

DEVELOPMENT OF NON-FORMAL EDUCATION ACTIVITIES BASED ON THE FOUR NOBLE TRUTHS PRINCIPLE TO ENHANCE LIFE SKILLS FOR LIVING TOGETHER OF MALE INMATES IN CHIANGMAI CENTRAL PRISON

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Abstract: The purposes of this research were to (1) analyze the case study of ways and means in an alleviation and rehabilitation of the drug addicts' capability from successful organizations, (2) to develop the program activities under non-formal education in accordance with the Four Noble Truths Principle, (3) study the results of the activities developed from (2) on the enhancement of life skills in living together in society of the male inmates in the Chiangmai Central Prison, and (4) to study factors and conditions affecting the success in applying the program activities to achieve the goal.

This study used the mixed methods including qualitative and the semi-trial methodologies. Successful models were selected from 3 organizations successfully rehabilitated drug-addict patients to analyze, synthesize and develop new program activities in accordance with the Four Noble Truths Principle. The newly developed program has been experimented with the male inmates, especially the drug-addict patients, recruited by random sampling using a ticket selection from Chiangmai Central Prison. A group of 28 volunteers participated in the activities during the course of 11 days (total of 116 hours) and were evaluated with life skills tests. Volunteers were assigned to fill survey forms to evaluate the activities according to their satisfaction and provide of self-assessment. Behavior observation has been recorded.

These research tools had been assessed and approved by technical experts and advisors to validate them before the trial ($\alpha=0.9133$, $p < 0.05$). Results demonstrated that case study from 3 successful organizations used applied methods of rehabilitation with the drug addicts following the process of the Four Noble Truths Principle; a) *Dukkha* the study of circumstances of suffering that revealed the drug addiction in the different format; b) *Samudaya* the

root causes of suffering caused by family-related and self-problems; c) *Nirodha* setting up goals and targets to reduce, detach and quit from the addiction; and d) *Magga* the steps of the path leading to the cessation of suffering. The Four Noble Truth Principle will ultimately prevent patients from future addiction by that include setting records of individual profile of drug addicts, providing occupational training, sports playing, dharma and ethics cultivations and pledging the oath not to return to drug addiction. It is believed that the application of the Noble Eight-fold Path (*Magga*) as the middle way process of achieving the target. The development of program activities in accordance with the Four Noble Truths Principle to enhance the life skills utilized the models from 3 organizations as the foundation to set up the principles, purposes, activity plan and the study process, aiming that the volunteers gain new knowledge and valuable experience, practice the important activities in accordance with Neo-Humanism process and the Four Noble Truths Principle.

The results showed significant ($p < 0.05$) improvement of life skills in the five fields and the male inmates had high satisfaction in all activity. Self-assessment demonstrated that majority of the male inmates had practiced activities every day such as meditation, stresses alleviation with the low brain-wave activity. Behavioral observation of the male inmates during group activities showed that there had been improved cooperation, unity and patients helping each other in making decisions to solve problems as a group. They were more socialized; take pride in working together, showing responsibility with relaxed emotions. Key factors and conditions in applying program activities towards the successful goals were program administration, location and environment, committed budget, safety and infrastructures convenient to the training including the encouragement and support the morale of the inmates. These were the important factors and conditions enabling the drug-addicts to change their behavior, improve self-esteem for themselves, family, society, community and the country as a whole.

Keywords: 4 Noble truths principle, non-formal education, drug addicts, life skills improvement

Background and Significance of the Issue

At present, Thai society has been suffering the deterioration of ethics and cultural values that demonstrated in the forms of increasingly violent

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crime rates. One of the major problems is narcotics addiction. This is the fundamental cause of subsequent violation of laws that is a threat to human resource development and national security because convicted persons have to be punished according to the crime they committed under justice.

From the spreading of crimes, higher numbers of convicted prisoners have been reported in correctional facilities. Department of Corrections reported the number of 161,844 prisoners under their control in 2006. Department of Corrections has been attempted to provide rehabilitation both physically and mentally for prisoners including education and vocational training. This enables the prisoners to reconcile with the society upon their return, live normal life and ultimately prevent future violation acts that might commit otherwise. The training provided to the prisoners could potentially rehabilitate body and mind prior to the freedom of imprisonment. Rehabilitation scheme should be focusing on recovering mental health and provide vocational skills that will allow prisoners to return to their family without being a burden to society.

Corrections or rehabilitations to provide good citizens back to society serve as preparedness before prisoners are being released. It is a crucial step that the government agency should consider and utilize the non-formal education to create activities to improve life quality of prisoners. Prisoners will also benefit from this process by gradually adapting themselves to be a good member of society.

Life skills is a personal fundamental ability to adapt to the environment and interact with others, as well as choosing the right path of life when having to make decisions among many conflicting situations in real life effectively (WHO, 1993).

In Thailand, Department of Mental Health (DMH), Ministry of Public Health, has adopted the Life Skill Concept from the World Health Organization (WHO) and modify it to be best fit with Thai society and cultures. Especially, in the period of conflicting mind set and social values amongst the people, Life Skills Concept can be useful for people to get pass this situation and can benefit teaching and learning methods used by teachers in schools. Department of Mental Health has divided Life Skills into 3 different domains; 1) cognitive domain, 2) effective domain, and 3) psychomotor domain. DMH also addressed that Life Skills demonstrates person's ability including knowledge and attitude required for problem solving in daily life including roles of man/woman, sexual relationships, narcotics, health issues, ethics, and influence of media, family life, and social problems, with logical approach towards successful ways of solving each problem constructively.

However, to teach people about Life Skills does not involve only knowledge but the combination of knowledge and attitude towards improved behaviors that instructors would expect. This is more valuable than improving only knowledge alone. Attitude is likely to determine a person's behavior. Therefore, if we wish to change one's behavior, we may need to change attitude first. The effective method to achieve that is participatory learning process that enabled a person to actively participate in the lessons, not being passively taught by teacher. A person will be thinking, sharing, discussing and assisting the group to solve problems together with the group.

To implement Life Skills Concept in real life situations with the target group to provide preparedness and adaptability for pre-released prisoners is very important steps for this group if we want to see that they can return to the society and deal with normal society with good quality of life.

The Objectives are 1) to analyze successful case study on ways to treat and rehabilitate ability for drug addicts from specific institutions; 2) to develop and evaluate non-formal education activities based on the Buddhist '4 Noble Truths Principle' for the enhancement of Life Skills and common living in the society for male prisoners at Central Correction Facility; and 3) to study factors and conditions associated to the implementation of non-formal education activities based on the Buddhist '4 Noble Truths Concept'

Research questions and hypothesis were 1) what are the factors contributing to the successful ways to treat and rehabilitate ability for drug addicts from specific institutions? 2) what are the suitable model structure and content of non-formal education activities for the improvement of Life Skills for prisoners? 3) can non-formal education activities and participatory learning process improve Life Skills for prisoners? and 4) what are the factors and conditions associated to the implementation of non-formal education activities based on the Buddhist '4 Noble Truths Concept'?

Research Scopes

Populations and sample size

Population for this study is randomized male prisoners (n=30) at Chiangmai Central Corrections Facility that have been convicted from drug use.

Context and variables

The context of this study is on Life Skills Concept activities divided into 3 learning processes:

- Cognitive domain, such as critical thinking

- Effective domain, such as caring for others, self-esteem, social responsibility
- Psychomotor domain, such as emotion control, stress management

All of the above activities will be based on the '4 Noble Truth Concept' in Buddhism.

Definitions

Format means the synthesis of content that involve principles, objectives, methodologies, evaluations that are used to develop and improve learning process that includes principle, methods and steps of activities under program or curriculum and self-study guidelines.

Organization of non-formal education activities means the process of planning of conducting activities within the framework of learning using the '4 Noble Truth Concept' as a core concept for the improvement of Life Skills and living with the community using knowledge, attitude and behavioral skills.

Problem solving strategy following the '4 Noble Truth Concept' means the process or steps under the Buddhism's core teaching for ways to eliminate sufferings at their cause. This can be explained by introducing the problems, finding out cause of the problems, planning strategies to eliminate the causative factors; and implementing the steps.

Life Skills means fundamental abilities of a person that can adapt and choose the suitable path of life to deal with problems people faces in the modern society, and prepare themselves to cope with future changes efficiently. This can be achieved by training.

Living together in the community means normal way of life that male prisoners spend routine or daily activities and play their own roles in the society after being released from corrections facilities such as realizing their responsibilities, family relationships, friendships, work ethics, relationship with community and urban life under the conditions of Life Skills development process.

Male inmates mean the convicted male criminals who violated drug laws and had used narcotic drugs (methamphetamine, heroines, marijuana, opium, etc.) in the past that were imprisoned at Chiangmai Correctional Facility. The group is waiting for rehabilitation both physically and mentally as preparedness before returning to society.

Factors mean any element that affect ways and results for the implementation of the non-formal education activities that can be developed further

Conditions mean any circumstances that influence and contribute to the success and failure in implementing non-formal education activities based on the '4 Noble Truths Concept'

Expected Benefits of this research are 1) Obtain the standard and successful model for narcotic drug therapy from institutions that can be used to apply to other correctional facilities that holds drug addict patients; 2) to create activities, learning process and manuals for the creation of activities for male prisoners at Chiangmai Correctional Facilities that can benefit after their return to society and not going back to drugs again; 3) to evaluate effectiveness and satisfaction after using the non-formal education activities developed by this research; and 4) identify factors and conditions associated with the development of the model for different target groups and environment

Relevant Literatures and Research

This research utilizes the basic concept in Buddhism, the '4 Noble Truths' to design non-formal education activities and incorporates in the learning process to enhance Life Skills for prisoners at Chiangmai Central Correction facilities. The principal investigator studied and used principles, theory and ideas, review literatures and related research to design the methodology and presented in 7 sections as follows:

1. Ideas and theories about non-formal education activities
2. Buddha's dharma that can be used to solve problems based on the 4 Noble Truths Concept
3. Life Skills Concept
4. Neo-humanist theory
5. Theory about narcotic addiction
6. Related research
7. Framework of the research

Research Procedures

To achieve the goals of this study and to obtain the reliable data, several phenomena and case study will be analyzed for the understanding and develop ways to enhance and rehabilitate drug addicts' ability demonstrated by successful institutions. Thereafter, non-formal education activities will be created based on the 4 Noble Truth Concept to improve the living condition of male prisoners that live together in the correctional facilities. Qualitative research methods will be applied. One-shot case study will be used to study the effect of learning process on the study groups. Effects of factors and conditions associated with the failure and success on the implementation of non-formal education activities will be analyzed using the following methodologies.

Part I *Synthesis of case study: ways to therapy and rehabilitation program for drug addicts from successful institutions*

1. Criteria for case study and institution selection. Selected institutions should have the following components:

- a. Ongoing program activities
 - b. Non-profit organization
 - c. Manage 300-1000 drug addict patients
 - d. Has good standing and well-recognized by general public
 - e. Comparable missions with governmental policy on prevention and suppression of drug crimes
2. Selected case study and institutions
- a. Wiwatpolamueng School, Royal Thai Air Force, Don Mueng, Bangkok
 - b. Khon Khaen Central Corrections Facility, Khon Khaen
 - c. Tham Grabork Buddhist Center, Phrabuddhapath, Saraburi
3. Analyzing case study using:
- a. Documentary study from published articles, online materials
 - b. Interview of key informants
 - c. Field study on site at 3 institutions mentioned above.

Data will be used to design non-formal education activities that would be suitable for further studies.

Part II *Developing non-formal education activities*

Information obtained from studies and interviews of patients in Part I will be used to develop activities by the following processes:

1. Developing roadmap of activity and curriculum development based on the 4 Noble Truths Concept using consensus from Part I including analysis and synthesis of factors, therapeutic guidelines, activity management, target group characteristics, individual status, family structure, community they used to live in, motivation of addiction, behaviors at time of addiction, backgrounds, and social Life Skills.

2. Analysis and synthesis of data obtained from interviews at 3 study sites from Part I. Develop learning process that will fit the selected target group, apply the program activities and collect information within limited timeline.

3. Use literature reviewed data such as Life Skills Concept and related research such neo-humanism, such as low brain waves, positive image creation, and enriched relaxed environment, problem solving skill based on the 4 Noble Truths Concept, to incorporate into the learning process and program implementation. All of the factors mentioned here will be analyzed and relate to apply to the conversation with target group and individuals, such as the question 'what make him suffer, what are the cause of such

problem(s)' and ways to eliminate the cause of problems with clear goals and constructive ways of solving such problems.

4. Construction of content framework, develop activity plan, curriculum and program of implementation based on Life Skill Concept to make the study group realize the importance of living in the community with others. This will include applying neo-humanist process occasionally during the learning process to increase knowledge, improve self-esteem and value, introducing new or alternative norms. The diversified activities and media used in this process will be targeting an appreciation of individual's mind, improved positive attitude, and ultimately positive behaviors that can be useful for the community living and Life Skills.

5. Developing Life Skills of male prisoners by non-formal education activity following the 4 Noble Truth Concept to improve Life Skill in 3 domains; knowledge, attitude and behaviors.

6. Develop program for implementation, and re-assess format and activities that have been developed.

7. Evaluate the program developed using Focus Group Discussion by 5 experts based on their areas of expertise; 1) rehabilitation and therapy, 2) human resource development, 3) non-formal education, 4) Buddhism, and 5) Social and community development

8. Modify and finalize the non-formal education activity after the processes mentioned above before testing.

Part III Evaluating the results after implementing non-formal education activities

1. Coordinate with Chiangmai Central Corrections Facility to study the population and identify sample size of randomized selected individuals; educate volunteers about awareness and value of participation in the learning process.

2. Prepare for all steps that need to be taken according to planned activities.

3. Create evaluation methods for the improvement of Life Skills for community living (knowledge, attitude, and behaviors).

4. Evaluate quality of research tools to ensure validity and reliability.

5. Implementing the program activities according to the planning.

6. Working with selected group of volunteers using the tools and methods developed. All volunteers will be put in one group.

7. Length of study can be divided into 2 different period

- a. Participation of non-formal education by target group takes half day with planned activities.
- b. Self-study using the manuals and guidelines last throughout study period.
- c. Evaluation of self-study and interview individuals' satisfaction.
8. Conclude the effect of the study.

Part IV Factors and conditions associated with the implementation of

1. Synthesis of results from Part I-IV, identifying conditions and factors affecting the use of non-formal education activities to improve Life Skills of drug addict prisoners at Chiangmai Corrections Facility.

2. Use in-depth interview with qualified experts to identify conditions and factors affecting the use of non-formal education activities to improve Life Skills of drug addict prisoners at Chiangmai Corrections Facility.

3. Study conditions and factors affecting the use of non-formal education activities to improve Life Skills of drug addict prisoners at Chiangmai Corrections Facility if it is suitable and effective.

4. Conduct Focus Group dialogue with Corrections Officers and select 5 prisoners to analyze the factors and conditions that affect the results of the improvement of Life Skills to help improve further development.

5. All data and information obtained from all studies will be summarized, analyzed and concluded to make recommendations for the improvements of future developments of non-formal education activities for related applications.

Research Findings

The newly developed program activities had been experimented with the male inmates, especially the drug-addict patients, recruited by random sampling using a ticket selection from Chiangmai Central Prison. A group of 28 volunteers participated in the activities during the course of 11 days (total of 116 hours) and were evaluated with life skills tests. Volunteers were assigned to fill survey forms to evaluate the activities according to their satisfaction and provide of self-assessment. Behavior observation has been recorded.

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addiction in the different format; b) *Samudaya* the and root causes of suffering caused by family-related and self-problems; c) *Nirodha* setting up goals and targets to reduce, detach and quit from the addiction; and d) *Magga*-the steps of the path leading to the cessation of suffering. The Four Noble Truth Principle will ultimately prevent patients from future addiction by that include setting records of individual profile of drug addicts, providing occupational training, sports playing, dharma and ethics cultivations and pledging the oath not to return to drug addiction. It is believed that the application of the Noble Eight-fold Path (*Magga*) as the middle way process of achieving the target. The development of program activities in accordance with the Four Noble Truths Principle to enhance the life skills utilized the models from 3 organizations as the foundation to set up the principles, purposes, activity plan and the study process, aiming that the volunteers gain new knowledge and valuable experience, practice the important activities in accordance with Neo-Humanism process and the Four Noble Truths Principle.

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Conclusions

The Buddhist 'Four Noble Truths Principle', in combination with neo-humanism and non-formal education can be used to develop program activities applicable for the successful rehabilitation program for drug-addict patients in Chiangmai Correctional Facility. Significant improvements of Life Skills and behaviors were observed after participating in the experimental trials. Volunteer prisoners showed the positive development and potential in living in community with others. The models developed from

this research can be used as a tool for rehabilitation of drug-addict prisoners in Thailand.

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