other hand, Peer Education, and Cleanliness Drives got the

lowest mean with 4.00 which is verbally interpreted as Effective.

As data shows, this implies that Sports Development, Vocational Training, Livelihood Training, and Fun and Games are the most effective activities under the Diversion Program. According to Jeremy Horner of UNICEF, Korea, Sports Development is a process of enlarging people's choices and increasing the opportunities available to all members of society. According to Tool Kit Sport for Development website (n.d), based on the principles of inclusion, equity and sustainability, the emphasis is on the importance of increasing opportunities for the current generation as well as generations to come. Tool Kit Sport for Development website (n.d), further stated that the basic human capabilities that are necessary for this are to "lead long and healthy lives, to be knowledgeable, to have access to the resources needed for a decent standard of living and to be able to participate in the life of the community". According to DSWD, this may be helpful, because it increases the participation of a child in the community; it may develop his or her patience, sportsmanship and discipline which is why it plays an important role in rehabilitating CICL. As defined by Celia V. Sanidad-Leones (2006), Vocational training is a process where children attend industry courses at the industry training center to develop complementary practical skills relating to the occupation at hand. While Livelihood skills development refers to their means of securing the basic necessities food water shelter and clothing of life. According to DSWD, these activities would be helpful to children; it can teach them how to provide their needs on their own good way, these activities also provide capital assistance to the child and their families to start an income-producing activity. And also according to them when a child and their family know how to earn money, there is a big possibility that their children will not return to committing another crime. As presented in the table the average weighted mean of Effectiveness of the Diversion Program is 4.45 which verbally interpreted as Very Effective.

2.2 Effects of the Diversion Program

Table 2.2 as to psycho-social aspect shows the different effects of Diversion program, as presented on the Table "Able to educate oneself by any means either non-formal or formal education provided on rehabilitation programs", got the highest mean with 4.75 which verbally interpreted as Always, on the other hand, Able to produce income on your

own good way" got the lowest mean 3.75 which verbally interpreted Very often. The Average Mean of Effects of Diversion Program is 4.36 which verbally interpreted as Always. According to DSWD, there are Education programs implemented and attached to rehabilitation programs. These programs aid CICL to educate themselves as they return to the community and continue their lives. We are all aware that most of CICL are out of school youth. The rationale of these Educational programs is to prevent these children from committing crimes, if they can finish their studies or they just finish at least High School Level they can find a more decent job.

Table 2.2 Psycho-Social Aspect

| Effects | Weighted Mean | Verbal Interpretation |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------|
| Able to produce income on your own good way. | 3.75 | Very Often |
| Able to enhance yourself in terms of cultural activities such as art and music etc. | 4.00 | Very Often |
| Attending church, bible studies and other religious activities. | 4.50 | Always |
| Able to educate yourself by any means either non-formal or formal education provided on rehabilitation programs. | 4.75 | Always |
| Active participation in community services and other activities that can improve your well-being. | 4.25 | Always |
| Being friendly to other people and sensitive to other's feelings. | 4.50 | Always |
| Obeying and respecting your parents. | 4.50 | Always |
| Seeking guidance and advice when you have personal problems. | 4.50 | Always |
| Refraining from doing illegal acts. | 4.50 | Always |
| Average Weighted Mean | 4.36 | Always |

Table 2.3 shows the effects of the Diversion Program in the Emotional Aspect of the respondents. Able to manage

yourself especially when facing traumatic experiences got the highest mean of 4.5 which verbally interpreted as Always. On the other hand Able to manage their emotions, not always hot-headed, short temper and moody, Able to identify personal interest and needs got the lowest mean of 4.25 which verbally interpreted as Always. The average weighted mean is 4.33 which verbally interpreted as Always.

Table 2.3 Emotional Aspect

| Emotional Aspect | Weighted Mean | Verbal Interpretation |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------|
| Able to manage your emotions, not always hot-headed and short temper and moody. | 4.25 | Always |
| Able to manage yourself especially when facing traumatic experiences. | 4.50 | Always |
| Able to identify personal interests and needs. | 4.25 | Always |
| Average Weighted Mean | 4.33 | Always |

3. Effectiveness of the Intervention Program

Table 3.1 Intervention Activities

| Intervention Activities | Weighted Mean | Verbal Interpretation |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------|
| Casework/ group work services- treatment and rehabilitation of children who undergo traumatic experiences that can affect their growth and development. | 4.70 | Very Effective |
| Education/ Services- provide opportunities for the continuing education of children by formal and non-formal education. | 2.76 | Slightly Effective |
| Spiritual/ Religious Activities- attendance at church, bible studies and fellowships. | 4.00 | Effective |
| Provision of limited financial assistance- aim to meet needs for food, clothing, footwear, assistance, etc. | 2.58 | Not Effective |
| Recreational, Sports and | 4.52 | Effective |

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| other socio-cultural activities- aims to encourage and participate on the basis of their interests and needs. | | |
| Functional Literacy- provides alternative education and cultural activities. | 3.41 | Effective |
| Medical Services- a form of referral for medico-legal examination, hospitalization and medical treatment. | 3.35 | Slightly Effective |
| Livelihood Services- provisions of skills training and a grant of capital assistance to enable the child to engage in income-producing activities. | 3.05 | Slightly Effective |
| Average Weighted mean | 3.55 | Effective |

Table 3.1 shows the effectiveness of different activities under the Intervention program. As presented in the table, Casework services got the highest mean with 4.70 which verbally interpreted as Very Effective, on the other hand, Provision of Limited Financial Assistance got the lowest mean with 2.58 which verbally interpreted as Not Effective. According to DSWD traumatic experiences have a great impact on the development of a child. Traumatic experiences can lead to Phobias, Fear, Anxiety or worse Aggression that can lead to the commission of crimes. Casework Services is an activity that undergone by the child who has traumatic experiences, this activity got the highest mean and can be considered as the most effective activity under the Intervention Program. This activity helps children to forget their traumatic experiences and can lead to better development of their personality and behavior. The Average Weighted mean of the Effectiveness of the Intervention Program is 3.55 which verbally interpreted as Effective.

Effects of Intervention Program

Table 3.2 shows the different effects of Intervention programs. As presented on the table Refraining from doing illegal acts got the highest mean with 4.35 which verbally interpreted as Always, on the other hand, "Able to produce income on your own good way" got the lowest mean with 3.23 which verbally interpreted as Often. The average weighted mean is 3.72 which is verbally interpreted as Very Often

Table 3.2 Psycho-Social Aspect

| Effects | Weighted mean | Verbal Interpretation |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------|
| Able to produce income on your own good way. | 3.23 | Often |
| Able to enhance yourself in terms of cultural activities such as art and music etc. | 3.53 | Very Often |
| Attending church, bible studies and other religious activities. | 3.29 | Often |
| Able to educate yourself by any means either non-formal or formal education provided on rehabilitation programs. | 3.53 | Very Often |
| Active participation in community services and other activities that can improve your well-being. | 3.47 | Very Often |
| Being friendly to other people and sensitive to other's feelings. | 4.17 | Very Often |
| Obedying and respecting your parents. | 4.23 | Always |
| Seeking guidance and advice when you have personal problems. | 3.65 | Very Often |
| Refraining from doing illegal acts. | 4.35 | Always |
| Average Weighted Mean | 3.72 | Very Often |

Table 3.3 shows the effects of the Intervention Program in the Emotional Aspects of the respondents. Able to identify personal interests and needs got the highest mean of 4.11 which verbally interpreted as Always. On the other hand, Able to manage oneself especially when facing traumatic experiences got the lowest mean which verbally interpreted as Very Often. The average weighted mean is 3.78 which verbally interpreted as Very Often.

Table 3.3. Emotional Aspect

| Emotional Aspect | Weighted Mean | Verbal Interpretation |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------|
| Able to manage your emotions, not always hot-headed and short temper and moody. | 3.70 | Very Often |
| Able to manage yourself especially when facing | 3.53 | Very Often |

| | | |
|------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------------|
| traumatic experiences. | | |
| Able to identify personal interests and needs. | 4.11 | Very Often |
| Average Weighted Mean | 3.78 | Very Often |

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the following conclusions were drawn: There are total of 21 respondents, 1 of 21 respondents have age ranging from of 9-12 that comprises 4.76 percent of the population, 8 respondents have the age of 13 to 15 that comprises 38.1 percent of the total population, 12 respondents have the age of 16-18 that comprises 57.14 percent of total population. Most of the respondents are males which comprise 85.71 percent of the total population, while the females comprise 14.29 percent of the total population. Most of the respondents have undergone an Intervention Program which comprises 80.95 percent of the total population, while the rest of the respondents undergo Diversion Program which comprises 19.05 percent of the total population. The rehabilitation programs implemented to the respondents were described as effective, it is clearly stated based on the effects that more often or mostly more often observable to the children undergo a rehabilitation program. Rehabilitation programs have a positive effect on children's emotional aspects because based on the data they able to make the right decision despite the traumatic incidents happened to them, it is observable on how they enable find their personal interest, able to manage their emotions and not being short temper. Psycho-social well-being of rehabilitated children improved, it is observable when they participated in community activities, always obeying their parents and instead of seeking guidance to their peers, and they seek the advice of their parents. Therefore, the rehabilitation being implemented is effective. It is based on the result of the effects and the positive transformations experienced by the children.

In the light of the findings, conclusions and limitations of the study, the following are highly recommended: Future researchers may extend the scope of the study, aside from the Effects of Rehabilitation Program to Life of rehabilitated CICL after undergone Rehabilitation Programs and increase the number of respondents of the study for more accurate result and to make accurate decisions given available information (Subia, 2018). Conduct of Barangay visit and face to face interviews with the respondents is also

encouraged. Future studies may devise a qualitative study in the form of an Interview for a better understanding of the results.

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