

## The Strengthening of the Social Support System for Children in Government Residential Care in Pattani, Thailand

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### Abstract

In Thailand, government residential care for children is an option for vulnerable and disadvantaged children when no other options exist to protect them from harm and to provide a better quality of life for them, including assuming responsibility to find the proper social support for them after they leave government residential care. Pattani is one of the southern Thailand border provinces where the majority of the population are Muslims, making up 70% of the population, which is different from other parts of Thailand. The different identities of local people here create a multicultural society in the area. The purpose of this study was to examine the social support system for children in government residential care in Pattani, Thailand, and to investigate how such sectors associated with the children could indeed enhance potential solutions in the support system to strengthen and improve child wellbeing. In this study, two focus group discussions of officers and child special workers related to the development of children at Pattani Home for Girls were assembled to gather perspectives on child support from various sectors and to generate adequate support for the children. Following that, a thematic analysis was carried out. The results of the study indicate that support for various sectors is important for determining the ideal ways to support the development of children in government residential care. The study also recommends that the government child welfare system should strengthen the support network for children in government residential care, particularly in terms of coping with life after they leave care. Furthermore, the study suggests that understanding a society's culture, language, attitude system, beliefs, and values is critical for developing appropriate welfare policies in places such as Southern Thailand.

**Keyword:** Social Support System, Children in Government Residential Care, Government Residential Care in Pattani, Thailand.

**Introduction**

A social support system is the one resource clearly likely to be the most effective in ensuring the wellbeing of children in residential care, as such systems help address the impact of challenging behaviours and their exact needs (Octoman & McLean, 2014). Social support plays a critical role in the upbringing of children, especially as they transit from childhood to adulthood (Fomby & Cherlin, 2007; Okpych et al., 2018; Leon & Dickson, 2019). Also, the experiences and perceptions of child welfare professionals are important in working progress with the children in residential care placement and affect the wellbeing of the children (Hong et al., 2011). Besides, social work intervention may be one aspect of the support system that helps improve the wellbeing of children in residential care with a holistic social services approach to commitment to human rights and advocacy within a multidisciplinary and multi-agency environment. Furthermore, it is critical that children receive assistance from a variety of sources, including assistance from various services tasked with individual protection and social services. This type of assistance decreases the risks for the children and eventually prepares them for life outside of residential care (Fuentes-Pelaez et al., 2016).

In Thailand, government residential care for children is a choice when no other choices are available to vulnerable and disadvantaged children so as to protect them from harm and with the aim of providing a better life for them (Kamolirisakul, 2017). It is thus the government's responsibility to assist and protect children in finding meaning in their lives. Although the government-run residential care for children in Thailand has provided services in various fields, the children still have problematic behavior, difficulty adapting to other people and low self-esteem while living in the residential care. Furthermore, according to the Department of Children and Youth's annual report for 2019, only 10% of children who were placed in government residential care can perform themselves effectively after they leave government residential care.

Pattani is one of Thailand's southern border provinces where the majority of the population, up to 70%, is Muslim, which differs from other parts of Thailand with a multicultural society that contains 3 important cultures: Islamic, Buddhist, and Chinese (Chanarnupap & Tongkachok, 2017). Since violent situation in southern Thailand began in 2004, there has been a significant increase in awareness of diverse cultures in Thailand's southern part of the state, but it is still asserted that the main drivers of the Pattani insurrection are the local people's loss of identity and the Thai government's recession of credibility in appealing to the emotions of the local people. Like a consequence of the situation, bureaucratic policy in this zone has changed, resulting in a significant cultural shift away from assimilation policies that were implemented to the emergence of multiculturalism. Furthermore, multiculturalism and diversity in society, on the other hand, continue to have an impact on people's quality of life and may have an effect on their transition to becoming successful adults (Vertovec, 2010). For this reason, it is critical to have an awareness of a support system from the community of cultural diversity and to be concerned about the local people's identity and figure out how to use appropriate child welfare to improve the wellbeing of children in specific identity and cultural areas (Chanarnupap & Tongkachok, 2017).

Moreover, Pattani Home for Girls is the one of government residential care in southern Thailand, which most children admitted to this facility, had family histories of infelicitous care, poverty, abandonment, and life experiences characterised by abuse, neglect, domestic

violence, and parental substance abuse. The Pattani Home for Girls has the aim of providing a safe space and strengthening the capacity of the children and youth in the institutions to live happily in society after discharge (Annual Report of Pattani Home for Girls, 2019). As well, in 2019, the Department of Children and Youth of Thailand selected Pattani Home for Girls as a residential care model to develop a plan of reintegration with a productive life after their discharge from residential care.

The department further submitted that it would be good to focus on the social support system as a way of taking care of the children, as it will help them while they are in residential care and thereafter. As such, conducting this study in a residential care home for children like Pattani Home for Girls will be a worthwhile research endeavor. The findings will aid in the development of a model for the evidence-based integration of social support systems that is diverse enough to meet the needs of children in residential care, particularly those with special needs.

It is on the basis of the above submissions that this study is being embarked upon to identify the proper social support system that can be put in place to support the development of children in residential care settings. This study intends to specifically examine the social support system with a specific focus on children with special needs. Basically, the development of the wellbeing of children is one of the reasons for necessitating the strengthening and building of child-friendly institutions to help better the lives of children and prepare them for society at large upon their leaving residential care settings. This empirical endeavour is thus worthwhile.

Moreover, one of the strategies in the plan also focuses on the issue of supporting children and youths at the community level, which needs collaboration and support from a wide range of multi-sectoral settings (i.e., family, school, formal and informal organizations, and community) to figure out the proper way to protect and uplift the children in the long run (The National Child and Youth Development Promotion Commission, 2017). While a holistic approach to taking care of children and youths in foster care residences, especially government-owned residences, has been provided for in the development plan, less attention has been paid to providing this care to children with special needs. The objectives of the current study are as follows by, a) To holistically examine the social support system of the children who have risen from government residential care in Thailand, b) To bring light to the forms of care that best supported the children, with a view towards further improving their overall wellbeing while in government residential care, c) To identify the possible ways to implement suitable child support in terms of providers for the children in order to improve the children's lives in the future.

## **Methodology**

### *Study Population*

Officers in government residential care for children in Pattani, Thailand (Pattani home for girls) and specialist workers from outside who are working with the children will be selected for this study. Both groups are defining as the group, which effected of improving of social support system and wellbeing of the children in Pattani Thailand.

The 6 positions of the officers in Pattani Home for Girls selected consisted of the head of residential care, social worker, social developer, psychologist, case manager, and caregiver. Specialist workers were purposively recruited to follow the Act of Thailand Child Protection A.D. 2003 and the Annual Report of Pattani Home for Girls (2019) and specialists in child wellbeing. The 6 specialist workers selected consisted of specialists from the education centre of Pattani, public health technical officers from the health care centre in Pattani, child social worker in Pattani Child Center, child developer from Pattani Local Government Promotion office, and child specialist in Pattani Child and Youth organization.

Researcher did two focus group discussions with the group of officers in Pattani Home for Girls and specialist workers from outside sectors who are related to the support system for the children in Pattani Home for Girls with the aim of developing a support system for the better wellbeing of children as well.

### **Sample Size Estimation and Method**

This study conducted two FGDs from officers (6 participants) and specialist workers from outside sectors (6 participants). For the officers selected by the position and duty, which related and effected to the children in Pattani home for girls and the specialist workers selected from the professional from the sector and organization which effected and related with child support system in Pattani. The focus of all of the interviews has been on data saturation.

This research utilized a purposive sampling method. The purposive sampling is appropriate when selecting "difficult to reach, specialized population" and lends itself well to qualitative research (Etikan et al., 2016). For this study, officers from government residential care for children in Pattani, Thailand (Pattani Home for Girls) and specialist workers from outside sectors related to the children have been selected.

### **Data Collections Method**

The purpose of this focus group discussions to gaining insights into officer's shared understandings of everyday supporting to the children and the ways in which individuals are influenced by others in a group situation and for specialist workers will obtain the view of other sectors and organizations in term of supporting the children. Gibbs (1997) views the process of focus group research can be more collaborative than other forms of study, and so focus group research can be an empowering process for participants, and an exciting challenge for social researchers wanting to gain a different perspective on their field of interest. Moreover researcher will directly access to the concepts participants use to structure their experiences and to consider and discuss about an imposed topic form the focus group. Hence conducting FGDs will assist to obtain more obvious and rich data about social supporter of the children in residential care.

FGDs, would be lasts approximately two hours. The researcher will be as the moderator by asking the questions and maintaining the FGDs among the one group officers and one group of specialist workers, which aim to seek the perception and suggestion about social support system of the children in term of directly provider and outside assisting. Time and place of discussion will be allocated according to the easy availability of the participants. Besides

researcher will inform participant of their right to not answer any questions that they would not feel comfortable with, as well as their right to withdraw from the study at any time.

### **Data Analysis**

All the information from FGDs was analysis in thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is a widely used, flexible analytic approach that allows for a detailed and rich account of the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thematic Analysis allows the researcher to determine precisely the relationships between concepts and compare them with the replicated data. By using, thematic analysis there is the possibility to link the various concepts and opinions of the learners and compare these with the data that has been gathered in different situation at different times during the project. All possibilities for interpretation are possible (Alhojailan, 2012). For more accurate and authentic results, researcher will be using qualitative data analysis software NVivo 10 to analyze the data. NVivo 10, released in 2012 by QSR International, can assist researchers carrying out this type of research by offering easy to use tools for organization and analysis of the data. NVivo allows researchers to collect, organize, and analyze the varied data types (Castleberry, 2014). Using NVivo 10, transcriptions will be then examined; themes were identified and analyzed across all interviews.

### **Results**

Both group of FGD have actively participated in FGD and addressed every question of FGD in detail. As they were the population who related to the support system of the children in government residential care in terms of providers. In order to figure out the possible solution to the social support system for the children in government residential care, information about both group participants' experiences with the social support system and the children is reported under several themes.

The findings of the two FGDs generated a great deal of information, with seven main themes emerging. These themes are: *Issues of Child Specialist Worker, Perspectives on Sector Collaboration, Suggestions for a Development Plan for Children in Government Residential Care, The System Support Network for the children, Development plan for Government Residential care in Southern Thailand.*

#### ***Issues of Child Specialist Worker***

First theme generated from FGDs, presented the issues of child specialist worker given by participants in both group of the FGDs. The 5 of 6 participants of the FGD1 were presented that the government residential care for children still not enough for number of specialist worker with the number of the children in government residential care such as social worker, psychologist and nurse. Likewise, the number of children in residential care has not decreased, despite the fact that officers and staff are still insufficient in comparison to the number of children. Most of them stated that the limited number of child specialist workers impacts the children on delayed assistance and also the workload of the workers. And specialists still needed for the children with trauma or abuse backgrounds, as well as children with specific group such as Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) or Learning disorder (LD). They also stated that workers who lacked experience working with specific groups of children are still an issue in government residential care. It is owing to the low salaries and benefits for specialist workers, which do not entice many specialists to work or remain in government

residential care for lengthy periods of time. This issue also had an influence on the development of children's wellbeing.

For FGD2, the all of participants indicated that specialist worker with specific problem of the children in government residential care The Ministry of Social Development and Human Security should obtain sufficient professionals to support children in government residential care, as well as implement a policy of qualified child specialist workers in all government sectors concerned with improving children's well-being. Moreover, all members of society who interact with children, such as officers, workers, family members, kinship, or everyone, must have a basic grasp of "children's rights."

### ***Perspectives on Sector Collaboration***

Perspectives on sector collaboration had been generated under this theme of the FGDs. All of the 6 participants of FGD1 indicated that collaboration of child development between various sectors is important to the wellbeing of the children in government residential care. They were presented that the government residential care still has less of collaboration with networks from outside sectors. Also recently, government residential care is still without the official committee team for collaboration between various sectors to develop the wellbeing of the children in government residential care. For cross-sector collaboration, a plate form should be created to share information about child intervention plans and long-term plans for children. Children still require greater attention and support from various sectors. Moreover, to support children and their families after they have been discharged from residential care, government residential care still has to produce a plan to collaborate with the local government sector and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to develop a community network for assisting and following up with them.

As well as the FGD2, all the 6 participants strongly presented that there was no mention of a clear-cut collaboration plan between sectors to support the children, which had an impact on the achievement of child development goals. The participants showed that due to the lack of an official child development collaboration plan among several sectors of aid, workers are sometimes turned down for collaboration in child development with other sectors. Furthermore, the participants discovered financial constraints in collaboration with other sectors that had an impact on the children's support, so they cannot dismiss the importance of financial constraints in assisting the children's processing.

According to participants in both FGDs, collaboration among various sectors on child development is important and directly affects the wellbeing of the children. The participants presented that a clear-cut plan for cross-sector collaboration is one of the critical components that should be explicitly addressed in the Child Protection Act, which includes the mention of a specific development committee and a clear specification of worker duties. As specifically mentioned, it will be beneficial for all sectors to collaborate and effectively support children. Also it is critical to have an official collaborative plan in place at the community level for supporting and following up with children and their families after they've been released from residential care.



In addition, another critical aspect is encouraging workers to collaborate more across government sectors. It is important to have network support from many sectors because it helps towards achieving holistic and sustainable development in the development of children's wellbeing.

### ***Suggestions Children in Government Residential Care Development Plan***

The next theme generated from FGDs, discussed the suggestions given by the officers and child specialist workers and need for the modification of some existing policies for development plan for the children in government residential care. As the all participants both group of FGD1 and FGD2 discussed that the development plan of the children the Department of Children and Youth should give greater attention to children with special needs in order to build appropriate policies and intervention programmes for them. Also, the development plan should pay attention to the welfare plan for the stimulation of healthy mental health and spiritual growth of the children in government residential care.

Another suggestion for children's development plans of participants was to create a solution to assist them establish confidence in social settings. Children in residential care must participate in activities outside of residential care in order to acclimate to living with people once they are no longer in residential care. As a consequence, the plan should include more activities outside of residential care and support children develop their abilities and confidence in living life. In addition, according to the residential care's child development plan, the children's skills in interacting with people in society should be strengthened in order to prepare them to be productive individuals once they exit residential care.

Furthermore, the discussion of all participants in both groups of FGDs showed that some of the child development plans were discontinuous in the long term due to a lack of follow-up on the plan as well as the instability in government child development policy. It is also due to the change in the head of any government sector, which is leading to a change in policy and child development plans, so that the child development plan should have continuity and seriousness in the development of these children and follow-up the plan in the long run.

Moreover, the participants indicated that the related sectors such as education part or strategies sector should increase more research about child welfare in any area and always follow-up the wellbeing of the children after provides the welfare as well.

### ***Support system network for the children***

The support system network for the children was one of the themes that all participants stated as possible solutions to the social support system for the better wellbeing of the children in government residential care. The report from all of the FGD1 participants revealed that network supports, such as family and kinship support, are still significant and have an influence on children's wellbeing after the children leave residential care. Further, the child policy for children in government residential care should give greater attention to a clear plan for following up with the children after they leave government residential care, such as having a strong support network from a sector related to the children once they quit care, such as local government or their community. Furthermore, four out of six FGD1 participants indicated that the Department of Children and Youth has to produce a comprehensive plan for preparing children through network support in terms of job preparation with the Ministry

of Labor. They should plan specific jobs for these children after graduation or before they exit residential care.

For FGD2, all six participants agreed that the support system of family and kinship networks is still vital and has a consequence on children's wellbeing after they have left residential care. The child support system still needs to be more concerned with efforts to establish stronger assistance for children at the micro level, such as family and kinship support. Moreover, government residential care centers for children must have a defined strategy in place to expand network support from the community and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), since both are critical components of child protection systems and the development of children's wellbeing.

In addition, 5 among 6 participants of FGD2 suggested that the government should strengthen child support systems in terms of volunteer networks at the community level by generating a volunteer network for the people in society to function as a network supporting the children. The child support system, as mentioned by the other participants, requires an NGO to enhance child protection systems by assisting in the linkage with foreign aid (organizations outside the country) to assist these children.

#### ***Development plan for Government Residential care in Southern Thailand***

Development plan for government residential care in southern Thailand was the one they generated from all the both FGDs. First, all the participants of FGD1 indicated that the children in government residential care in Pattani need a network to support them once they leave residential care so the government needs a plan to build a social identity and varied cultural understandings with the inhabitants of these locations. As a result, in order to improve the future wellbeing of children from varied cultures, such as those in southern Thailand, government policy must emphasize knowledge of their environment. The government's child support plan should have special skills for the children based on the prominent points of the area and the strength of local tradition. Furthermore, most participants of FGD1 stated the government should be more concerned about specifying the specific qualifications of head and specialist workers in government residential care for children in Southern Thailand, such as experience with the area and an understanding of the identity of the people in the area.

For FGD2, all participants showed that children under government residential care in Pattani, Thailand, nonetheless needed well defined long-term of development assistance plan, which suited to the identity and culture of their area. Since Buddhists make up the majority of Thais, and also most activities and celebrations in Thailand are dominated by Buddhists, despite the fact that the majority of people on the southern Thai border are Muslim. This necessitates a greater focus on developing a child policy that encompasses multiple religions in each area, such as southern Thailand. Also 4 of 6 participants in FGD2 stated that religion plays a vital role in the lives of the people and their children in this society. As a matter of fact, the government should take this issue seriously and develop an intervention plan for the children as well as provide a budget for support plans to improve the mental and spiritual health of children in government care by encouraging religious studies and activities as well as hosting religious ceremonies for these children.



In addition, all of participants of FGD1 and FGD2 were indicated that greater collaboration between government residential care for children, the Southern Border Provinces Administrative Centre, and the sectors at community level is needed to figure out how to establish a suitable development and programme for children in government residential care in southern Thailand. Moreover, the results of FGDs presented that child welfare of children in government residential care should pay more attention for specific issue in some area of government residential care such as halal food for muslim children, support in fasting month of muslim children or any celebration ceremony of any religions or ethnics. Moreover, children in government residential care in any area should have specific development programmes designed by the area's specific and unique elements as well.

### **Discussion**

The current study was to find a possible solution for a social support system for the children in government residential care in Pattani, Thailand. The data from the focus group discussions (FGDs) was extremely rich, and it revealed additional insight into the highest potential plans and current policies. Both groups of FGDs suggested possible solutions for social support systems for the children in government residential care in Pattani, Thailand. They came up with multiple suggestions based on their knowledge and duties from each work position with the children and discuss on proper child support in terms of the provider.

The most participants from FGDs advised providing a sufficient number of child specialist workers, effective child worker quality, and the government should provide welfare and profit in order to attract specialist workers because of low salaries and benefits for specialist workers, which do not entice many specialists to work or remain in government residential care for lengthy periods of time. All of which are critical to the wellbeing of children in difficult situations and for children with special needs. Moreover, since government residential for children in Thailand has mainly been the responsibility of the Department of Children and Youth, Ministry of Social Development and Human Security (UNICEF, 2015), the Department of Children and Youth should create the worker structure for sufficient professionals to support children in government residential care. Also, all government sectors that are related to children should be concerned about implementing a policy of qualified child specialist workers to improve children's wellbeing.

As the study of Karnjanavanich (2014) revealed, there are also limitations in the capacity of staff in residential care, especially the specialist staff, to provide care to children with behavioural problems and special needs. This also affects the quality of personalised child care, which impacts the quality of child development of the children as well. Another factor influencing the provision of insufficient care is the low pay paid to child caregivers, despite the nature of their employment. This surely has a negative impact on the children's wellbeing due to the correlation of quality service to quality enumeration in foster care home or residential care. Similarly, low salaries for childcare workers impact frequent turnover and fatigue over time, and they have a significant effect in children's problematic interactions (Zhang et al., 2016). Consequence, it is crucial to enhance the quality of caregivers' working conditions such that they will provide quality care that will improve the wellbeing of children (Hemmanee & Kaewpila, 2018).

One more suggestion from the participants in both groups of FGDs of the current study was to emphasise the importance of evaluating policies linked to the collaboration of child specialist workers in order to support the better wellbeing of children in government residential care in the long term. All of the participants agreed that it was a necessity for a well-defined strategy for the official committee, including the responsibilities of any child workers and various sector aids. The participants also suggested that an official, clear plan for cross-sector collaboration is a critical component that should be explicitly addressed in the Child Protection Act. Also, a plate to share information about child intervention should be created for cross-sector collaboration. Furthermore, in order to assist and follow up with children and their families after they have been discharged from residential care, government residential care must build a community network through collaboration with local government and non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

Collaboration between sectors on child aid is indeed very significant, according to previous studies (Carrard et al., 2009; Walakira et al., 2014; UNICEF, 2015), and should be used for building better relationships between various service sectors, NGOs including government agencies and service providers at local, provincial and national levels. The ways in which support networks from various sectors can help children in residential care gain access to current welfare and social protection systems. Social workers, community development officers, village leaders, and other key stakeholders at the local level, as well as government workers at the district and sub-district levels, play a vital role in the welfare and protection of children.

Moreover, the discussions of all participants in both groups of FGDs revealed that some of the child development plans in government residential care were discontinuous in the long run due to a lack of follow-up on the plan and government child development policy uncertainty. This could be because of a change in leadership in any government sector, which results in a change in policy and child development plans. The child development plan should have continuity and seriousness in the development of these children, as well as lengthy follow-up.

The majority of participants also suggested that the government child welfare system should strengthen the support system network for children in government residential care, especially in terms of coping with life after they leave the care. For example, the Department of Children and Youth should indeed develop a comprehensive plan for preparing children through network support in terms of job preparation via collaboration with the Ministry of Labor and also define a strategy to expand network support from community and non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

As well, the study of Walakira and friends (2014) showed that several sectors, including the private sector and NGOs, play crucial roles in delivering volunteer services and administering charity contributions to children and young people with special needs. Furthermore, some aspects of child support are beyond the context of a single organization's efforts and necessitate a network effort for long-term government and other agency action.

Additionally, participants in FGDs also suggested that government child policies should contain child development support strategies for specific areas of concern, as evidenced by

the condition of each area and distinctive characteristics of a government residential care location. Despite this, children in government residential care in Pattani, Thailand, required a well-defined long-term development assistance plan that was suited to the area's identity and culture. In particular, greater collaboration between government residential care for children, the Southern Border Provinces Administrative Centre, and the sectors at community level is needed to figure out how to establish a suitable development and programme for children in government residential care in southern Thailand. As well as child welfare of children in government residential care, more attention should be paid to specific issues in some areas of government residential care, such as halal food for Muslim children, support during Muslim children's fasting months, or any religious or ethnic celebration ceremony.

Also the previous studies (Choi, 2010; Ladlia, 2010; Benet-Martínez; 2012; Brown et al., 2013) presented that the proper policies for multicultural influence the structures and decisions of governments to ensure that plan resources are allocated equitably to all represented cultural groups. In terms of child welfare, parents and the community, in collaboration with the government sector, play an important role in enhancing development and raising awareness that proper child welfare support leads to a successful life for children. To determine the best welfare policy in any given area, they must first understand the culture, language, mindset system, beliefs, and values of that society. Likewise, multicultural education should be two-way, not one-way, in order to achieve a balance of diversity of cultures and cultural unification. It should also empower all children to learn about their differences and similarities.

Furthermore, with the accessibility of support in bringing out their own uniqueness, children will be encouraged to engage with one another, and sharing it with others will help them to open their minds to difference and uniqueness. It is essential to have awareness of support systems from the community of cultural diversity and those concerned with the identity of the local people in order to lead children to appropriate child welfare and increase the wellbeing of children in specific identity and cultural areas (Chanarnupap & Tongkachok, 2017).

### **Recommendations**

Since the finding recently found a shortage of specialist workers, such as social workers and psychologists, in Pattani Home for Girls which impact to limited the capacity to support children with complex difficulties and children with special needs such as take long time. The quality of specialist workers is important in the intervention wellbeing of children in government residential care, such as providing assistance in mitigating the severity of trauma, contributing to child-centered preparation, and increasing child placement consistency. They also contribute to better community care practise by preparing communities that impact children inside the existing model of aftercare (Hong et al., 2011; Zufferey & Gibson, 2013; National Association of Social Workers, 2013). As a result, this study recommends child welfare agencies to figure out a possible way to increase the number of specialist workers such as social workers or psychologists to assist the children in residential care as well as the number of child caregivers, which still needs to be concerned about increasing the number of child caregivers as the findings revealed that the workload of child caregivers impacts the children's emotional and wellbeing. It was attributable to a shortage of child caregivers in the residential care.

Moreover, it is also recommended to express concern over the working structure within government residential care in terms of clearly specifying specifications on the duties of functioning properly, since the study reveals that the working conditions in residential care are detrimental to the quality of care for children, such as the issue of unclearly indicating specifications on the responsibilities of operating as child caregivers or officers, since it has an impact on the workers' full potential to work with the children in Pattani Home for Girls. As well, it is also strongly recommended to child development plans in the issue of collaboration among various child sectors, such as raising the level of organising plans for the development of children and youth to have clearer goals by exchange knowledge about children and youth, and work collaboratively to lead to network-level cooperation in the form of activities to prevent and enhance children and youth. This will make the operations of various sectors more powerful and affect the development of children and youth, including the development of storage systems, evaluation, and dissemination of information. It is also used to evaluate the outcomes and develop future activity plans.

Furthermore, considering potential ways to improve network collaboration, which could be a possible source to improve the opportunity for children placed in residential care to catch up with the welfare service, will be necessary as the findings show that it still needs to do so as planned for the aim of sustainable development.

Next, the finding recommended that the Department of Children and Youth should produce a comprehensive plan for arranging children through network support on the issue of job preparedness with the Ministry of Labor. They should prepare special careers for these children after they graduate or leave residential care. Moreover, it is suggested that the sectors related to this should figure out how to build stronger assistance for children at the micro level, such as family and kinship support, and provide a clear strategic plan for the children's community in terms of preparing a strong support network for the children once they leave residential care.

Lastly, it is strongly recommended that government child policies should contain child development support strategies for specific areas of concern, as evidenced by the condition of each area and the distinctive characteristics of a government residential care location. In particular, children in government residential care in southern Thailand should have greater collaboration to improve child development with the Southern Border Provinces Administrative Centre and the sectors at community level needed to figure out how to establish a suitable development and program for children in government residential care in southern Thailand.

Since the study showed children in government residential care in Pattani, Thailand required a well-defined long-term development assistance plan that was suited to the area's identity and culture. So, to determine the best welfare policy in any given area, they must first understand the culture, language, mindset system, beliefs, and values of that society. Likewise, multicultural education should be two-way, not one-way, in order to achieve a balance between the diversity of cultures and cultural unification. It should also empower all children to learn about their differences and similarities.

**Conclusion**

As a result of the findings of this study, guidelines for intervention strategies and empowerment strategies in the field of social work practise were made, which were customised to the requirements of children and their goals. Furthermore, the findings look into strengthening specific child welfare programmes and strategies for Thailand's government child policy in order to improve the wellbeing of children in government residential care.

The FGDs offered possible social support systems for children in government residential care in Pattani, Thailand. They addressed suitable child support in terms of the provider and came up with several recommendations based on their expertise and tasks from each professional position with the children. Especially the suggestion was highlight for clear-cut plan of cross-sector collaboration, it is critical components that should be acknowledge explicitly in the Child Protection Act of Thailand, which includes an indication for an official child development committee and a clear requirement of worker duties for develop children in government residential care. In relation, the Department of Children and Youth should collaborate with the Ministry of Labour to develop an integrated plan for preparing children through network support in terms of job preparation, as well as identify a strategy to expand network support from community and non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

Finally, this study suggests that the development for children in government residential care needs greater collaboration between Pattani Home for Girls, the Southern Border Provinces Administrative Centre, and the sectors at community level to figure out how to establish a suitable development and programme for children in government residential care in southern Thailand. Furthermore, specific issues in certain areas of government residential care, such as halal food for Muslim children, support during Muslim children's fasting months, or any religious or ethnic celebration ceremony, should be given more attention to the child welfare of children in government residential care in Thailand.

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