

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF COMMUNITY - BASED DIVERSION PROGRAM FOR CHILDREN IN CONFLICT WITH THE LAW IN BATASAN HILLS, QUEZON CITY

ABSTRACT

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Children in conflict with the law (CICL), or individuals under 18 who engage in unlawful behavior, remain a growing concern globally. In the Philippines, underlying issues such as poverty, lack of access to education, and unstable family environments contribute to delinquency among youth. While interventions such as the community-based diversion program implemented by the Social Services and Development Department (SSDD) aim to address this issue, challenges persist. These include insufficient funding, weak interagency coordination, and inconsistencies in implementation. This study aims to assess the effectiveness of the community-based diversion program for CICL in Batasan Hills, Quezon City. This study utilizes a descriptive research design and employs purposive sampling to identify respondents. Participants include thirty (30) social workers, ten (10) law enforcers, and ten (10) barangay officials from Batasan Hills, Quezon City. Survey questionnaires were personally distributed and retrieved from community professionals and residents involved in child welfare efforts. Findings revealed that the majority of respondents were aged 26 to 33, with an equal gender distribution. Most respondents were college graduates and had served between one to three years. The community-based diversion program was generally evaluated as "Very Effective" across several key areas. Psychological rehabilitation received a weighted mean of 3.26, and physical rehabilitation 3.24. Pre-admission and post-program services were rated 3.365 and 3.396, respectively. Government and non-government organizations scored 3.429 and 3.372, respectively, indicating strong perceived effectiveness. Identified challenges included limited NGO involvement in legal aid, insufficient employment opportunities, and weak follow-up mechanisms. Suggested improvements focused on enhanced interagency collaboration, expanded counseling services, and increased legal support through NGO partnerships. The findings suggest that the community-based diversion program is effective in supporting the rehabilitation and reintegration of CICLs. However, to strengthen its impact, consistent delivery of services before and after the program must be maintained. Strengthening partnerships between government and non-government organizations is essential to overcome existing barriers and to support lasting behavioral change among CICLs. These improvements aim to empower youth in their reintegration journey and reduce the likelihood of recidivism.

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