

# Juvenile Justice and Welfare Law Implementation: The Philippine Urban Poor City Case

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**Abstract—** In the Philippines, under the law as embodied in Republic Act No. 9344 otherwise known as the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act of 2006, law enforcers are compelled to spare juvenile offenders aged 15 and below and those above 15 and below 18 from criminal liability and release them back to the community when the reglementary period lapses.

Against this back drop, it was observed that incidents involving minors who are suspected to be under the control of the crime groups (Macob and Visperas, 2013) is becoming rampant, particularly in Metro Manila and as reported previously by CNN News Documentary. Hence, the cogent need for assessing descriptively the implementation of the law in 2012 in one urban poor city in the Greater Manila Area said to ascertain the effectiveness of which in securing and ensuring the welfare and protection of the child-at-risk and those children in conflict with the law.

The study revealed that majority of the youthful offenders are males belonging to the age bracket 13-14 and 14-15 years old where the most prevalent crimes/offenses are: theft and robbery while the most dominant reasons that lead to commit crimes are abandonment, neglect of parents and non-satisfaction of their basic needs. Both diversion and intervention activities are only partially implemented or partially undertaken. Further, majority of the constraints/draw backs encountered by the respondents in the implementation of RA 9344 are only considered as moderately serious. Overall, successful implementation of the law necessitate concerted efforts from all the sectors involved in order to substantially and effectively reduce juvenile crimes.

**Keywords—** Juvenile Justice and Welfare, Law Implementation, Philippines.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Juvenile justice policies were influenced significantly by the punishment trend in the criminal justice system (Mears, 2006) but not to the extent of the criminal justice apparatus. A major factor is a “habit of the heart” that continues to guide juvenile justice (Cullen, et al., 2007), meaning, that most adults are

unwavering in their belief that juveniles can be rehabilitated – from personal experience if nothing else. Yet the juvenile justice system, as pointedly emphasized by Howell (2009), was severely affected by the punishment trend in the adult system, because it is joined at the hip to the criminal justice system (by police and prosecutors on the front end), and by ill-informed outsiders who concocted an imaginary forthcoming horde of juvenile “superpredators” and a “wave” of violence, creating a bloodbath.

In the Philippines, the 1987 Constitution, under Article II, Section 13 provides that: “the state recognizes the vital role of the youth in nation building and shall promote and protect their physical, moral, spiritual, intellectual and social well-being.” Further, it also provides in Article 15, Section 3, that the government shall ensure “the right of the children to assistance including proper care and nutrition, and special protection from all forms of neglect, abuse, cruelty, exploitation and other conditions prejudicial to their development,” to recognize children’s vulnerability and special needs.

As a manifestation of the State’s commitment to promote the rights of children, it ratified the United Nation’s Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN-CRE) in 1990. It also signed the Optional Protocols to the UN CRE in 2002 on the involvement of children in Armed Conflict and Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography.

In upholding children’s human rights and translating our international commitment into law, the State addressed the same by passing Republic Act 7610 or the Anti-Child Abuse Act of 1990 into law. Several other related laws which affect children that have been enacted are the Child and Youth Welfare Code or Presidential Decree No. 603 as amended, Republic Act 7658 on An Act Prohibiting the Employment of Children below 15 years of age, among others. Other recent laws are Republic Act No. 9165 or the Comprehensive Drugs Act of 2002, Republic Act No. 9208 or the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2003. Republic Act No. 9231 or the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor and Affording Stronger Protection for the Working Child, Republic Act No. 9255 Allowing Illegitimate Children to use the Surname of their Fathers, amending Article 176 of the Family Code of the Philippines, Republic Act No. 9262 or the Anti-Violence Against Women and their Children Act of 2004, the Family Court Act and the most recent of which is, Republic Act No. 9344 or the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act of 2006, which is the focus and locus of the present study at hand.

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The importance of this study which focuses on the implementation of the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act of 2006 (RA 9344) cannot be over emphasized. Under the law (RA 9344), it compels law enforcers to spare juvenile offenders aged 15 and below and those above 15 and below 18 from criminal liability and release them back to the community when the reglamentary period lapses.

However, there has been a call at the national level for the amendment of some provisions of the law following numerous incidents involving minors who are suspected to be under the control of crime groups who are taking advantage of the Juvenile Act (Macob & Visperas, 2013).

Further, the City Prosecutor's Office of Navotas in the Greater Manila Area which directly deals on investigating and prosecuting cases that also involve children as victims, offenders and witnesses finds the activities provided in the said rules and regulations quite hard to effectively implement within their office. Moreover, sentiments of the members of the Philippine National Police who come into first contact with a child in conflict with the law, members of the Family Court Staff as well as the Local Social Welfare and Development officers who usually conduct diversion, intervention proceedings and custody for children in conflict with the law regarding problems they encountered in the implementation of the RA 9344 law as well as the growing concern of parents for their children to undergo reformation for them to be brought back to the normal life. The above cited situations greatly encouraged the researcher to embark on the study of the status of implementation of RA 9344 in Navotas City.

The spate of crimes for the last three last years, in the streets of Metro Manila, particularly in the City of Navotas (which was featured in CNN News documentary) brought to the fore the cogent need for the assessment of the implementation of RA 9344. It is for this reason that this empirical study was conducted. Such study will serve as a baseline data in determining problems that arises in its implementation and how said rules and regulations can be effectively implemented and most importantly, to be able to design youth crime prevention measures that will drastically reduce juvenile crime.

The study covered the activities undertaken for the last three years. It includes two groups of respondents. The first group consisted of 50 uniformed men (police officers of the Philippine National Police of Navotas City Police Station while the second group composed of 6 staff members of the Department of Social Welfare and Development, Navotas City.

It particularly covered the extent of implementation of both diversion and intervention activities for children-in-conflict-with law (CICL) in an urban poor city in the Philippines per the case of the City of Navotas in the Greater Manila Area (GMA). Further, it identified the implementational constraints and measured their level of seriousness. Results of the investigation will be the basis in designing a youth crime prevention measures to ensure the successful execution of RA 9344 in the area.

Specifically, this study was premised on the following objectives:

(1) Determine the status of implementation of RA 9344 in terms of the profile of children in conflict with the law as to: age, sex, crime(s) committed; and reasons for committing crimes.

(2) Ascertain the extent of implementation of the intervention and diversion activities as mandated by RA 9344.

(3) Identify constraints encountered in the implementation of the intervention and diversion activities for the children-in-conflict-with-the-law.

The Child in Conflict with the Law refers to an individual under the age of 18, who is alleged as, accused of, or adjudged as, having committed an offense under Philippine laws.

Governed by the juvenile justice and welfare law, a child in conflict with the law are made to undergo activities designed to address issues that caused the child to commit an offense. It may take the form of an individualized treatment program which may include counseling, skills training, education, and other activities that will enhance his/her psychological, emotional and psycho-social well-being. It is categorized into two, namely: diversion activities and intervention activities that protect and uphold his/her right as a child.

Diversion refers to an alternative, child-appropriate process of determining the responsibility and treatment of a child in conflict with the law on the basis of his/her social, cultural, economic, psychological or educational background without resorting to formal court proceedings. Diversion activities refer to the program that the child in conflict with the law is required to undergo after he/she is found responsible for an offense without resorting to formal court proceedings.

Intervention refers to a series of activities which are designed to address issues that caused the child to commit an offense. It may take the form of an individualized treatment program which may include counseling, skills training, education, and other activities that will enhance his/her psychological, emotional and psycho-social well-being (RA 9344).

## II. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This study anchored on Republic Act 9344 otherwise known as the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act of 2006, as its legal basis. The effectiveness of the law depends so much on its proper implementation in order to secure and ensure the welfare and protection of child at risk and those children in conflict with the law.

Recent studies have shown that preventing as well as reducing juvenile delinquency and/or juvenile crime will involve a comprehensive framework.

Researchers organized the risk factors for serious and violent delinquency according to five developmental domains as cited in the book of Howell (2009) entitled: "Juvenile Delinquency: A Comprehensive Framework." These domains are: individual, family, school, peer group, and community. This framework is earlier inspired by developmental psychologist

Bronfenbrenner's (1979) conceptualization of the different spheres of influence that affect a child's behavior such as relations in family, the peer group, and schools. More recent research has expanded the scope of these developmental domains to include individual and community factors as well. In addition, research shows that risk and protective factors function as predictors of violence, crime and substance abuse at different points in life, as affected by risk factors in the respective spheres of influence.

Unfortunately, the idea of risk reduction is sometimes misinterpreted as though it involves blaming youths for being at risk of delinquency involvement (Howell, 2009). Some youth development advocates urge a shift from "risk and protection focused" delinquency prevention to an emphasis on only the protection side of the equation, what they prefer to call "positive" youth development. They promote the exclusive use of what is sometimes called "strength-based training, resilience strengthening, or asset building (Brendtro & Ness, 1995; Leefert, et al. 1996).

Further, risk and protection focused prevention does not involve blaming youths for their risk factors. Four of the five major risk factors for delinquency are clearly beyond the control of the affected youths. Children do not choose the families into which they are born, the communities where they live, the schools they attend, or many of the problems they develop. Therefore, risk reduction involves changing the conditions to which youth are exposed that negatively affect their life chances (Howell, 2009). It has been estimated that at least 25% of adolescents in America are at serious risk of not achieving productive adulthood (National Research Council & Institute of Medicine, 2002). A large proportion of them are victims of psychological abuse at school, and dropouts (Hyman & Perone, 1998; Hyman & Snook, 1999). As a consequence, out-of-school youths are significantly more likely to become involved in physical fights, carry a weapon, and participate in a wide range of other delinquent behaviors (Howell, 2009).

Quite interestingly however, Browning & Huizinga (1999) and Stouthamer-Loeber, et. al (2002), collectively expressed the view that problem behaviors normally develop in people who have a preponderance of risk factors over protective factors. This theory applies for all types of delinquents – even child delinquents (Loeber & Farrington, 2001 and Stouthamer-Loeber, et al. 2002). However, in extremely high-risk conditions, people need more than a simple majority of protective factors to overcome multiple risk factors (Browning & Huizinga, 1999; Smith, et al. 1995). Moreover, exposure to risk domains in the relative absence of protective domains "dramatically increases the risk of later persistent serious offending" as collectively emphasized theoretically by Stouthamer-Loeber et al. (2002). Therefore, communities must reduce the presence of multiple risk factors to achieve significant reductions in delinquency and other social problems. Howell (2009) summed up, that in the end, "the most effective approach is to reduce risk factors while increasing protective

factors."

Juvenile delinquency theories and concepts have been developed and refined by successive generations of researchers. Most often, the results suggest that one best theory or model simply does not exist as the elements of political, economic and social realities keep on changing from time to time from country to country, around the globe. This change is best illustrated by "an unprecedented youth violence epidemic which is said to have occurred in the late 1980's and early 1990's (Blumstein, 1995; Cook & Laub, 1998; and Fox, 1996).

Juvenile delinquency reduction and/or prevention is the principal purpose of RA 9344 (Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act of 2006).

The paradigm of the study employs the Input-Process-Output (IPO) Model.

Green (2001) underscored the importance of this paradigm scheme as the best tool in modern research. It is envisioned to provide a clear picture of concept of any study and allows the readers to understand its direction.

Green stressed that the input variables are fixed and established. It provides basic information which is necessary to start or begin a research. In this study, the input variables are: the characteristic features/descriptions of the children in conflict with the law (respondents) in terms of age, sex, crimes committed, reasons for committing crimes, activities undertaken in the implementation of RA 9344 as well as the extent of its implementation, and drawbacks/constraints which are encountered by the respondents in the implementation of RA 9344.

The process embraces the analysis of the input variables with the use of appropriate statistical tools while the output box contains the proposed youth crime prevention program designed or formulated to reduce juvenile crime that will pave the way for successful implementation of RA 9344. Further, the feedback mechanisms include comments and opinions to the proposed youth crime prevention measures.

### III. METHODOLOGY

This study made use of the descriptive assessment method of research. The researcher considered the collective assertion of Best (1994), Aquino (1992), Leedy (1993) and Rivera & Rivera (2007) that the descriptive method is the most appropriate method in this investigation for gathering data because it will be used to discover facts upon which professional judgment could be based. Polit and Hungler (1998) further defined descriptive research as one that deals with studies that have as their main objective, the accurate portrayal of the characteristics of persons, situations or groups and/or the frequency with which certain phenomena occur. The purpose of descriptive research is not only to describe a given state of affairs as fully as possible (Abulencia, 2001) nor to describe a phenomenon or a condition but also to understand the same to be able to create theories and analyses (Mark, 1996 and Green, 2001).

Documentary analysis was likewise used. Documentary analysis, as defined by Payne (2004) is the technique used to categorize, investigate, interpret and identify limitations of physical sources, most commonly so of written documents.

Since this study pertains to the gathering of data on the implementation of Republic Act 9344 (otherwise known as Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act): its status and direction, the descriptive method of research is the most appropriate method.

The study utilized two sets of survey questionnaires as the main instruments in data gathering. The Survey Questionnaires are intended to the members of the Navotas City Police Station, Philippine National Police and the staff members of the Department of Social Welfare and Development in the City of Navotas, local government unit.

The first set of questionnaire dealt on the intervention and diversion activities undertaken in the implementation of the Juvenile Justice Welfare Act (RA 9344) while the second set of questionnaire focused on the drawbacks or constraints in the implementation of said law.

Aside from the Survey Questionnaire and Interview Guide, documentary analysis was likewise used to be able to characterize the first group of respondents – the children in conflict with the law as to age, sex, crime committed, and reasons why crimes were committed. Such data were secured from the documentary records of the Chief of Police of Navotas Police Station, Philippine National Police.

#### IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

##### A. Extent of Implementation of Diversion and Intervention Activities

There are two sets of activities undertaken by the two groups of respondents, namely the members of the PNP-Navotas Police Station and staff members of the DSWD, Navotas City. These activities are classified into diversion activities (Table 1) and intervention activities (Table 2).

TABLE I: DIVERSION ACTIVITIES IMPLEMENTED FOR THE WELFARE AND PROTECTION OF CHILD IN CONFLICT WITH THE LAW

Items	WM	DE	Rank
1. restitution of the property damaged by the child	1.75	PI	12
2. reparation of the damage caused by the child	2.05	PI	8
3. indemnification for consequential damages	1.91	PI	11
4. written or oral apology by the child or his family	2.08	PI	7
5. care, guidance and supervision by the social worker	2.21	PI	3
6. counseling of the child and his family	2.25	PI	2
7. child attendance in training, seminar and lectures on values formation	2.18	PI	4
8. participation in available community-based programs and community service	2.01	PI	9
9. participation in education, vocation and life-skills programs	2.16	PI	5
10. confiscation and forfeiture of the proceeds or instruments of the crime	2.71	FI	1
11. oral or written reprimand	2.11	PI	6
12. institutional care and custody	1.95	PI	10
Overall Mean	2.11	PI	

The above table indicates that only one item: confiscation and forfeiture of the proceeds or instruments of the crime (item 10) is fully implemented with the weighted mean of 2.71, all the other remaining items are partially implemented/undertaken.

From the above results, it can be inferred that along diversion activities, both the members of the Navotas Police Station and Local Department of Social Welfare and Development have to strictly monitor the implementation of activities for full implementation and/or compliance to ensure the success of RA 9344.

TABLE II: INTERVENTION ACTIVITIES IMPLEMENTED FOR THE WELFARE AND PROTECTION OF THE CHILD IN CONFLICT WITH THE LAW

Items	WM	DE	Rank
1. the child in conflict with the law is maintained, reared and nurtured in his family	2.14	PI	5
2. the educational institutions provide basic literacy program or non-formal literacy program accreditation equivalency system	2.02	PI	6
3. mass media relays consistent and truthful messages to the public through a balanced approach to avoid undue, inappropriate and sensationalized publicity of any case involving a child in conflict with the law	2.25	PI	2.5
4. social councils for the protection of children have been established or strengthened for the adoption of a comprehensive plan on delinquency prevention	2.25	PI	2.5
5. a duly licensed local social welfare and development officer/social worker had been appointed to assist children in conflict with the law	2.27	PI	1
6. the Sangguniang Kabataan (youth council) in the locality where the child in conflict with the law resides coordinates with the LCPC in the formulation and implementation of juvenile intervention and diversion program in the community.	2.21	PI	4
Overall Mean	2.19	PI	

As can be gleaned from Table 2, all the six (6) items identified under diversion activities obtained corresponding weighted means ranging from 2.02 to 2.27 which means that the identified activities are merely partially implemented/undertaken. There is therefore a need for a stronger public (PNP & DSWD) and private (children in conflict with the law and their parents and the community) partnership to effectively curb/reduce juvenile crimes. This community-oriented prevention program focused on cooperation of all sectors to effectively change the environment as earlier postulated by Shaw and Mckay.

Below is the summary table on the diversion and intervention activities implemented for the welfare and protection of the child in conflict with the law.

TABLE III: SUMMARY TABLE ON THE DIVERSION AND INTERVENTION ACTIVITIES IMPLEMENTED FOR THE WELFARE AND PROTECTION OF THE CHILD IN CONFLICT WITH THE LAW

Activities	WM	DE	Rank
1. Diversion Activities	2.11	PI	2
2. Intervention Activities	2.19	PI	1
Overall Mean	2.15	PI	

As reflected from Table 3, both activities are only partially implemented. There is therefore a need for the strict monitoring and evaluation to ensure the full implementation of both activities as mandated by RA 9344.

*B. Extent of the Drawbacks/Constraints in the Implementation of RA 9344*

As to the extent on the drawbacks or constraints in the implementation of RA 9344 (Table 4) six (6) notable items obtained weighted means ranging from 3.54 to 3.98 which are described as serious problems.

TABLE I: EXTENT ON THE DRAWBACKS/CONSTRAINTS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF RA 9344

Items	WM	DE	Rank
1. Non-cooperation and support of the following entities:			
a. Educational institutions	3.38	MSP	7
b. Mass media	2.63	MSP	15
c. Local Council for the Protection of the Child	2.48	SSP	16
d. Punong Barangays	3.29	MSP	10.5
e. Community People	3.59	SP	4
2. Juvenile Justice and Welfare Council does not ensure the effective implementation of RA 9344			
3. Parents do not comply with the prevention program	3.41	SP	6
4. Parents have no ability to guide and supervise the child	3.73	SP	3
5. After-care support services for children in conflict with the law is not provided	3.98	SP	1
6. Youth rehabilitation center has no qualified trained staff	2.95	MSP	13
7. Unavailability of community-based programs for rehabilitation and re-integration of the child in conflict with the law	3.38	MSP	7
8. Inability of the LGUs to build youth detention homes as mandated by the Family Courts Act	3.13	MSP	12
9. Child in conflict with the law does not like to participate in community-based programs such as community volunteer programs, leadership training and socio-cultural and recreational activities	3.29	MSP	10.5
10. A child searched by law enforcement officer is not of the same sex.	3.75	SP	2
11. Child in conflict with the law is locked up in a detention cell.	3.54	SP	5
12. Child in conflict with the law during investigation is not witnessed by the child's parents/guardians/social worker or legal counsel in attendance	2.45	SSP	18.5
13. Subjecting the child in conflict with the law in greater restraint than is necessary for his own good	3.38	MSP	7
14. Violence or unnecessary force is used in apprehending the child in conflict with the law.	2.80	MSP	14
15. Child in conflict with the law is not secured in his quarters separate from that of the opposite sex and adult offenders.	2.45	SSP	18.5
16. Police agencies and other law enforcement agencies are engaged in acts of police brutality and torture	2.46	SSP	17
17. Police agencies and other law enforcement agencies are protecting the child in conflict with the law that is actually committing the acts	2.34	SSP	20
18. Police agencies and other law enforcement agencies are engaged in corrupt practices such as extortion and solicitation of bribes from parents of children in conflict with the law	2.0	SSP	21

	1.93	SSP	22
Overall Mean	3.69	SP	

These items are as follows: parents have no ability to guide and supervise the child (Item 4) 3.98, child in conflict with the law does not like to participate in community-based programs such as community volunteer program, leadership training and socio-cultural and recreational activities (Item 9) 3.75, parents do not comply with the prevention program (Item 3) 3.73, non-cooperation and support of the community people (Item 1e) 3.59, a child served by law enforcement officer is not of the same sex (Item 10), 3.59 and Juvenile Justice and Welfare Council does not ensure the effective implementation of RA 9344 (Item 2) 3.41, all of the identified 6 items are interpreted as serious problems (SP).

On the other hand, nine (9) items are interpreted as moderately serious problems (MSP) with mean ratings ranging from 2.80 to 3.38. These are: non-cooperation and support of educational institutions (Item 1a), youth rehabilitation center has no qualified trained staff (Item 6), child in conflict with the law during investigation is not witnessed by the child's parents/guardians, social worker, or legal counsel in attendance (Item 12), non-cooperation and support of punong barangays (local chieftain) (Item 1d), inability of the LGUs to build youth detention homes as mandated by the Family Courts Act (Item 8), unavailability of community-based programs for rehabilitation and re-integration of the child in conflict with the law (Item 7), after care support services for children in conflict with the law is not provided (Item 5), and subjecting the child in conflict with the law in greater restraint than is necessary for his own good (Item 13).

Further, the rest of the other remaining seven (7) items are interpreted as slightly serious problems (SSP) with mean ratings ranging from 1.93 to 2.48. These are: non-cooperation and support of the local Council for the Protection of the Child (Item 1c), child in conflict with the law is locked up in a detention cell (Item 11), violence or unnecessary force is used in apprehending the child in conflict with the law (Item 14), child in conflict with the law is not secured in his quarters separate from that of the opposite sex and adult offenders (Item 15), police agencies and other law enforcement agencies are engaged in acts of police brutality and torture (Item 16), police agencies and other law enforcement agencies are protecting the child in conflict with the law that is actually committing the acts (Item 17) and police agencies and other law enforcement agencies are engaged in corrupt practices such as extortion and solicitation of bribes from parents of children in conflict with the law (Item 18).

In summary, of the total twenty-two (22) items (including the sub-items in number 1) are rated by the respondents as moderately serious while the remaining 7 items are rated as slightly serious. Overall, the grand mean is 3.69 which is described as serious problem (SP). Quite interestingly, not one among the items is rated as very serious problem (VSP).

### A. C. Proposed Youth Crime Prevention Measures

Most studies and theories on juvenile crime prevention have concentrated on the risk-protection framework (Howell, 2009); Browning & Huizinga (1999); and Stouthamer-Loeber, et al. (2002) and the prevention component through the identification of correct treatment on a particular offense committed (Deatherage, 1996) as well as the adoption of a community oriented delinquency program of Shaw and Mckay (as cited by Deatherage, 1996) which is directed at changing the environment.

The proposed youth crime prevention measures present a different angle of reducing juvenile crime and/or juvenile delinquency through social policy and social action which are likewise anchored on prevention, through different approach.

These measures envision a type of social bond which is deemed as a joint partnership between the school and the community. All significant activities which are informative, educational, community-wide, and which require the support of the entire community as well as the school, are deemed partnership ventures between them. A school-initiated program or project cannot likewise get off the ground without the public enlistment of the support of the people in the community.

Social policy and program development for the prevention of juvenile delinquency should be necessarily geared at primary prevention. Furthermore, this primary prevention should be from a situational model rather than from a personal model. A situational model should emphasize the context of developing children, youth and their families rather than identifying and intervening with individuals. The model would enhance the development of each individual's competence rather than diagnosing and treating individual defects. The physical well-being of the child would be stressed and the highest quality of social psychological support possible would be provided, preferably within the family.

Resources would be targeted to schools, neighborhoods within communities and other normal mainstream agencies. These agencies would be supported to improve their safety, operational fairness and respect for individual differences, so that the mutual obligations between each developing child or youth, their family and their community are reinforced.

This proposed model shall be known as the "social development integrative measures" that stresses that schools, community, peer bonds as well as family bonds have important effects on delinquency behavior. The family, which is the nucleus of all other social bonds, like the other identified bonds, such as those established in schools, in the community, as well as with peers, are essential to social success and well-being. Schools should be and can be more responsive to "high risk" youths. For both enrolled youths in schools and the out-of-school youths, it is necessary to enlist the support of their families, particularly their parents.

#### *Underlying Principles of the Program and Its Objective*

Under this proposed social development mode, there are several fronts to harness that should be taken into consideration, for it to succeed.

(1) Delinquency prevention will be most effective if interventions are comprehensive and multi-leveled. Individual behavior changes are unlikely to continue without complementary supporting changes within the economic and social structure.

(2) Preventive interventions should focus on the individual. Coercive interventions should only occur following the due process of the law.

(3) Natural informal relationships may be more helpful to "delinquent prone" children than expert practitioners.

The heart of prevention delinquency should be directed at intervention as its principal objective. However, such intervention or interventions, should be justified on grounds of fundamental fairness.

Assessment of the Social Development Measures should be "utilization-based." Activities are to be evaluated and monitored based on their utilitarian value or practical and beneficial application.

## V. CONCLUSION

On the basis of the findings of the study, the following conclusions are drawn:

(1) Majority of the youthful offenders are males belonging to the age ranges of between 13-14 and 14-15 years old. The most dominant or prevalent crimes/offenses are: theft and robbery while the most dominant reasons that led to commit crimes are: being abandoned or neglected by parents and non-satisfaction of their basic needs.

(2) Both diversion and intervention activities are only partially implemented or partially undertaken.

(3) Majority of the constraints/drawbacks encountered by the respondents in the implementation of RA 9344 are only considered as moderately serious problems.

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