

Implementation of the Intervention Programs for Children in Conflict with the Law: A Sturdy Basis for Action Plant

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Abstract

The aim of this study is assessment on implementation of intervention programs for Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL) as a basis for an action plan. Using a descriptive-correlational design, data were collected from barangay officials, including Barangay Captains, Secretaries, and VAW Desk Officers. Findings showed that respondents were mostly aged 51–60, male, married, and college graduates. All program areas—community-based, diversion, education, and counseling—were rated as “well implemented,” with education programs receiving the highest mean. No significant relationship was found between respondents’ profile and their assessment of program implementation. Despite positive results, key challenges included difficulty in building rapport with CICL, limited parental support, lack of personnel, and insufficient funding. Finally, it concluded while programs were effectively implemented, improvements were needed in family involvement, staffing, and resource allocation. It recommended enhanced training, stronger inter-agency collaboration, and systematic monitoring to ensure sustainable and effective rehabilitation and reintegration of CICL.

Keywords: *Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL), Intervention Programs, Community-Based Programs, Diversion Programs, Counseling Programs, Educational Programs, Descriptive Correlational Design*



I. INTRODUCTION

The Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL) is a youthful offender known also as a chronic juvenile offender, chronic delinquents, or chronic recidivists. These are the youth who had been arrested four or more times during their minority and had perpetuated a striking majority of serious criminal acts. Article 40 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child stipulated. The State recognized the right of every child alleged as, accused of, adjudged, or recognized as having infringed the penal law, to be treated in a manner consistent with the promotion of the child's sense of dignity and worth, considering the child's age and desirability of promoting his/her reintegration. In the Philippines, under Republic Act 9344, otherwise known as the Juvenile Justice Welfare Act of 2006 defined that a Child in Conflict with the Law referred to a child who is alleged to be, accused of, or adjudged as, having committed an offense under Philippine laws. Republic Act 10630 strengthened the Philippine Juvenile Justice System; it kept the indemnity from criminal liability of children aged fifteen (15) years old. However, a child who is above 12 years of age up to 15 years of age, who committed serious offenses that are punishable by more than 12 years shall be mandatory placed in an Intensive Juvenile Intervention and Support Center. Repeat offenders, or children who have committed crimes more than three times, would also be considered as neglected children and, as such, must undergo intervention programs supervised by the local social welfare and development officers. The juvenile justice system's intervention program for kids in trouble with the law is essential to meet the diverse needs of young people who have encountered the law. The success of this program depends on a detailed knowledge of each child's unique situation, including their upbringing, social surroundings, and the causes of their participation in the legal system. The significance of awareness in the intervention program was covered in detail in this introduction. It was also examining the many facets of assessment and how crucial it is to develop effective treatments. They looked at the essential components of a thorough evaluation, such as determining the child's unique needs, risk factors, and protective factors. It also discussed the importance of using a child-centered approach that puts the child's rights, voice, and welfare first during the evaluation. A vital part of the juvenile justice system, the intervention program for children in conflict with the law aimed to address the complex needs of young people who have met the law. By raising awareness and understanding, intervention programs can effectively tailor their strategies to meet the unique needs of each child, promoting their rehabilitation and reintegration into society.

Furthermore, the Philippine Juvenile Justice System was reinforced by Republic Act 10630, which maintained the protection from criminal culpability for children under the age of fifteen (15). But a child who is between the ages of 12 and 15 and who commits grave crimes that are those accused of crimes carrying a sentence longer than 12 years must be placed in an intensive juvenile Center for Intervention and Support. Children who have committed crimes or repeat offenders more than three times would also be regarded as children who have been neglected and, therefore, need to participate in intervention programs overseen by the local development and social welfare officers. These young people frequently dealt with various complex situations that interact in their existence. The Implementing Rules and Regulations defines an intervention program as a series of activities addressing the underlying issues that led the child to commit an offense. This program may involve personalized treatment, including



counseling, skills training, education, and other activities to improve the psychological, emotional, and psycho-social well-being of the child. However, the intervention program formulated by the LGU, NGOs, and other government agencies must align with the National Intervention Program. The LGU, in collaboration with the Local Council for the Protection of Children and other relevant sectors, is responsible for developing a Comprehensive Juvenile Intervention Program (Local Intervention Program) to be implemented from the barangay to the provincial level, covering a minimum period of three (3) years.

Additionally, the Philippine Congress utilized RA 9344, also known as the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act, in 2006 to ensure compliance with international juvenile justice standards, particularly the principles outlined in the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child. RA 9344 is widely regarded as a landmark piece of legislation for children's rights in the Philippines (International Justice Mission (Philippines, 2006), and throughout Asia, this law has elevated the Philippines to the forefront of restorative justice activism (Chan, 2012). The neutral term "children in conflict with the law" rather than delinquent, which is more typically used in technical literature but considered condemnatory, demonstrates the movement to restructure the Philippine juvenile justice system.

The local intervention program must be implemented with adequate financing and undergo evaluation and assessment yearly by the DILG on behalf of the LGUs to the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Council (JJWC). The Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act of the Philippines currently establishes 15 years old as the minimum age of criminal responsibility, providing a distinct legal structure for children in conflict with the law (CICL). Those below 15 are not held criminally responsible but could be accountable civilly and participate in intervention initiatives. However, there is a proposed bill aiming to reduce to "above 9 years old" due to worries about child exploitation by criminal organizations, contending that this adjustment would discourage such exploitation. Opponents, which include medical experts, psychologists, human rights advocates, and religious figures, vehemently oppose the bill, expressing concerns about exposing younger children to coercion and peer pressure, considering their brain development incomplete. The Catholic Church favors rehabilitation over lowering the MACR, advocating for improved law enforcement and enhanced youth rehabilitation programs to protect young offenders in the justice system.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This study was anchored on the Republic Act No. 9344 or the "Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act, which defines that Child in Conflict with the Law and Welfare System as a system dealing with children at risk and children in conflict with the law, which provides child-appropriate proceedings, including programs and services for prevention, diversion, rehabilitation, reintegration, and aftercare to ensure their normal growth and development. They institutionalize the promotion of the well-being of the child and their families, involvement of parents and guardians, promotion of diversion, avoiding deprivation of liberty, and protection of the privacy rights of children. In intervention programs for children in legal trouble, a rights-based approach is combined with useful diversion, rehabilitation, and community reintegration tactics.



Moreover, this aims to reduce recidivism among children in conflict with the law by prioritizing the child's best interests and establishing supportive surroundings that promoted good development, it comprises ideas from many criminological theories, such as developmental theories that emphasized children's growing capacities and labeling theory, which look at how social labels impact children's conduct and sense of self.

In addition, Republic Act No. 603, amended, otherwise known as the "Child and Youth Welfare Code", is yet to be embodied in this study. In such an Act, the Supreme Court rule on children's commitment: provided further: that the minimum wage age for children committed to youth rehabilitation centers shall be twelve (12) years old. All children have a natural right to fundamental freedoms known as child rights. All children have access to this right, regardless of their background, race, color, parents or guardians, creed, or gender current knowledge and how your research adds to it.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Importantly, it was aimed to assess the level of implementation of intervention programs for children in conflict with the Law in the selected barangay of Tuguegarao City, Cagayan. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions. What is the respondent's assessment of the level of implementation of intervention programs for Children in Conflict with the Law related to. Is there a significant difference in the respondent's assessment on the level of implementation of the intervention programs for children in conflict with the Law when grouped according to their profile variables. What challenges are encountered by the respondents in the implementation of the intervention programs for Children in Conflict with the Law. What action plan can be proposed to strengthen the implementation of the intervention programs for Children in Conflict with the Law.

LIMITATIONS

The study targeted to assess the level of implementation of intervention programs for Children in Conflict with the Law in the Municipality of Tuguegarao City, Cagayan. The study was further limited to the inclusion of 12 Barangay Captains, 12 Barangay Secretaries, and 12 Barangay Violence Against Women (VAW) Desk Officers, as they were the frontliners in the implementation of intervention programs for Children in Conflict with the Law. The respondents were selected using a purposive sampling technique.

Moreover, the data-gathering tool used in the study was a survey questionnaire adapted from the manual of the Cagayan Valley Regional Rehabilitation Center for Youth and Educational Research International, Vol. 18, No. 18, February–May 2022.

II. METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study utilized descriptive research design. As such, the quantitative method in the form of a questionnaire was also used to determine the character development of the respondents. The study in the examination was a descriptive research design, which is defined as research that described the features of the population or phenomenon being studied (Salmorin



2006). This study examined the problems encountered by social workers in implementing intervention programs for CICL. This research study dealt with the implementation of intervention programs for Children in Conflict with the Law as community-based programs, diversion programs, education programs, and counseling programs, respectively, which are conducted at Tuguegarao City, Cagayan Valley.

The informants

Respondents were purposely selected as they were considered respondents or frontliners in the implementation of intervention programs for Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL) in a municipality composed of 49 barangays in Tuguegarao City, Cagayan Valley. A total of 36 respondents were included in the study, consisting of 12 Barangay Captains, 12 Barangay Secretaries, and 12 Barangay VAW Desk Officers from selected barangays with documented CICL cases. To be included in the study, they should have direct involvement, experience, or participation in handling CICL cases or in the implementation, monitoring, or evaluation of intervention programs for CICL. Conversely, not being involved in CICL-related programs, or coming from barangays without recorded CICL cases were excluded from the study.

Data Gathering and treatment

The research used a survey questionnaire lifted from the operations manual of Cagayan Valley Regional Rehabilitation Center for Youth and Educational Research International Vol.4444(44) Feb -May 2022. Part I described the profile of the respondents in terms of age, sex, civil status, Educational Attainment, designation, and Ethnic Affiliation. The survey questionnaire gathered responses from respondents about the challenges they face in the implementation of the intervention program for Children in Conflict with the Law while Part 2 consisted of questions related to the implementation of intervention programs as assessed the level of implementation of intervention programs for Children in Conflict with the Law relative to Community-Based Programs, Diversion Programs, Education Programs, and Counselling Programs.

Ethical and Legal Considerations

It was observed that strict ethical and legal standards be obeyed by ensuring voluntary participation, informed consent, confidentiality, and anonymity of all respondents. Data were collected and handled in compliance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012. The research also upheld the rights and welfare of children in accordance with the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act of 2006 and the Child and Youth Welfare Code, ensuring that all information was treated with sensitivity and used solely for academic purposes.

III. RESULT and DISCUSSION

Most respondents are aged 51 to 60 years, predominantly male, married, and degree holders. The respondents are evenly distributed across the roles of Barangay Captain, Barangay Secretary, and Barangay VAW Desk Officer. In terms of ethnicity, respondents are equally represented by Tagalog and Ibanag.



Level of effectiveness of rehabilitation programs for CICL.

Community Based Programs. The Community Based Programs programs achieved a category mean of 3.63, which is interpreted as Well Implemented. This indicates that, overall, the programs are effectively carried out according to their intended design and objectives. The well-implemented rating reflects consistent efforts by the program staff to deliver the interventions, address the needs of Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL), and maintain program quality across different areas such as education, community engagement, counseling, and diversion initiatives.

Diversion Programs. The diversion programs obtained a category mean of 3.62, which is interpreted as Well Implemented. This indicates that alternative interventions outside the formal justice system are effectively delivered and consistently practiced. These programs provide opportunities for Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL) to engage in structured support and rehabilitation without formal judicial proceedings, demonstrating the commitment of program implementers to restorative approaches and community reintegration.

Education Programs. The education programs received a category mean of 3.64, interpreted as Well Implemented, making them the most effectively implemented among the program categories. This reflects the strong emphasis on formal and non-formal learning opportunities, including ALS and secondary education, which support CICL in acquiring knowledge, skills, and competencies necessary for personal development and independent living. The high mean suggests that educational interventions are systematically organized and delivered, although further enhancement of tertiary education opportunities may increase the program's overall impact.

Counseling Programs. Counseling programs obtained a category mean of 3.61, also interpreted as Well Implemented, indicating that psychosocial support services are being delivered effectively. This demonstrates the dedication of service providers in addressing the mental health and emotional needs of CICL. Although well executed, slight improvements in therapeutic activities and individualized counseling may further strengthen the overall quality and impact of these interventions.

Correlation between the respondents' assessment of the level of implementation of intervention programs for children in conflict with the law.

There is no significant relationship established between the respondents' profile (age, sex, civil status, educational attainment, designation, and ethnic affiliation) and their assessment of the level of implementation of intervention programs for children in conflict with the law.

Challenges encountered in the implementation of intervention programs.

The top challenges in implementing intervention programs for Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL) include difficulty in establishing rapport with CICL, lack of parental sympathy toward siblings, unavailability of personnel, and insufficient government funding. These challenges highlight the critical need for trust-building activities, parental engagement, adequate



staffing, and consistent financial support to ensure effective program delivery and successful rehabilitation and reintegration of CICL.

IV. CONCLUSION

The conclusion shows programs for Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL) are generally well carried out, covering community activities, education, diversion programs, and counseling services. More importantly, the research sheds light on what really makes these programs work: building trust with the children, involving their families, having enough skilled staff, and managing resources effectively. These insights make it clear that helping CICL is not just about having structured programs, it is about taking a holistic approach that addresses their emotional well-being, education, and economic needs all at once. Findings also provide guidance for social workers, program managers, and policymakers. They show that interventions need to be flexible and responsive to each child's situation, while families need to be engaged as active partners in the process. Ensuring enough trained staff and consistent funding is equally important to make programs sustainable and impactful. Looking ahead, there is a need for innovative strategies to keep children engaged, encourage parental involvement, and improve resource allocation, as well as research that follows up on the long-term effects of these interventions.

V. RECOMMENDATION

Barangays may develop and implement initiatives that actively engage parents or guardians in the rehabilitation process. Parenting seminars, family counseling, and values formation activities may help improve parental support, which is essential in sustaining behavioral change among CICL. Continuous training and seminars should be provided to barangay officials and program facilitators to improve their skills in handling CICL cases, particularly in areas such as counseling, conflict resolution, and rapport-building. This will help address challenges related to managing the behavior of CICL. Local government units (LGUs) may consider assigning dedicated personnel or social workers to focus specifically on CICL cases. This will ensure more consistent monitoring, follow-up, and implementation of intervention programs. The government may prioritize sufficient budget allocation for CICL intervention programs. Funds are necessary for training, program materials, activities, and continuous operations to ensure sustainability and effectiveness. Barangays may collaborate with agencies such as the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), schools, non-government organizations (NGOs), and law enforcement to create a more holistic and coordinated approach to CICL rehabilitation. Establish a systematic monitoring and evaluation framework to regularly assess the progress and outcomes of intervention programs. This may help identify gaps, improve strategies, and ensure that programs remain responsive to the Conduct community-based awareness campaigns to reduce stigma against CICL and encourage community support. A supportive environment can contribute significantly to the successful reintegration of CICL into society. Future researchers may explore additional variables not covered in this study, such as the long-term impact of intervention programs on CICL behavior or include a larger sample size and various locations to validate and expand the findings.

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