

Community Justice Innovation in Preparation and Support Prisoners Out Society

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ABSTRACT

This research the objective of this study was to study guidelines for preparing and accepting prisoners leaving prisons in Thailand. Offenders had difficulty adapting from a place of detention back to society. The preparation innovative of the Center for Assistance to Reintegration and Employment (CARE) in the detention facility gave offenders encouragement to return to society and create good relationships. This has a positive effect on the return of offenders to the community. In addition, there was community innovation to support the return to a new environment unlike before (Recidivism). There were beneficial activities resulting in no risk of recidivism. Welfare requires skills. Therefore, the correction and rehabilitation of offenders in the community and the presence of a community justice network, who had public consciousness, were important mechanisms. Local administration or those with positions in the local government may assist coordinate with the work network, budget, and implement complementary community job creation projects. These can create participation and understanding to the community in all sectors and create a social ground for the ex-convicts.

Keywords

Community justice; Innovation; Preparation; Prisoners support; Return to society

Article Received: 10 August 2020, Revised: 25 October 2020, Accepted: 18 November 2020

Introduction

Nowadays, Thai society is facing an increasingly violent crime problem. This problem is evident in the recent crimes resulting in a large number of prisoners. Prisoners who are served at the time of their conviction and return to society are often labeled as bad people. Because the prisoners are insulted as incapable to improve themselves, this creates a cycle of recidivism. The problem that the ex-convicts must face is social stigma. In particular, the restriction of rights such as the right or the opportunity to return to work (Pryor & Thompkins, 2013), or re-enter society (Garland, Wodahl & Mayfield, 2011). Occupation is essential to the sustenance of all human beings in order to generate income to live and to feel a sense of self-worth. Therefore, the prisoners are often limited by the regulations of the various agencies resulting in permanent closure of the opportunity from the labor market to earn a living.

The Department of Corrections and Ministry of Justice Thailand have a duty to treat offenders in accordance with court judgments and punishment orders of the legal authority. Guidelines for detaining prisoners are in accordance with modern penology (Sandra, 2020) and to the minimum standard for treating prisoners according to the United Nations guidelines. Treatment of prisoners has begun since the introduction of prisoners to prisons. All prisoners will be identified for a detailed study in planning for individual prisoners (Gordon & Martha, 1996). After that, the prisoners go through corrective training (Anthony, 2017) and rehabilitation. Until the end of the punishment, all prisoners are required to undergo training and preparation before their release. The Corrections Act B.E. 2560 states that prisons must prepare their prisoners before release. Preparations have been initiated since prisoners' placement

in prison so that there is a process for promoting and supporting prisoners appropriately (Shaw, 2015). This process is to support all prisoners to be able to live in society (Ajala & Oguntuase, 2011) as well as to provide advice on managing personal, economic, social and good relationships with family and community (Karp, Lane & Turner, 2002).

The Corrections Department is the last department in the justice process. They not only have a duty to control the offender of the court's judgment, but also have one of the important tasks which are rectification, rehabilitation (Nancy, 2007). And developing prisoner's behavior while in prison to reform themselves, change the attitude, and be able to live happily with others in society when released from prison (Department of Corrections, Behavior Development Division, 2017). Released prisoners often face many problems. Preparation before release is the preparation for prisoners who are imminent to the outside society (Hayden & Katherine, 2011). The pre-release program is a training program to develop prisoners in various areas, including physical, psychological (Courtney, 2020), labor skills training (Cook, Kang, Braga, Ludwig & O'Brien, 2015), advice and guidance on how to live properly, to build confidence and guide prisoners to decide on their lifestyle after their release. This will help prisoners to adjust to their family, community and society properly (Anthony, 2017). A shift from the traditional way of working to a new paradigm to evolve from reactive to proactive behavior requires good preparation and in the part of leaders (Katia, & Jaime, 2002) to support them. That is expected to occur in the future for those who will pass the punishment and return to society. Thus, a network was created (Andrew, 2002) in supporting the Department of Corrections missions at various times according to the needs of individual prisoners appropriately

(Elizabeth, Robin, Daniel, Christi, Thuan, Deza & Jessica, 2020), because they are also members of society that should be take cared (Inbal, Dana & Eran, 2020).

Therefore, the model for modifying behavior to return good people to society has been driven through many prison's s management experiences (Senior, 2013) and contributing to the advocacy of community justice (Bottoms, 2017) through cooperation with the Sub district Administrative Organization (Tongkachok, Apinawatawornkul & Tongkachok, 2018) become a social innovation that will study the planning to create a proactive correctional system. The study expanded prisons work in the community (Umbreit, Coates & Vos, 2004) to create a network for supporting prisoners (Diana & Noelle, 2014). This process provides the Department of Corrections useful information to develop a new working system that is integrated with all sectors. This process also helps prisoners to return to society (Kam, 2020). By cooperation between the government, the private sector, and the civil society sector to take the responsibility of improving the behavior of prisoners effectively and able to return good people to the society sustainably in the future.

Literature Review

The concepts of creating a network, connecting groups of organizations or groups of people who voluntarily share information or activities, social control, returning good people to society (Li, 2015), are the treatments for offenders in accordance with the Criminal Justice Policy (Dzur, 2003). The idea was to allow the prisoners to modify behavior (De Beus & Rodriguez, 2007) and to re-enter society without social stigma. This also improves prisoners' behavior to return good people to society (Hunter, Lanza, Lawlor, Dyson & Gordon, 2016) by engaging the community to participate in taking care of the prisoners (Chapman, 2019), for returning good people to society sustainably, reduce difference, and create opportunities to access government services. This process began with the development of projects for the return of good people to society (Falco & Noelle, 2014), to provide prisoners with professional knowledge and to transfer knowledge to develop skills (Rhine, Mathews, Sampson & Daley, 2003), which was a professional training for prisoners who received pardons. The focus on returning to society (Li, 2017), led to work adjustment, both in correctional works (Kurlychek, Wheeler, Tinik & Kempinen, 2011) and the involvement of various sectors of society (Lyons, 2003). Currently, various agencies in both public and government sectors are involved in assisting ex-convicts (Jones, 1990). Besides, the operations not only benefit offenders after impunity and society, but also the correctional work in reducing ex-convicts' return to prison which is the protection of further problems very well.

Methods

This study analyzed the theoretical concepts, principles, statutory provisions relating to the care of the prisoners. The study collected, studied, researched, and analyzed various information that appeared in the form of documents that had been analyzed or interpreted by third parties, including policies, directives, laws of Correction Act, B.E. 2560 of

Thailand, and general documents including books, articles, related researches both Thai and foreign. The research also interviewed target populations, including lawyers, judges of the Courts of Justice, prison staff, and prison commanders.

Results

The research results have shown that Thailand has a 20-year national strategy framework (B.E.2560-2579) in the sixth way, namely the balancing and development of public administration. The establishment of an integrated public administration system, the development of public service systems of government agencies, and efforts to build a network of cooperation in the relief of the prisoner had been established since 2007 with a policy to create community justice (Clear, 2020). This policy was a collaboration between the Department of Corrections and the Provincial Governor in signing a Memorandum of Understanding on the coordination of cooperation in social work with local organizations.

It was also a collaboration on the part of the corrections network to manage the "Correctional Community" in accordance with correction policy (Wilson, Applegate & Bolin, 2020). The local division was responsible for correcting the behavior of prisoners for returning good people to society sustainably (Clear & Cadora, 2003). They also conducted coordination with government agencies and local administration organizations in the pre-release preparation for prisoners, families, and civil society communities. This project played a huge role in giving people the opportunity to turn themselves into good people and not repeat offenses (Chokprajakchat & Iyavarakul, 2015), and allowing the surrounding society to give prisoners the opportunity to return to society and not create troubles anymore. This is because the Department of Corrections realized that they can not solve the problem of recidivism (Viglione, Blasko & Taxman, 2018) and the unacceptable social tolerance of the prisoners alone, but required cooperation from all sectors on the prevention, correction and recover the minds of the prisoners (Lasher & Stinson, 2020). Therefore, government agencies, the private sector, or the public sector must work together as a driving force in solving the problem. For enhancing cooperation between the Department of Corrections and the social sector (Ratanapongtra, Khamkerd, Kongdit & Nawatnatee, 2020), had been defined as a correctional community network building concept by allowing all prisons and correctional institutions to seek and coordinate with the administrative organizations. They can work together in various ways by organizing activities (Montes, 2019) such as providing information on prisoners for characterization, prisoners and family synthesis, career guidance (Surahmad & Nugroho, 2019), promoting society to accept the ex-convicts, and funding the occupation (Alarid, 2019) under correctional laws.

1. The Correction Act, B.E. 2560 specifies behavior correction and development, and preparation before the release of prisoners as follows: Act 42, for the benefit of correction, therapy, rehabilitation, and development of behavior of prisoners to return themselves to good person, the director-general is required to provide a system for the development of prisoners' behavior with appropriate

methods and guidelines. Prisoners must receive education and training in terms of morality, ethics, work, vocational training, ministering, learning good culture, leisure activities, and sports. They must have the opportunity to get in touch with their families, friends, and private organizations whose mission is to remedy, heal, restore, and develop prisoners behavior, and be aware of the news and changes of the outside world.

The process must be in accordance with the regulations of the Department of Corrections with the approval of the Correction Act, B.E. 2560. Act 43, prisons must provide basic education for prisoners under the National Education Act. The process must be consistent with the educational curriculum of the Ministry of Education, including training on moral and ethics and training to increase employment opportunities.

Prisoners must be prepared before the release, starting with preparations at the time of adoption of prisoners, in order to have a process for promoting and supporting prisoners appropriately, allowing each prisoner to return to life in society. Prisons must provide advice on how to deal with personal, economic, social, and healthy relationships with families and communities.

The prisons must arrange for prisoners who have been imprisoned until the remaining imprisonment in accordance with the regulations prescribed by the Department of Corrections, can suspend work or separate detention from other prisoners, then arrange for training to prepare before release. The procedures for the release of ex-convicts are as follows: (1) Restore government property. (2) Provide the clothes as specified by the Department of Corrections for unclothed ex-convicts to leave the prison. (3) Make evidence of release (4) Return the property of the ex-convicts, including the reward and money. (5) Issue a certificate of release of ex-convicts.

In addition, the Department of Corrections had issued the regulation of the Department of Corrections on the preparation for the release of prisoners B.E.2561 in order to have processes for promoting and developing prisoners in a correct and appropriate way and to assist prisoners return to life in society normally and happily.

When the prison receives the final inmates, they should arrange for the prisoners for their subsequent release to life in society appropriately, for example, organize activities or training to provide advice to the prisoners and their families and provide assistance in the social adaptation stage or social work assistance to prisoners according to their problem and need.

The prison should provide the remaining unconditional prisoners with a term of six months to one year or a specified period of time specified by the Department of Corrections to enter a pre-release program.

Prisoners participating in the pre-release preparedness program should be exempt from normal work, except prison sanitation work or matters related to their own health.

2. Innovation of the Department of Corrections was the establishment of the Center for Assistance to Reintegration and Employment (CARE) to forward the ex-convicts to the community. CARE was established to promote effective correction and rehabilitation of prisoners, manage relevant information systematically, and facilitate access to service

users which are prisoners, ex-convicts, relatives, families of prisoners, and interested public. In addition, CARE also promoted and coordinated employment to prepare information on the employment needs of those who are close to punishment, prepare information of entrepreneurs in job vacancies, coordinate their network of assistance in the field of employment, and forward information of the prisoners. The users of CARE were prisoners, relatives, and families of prisoners, and the places were the job coordination and promotion center, all prisons / correctional facilities, the service points of visiting relatives, or suitable places such as in front of the prison that is convenient for user contact.

Operation guidelines for the Center for Assistance to Reintegration and Employment, Behavior Development Office: The Department of Corrections, the agencies in charge of the Center for Assistance to Reintegration and Employment (CARE) and as a coordinating and information hub for prisons across the country, had laid out guidelines to drive CARE in response to the policies of the Ministry of Justice and Correctional Administrators, which guided the operations of the Center for Assistance to Reintegration and Employment, the Department of Corrections, and the prison / correctional institution guidelines.

In addition, operation guidelines for Center for Assistance to Reintegration and Employment in the prisons/correctional institutions:

(1) Determination of roles and tasks of the Center for Assistance to Reintegration and Employment (CARE) is clear in being a service agency that primarily provides services to prisoners, acquirers, and their relatives in providing assistance to users, such as dealing with companies or stores that are willing to accept ex-convicts to work, finding suitable vacancies to accommodate for ex-convicts, providing advice, coordination and assistance in applying for scholarships to different sources, and providing assistance in various fields to service recipients appropriately. The operations are as follows:

(1.1) Publicize the objectives of CARE to the prisoners who are close to being out in order to request coordination of assistance.

(1.2) CARE should proactively coordinate with various parts/departments in the prisons/correctional institutions to provide information on prisoners approaching their out during the period prior to their release 1 year or during the pre-release preparation period, both the person who will be released to be punished and reduce the days of imprisonment and those who will be released as punishment, to plan and coordinate agencies, companies, stores, or establishments that accept ex-convicts to work, or promoting necessary professional skills training while in prison to prepare for leaving, career, and coordinate assistance in various fields.

(1.3) Provide advice on life after the punishment and other aspects appropriately.

(1.4) CARE becomes the center of coordination with relevant agencies to provide assistance in the event that the prison/correctional institutions cannot provide assistance.

(2) Appointment of CARE working group. The prison commanders/director of the correctional institutions must assign and instruct all parts/parties concerned to cooperate and give knowledge of the importance of duties.

(3) Promote CARE's mission to enable users (prisoners, ex-convicts, relatives) to access information, understand

CARE's mission, and prepare yourself to be ready before entering the service.

Table 1. Access information of the Center for Assistance to Reintegration and Employment (CARE)

Guest users from October 1, 2019 to July 31, 2020.

Details in the reporting	Prisoners (person)	Ex-convicts (person)	Relatives/others (person)	Total (person)
1. Number of people using the service (person)	28,486	31,028	9,727	69,241
2. Support of the CARE Center				
2.1 Employment	4,284	420	53	4,757
- Bringing prisoners to professional training in the workplace	4,163			6,163
- Employment project to return good people to society		221		221
- Other employment (Coordinated by CARE Center)	121	199	53	373
2.2 Recommendation of job sources / vacancies	13,372	18,887	888	33,147
2.3 Recipients of scholarship for occupation	5	463		468
2.4 Providing assistance in various fields	10,825	11,258	8,786	30,869
- Vehicle fee returning the local community		4,089		4,089
- Scholarships for Prisoners	242			242
- Accommodation after the punishment		310		310
- Medical treatment	2,574	269		2,843
- Other assistance	8,009	6,590	8,786	23,385

3. Project innovation "Khok Nong Na of Kindness and Hope, Department of Corrections" The Department of Corrections, Ministry of Justice, signed a Memorandum of Understanding to show the intention to create social innovation in integrating, continuing royal aspiration and in recognition of The King Rama X Maha Vajiralongkorn Bodindradebayavarangkun. Royal Project "Khok Nong Na of Kindness and Hope, Department of Corrections" provided an opportunity for 39,089 prisoners expected to receive a royal pardon and be released in 2020 in 137 prisons to create social innovation. The prisoners received the opportunity to do right livelihoods after being punished as well as being proud of what they had done and made a good example for others to not return to repeat offenses. The Department of Corrections and The Community Development Department were involved in assisting the prisoners who have completed the program "Khok Nong Na Model." Prisoners can apply their training knowledge, and be given access to basic state or public services. This approach had been developed in the model areas for improving the quality of life according to the new theory applied for the returning workers to local communities by hiring in the Community Lab Model for quality of life: CLM at sub-districts of 337 sub-districts, total 3,370 people (10 people per sub-district), hiring in the Household Lab Model for quality of life: HLM at the household level of 2,909 sub-districts, total 5,818 persons (2 persons per sub-district) (Department of Corrections, 2020). In addition, the Khok Nong Na model refers to the application of indigenous farming wisdom to produce a modern-day farming method intended for the kingdom's new generation of farmers (Bangkok Post, 2020)

Discussion

(CARE) Thailand and the community support project by participating in the empowerment model for communities to be ready required skills in organizing the learning process to empower the community to be ready to provide opportunities for the ex-convicts in the community. Communities will be governed by government-sponsored and escapades at the center, with ongoing learning exercises and greater involvement of community resources associated with each ex-convict. As a result, the ex-convicts have developed skills for empowering communities through practical action and being able to apply the knowledge gained from practice to guidelines for further expansion. Community volunteers, community justice networks, local government organizations, community leaders, and related agencies have learned how to approach and develop the skills of correction and rehabilitation of the prisoners in their role. It was also possible to change the attitude of the community towards the acquirers. The ex-convicts' families had the opportunity to join together as a support group to help the ex-convicts' families together, which will create a community to look after themselves. However, for the development of both forms of participation, probation volunteers were an important mechanism for coordinating the remediation of prisoners at the community and agency levels.

Those probation volunteers were in the administrative positions, namely the sub-district chief and the local administrative division. More importantly, those probation volunteers had good relationships with both the community and the working organization. Working together on a horizontal relationship was a contributing factor to smooth

achieving goals and sustainable recovery of the ex-convicts in the community. Relevant agencies opened channels and brought community resources of the community justice network, local places, immunity families, and other entities to continually participate in the repair and rehabilitation. There were encouragements for the establishment of a social support group in the community to promote sustainable self-care in the community.

“Khok Nong Na of Kindness and Hope Project, Department of Corrections” was to encourage the ex-convicts to apply the training knowledge to in the occupation after the punishment and to support the ex-convicts to access the basic government missions or public service in order to work towards the purpose of innovation. This project helped the ex-convicts in a concrete way, resulting in an integrated work in the main department at the Department level which was the Department of Community Development to promote the learning process and public participation. In addition, this project also promotes and develops the foundation community economy to be stable, establish community strategy, training, and the development of people involved in community development to strengthen the community sustainably;

-The Department of Skill Development provided professional training to vocational education and training center of the Department of Skill Development throughout the country.

-The Department of Employment provided demonstrations and short-term freelance skills training for prisoners before release, counsel, advice and career guidance for the self-employed target group, including location, cost calculation, registration, and recruitment of prisoners who wish to work, assess career readiness.

-The Department of Provincial Administration coordinated every provincial governor in delivering policies to the sheriff, Local province, and Local government organization in all areas, follow-up, care, assistance, and advice to prisoners, ex-convicts and their families.

-The Department of Local Administration coordinated the all local government organizations around the country and participated in monitoring and looking for ways to help and support the ex-convicts and their families.

Conclusion

Encouraging companies or juristic partnerships to hire ex-convicts in Thailand to create their jobs and generate income will help reduce recidivism. This encouragement is in line with the Mission of the Department of Corrections having the duty to correct and develop the behavior of prisoners to be skilled and ability to have a job and income, be able to support themselves and their family after being punished and not repeated offenses. Employment results of prisoners are monitored through the Center for Assistance to Reintegration and Employment (CARE) of prisons / correctional institutions nationwide. This is a matter of great importance to the Department of Corrections and is an innovation that allows the punishment to have a job and return to a normal life in society. From the data in just one year, there are many users of this innovation. The return of good people to society and its paradigm, cooperative community work, and understanding of supportive work can

foster engagement and understanding to all communities and support the work of the community justice Network properly. Methods and places of rehabilitation of the prisoners have moved from greater centralization in prison to community action. The principles of community participation with the beliefs, cultures and wisdom of each region of the community make it accessible and easy to understand because they are not separated from the way of their life. This also creates and strengthens the spirit of the ex-convicts for increasing the immune system to prevent recidivism.

Conflict of Interest

There is no conflict of interest.

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