Handling Children in Conflict with the Law: From the Journals of Field Instruction Students

Amelyn Laro, R.S.W., M.A.S.W.
Social Work Program, Holy Cross of Davao College

Abstract: This is a qualitative study which aims to know the experiences of Field Instruction students are and their interventions extended to the Children in Conflict with the Law while they were assigned as interns in San Pedro Police Station. The study utilized a well-defined content analysis procedure “text analysis” which looks into the common experiences and interventions of these students in one semester of Field Instruction subject. A focus group discussion with Children in Conflict with the Law was also conducted to know the “take on” of the clients on the interventions extended. The study will also share the insights of the Field Instruction Students in the public in general and to the academe in particular. The result of the study showed that the common experiences of the Social Work Interns includes extensive use of their observation skills, exposure to the different behaviors of the CICL and learning how to practice social work principles like acceptance, individualization and confidentiality. Furthermore, these experiences help them develop skills in dealing with families and communities and other sectors involved with Community Based Programs for Children in Conflict with the Law.

Keywords: Handling Children in Conflict with the Law, Experiences, Interventions, Field Instruction

I. INTRODUCTION

Based from the Republic Act 9344 or also known as the Juvenile Justice Welfare Act of 2006 the law mandated all Local Government Units to appoint a duly licensed social worker as its local social welfare and development officer. A social worker assigned in this position was tasked in assisting children in conflict with the law in the implementation of the “Diversion Program”. This is a program which required a child who committed violations against the law to participate in various activities when the child was found responsible for an offense as a result that child will not attend formal court proceeding. In reality, there are few studies about the preparation of social work schools for their students in their role as future social workers handling juvenile cases.

In the light of the CHED Memorandum Order Number 11 Section 1, it was stated that Bachelor of Science in Social Work (BSSW) is an undergraduate program that prepare students for direct (generalist) practice of social work with individuals, families, groups and communities. Social Work as a profession aims to advance the growth and empowerment of people, development and social progress of communities and greater justice and equality of societies where there exist oppression, discrimination and inequality among marginalized individuals, families, groups and communities.

As a matter of fact there are limited literatures written about experiences and interventions extended to Children in Conflict with the Law extended by the Field Instruction students. Selected social welfare and development agencies and also partner communities for field instruction was carefully selected as field placement areas. As of 1999 to 2000, the program had forged partnership with national and local government institutions and identified itself as one of the schools which offered varied placement for field instruction. Students who were enrolled in one year field placement are required to submit field instruction journals consolidated and submitted at the end of the course which serves as evidences of their knowledge and skills application.

This document can be basis for evaluating their knowledge, attitudes and skills towards working and helping clients with their problems. Lack of documentation of the Field Instruction Interns common experiences and utilization of their documents was one of the shortcomings of the program. This study was conducted to describe the experiences and interventions of the San Pedro Police Station Field Instruction Students in handling cases of Children in Conflict with the Law analyzed through content analysis of their field journals.

These five students coordinated with partner communities, parents and families of the Children in Conflict with the law who served as their clients. They were also supervised by a Registered Social Worker who provided supervision in the duration of their field instruction subject.

My purpose in conducting this qualitative study is to describe the experiences of field instruction students in handling children in conflict with the law. It also aims to know the interventions they extended to CICL by utilizing their field instruction journals as primary source of data. Specifically, it sought answers to the following questions: 1. What are the experiences of Field Instruction students in handling Children in Conflict with the Law? 2. How do the Children in Conflict with the Law take on the interventions extended by the Field Instruction students? and 3. What insights can the Field Instruction Students and Children in Conflict with the Law share to the public in general and to the academe in particular?

In this particular study, the following key terms were defined operationally.
Based from Meriam Webster the term “experiences” refers to the direct observation of or participation in event as basis of knowledge. In addition, the term also refers to the concept practical skill or practice derived from direct observation or participation in events or in a particular activity. Moreover, when we considered something as an experience this is also based from personal encounter, undergone or live through or the act or process of directly perceiving events or reality. Furthermore, Macmillian dictionary cited that the length of time spent in such participation must be given emphasis before you will call an event as part of an experience.

Another concept used in this study is social work intervention which refers to the term almost similar to the physician’s term as “treatment”. Etymologically speaking the term intervention comes from the Latin word ‘intervenire’, meaning “to come between, interrupt”. In like manner the word intervention was defined as taking ‘a decisive or intrusive role in order to modify or determine events or their outcome’. Correspondingly, it is direct action, or a specific social work input, based on our understanding of the situation or problem presented. Furthermore, it can involve providing direct services or trying to effect change in the social environment, including organizations, in order to change ‘the balance of forces in the social environment in the client’s favour’. A social worker who provided intervention may involve acting as an advocate or a mediator on behalf of a service user (Trevithick, 2000).

With this in mind, social work interventions are purposeful actions that social workers undertake as workers which are based on knowledge and understanding acquired, skills learnt and values adopted. Therefore, interventions are knowledge, skills, understanding and values in action. Specifically, intervention may focus on individuals, families, communities, or groups and be in different forms depending on their purpose and whether directive or non-directive. They are selected on the basis of the issues, needs and strengths of the client. Furthermore, when a social worker provides interventions these are determined as a result of a psychosocial assessment conducted. (Boihlting, n.d.). This study purposively aims to describe the experiences and interventions of the Social Work Interns who were dealing directly dealing with Children in Conflict with the law and the various interventions they extended to their clients while they are in their internship program.

Another important concept used in this study is Children in Conflict with the Law the term refers to anyone under eighteen years old who came into contact with the justice system as a result of being suspected or accused of committing an offence. Most children in conflict with the law have committed petty crimes or such minor offences examples are vagrancy, truancy, begging or alcohol use. Some of these are known as ‘status offences’ and are not considered criminal when committed by adults. In addition, some children who were engaged in criminal behavior have been used or coerced by adults. In many instances, prejudice related to race, ethnicity or social and economic status may bring a child into conflict with the law even when no crime has been committed, or result in harsh treatment by law enforcement officials. (UNICEF, 2006). In the Philippines, RA 9344 defines "Child in Conflict with the Law" to a child who is alleged as, accused of, or adjudged as, having committed an offense under Philippine laws.

Part of the study is Field Instruction which connotes to a standard of the BSSW curriculum required by R.A. 4373 (Social Work Law). The law stated that social work Field Instruction interns must rendered one thousand hours for field practice provided that she or he was under the supervision of Registered Social Workers in various social work settings whether governmental or non-governmental organization in either urban or rural areas, whichever is most preferred. (Castigon, 2015)

II. METHODS

Research Design. This is descriptive-qualitative research which aims to describe the experiences and interventions of field instruction students working with children in conflict with the law specifically in their field placement under San Pedro Police Station. The study made use of content analysis specifically conventional content analysis method. Qualitative content analysis is one of the numerous research methods which made used of analyzed text data. In this study, student’s field journal will be the primary medium of analysis based from the data gathered from the actual field instruction subject. In this study the emphasis of the text analysis are the following words “Experiences” and “Interventions” which are coded by color. Words and phrases which fall under the term “Experiences” are coded with “Red” color while “Yellow” color was used to code any words or phrases relative to “Intervention.

As the content analysis process continues, labels for codes emerged that are reflective of more than one key thought. Most of the labels will often came directly from the text and are they become initial part of the coding scheme. The next step includes sorting out the codes into categories based on how different codes are related and linked. The following steps are involved in data gathering: first the student’s journal was read by the researcher and was entered into the excel format based on the dates of journal entry. The researcher decided that the unit of analysis by creating a coding frame which include words, text or phrases which means the same words for “experiences” and “interventions”. The researcher considered the definition of the terms before developing a coding scheme based on the common literatures of the words or text usage. After coding researchers quantified on how many times the text appeared in the journal and also analyzed the presence, meanings and relationships of such words and concepts then later made inferences about the messages within the texts. After which common themes are put together and analyzed then the researcher draw conclusion from the coded data and report findings of the study. The researcher had
undergone first” and “second” coding process of coding in order to find the “key words and phrases” which can be classified as “Experiences” or “Interventions”. The word “Insight” used by the students in their journal automatically coded under their learning. In order to know the learning’s of the client or their “take on” of the services extended by the Field Instruction a separate focus group discussion was conducted moreover, this will help the researcher validates the data gathered from the content analysis of their journal. The study will follow the conventional content analysis design whose aim is to describe a phenomenon. In this study this is applicable because there are few written literatures on the experiences of field instruction students and how they handled cases of children in conflict with the law.

In data gathering, I used purposive sampling by carefully selecting the field instruction students output. The data of this study was obtained from June to November 2015. I asked the permission of the Agency Field Instructor and five field instruction students who were assigned in San Pedro Police Station that their output will be utilized for research. Since the law R.A. 9344, otherwise known as Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act of 2006, mandates that the identity of the child offenders must be protected, the researchers keep the names of the CICL and also the Field Instruction Interns for the purpose of confidentiality and ethics. The researcher also sought the permission of the clients during the focus group discussion of the purpose of the study. They all gave their informed consent to freely participate in this study.

Trustworthiness and Credibility of the Study. In line with these the student interns were given debriefing sessions after their assignment with San Pedro Police Station. The researcher also asked for permission from the Agency Field instructor of the agency that the field journals of the students will be used for institutional research which means that she carefully read their journals prior to the submission to the researcher. The researcher was also exposed to the field as she observed the students conducted activities with the children. Personally, I visited Barangay Kasilak Purok 14 as the research environment of the study. The research aims to observe the students conducted activities with the children. The researcher validates the students conducted activities with the children. Moreover, Ecological systems theory portrays an individual functioning in the context of the given environment. Instead of thinking about the problems of the individual face which comes from within the ecological systems suggested focusing on the interactions within the systems. Furthermore to analyze how the physical, social and cultural contexts affected the lives of the individuals. (Langer, et al 2015). According to Urie Bronfenbrenner that in order to understand human development one must consider the entire ecological system in which growth occurs. This system is composed of five socially organized subsystems that help support and guide human growth. (Elsevier et. al.1994)

Role of the Researcher. In this particular study, the researcher primarily developed a coding frame out from the various literatures which may define the words “experiences” and “interventions”. The researchers read the journal entry and look for common text, words or phrases and put them all together. The researcher also read the latent meaning of the texts and correlated with the actual result of the focus group discussion with the CICL.

Ethical Considerations. In this study, I treated the participants in accordance with the ethical guideline in conducting qualitative type of research. I properly informed the Social Work Interns that their journals will be utilized as part of the Institutional research. I personally facilitated the debriefing of the students who are assigned in the community. I also see to it that I will not be biased in the coding process by asking an external encoder to entry their journal. On the other hand, the Agency Field Instructor of the social work interns was also given information that the student’s experiences and interventions in the field will be used for the research study. The researcher also asked for permission from the Children in Conflict with the Law who are clients of the students to freely participate in the focus group discussion to know their views and experiences.

Theoretical Lens

This study is based primarily on Ecological Systems theory which describes the human environment in the concept of different layers from the closest to the farthest systems. The theory stated that systems and ecology are linked together and it advocated that we should understand the person as a system and the environment of the person. The concept of “fit” and “transactions” between person and environment is crucial in taking actions, interventions and transactions. (Timberlake et. al, 2008). ESP or Ecological Systems Perspectives mentioned that living organisms and their physical and biological environment had interrelationships. This model put forward into consideration that the nature of the transactions between people and their environment is the source of human needs and social problems. It is stated by this theory that humans affect and are affected by their physical and social environment through the process of continuous, reciprocal adaptations. (Dubois, et. al n.d.)

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III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This chapter focuses on the analysis of the content of the journals of the Social Work Field Instruction Students. Patterns and themes emerging from the content analysis are presented in figures and are described qualitatively and illustrated by direct quotations from the participant’s responses. The results are shown in themes corresponding to the statement of the problem.
From the data collected in the Field Instruction Students journals these social work students revealed the following emerging themes as their common experiences in the field.

**Difficulty in establishing beginning relationships with CICL clients and their families**

*Clients were usually shy during the interactions with students.*

One of the common experiences by Social Work Interns was handling clients who were usually “shy” during their initial interaction. In one of the account of the student she describe that: “During the Interview the client cannot maintain eye contact”. This difficulty was common in the beginning of contact with clients since these students are still new in the community and they need to gain the trust of their clients. Based from the study conducted with social workers from Southern Cotabato dealing with children in conflict with the law they had challenges in establishing meaningful relationship with their clients. It was cited that they lack participation during the implementation of intervention programs. (Lakima, 2013)

As the field exposure of the students continues it was found out that one of the reasons why most of them were hesitant was because they were scared that their parents and family members will knew about their violations. Some of these children were hiding their illicit activities from their parents or other siblings. Thus, they were afraid that the interns would their parents of their cases.

In this field instruction journal some of the field Interns revealed that they discovered that some of their clients were wondering why the Social Work Interns were looking for them. They were not aware of the purpose of the visit which usually cause surprise and unexpected on the part of the clients. According to the students they have learned that most of the CICL felt embarrassed that their names were listed by the barangay officials especially when the social work students identified them having violations with the law. In Davao City CICL can be categorized into two groups those who are on the streets or those off the streets when they were apprehended (Templa, 2011). Thus, these CICL were community based.

**Clients had poor hygiene and unusual sleeping patterns.**

Another theme which surface from the content analysis is the “Unusual sleeping patterns of the CICL” commonly observed by the SWI students. There are several accounts of Field Instruction students which highlighted that every time they visited the client’s houses most of these children were sleeping and not available for the interview even after noon time. According to the study they cited these children were usually sleeping late at they were roaming until dawn which made them sleepy during the day time. Thus, they revealed that their clients were members of gang which usually held their activities in the evening.

According to one of the Interns she recorded in her journal that “My client was member of SIKOP (Samahang Hosenent Kaibigan Ordinaryong Patisoy) which is formerly the IANK (Istilong Atchup ng Kasilak/Kanto). He said that their group does not involved in any violent disturbance in the community and also do not have problems in other groups. According to him, they formed the group to promote friendship. They just stay in the streets to talk about their experiences in life and gather to celebrate the monthsary of their group by drinking liquor together. – SWI II

On the other hand, one of the Interns narrated that her client usually hesitated to face her during home visitation because she found out that the client just woke up and still did not take a bathed. A study on the profile of the CICL mentioned that some CICL lack basic hygiene (OCA, 2011). This finding is also true in this study. It was reported by Department of Social Welfare and Development that “gansterism” provides access to children to use alcohol and drugs. It was also explained by former DSWD Secretary Dinky Soliman that exposure to violence in the communities and schools are common among Children in Conflict with the Law. (Rappler, n.d.)

Sometimes a client was not present in their houses during home visitation and sometimes nowhere to be found. Their parents also do not know where they slept the other night. In one of the account of Social Work Interns said that “My client voluntarily joined the gang called SIPUK (Samahang Hosenent Patisoy Upang Kilalanin). He was a member for one year. Since he started becoming a member of SIPUK gang, he engaged in different activities like drinking alcohol, smoking cigarettes, participating in riots and playing gambling activities called “hantak”.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Major Themes</th>
<th>Core Ideas</th>
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<tr>
<td>Difficulty in establishing beginning relationships with CICL clients and their families</td>
<td>“Clients were usually shy during their interactions with students” “Clients had Poor hygiene and unusual sleeping patterns” “Lack of parental supervision”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hardships in conducting home and community visitation</td>
<td>“Houses are difficult to locate” “Presence of gangs in the community” “Congested neighbourhood” “Low-income families”</td>
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<td>“Coordinating activities with various professionals” “Cooperating with barangay officials” “Involvement in the work of ALS as functional literacy teachers”</td>
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<td>Application of Beginning Skills in working with individuals and families</td>
<td>“Using the skills in observation” “facilitated individual and group activities” “Utilizing social work principles” “Employing problem solving interventions” “Assisting in conducting Barangay Case Conferences”</td>
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*Figure 1. Experiences of Field Instruction students in handling Children in Conflict with the Law*
These group activities are usually held at night which is the reason why some of them are still awake during night time. A study conducted by the Save the Children, UK lay stress on helping young people acquired knowledge, skills and attitudes which will foster awareness of their roles and responsibilities in the world and advance their academic, vocational skills, and soft skills that they will eventually take good care of their health and made an informed decisions. (Save the Children, UK n.d.)

Lack of parental supervision. In their Field Instruction journal, the FIS found out that some parents failed in extending supervision of their children who were often sleeping late at night with their peers who were usually involved with gangsterism in their community. Some parents claimed that they were tired looking for their children because they are also busy working during the daytime. As stated in one of the journal entries she recorded that ‘clients mother was working in the laundry shop where the latter earned 300 pesos per day. She spent her working time from eight in the morning to nine in the evening while the client’s father was employed in Saudi Arabia’.

Based from one literature it was cited that most of the CICL parents were busy with earning a living, they had no time to supervise their children. (Etemadi, et.al, 2004). In a different journal of the Social Work Intern she narrated that her client’s mother was solely supervising his son because the child’s father was imprisoned at the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP). The father was also responsible for teaching his son to use marijuana. According to her journal she wrote: “Client said that one of the primary influences on him to use marijuana and practice smoking was his father. He was curious of what it taste like and when he saw his father using it he allowed his son to take marijuana and lead others in the group to do it too. The child likes the effect of the weeds because he feels certain ecstasy”.

This result was supported by the research conducted in Cebu which cited that almost half of the CICL have broken families and they were not living with their parents. (Etemadi et.al) In addition, Grant, 2011 also mentioned that a single mother parent was also reported among the children in conflict with the law.

Hardships in conducting home and community visitation

Difficulty in locating the houses of clients. In this study, the participants narrated their personal challenges in conducting home visitation. One of the Interns wrote down that she experienced some feelings of discomfort every time she conducted home visitation. She depicted that most of the houses of their clients are shanty and built closer to one another. One of the participants wrote in her journal that: “in order to reach the house of my client I need to pass the narrow pathways”.

According to the writings of another Intern she personally learned in facing her fears and hesitation because of this field internship. Part of the field instruction student’s exposure was to visit the houses of their clients for them to gather collateral information about their clients. By conducing home visitation they will learn about the socio-economic status of their clients. Furthermore, they can also observe the interactions of their clients and their families. By working together these interns found the houses of their clients and with minimal assistance from the Barangay officials in whom they recorded mostly gave them the lists and the addresses of the houses. They usually conducted home visitation as a group and used the “body-body system”.

These students also recorded that some people in the community were not cooperative in helping Social Work Interns in locating CICL clients. The researcher found out that some residents were giving them the correct information to facilitate in finding the home of these children. They also discovered that client’s information from the referrals of the barangays and police stations where incorrect. Some of the CICL were using “Pseudonyms” instead of their real names. This is one of the factors which contributed that why some of them were difficult to find.

Presence of gangs in the community. According to the journal entry of the research participants they validated the presence of gangs in the community. In one of the student’s journal she jots down that “most of the young people in the community are out of school youth”. Another participant wrote in her journal “this community has many different “gangs” and the youth are exposed to riots which usually caused public disturbance to their neighbors especially during midnight.

One of the Interns described in her journal that the gang is called “Desperado” wherein even girls and lesbian are welcome to become members. They are also engaged in stealing and riots which are like what other groups usually do. They also used prohibited drugs such as “shabu” and “marijuana”. This only validated the findings of the study that the child’s immediate community was known as the source of the Children in Conflict with the law exposure to violence. (Rodriguez, 2015)

Congested neighborhood. Another FIS also observed the people in the community surrounding the clients were also significant players in the CICL for their behaviors. In one journal entry FIS wrote “I noticed that the area is quite congested and noisy” referring to the community surrounding the clients. There were people gambling in the gym and also bystanders. In her specific account she portrayed the dwellings of the child and his family as:

“The house is located in the compound area and it is very small for ten children and there is no room or any division inside the house because there is only one space provided where they all sleep together. It was made of wood cutting materials with some part of the wall covered by a tarp. Outside the house has a lot of garbage and surrounded by “gabi” and “banana” plants. They have no electricity and only used lamp. Their source of water is from the leakage pipe
of their neighbors which is located outside the compound. This compound is prone of floods which reached inside the house – Social Work Intern I.

Another SWI noted down the house of her client as “Family activities are undertaken in one room structure. The family rent the space for about 800 pesos. This place serves as their sleeping and eating area. Their house is near where people play “cockpit” with so many people surrounded attending the game they are very noisy. There were group of people especially young people beside the cockpit area chatting, smoking, listening to loud music they called as “budots”.” These findings supported the claimed of Templa that interventions of Children in Conflict with the Law should also take into account the context of these children example chronic poverty. (Templa, 2011)

Opportunities to work with various professionals in the community

Coordinating activities with various professionals. “Education for social work is a responsibility not only of educators but equally of practitioners, employing agencies, and the interested public” (Kendall, 2001). In the course of Field Instruction Social Work Student Interns also learned how to work with different professionals they disclosed that they had experiences working with other professionals aside from their Agency Field Supervisors. In one of the journal entry the FIS wrote: “We went to Paginhawaan Drop in Center for Children to find out if we are going to report for our on the job training. We explained everything to the head of the agency. We make agency profiling but the information is really not insufficient. We should be alert and responsible.”

They also have opportunity to deal with police officers and teachers in the community to provide interventions for the CICL based from the literature extending social work interventions refers to various practices of social workers in extending assistance to individual clients for instance providing counseling, skills training, educational program and other activities which would lead to the enhancement of the psychological, emotional and social well-being of clients. (Philnet, n.d.)

As Interns these students also experience problems brought about by the condition of their Field Instruction. They underscored that the police station (their agency placement) was always packed with people and they have no space where they can properly write their documentation. Their office situation is not conducive for working space and so students ended using Osmena park as their meeting place. However, these students justified that their Agency Field Instructor Office was also very small. Thus, for them to find a more comfortable place to work their AFS advised them to spend their time in the barangay center after they visited their community and used this as their temporary office.

In this regard the agency was creative in designing student responsibilities and a generalist social work practice experience by utilizing the space in the community. Although prior to partnership for field instruction there is an agreement that the agency is willing to provide an appropriate workspace and other necessary supports such as equipment and supplies. This is in contrast to what stated in the BSSW Field Instruction Manual of 2015 which requires the Agency Field Instructor to assess the agency in their capacities to provide the students conducive learning environment

Cooperating with barangay officials. The findings of this study highlighted the crucial role of Barangay Functionaries in helping the students in the community and the time they spent with Field Instruction Interns. The barangay serves as a satellite office of the student interns in the duration of their field work because they were usually working with Barangay Officials.

Their journals depicted that there were many instances that they visited the barangay hall and communicated with the barangay in line with the agency purpose. Most of the Student Barangay 76 officials almost every week. Most of the Student Interns also disclosed that they have several meetings with the barangay officials regarding the situations of their clients. They also actively involved in the activities of the barangays like conducting case conferences and small group activities. This supported the study conducted by the Save the Children-Uk concluded that that there is a need for an organized system of diversion program including the community based restorative justice model for mediation.

According to one of the Field Instruction Student’s journal she indicated that they worked closely Barangay 39-D and Barangay 76-A officials. There were many recordings of the barangay visitation throughout the duration of the internship indicated in the journals. By their community immersion students learned how to tap linkages with the barangay in line with the agency purpose. Based from the journal of one Social Work Interns she enjoyed the time she spent with Barangay 39-D because she gained more knowledge about many things which included sessions that they conducted with CICL. She narrated the First Aid sessions in the barangay where she had experienced how to get along well with the personnel in the community.

In her journal this Intern wrote “I see importance of the BHW and how they worked with the community. They helped a lot especially in securing the health of the people specially the children who needs attention.” The participants of this study also disclosed that they have several meetings with the Barangay Staff almost every week. Most of the Student Interns journals pointed out that the barangay officials were accommodating and assisted them when they came to their offices. These Barangay officials also gave them instruction on how to effectively handle their clients for them to be safety in their field work.

One of the Social Work Interns mentioned that she knew how to write letters to the barangay officials asking for their assistance in handling CICL. These barangay officials also provided advice to the Interns how to treat the information with confidentiality for their own safety and the child’s safety. This is just affirming the importance of BCPC trainings which
is necessary knowledge about the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the JJWA, restorative justice and skills in management of programs related to CICL. (Templa, 2011)

Involvement in the work of Alternative Learning System as functional literacy teachers. An effective Community Based Programs shall include Educational Institutions to work together with families, community organizations and agencies in the prevention of juvenile delinquency and in the rehabilitation and reintegration of the child. Schools shall provide adequate, necessary and individualized educational schemes for children manifesting difficult behavior. (R.A. 9344). In this research, social work interns showed their important roles in helping this CICL especially with their educational needs.

There is a regular Sunday Functional Literacy classes in coordination with Emar Learning Center at the Camp Leonor Domingo with San Pedro Police Station These Field Instruction students a conducted sessions on literacy and wrote their observations of the learning sessions. One of the respondents noted in her journal this important observation: “It is difficult to teach CICL because I found out that their attitude is not focus towards learning. Most of the time they keep on talking while the teacher gave an instruction to them. They also cannot control their attitude. Most of them lack self-control especially when they are upset which are manifested in shouting each other, lack of patience and beating and bullying one another”.

This is supported by a study which explained common responses why children are in conflict with the law according to the practitioners which includes frustrations with school or being illiterate or semi-illiterate. They also have negative peer influence and most of the CICL are boys because they are more adventurous by nature. (OCA, 2011). Since most of the students are boys they like physical activities which are contrary to the usual way of teaching in their functional literacy classes which usually involves reading and writing.

Application of beginning Social Work Skills in helping individuals and families

There are various interventions identified by the students in their internship which ranges from the individual to community.

Extending individual, families and community interventions. During my content analysis, I discovered that in this field instruction students assigned in San Pedro Police station had developed their knowledge and skills while they were working with individuals and families. Based from the narratives of the students most of them recorded that that they conducted home visitation and went to the client’s respective houses from beginning intake until the end of their field instruction. Utilizing intake is the beginning of the relationship of worker and the clients. By reading the student’s journals, I am ascertained that there was an extensive use of their observation skills with individuals, families and environment of their clients. The students wrote down in their journal their description of the clients, houses and community directly influencing the clients.

One of the SWI cited that “it is difficult to conduct the interview because the place was not conducive and it was opened and there were many interruptions” and her action taken based on this problem is “I am just setting some limit for the questions which is specifically focused on the family”. One of the SWI also mentioned that she considered the availability of her client. In her journal she explained that “Since almost all of them are available from seven in the evening then we plant that we will enter the community in that time for us to gather information from them. We do this because they are usually asleep as we visited them in their houses”.

Another significant theme from the content analysis is the recognizing the crucial of the families in the case of children in conflict with the law. Another journal entry of the FIS mentioned that “sometimes the family itself will be the perpetrator of their own child. They don’t care about the psychological effect of this to the child. “My client experienced physical violence by his own father because he frequently involved in illegal activities like using marijuana and had vices such as drinking alcohol and smoking cigarettes” – SWI IV

Based from one of the narratives of the Field Instruction Student she recalled the time that she handled one mother who expressed her disappointment about her daughter this is her account: “the client talk about her daughter and just like any mother she defended her child. She talked about her family situation and even if she was crying because of the current situation she wanted help from us and willing to coordinate with PO2 so that her daughter will have a drug test and be cleared of allegations she is experiencing now. We agreed to help her because of what we observed that she really needs help and as a mother she wanted her child to be safe”.

According to UNICEF the families of CICL should be more engaged in the programs. The study conducted by United Nations Children’s Fund in 2013 explained that social workers have important roles in juvenile justice system. Social workers help to identify proactively, and respond to, families where children are at risk, whenever possible by enabling those families to address the root causes of “presenting problems” such as intrafamilial violence, neglect and delinquency. The family of the child in conflict with the law shall endeavor to actively participate in the community-based rehabilitation. Based on the program of the youth in the community, a final report will be forwarded by the local social welfare and development officer to the court for the final disposition of the case. However, in this case the students of field instruction will report the incident to their Agency Field Instructor for further intervention. (RA 9343)

Utilizing Social Work Principles. According to NASW, Social workers should respect clients’ right to privacy. Social

www.rsisinternational.org
workers should not solicit private information from clients unless it is essential to providing services or conducting social work evaluation or research. Moreover, Social workers should protect the confidentiality of all information obtained in the course of professional service, except for compelling professional reasons. The Social Work Interns learned how to apply beginning skills required from a social working in handling important cases of clients. It is evident that they know how to observe proper way of conducting interview and also they carefully adhere to the social work principles like confidentiality. Furthermore, the student also observed client privacy or confidentiality which is one of the social work principles and an important skill an intern must learned. If the SWIs compromise the client safety his/her internship will be subject for termination. In another journal one Intern emphasized to her client the value of confidentiality by informing the latter that they should discussed in the interview will be only between the two of them.

The United Nations Children’s Fund also pointed out the role of the social can have positive both direct and indirect impacts. In the direct practice social workers families with difficulties. In the same way, social workers may help in responding to can address issues for prevention, access to social services and self-referral basis by families of children who are at risk and go deeper into the root causes of their presenting problems. In partnership with the police officers they can participate in the justice system for instance when the when the police question or arrested a child who is under the minimum age for prosecution or has not committed a criminal act but is arrested and detained, social workers should be able to check and ensure the well-being of their children. (UNICEF, 2013)

Employing problem solving interventions. Based from the literature, common services extended to children who committed violations usually focused on emotions and their coping capacities. (Lakima, 2013). One of the students learned to appreciate the client’s individual strengths and weaknesses in one of the journal entry she wrote: “I asked my client to tell me about his strengths and weaknesses, what is positive and negative about his. He said akong strength akong mama ug ang akong weaknesses kay ang akong mga barkada kay madani man ko nila maghimo ug dili maayong mga butang, akong positive experience kay inig magpundo akong mama sa balay labi na kung dili siya mag trabaho, ang negative experience nako kay katong dili ko dawat sa akong stepfather.

Facilitated individual and group activities. In the journals of the students most of them were writing how they observed everything that happens in the field which includes working with clients and their families. Some of their observations encompass observing the housing conditions, their clients, family and the environment where they are living. They also included in their observation different activities conducted by different agencies with the CICL. There are many activities conducted by various agencies assisted and facilitated by the SWIs which are the following: 1.) Trainings on Basic first aid and basic life support at Barangay 39-D. 2) Crime Prevention Week by Bureau of Jail Management and Penology 3) Help a Child and Educate a Child. This is supported by one study which suggested that psychosocial interventions such as group and individual sessions by the social worker for children at risk are necessary like involvement of former CICL groups as advocates and also providing family therapy to the family and families at risks and also organization for watch groups in the community. (Fabre, et.al 2016)

Our Field Instruction interns also actively assisted in conducting functional literacy classes and also facilitated some group activities for Alternative Learning System every Sunday at Camp Leonor Domingo for CICL. Before the activity they visited their clients to remind them of their attendance. Their journals usually expressed their preparation for the weekend sessions. In their chronicles students said that: “we finalized our activity plan for this coming Saturday. We clearly laid our activities and its objectives. We also encoded it together with the program for our activity” This only proves that in field instruction students apply, under supervision, what they have been learning in the classroom to real situations. (Simmon Colleges, n.d.).

According to the study of Lakima, 2013 one of the interventions to CICL is emotion-focused coping strategies in order to address the challenges encountered by CICL examples of these are engaging the clients in computer games, spending time with friends, eating and singing, dancing and watching movies. The Social Work Interns enumerated several activities that they conducted including group activities like ball games, drawing and using videos during their sessions. They also reported that they usually had sharing sessions after their activities wherein they helped clients draw meanings which they can relate with their own lives. Using problem solving coping strategies and also seeking secondary data about CICL are also identified interventions. (Lakima, 2013)

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activities wherein they helped clients draw meanings which they can relate with their own lives.

Assisting in conducting Barangay Case Conference. By reading several journals Field Instruction students several times narrated that they had various activities in which they formally asked about data of CICL from the communities they worked with. One FIS said that “we coordinate with the Barangay Captain of Barangay 76-A”. The study also revealed that Social Work Interns usually attended Barangay Case Conference usually facilitated by the Social Worker in the Barangay.

One of the Interns journal account stated: “I have an actual observation of case conference on child abuse. This conference was participated by the BCPC, Social Workers, victim’s family and the victim. The case is all about a 14 year old boy, physically abused by his own family. He was rescued by the QRTCC because of the report made by the school principal. He has many bruises all over his body which is very alarming to the teachers. The family was asked by the social workers and the barangay kagawad. The boy keeps crying during the interview and according to him he was punch and beat by his parents. He was very emotional and never stops crying. After the family counseling they made an agreement between the barangay and the family of the victim and the parents promised not to do it again to the child because if they will the barangay officials will file a case against them”.

Part of the intervention to CICL is providing counseling to the child and also the child’s family regarding the law. (Fabre, et.al. 2016)

Figure 2. Take On of the Children in Conflict with the Law on the interventions extended by the Field Instruction students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major Themes</th>
<th>Core Ideas</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Influence of external environment</td>
<td>“Stronger peer pressure”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Presence of vices and drugs in the community”</td>
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<td></td>
<td>“financial needs of the family”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Impact of their actions to others</td>
<td>“feeling sorry for their families”</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“ Stigmatization from members of the community”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning lessons from their actions</td>
<td>&quot;regrets on committing illegal activities”</td>
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<td></td>
<td>“realizations on the bad effects”</td>
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Influence of External Environment. According to these CICL they committed violations against the law because of following circumstances. One of the respondent mentioned that he committed illegal activities but he did not find any important reasons why he did so. In his words: “Wala, nadala rako sa akong mga barkada. Sukad nadakpan ko sa akong ate wala na.. na naundang napud ko ug aban-aban (Nothing, I am just influenced by my friends, since I was caught by my elder sister I already stopped and even going out with my friends). Another respondent said that “Kanang dili ko makalaag kung asa nako gusto lagan kay mahadlok ko na resbakan ko sa ubang mga gang na kalaban namo” (I cannot go out when I want because I am scared that my opponents will find me from other gangs).

The other perspective of one child was referring to his external environment: My struggles are how other people see me because they look at me like a drug user and pusher. They treat me like an addict and like I am planning to get their stuff and they do not trust me because of what I did before. Sometimes I got upset to them because they are judgmental. Based from the literature most common violations charged with Children in Conflict with the Law are drug related which usually involving crime against persons. The most common are shabu and rugby. (UNICEF, 1995)

One of child expressed that “Every time when I am with my friends hanging out in the story or together with my friends. I observed that some people look strangely at me and nagged at me and called me “deviant”. They also gave negative feedback to my parents on how they raised me”. Another respondent was affected by the treatment of his family by saying that “My family especially with my father because he frequently hit me and punch me because he believes that I steal from him every time I get caught in the Barangay. He always nagged and scolded me because I keep hanging out with my friends.

Impact of their actions to others. In finding reasons why they did their activities only one respondent identified primary reasons for committing illegal activities according to him it is ‘Maybe because of my vices, honestly, I am using shabu and marijuana and also smoking cigarette and sometimes I commit stealing because of the influenced of my friends who are financially in need. Based from the UNICEF report in 2013 the most common criminal charges against the children involve crimes against property, specifically, robbery theft, qualified theft, malicious mischief, and estafa. This is followed by crimes against persons, violation of ordinances, special laws, and drug-related offences.

When asked about the effects of their activities to themselves one of the respondent mentioned that “Blind... kanang wala kay mahuna-hunaan ba muraq mabuang ka” (Blind, my mind is empty and I feel like going crazy). He refers to the used of illegal substance. Another respondent expressed his regrets by stating that “Nalain sa sarili kay nagpadala ko sa akong mga barkada. Sukad man pug guad atong mga gipangbuahat nako kauban akong mga amigo kay dili nako makalaag bisan asa tapos kanang gusto ko mamasahero ug side car kay dili napud nako mabuhat kay atangan man ko nila (I do not feel good about myself because I allowed my friends to influence me. Since what we did with my friends I cannot freely go anywhere like riding the side car because I already have many enemies). Some practitioners explained that with underdeveloped literacy among CICL it will result also result into poor reasoning. The poor reasoning also renders the CICL boys vulnerable to being exploited by others. (OCA, n.d.)
Learning Lessons of their actions. During the focus group discussion it was revealed by one of the participants that he regretted that other people saw me as criminal and they don’t trust me”. In this study I found out that some of them were unhappy about the situation for instance one of them mentioned that “I feel sad because my parents always get quarreled and having conflict with each other”. Another participant said that “It makes me sad because I cannot find a job since many do not trust me and people perceived me as stealer of their things”.

Furthermore, one of the participants said that “It affected my relationship with my father because I always experienced physical violence from him because he believed that I am a thief but the truth is I was influenced by my friends”. One of the participants disclosed that “I am always punched and hit by my father. My self-esteem was affected because he always does it outside our house where many people can witnessed the violence he did. Expressing his frustrations “It affects me, sometimes it makes me upset because I never do anything harm to them but it seems that I did something wrong” according to one respondents.

Based from the findings of Templa she stated the relationship of poverty and family breakdown because according to her dysfunctional families played a crucial role in the increasing numbers of street children, working child and gangsterism and higher incidence of volatile substance use and committing petty crime.(Templa, 2011) When one the children were asked about how they feel being CICL one of them said that “I feel pity to my mother because she is the one who always defended me and understand my situation and even my attitude”. On the other hand one of them told me that “It makes me feel upset because they always nagged me. They always see me wrong every time when I am with my friends”. According to one of the participants he felt like going crazy “Murag nabuang”.

Since they already received interventions from the Field Instruction students they enumerated their insights. One of them stated that “Nagbag-o nako... di nako mag-usab” (I already change, and I will not do it again). Another participant claimed that in reality he had a lot of realizations and also regrets. This is expressed by the following statements:

“Sa tinood lang Mam daghan pud ko ug gimahayan kay kung wala siguro ko nagpadala sa akong mga barkada kay highschool na unta ko karon, pero usahay man pud man kay kapoyan ko anang regular na klase. Natun-an nako na mamili pud ko ug tarong na barkadahon kay na realize nako na akong mga barkada kay mga bad” (I have so many regrets because if I was not only influenced by my friends I am already in highschool now but sometimes I felt tired attending regular classes but I have learned that I should choose my friends because I realized that some of them are not good)

<table>
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<th>Major Themes</th>
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<td>Crucial role of families and peer group</td>
<td>“Using positive discipline”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gaining appreciation of social work as their future profession</td>
<td>“learning about the duties and responsibilities of social workers”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Drawing personal insights from the experience</td>
<td>“personal value of the experience”</td>
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Crucial role of parents and families

Using positive discipline. These are the different learning insights gathered by the students in the course of their field placement and these are categorized based on content analysis. The most significant themes which the students appreciated in this field internship put high emphasis of parents as primary source of love for their children. One of the Interns said that her primary reflection is “I learned that the family is the primary institution where the child learned the value of love, care and nurture us of what we will become”.

One of them wrote that she learned that family must remain strong in terms of these challenges and it was reflected by writing that “I learned that family must not surrender the child because it is only a challenge for the family to be stronger and better”. A study on CICL stated that there was also lack of communication among parents and children. (Etemadi et.al)

Based from the journal, one of the Interns mentioned the importance of discipline which needs not to be harsh and she reflected that we can discipline through small talk”. Another Intern wrote in her reflection that “that hurting a child physically will never make a child better and it can worsen the child’s attitude and have negative effects on them. A child should be given love and affection especially by his/her family and provide them safety”. In a different account one of the Field Instruction Interns stated that “I learned that first you will never hurt a child physically because you can discipline them by talking”.

Impact of peer influence. Another Social Work Intern added children must not be blamed for their situations she wrote in her insight that “These young people lack proper guidance and attention by their parents because their friends are highly influential and they can easily influenced by their friends.” This is also supported by another intern who expressed that “I learned that friends will influence our actions especially when you are financially in need it really pushed you to do certain things even if it is bad.

Gaining appreciation of Social Work Profession
Learning about the duties and responsibilities of social workers from their AFS and colleagues and client. While reading the journals of the students I have learned that their Agency Field Instructor, colleagues and clients helped them develop their appreciation of the social work as a profession. I understood their relationship with their AFS when one of them wrote in her journal. She said: “I have learned that it is good to report what you have for the day in order for the supervisor to know what we did and let her know our plans. We used our free time for educational purposes and training”. On the other hand one of the Interns recorded that “We learned how to adjust to the situation since our AFS was busy and cannot look after us. We initiate to inform her of our tasks.

Another one said that she knew how be to more respectful to other fellows and also always asked for their permission. This is in relations to their relationship with her agency field instructor and colleagues. In dealing with Colleagues we have learned the following these are the insights worth “equal distribution of tasks and be cooperative to maintain good relationship” 3.) “Working together will make the task easier to accomplish and members feel their enumerated by the Social Work Interns: 1.) “We should plan ahead” 2) “We should have workers are guided by ethical responsibilities in working with their client while they also how to laugh with our clients”. Respect and promote the right of clients to self-determination.

These insights are related to this claimed: In working with clients the following insights are written by the Interns: One, “It is important to value time and other people and do not let them wait” two, “to have successful communication with other people especially our clients we should consider their educational attainment and also if they are Persons with Disability”. While reading their journals I can conclude that the field instruction students developed high appreciation of social work as profession and they adapted the culture and discipline of social work practice. This is written in the following insights: One of the respondents wrote that “I learned about our duties and how to enjoy and relax sometimes “which is a balance of responsibilities and self-care for social workers. The other SWIs narrated that “I learned that we should be prepared always for Instruction our Interns expound more on being responsible for their actions in front of us to survive and be responsible enough to have successful training. In this Field the family and parents of their clients. In course of their internship several journals of interns mentioned about their difficulties but despite of these experiences they have seen the significance of their job in the lives of others.

A Social Work Intern wrote that “we will not lose our hope easily because of a without thinking or having a solution to it. These are just some of the realities that we little problem and we will not immediately come up with a decision with a decision will encounter in dealing within a community.

Making mistakes are part of the learning work/perseverance and patience to everything to us be a good social worker”. Should not be weak and give up just because of one’s failure. We should have the hard and it will help us grow to become better”. Another lesson from one student is “we

Finding significance of the Social Work profession. They also narrated how they see those social workers they have meet in the field and their impressions about them. There are students who summarized their insights: insights of Social Work Interns supported these findings: as they help their clients to be responsible and independent individuals, families and communities”.

The other respondents said that “I learned hard work which are keys to become better social worker”. Based from the field Instruction of Simmon College of Social work it was cited that students can learn from any of the staff around them—all play a role in helping students to become more proficient. Students not only acquire practical experience from the field, but they also are socialized into the professional subculture. The following “We learned that social workers are hardworking, patient and passionate in their work even though they are children and age does not matter when it comes to respect”.

Reflecting on the ethics and principles of social work profession. Another Intern wrote that “ I realized that the principle of individualization is very helpful because it helps me to prove that every individual is unique and that everyone is not the same. We have different talents, behavior and beliefs. In a different statement another student cited that “I have learned that even if we are students when people recognize us they see us as future Social Workers that they can trusted us and we can help them just like the mother of one of our clients. It is a great deal for us since we will be able to help her to protect her child” Furthermore, a reflection by a Social Work Intern about working with clients was written like this ““I am more patience especially in finding my respondents or clients it is because it is not right to force them to participate in activities. I also respect them because every human beings deserved to be respected.

One of the students said that that “Learned to undergo formal process especially requesting some data from the Government offices because the data that we keep must be confidential and we should not easily be given to anyone without serious reasons”. The other one wrote that “I learned how to write formal letter to asked data about CI CICL/CAR/OSY.

Building Self-Confidence. The other interns wrote that her personal inadequacies when she wrote that “I am shy with my co-interns because I feel I do not have any contribution to our meeting especially to our task. I feel that my knowledge was not enough to handle this kind of situation that I have facing now, or maybe it’s all about my confidence that’s why I am saying this. Another Social Work Intern had a realization that “I should not easily say that others are more intelligent than
me because everyone has their own expertise on how they handle their skills”

Personal value of the experience. The student’s journal also reflected the student’s insights about the value of team work she wrote that “I should be responsible in time management because if I will still continue my behavior, it might affect the people who surround me, also my performance. “Another participant wrote in her journal that “We should be considerate with other people. Respect everyone’s thoughts, ideas and also with the feelings in order to have mutual understanding. I learned to value working together.

In conclusion Social Work Interns also have a personal value of these experiences and these are their take: “I learned a lot and it will be a “life changing experience”. – Intern 1; “I learned that in order for you to attain something, you should work hard for it because if you work hard and have a heart in doing it you will end up doing it successfully”. – Intern 2; “I learned how to take initiatives and mobilize resources available and utilize our skills in order to come up with good and creative ideas that can be useful for our clients”; “Learned how to be patient to achieve our goal and finish the course”; “Treasure our time and doing some important things and set aside less important things”; “Learned how to be organized and make our plans”; “Learned not to complain simple things because there is someone who wants to have the same experience” and “Learned to be creative, reliable, patient and hardworking because in the future you will perform certain roles in the community”

Implications for Practice

I realized that the common experience of Social Work Interns in their Field Instruction includes extensive use of their observation skills which can be very helpful in their future social work practice. Their exposure to the different behaviors of children who committed violation against the law and understanding their reasons and circumstances of committing this act will improve their capacity to empathize to their clients. They will also learn to practice social work principles which include acceptance, individualization and confidentiality which are good foundation for effective social work practice. Through these experiences they will develop skills in dealing with families and communities and other sectors involved in the Community Based Programs for CICL.

The study also enumerated various assistance extended by Social Work Interns to individual and families like counseling, functional literacy, enhancing problem-solving skills, group activities, case management, family conferencing and participating in barangay case conference. By doing, these interventions they are able to reflect on their practice and this will help them use critical thinking. The result of this study highlights some concepts on working with Children in Conflict with the Law which include conducting Intake, home visitation, barangay case conference, conducting group activities and working with barangay officials in the community to fully implement “diversion program” which requires social workers to develop in response to the needs of this group of clientele. Furthermore, the study revealed that the social environment and children engaged in conflict with the law affected each other in a reciprocal way.

This study describe the dynamic interaction of the child (client) with poor self-concept and the direct neighborhood, low-income families, barangay policies on juvenile delinquency and the macro system (agency social welfare system, programs and services, school field instruction program) which are essentials in effective interventions of future practitioners in dealing with children in this context. Through analysis of environment (macro system) which can be depicted with presence of gangs, poor parental supervision and the mesosystem (relationship patterns of the child to his/her parents and the perception of the members of the community) and the exosystem (congested surrounding) and the impact of this environment and transaction to the child we will be able to address the needs of children and their families. Eventually prevent the increasing the numbers of children in conflict with the law.

The finding of this study is significant to improve the Social Work Curriculum specifically on Field Instruction Program which requires Agency Field Instructor to carefully assess how the theories in field instruction and supervision of Social Work Interns are practice in the field. It is also crucial to consider our students preparedness and social support while they are doing their internship.

Likewise this will also encourage the next Social Work Interns to reflect on these experiences and interventions. Moreover, this study will help Agency Field Instructors and School Field Instructor to analyze the integration of social work theories into actual social work practice.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This study may support the implementation of RA 9344 or Juvenile Justice Act of 2006 highlighting the important roles of Social Workers in Diversion programs. The data of this research will enhance the Social Work Curriculum specifically in working with children in conflict with the law and also the different sectors involved namely: family and community. By reading the result of this study, Agency Field Instructor and School Field Instructor will reflect on the intervention skills applied by the Social Work Interns in working with Individuals and Communities.

In the same way, this study would like to recommend training on Case Management on handling Cases of Children in Conflict with the law as part of the seminar in social work. It is also necessary that students who will be given such assignments will be given opportunities to share their experiences to students who are in the lower years which will be helpful in terms of preparing our students for their future role in the community based diversion program. Another recommendation of this study is give capacity building trainings to Barangay Officials on how to deal children who are in conflict with the law which is more sensitive to their needs and their families.
V. CONCLUDING REMARKS

As a Social Worker and Educator I believed that Children in Conflict with the Law is one of the most challenging group of clients to deal with. On the other hand, this is also an opportunity for our Social Workers to show their skills and expertise as they are required to implement the diversion program. I believed that there is a need to carefully study the diversion programs and appropriate interventions on how to deal with these clients. In this study, our Social Work Interns experiences and services to these children are common services extended and only within the parameters of the agency where they belong.

I have also learned from this study that our students need further assistance on how they should implement interventions in the community specifically when it anchors on a specific policy like RA 9344. The Students had just started with their job as Social Worker and they do not have sufficient knowledge and skills on how to handle such difficult clients. Although, I realized that our students are really emotionally, psychologically and even spiritually ready to practice social work despite their limitations and difficult situations.

These implications are positive indicators of their attitude as future social workers which include commitment to empower clients and enhance their capacity as human beings. I also appreciated their learning insights which shows how they appreciated their internship and how this course prepares them for their future roles.

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