

HOW ADULTS COPE WITH JUVENILE DELINQUENCY IN THAI SOCIETY

วิธีการรับมือกับการกระทำความผิดของเด็กและเยาวชน
ในสังคมไทย

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Abstract

This research article entitled “How Adults Cope with Juvenile Delinquency in Thai Society.” The study revealed that the problem issues of juveniles are body, psycho-emotion, family, friends and intimates, inspiration and life target, society and environment, crime record, background and education opportunity, deviate behavior and the national education system problems. Meanwhile, the crime-influencing factors for juveniles consisted of 4 factors: society factors such as friends, habitats, easy approach to contrabands and vices, etc., economy factors such as over demand of necessities, high living-cost, lack of job opportunity etc., family factors such as child-bringing-up pattern, family pattern, parent characteristic, etc. and juvenile factors such as gene, maturity, illness, etc., affecting juveniles differently. As for the ways of Dharma application to juveniles, the use of Dharma can be implemented in 2 dimensions: Dharma teaching application such as mind opening, extra-curriculum activities, camping, etc. and mind-refinement such as approaching to religion, creating good consciousness to juveniles, etc. Additionally, the suitable Buddhist principles are the Five Precepts (Silas), the Four Noble Truths (Ariyasacca), the Noble Eightfold Path (Ariyamagga), and the Sublime States of Mind (Brahmavihara).

Keywords: Juvenile, Delinquency, Thai Society

บทคัดย่อ

บทความวิจัยเรื่อง “วิธีการรับมือกับการกระทำความผิดของเด็กและเยาวชนในสังคมไทย” ผลการวิจัยพบว่า ประเด็นปัญหาเยาวชนคือร่างกาย อารมณ์ความรู้สึก ครอบครัว เพื่อนฝูง

และเพื่อนร่วมงาน แรงบันดาลใจและเป้าหมายชีวิต สังคมและสิ่งแวดล้อม ประวัติอาชญากรรม พื้นฐานและโอกาสทางการศึกษา พฤติกรรมคลาดเคลื่อนและปัญหากระบวนการศึกษาของประเทศ ขณะที่ปัจจัยที่มีอิทธิพลต่อการเกิดอาชญากรรมของเด็กและเยาวชน ได้แก่ ปัจจัยด้านสังคม เช่น เพื่อน ที่อยู่อาศัยวิธีการที่ง่ายต่อการค้าขายผิดกฎหมายและสิ่งชั่วร้ายทั้งหลาย ฯลฯ ปัจจัยทาง เศรษฐกิจ เช่น ความต้องการที่เกินความจำเป็น ค่าครองชีพสูง ขาดโอกาสในการทำงาน ฯลฯ ปัจจัยครอบครัว เช่น รูปแบบการเลี้ยงดูเด็ก รูปแบบครอบครัว ลักษณะบิดามารดา ฯลฯ และ ปัจจัยเกี่ยวกับเยาวชน เช่น ยีน ความสมบูรณ์ ความเจ็บป่วย ฯลฯ ซึ่งส่งผลกระทบต่อเด็กและ เยาวชนที่แตกต่างกัน สำหรับวิธีการประยุกต์หลักธรรมกับเด็กและเยาวชน สามารถนำมาประยุกต์ ใช้ใน 2 มิติ คือ ประยุกต์การสอนธรรมะ เช่น การเปิดใจ กิจกรรมเสริมหลักสูตร การตั้งแคมป์ ฯลฯ และการปรับจิตใจ เช่น การเข้าหาศาสนา การสร้างจิตสำนึกที่ดีแก่เยาวชน เป็นต้น สำหรับหลักพุทธ ธรรมสำหรับเยาวชน ได้แก่ ศีล 5 หลักอริยสัจ 4 อริยมรรค 8 และ พรหมวิหาร 4

คำสำคัญ : เด็กและเยาวชน, การกระทำความผิด, สังคมไทย

Background of the research

“Juvenile” a short and simple word but it is a very important and meaningful factor for every nation because today’s juvenile will be tomorrow’s adult that will help developing the nation. All adults had their life-experience of juvenile or childhood. This period lasts only 6-7 years, 13-19 age range but this moment of life is vital and affects one’s life in the future. In Thai law, juvenile is a person with age between 15-18 years Old. While the United Nations has designated juvenile between the ages of 15 to 25 years. However, juvenile is a very important cog for national development. Our present society is rapidly developing; the world of technology has replaced the world of beautiful nature. People are fascinated by the civilization and materialism. The more developed society is, the lower human minds become. The most dominant factor which affects human mind is “materialism”. People are currently overshadowed by this development. Juveniles who are naïve cannot resist the force of their desire inevitably. The conscience has gradually disappeared and the shame of sin vanished from their minds. This reflects that Thai society is now facing the problem of which material weighs more than morality. Juveniles are not an exception; they cannot resist this gravity as well.

Thailand is the land of Buddhism, more than 94 % of the population are Buddhist (Thailand statistic, 2011) It is surprising why Thai people dare commit such crimes, they were taught in schools that they should not do bad things

according to the Five Basic Buddhist Precepts (Benjasin). On a contrary, they are committing crime just for some benefits such as money, mobile phones etc. If juveniles behave in this way when they are young, they will grow up to be evil adults in the future. These behaviors will become their familiarity. To prevent juveniles' crime commitments and correct their attitudes, adults have to take charge of this role. Besides using law to compel and control juveniles' action, dharma is another apparatus to control their minds. To plant useful plants, one has to take care of them. To bring up potential juveniles, adults have to teach them the right things, leading them a right way to walk.

Objective for the research

- 1) To study the problem issues of the juveniles.
- 2) To study the crime-influencing factors for juveniles.
- 3) To apply the Buddhist Dharma for juvenile-mind refinement.
- 4) To provide the suitable Buddhist principles for juveniles.

Expected outcome

- 1) Discover the problem issues of juveniles.
- 2) Discover the crime-influencing factors for juveniles.
- 3) Discover the Buddhist Dharma application for juvenile-mind refinement.
- 4) Discover the suitable Buddhist principles for juveniles.

Scope of the research

The researcher has provided the scope of this study as follow:-

1) Scope of content

The content of the research is about juveniles' problems, crime-influencing factors, Buddhist Dharma and suitable Buddhist principles for juveniles. This is a mixed research between quantitative & qualitative method.

2) Scope of population and informant

In the quantitative research, the main population of this research is aimed to the juveniles with age-range between 15-18 years old. They were prosecuted at the Central Juvenile and family Court. Another group is their parents. The sampling size is 350 informants in each group. Seven hundred of questionnaires were answered by these informants.

In the qualitative research, well-prepared questions were used in interviewing 20 savants who have worked or experienced with juveniles. This group of informants is comprised of judges, associate judges, doctors, academicians and monks.

3) Scope of place

Bangkok Metropolis is the densest city of Thailand with the highest juvenile crime rate, compared with others. It is rated about 10 % of the whole country. This research was using Bangkok as a main place of the study.

4) Scope of timing

This research has used both primary and secondary information. Good timing is important for it. The scope of timing was defined as follow:-

Primary information, composed of the information from the in-depth interview and from the questionnaires, was collected between 2012-2013.

Secondary information, composed of the statistic data, was 5-year retrospective between 2006-2011.

Data analysis

In the quantitative section, the 700 sets of questionnaires were evaluated and numbered into various tables which made easy interpretation. All questions were IOC tested by 5 experts. The statistic tools used in this research were percentage for general evaluation and the Chi-square test for hypothesis testing.

In the qualitative section, 20 savants were interviewed with the well-planned questions. The results from the in-depth interview were analyzed by using the 6 C's Technique.

Discussion

To solve juvenile problems, there is no ready-made formula. For example, the drug addict sometimes we need the strong and severe law to help in this case. Juveniles have to be modified in their thought and need to change their viewpoints. The solution needs to be done in multi-dimensions simultaneously. The community must be responsible to its members by creating civil society and take care of them. People who are role models in society must have the right views. Buddhism should be involved in activities to share with the community members and to revive the idea of morality for juveniles.

Ethical development for juveniles will raise their minds higher and lead them to participate in these activities; they need mentors to guide them to do good things. The mentors mean parents, teachers, mentors, peers and adults around them. Adults should behave good to inspire juveniles to behave good too. Fathers should not explode their feeling to their children. They must control

emotions and let juvenile learn about the actions of their fathers. Adults' action must be able to answer three questions which are the requirements of juveniles:-

1. Juveniles need to be loved and trusted with good relationships from their peers, parents, teachers, friends and family people. They should get no deceitfulness from their surrounding people.

2. Juveniles want to be on the reasonable expectations of adults who should listen to their requests and recognize their needs. Parents and teachers should be the good listeners for them.

3. Juveniles want to participate with adults valuably. Sometimes a sermon lecturer is preaching unilaterally, juveniles have no chance to express their ideas. Their demands are not recognized and it is only one-way communication. This will be less effective than giving juveniles a chance to participate.

Kohlberg's theory of morality development of juveniles in the age-range of 15-18 years, it is in the 2nd level which is the conventional morality level. They will act on the basis of the society they live in and follow the expectations of their parents. They do not take into account the consequences to themselves but to others' minds. There are expectations and acceptance in juvenile society, they will behave what can make them be accepted by the group or make others happy and satisfied. Some obedient juveniles are easily induced by others. Jean Piaget had concluded that human nature which was fundamentally ingrained from birth had two types of organization and adaptation. Human beings will absorb their experience into their cognitive structure after the interaction with the environment. Their thoughts will be changed along with the environment. Abraham Maslow Theory concluded that most juveniles had completed the first two requirements. Some juveniles demanded the third one from their parents who might not have enough time to love or to take care of them. Juveniles, therefore; turn their heads to others who could give these things to them. And friends were the persons whom juveniles would approach. They also wanted to get respects from their friends, sometimes they might do something wrong just for recognition or praise from their friends. Arnold Gesell said that juveniles' maturity did not comply with their physical growth. They were growing very fast but that did not mean their maturity had developed. Parents misunderstood that children were grown up and did not take much care. Juveniles' maturity at this age was not fully developed as of adults'. This caused juveniles to be ignored and let loose from their parents. Interpersonal relations, personality structures

as a result of the relationship between people to person. Juveniles are creating their own image and self-awareness. In the age range of 13-20 years, there were numerous problems such as relationship issues with parents, drug, personality, sexual problems and unruly behavior. This was a period of confusion for Juveniles. If they chose good ways to go, they would meet good things for their lives. On a contrary, they would lose their future if they chose to walk on the wrong ways. Parents should escort their children closely. Steven Briggs gave the guideline that some juveniles' crime commitment caused from the society and the other from themselves. For example, society condemned those who had offended just one time to be a bad guy forever. Parents should understand and forgive their children. Sometimes, juveniles who got the negative reinforcement would not ready to do anything for other people or society. To understand the causes of juvenile delinquency could make clean juveniles back to society.

To solve juvenile problem, it must be integrated and coordinated in the national level down to juveniles themselves. The main organizations involved in the development of juveniles' ethic are divided into three levels that will have to integrate their efforts to develop the juveniles to be the good citizen who are ready to contribute themselves to develop the country in the future. These 3 levels are composed of society, family and juveniles.

Conclusion

The conclusion was divided into two parts: the results of the quantitative and the qualitative research.

1. Conclusion from the quantitative research

The specific characteristics of juvenile offenders:- Most juvenile offenders are male whereas female is only 10 % of the male group. The major ages are between 15-18 years. This is the first offense with the highest case of involving drugs. Most of them are only-child and still studying in the education system at the secondary school level. Currently most of them do not have spouses, only 14.6 percent are married and have children.

The conditions of the juveniles' families:- Their parents are employed and some are doing their own small trade. Most parents are Buddhist and living together with their children. By the way, most families have enough to spend. More than a half of the juveniles do not have to help their parents raise the families. They occasionally help their parents do houseworks.

The cause of juvenile delinquency:- Most juvenile offend because of the contact with bad friends who urged them to do bad things. Impetuousness is another important reason that causes them to commit crime. Both juveniles and their parents agree that the cause of juvenile delinquency is the lack of morality. And they are ready to do good things if their minds are morally purified. The most suitable Buddhist principle is the Five Basic Buddhist Precepts (Benjasin).

2. Conclusion from the quantitative research

The researcher has set the questions according to the objective of the research which has 4 aspects.

- 1) Problem issues of the Juveniles which is comparable to Duukka (the suffering)
- 2) Influencing-factors of delinquency which is comparable to Smutai (the cause)
- 3) Principle application which is comparable to Niroth (the cessation)
- 4) Appropriate principles which is comparable to Mak (the path)

1. The problem issues of the Juveniles There are 10 main problem issues:- the physical, emotional and mental, social or environmental, family, friends and intimate persons, educational background and opportunity, offense record, deviant behavior problems, national education system and the last one is aspirations and goal of life.

2. The influencing-factors of delinquency There are 4 main factors:-

2.1) Society Factor There are several factors which have led to many problems such as the society juveniles living now makes them flow along the materialistic society and commit crime. Juveniles were convinced by their friends to do bad things. Their living communities accustom juvenile to have bad behavior. Juveniles imitate the adults' misleading behavior. There is no room for religion, juveniles have no sense of feeling guilty in doing wrong things. Lack of juvenile development plan, the country will have low-quality human resource. The convenient access to illegal things and vices intensifies the incident. Public media makes problems more difficult to solve and prevent. No social platform for charity conduction, juveniles do not know for whom to do good things, what they will gain in return.

2.2) Economy Factor Although this is not the main factor, it highly affects juveniles' behavior. There are several factors, namely; juveniles need more than four life-essential factors. They choose to commit crimes for those things.

Due to high cost of living, they earn money from immoral ways. Because of the continuation of poverty in families, parents alternatively bring up their children. It causes juvenile cannot learn good things of life from their parents. Lack of job opportunities, they choose to earn money by illegal means, but get better paid than usual employment.

2.3) Family Factor This factor affects juveniles highly. There are many factors; nurture pattern, some juveniles are spoiled and led to unconfident. Family pattern makes juveniles lack of stability in their lives and be easily led to be victims of other criminals. Parent characteristics cause juveniles to disobey their instruction because they cannot be good role models for their children. Illness of the family member causes juveniles depressed and misled. Parents career causes juveniles to follow the footsteps of their parents. Family disparity makes juveniles compare themselves to others. Parents' abandon leads juveniles to turn to their friends or count on drugs when they have problems.

2.4) Juvenile Factor This factor affects juveniles directly. There are many factors; genetic factor which directly affects juveniles from the inside and cannot be changed. Undeveloped maturity causes juveniles to be astray to do wrong things. Friend consorting causes juveniles to follow friends' incitement regardless of whether it is good or bad. Juveniles' illness causes others to exploit from juvenile by this point. Lack of self-esteem causes juvenile trouble to manage his own life. Lack of inspiration causes juveniles to be life-goalless.

3 Buddhist Dharma applications

It is categorized into 2 main applications:-

3.1 Buddhist Dharma application 1 Arranged activities for juveniles to accept Dharma into their minds. The activities of interest to juveniles attract their attention to cooperate in the activities. Provision of extra-curricular activities lets juveniles learn the Dharma through informative fun. Sometimes, the novice ordination will help juveniles be closer to religion and change their thought into the right way. Juvenile camping gives them the opportunity to practice and enhances the attractiveness of the event. The "H.T.S" activity is a link between home, temple and school. Home is to teach the juveniles about ethical thought. There should be the Buddhist subjects in the school curriculum to urge juveniles more interested to learn about Buddhism. This immunity will be in juveniles, mind prevent them not to make any mistakes. Another important element is the qualifications of the dharma instructor whose teaching technique cannot be

overlooked. They will teach juveniles better understanding about the Buddhist principles with good techniques and communication.

3.2 Buddhist Dharma application 2 It is the way to refine juveniles' minds by using the principles of Buddhism. Juveniles will have the opportunity to get closer to religion via tales and the other media. To construct conscience in Juveniles' minds, the Five Basic Buddhist Precepts (Benjasin), Hiri Oattappa and Brahmavihara 4 (Four Buddhist virtues) will lead juveniles to practice good things every day. The auspicious canons 38 (Mongkol 38) and Benjasin will encourage juveniles to attend religious activities. The Four Rddhippada, Ariyasat 4 and Benjasin will motivate juveniles to live their lives in the right direction and goals and discipline them in daily life. The Threefold Dharma (Trisikka), five precepts, Sangahavatthu Four will create the sense of gratitude.

4) The Proper Dharma The Buddhist principles which are proper to develop juveniles' mind are as follow.

The Five Basic Buddhist Precepts will control their physical behaviors and verbal using. Ariyasat 4 will find and solve their problems. Mak will help them sustain in good things and living. Dharma Lokabal will inhibit the mind and help stop the bad deeds. Brahmavihara 4 will keep them loved by their participants. The Four Rddhippada will strengthen their commitment to the success of their tasks. Gratitude will strengthen the sense of gratitude. Sangahavatthu Four will build unity among their companions. Threefold Dharma will discipline them to do the right things.

Suggestion

1) Policy Suggestion At the policy level The government will take major operation. In any development process if the lack of support from the government, it would be difficult to accomplish the task. The government must realize the importance of juvenile development. They will grow up to be adults in the future. So when they were young, they should be protected and taught in the right things. The government should formulate policies for juvenile continuous development which will not be changed despite of the change of government. The legislation will protect juveniles from working illegally being exploited by the bad adults. The school curriculum improvement will enhance learning and teaching of Buddhism. Open public chance for people to do good things for goodness. The cooperation with media will support the moral development of juveniles

by promoting more ethical programs.

2) Operation Suggestion Juveniles' daily lives are associated with home and school. Home is a place of comfort, safety, security for them. School provides knowledge and skills for life. If these two places can be integrated into the daily life of juveniles', then they will have moral thoughts and ethical lifestyles.

3) Research Suggestion To develop further study. The researcher has suggested a lot of other issues related to juveniles. The results of the study will be beneficial to juveniles and nation. It, therefore, proposes the following topics for further research.

1. The strategic development in training Buddhist Principles to juveniles.
2. The moral consciousness creation for juveniles.
3. The juvenile coaching strategy for them to have good foundation of life.
4. The strategy of inspiring juveniles to live a correct direction and goals.
5. The strategic Plan for religious activities that support juvenile moral camp.

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