

VIET NAM

Helping teachers to encourage their students to set up the classroom rules in primary school to increase participation in school activities

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1. Introduction

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) was passed by the UN on 20 November 1989 and has become effective since 2 September 1990. Viet Nam was the first country in Asia and the second one in the world to ratify CRC. In Viet Nam, The Law on Child Protection, Care and Education (LCPCE) was ratified on 12 August 1991 and adjusted on 15 June 2004 by the National Assembly. Since then, Viet Nam has practiced CRC and LCPCE for the best interest of children. CRC propagation and implementation have been done throughout the whole country, especially in education. But we still have some important steps to take in CRC in Education in our city and society.

2. Frame of Reference

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) passed by the UN on 20 November 1989 and become effective as from 2 September 1990. Viet Nam was the first country or state in Asia to ratify the CRC and the second country or state in the world to ratify CRC.

The implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child has been institutionalized by state law, The Law on Child Protection, Care and Education (LCPCE) was ratified by the National Assembly on 12 August 1991.

Ho Chi Minh City is in the south of Viet Nam. It is the big centre of culture, economy and education of country. Ho Chi Minh City is currently divided into 24 districts

and with a population of over 8 million and has near 500 primary schools. CRC have been applied in all of the primary schools in Ho Chi Minh City.

Nguyen Van Troi (Ms Pham Thuy Ha is a principal) and Luong The Vinh (Mr Ha Thanh Hai is a principal) are primary schools in Ho Chi Minh City.

Nguyen Van Troi primary school is located in District 4 Ho Chi Minh City. In school year 2015-2016, there are 1200 students with 32 classes (36 students/class), 49 teachers with 33 form teachers and 16 school subject teachers. Besides, the school has more 19 people working as school staff.

Luong The Vinh primary is located in District 7, Ho Chi Minh City. In school year 2015-2016, there are 2156 students with 45 classes (48 students/class), 87 people with 45 form teachers and 25 school subject teachers. Besides, the school has more 40 nursery teachers who take students' care in school activities.

The pilot program had been applied in 3 classes with 150 students, 3 teachers in Luong The Vinh primary school; in 3 classes with 105 students, 3 teachers in Nguyen Van Troi primary school in 2014. We were collecting 6 classes from grade 3 to grade 5 and also establishing the volunteers group including teachers, staff.

Since 2015, especially after coming back from the workshop in India, we have extended this project with all classes, students and teachers in both schools.

2.1 Baseline

After The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) has been implementing in Viet Nam, Luong The Vinh and Nguyen Van Troi primary school is eager CRC into class practice.

However, when we attended this course in Sweden, we recognized that all classroom rules applied at schools in HCMC which were completely set up by principals and teachers. The students are forced to obey the rules without participating in setting up them.

In all schools in Viet Nam, students have never got good chances to give their opinions, ideas, and thoughts in setting up the school rules or the classroom rules, so it's difficult for them not only to know and understand what to do, how to do clearly but also *why* to do it.

To our teachers, we wish to change our teachers' minds and thoughts to implement the child rights better in their teaching. Besides, we hope they themselves can evaluate their teaching result in educating and helping their students as well as they have more responsibilities for their jobs.

To our students, they have more benefits of effective educations and more responsibilities for their study and participate in the school activities more actively and enthusiastically.

Class atmosphere will be friendlier and more exciting. All members in the class can easily share the difficulty and know clearly how to implement the classroom rules together. From this, everyone will help each other make a friendly and cooperative classroom and school atmosphere.

Parents will take the school pride and confidence in educating their children. Our school project will spread to all class activities and furthermore it can be applied to other schools in Ho Chi Minh City. We think that this project will be able to promote the effect of the implementing the child rights.

In HCMC we have so far 19 change agents where of 9 principals.

3. Purpose

- Students and teachers will know basics of Child Rights (CRC).
- Classroom rules will consist of what teachers and students have to do or not.
- Teachers will help students to collect the students' ideas in setting up classroom rules and students are encouraged to participate in setting them up.
- Classroom rules will help students to participate and be active in classroom and also in their own learning.
- Classroom rules are changed if it is needed.

4. Methodology (Activities)

4.1 Step by step to perform the project

4.1.1 Step 1

Preparing documents. Trainings for the applicable subjects will take place at Nguyen Van Troi and Luong The Vinh Primary School of District 4 and 7. The training rooms will be equipped with projectors and other devices. In addition, there will be outdoor trainings for pupils. After having studied various sources, we decided to select the following documents to conduct the training of the project.

1. Save the Children, **Training material on "the Convention on the Rights of the Child"**, The National Political Publishing House, 1999
2. Radda Barnen, **Propagation of "Child Rights" in primary schools (a story for primary pupils)**, The Ho Chi Minh City Education and Training Department, 1999
3. Radda Barnen, **"Corporal Punishment on Children" will this be really necessary?** The National Political Publishing House, 2004
4. Radda Barnen, **Propagation of "Child Rights" in schools (teaching material for teachers)**, The Ho Chi Minh City Education and Training Department, 1999
5. Save the Children, **Application of "Child Rights" in schools**, The National Political Publishing House, 2004

6. **The Convention on the Rights of the Child**, The National Political Publishing House, 1997
7. Save the Children, **Building a friendly learning environment for children**, Hanoi 2008
8. Save the Children, **Child Rights**, The Gioi Publishers in Hanoi, 2003
9. The picture cards

4.1.2 Step 2 Training for trainers

Training on the CRC for teachers and staff

1. Time: August 2014
2. Materials:
 - a. Propagation of Children's Rights in Primary Schools (guiding material for teachers) by Radda Barren
 - b. Will *Corporal Punishment on Children* really be necessary? Save the children
 - c. "The Convention on the Rights of the Child" of the National Political Publishing House.
 - d. Application of "Child Rights" in schools of Save the Children
3. Method: conversation, lecture, discussion
4. Curriculum (1):
 - a. Introduction of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.
 - b. Who are children?
 - c. Difference between a need and a right
 - d. Background of the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of the Child and the development of the rights of children.
 - e. Fundamental characteristics representing the sense of the Convention.
 - f. Introduction of the group of protection rights
 - g. Why do children need protecting – define circumstances where children need protecting.
 - h. Context of the rights of children to be protected.
 - i. Subjects and responsibilities for the implementation of the rights to be protected.
 - j. Introduction of the group of Participating Rights
 - k. Why do children need to participate in all matters – define degrees of participation?
 - l. Context of the children's rights to participate.
 - m. Benefits and responsibilities of children in the implementation of the rights to participate.
5. Curriculum (2):
 - a. Current status of "Corporal punishment on children" in primary school.
 - b. A necessity of eliminating the corporal punishment on children and building a friendly learning environment for children.

- c. Setting out a criterion of "Friendly learning environment"
 - d. Measures for creating a Friendly learning environment for children
6. Enhance the participation of children: A mailbox of Speak-up; opinions of children are more important; building and monitoring the implementation of internal rules; only wish of a class
 7. Innovation of teaching methods
 8. Innovation of class managing methods by positive education methods.
 9. Curriculum (3): Training for Teacher have changed their education methods to encourage student to learn

4.1.2.1 Purpose

- To improve the education quality of the school;
- To create a joyful learning environment, to encourage pupils to be active;
- To promote the activeness and creativeness of pupils.

4.1.2.2 Method

- To conduct workshops and trainings for teachers regarding the teaching methods and active learning approach.
- To recommend teachers to instruct and involve pupils in making teaching tools using easy-to-find materials, regularly use them.
- To arrange desks and chairs flexibly so that pupils can participate actively in learning activities.
- To decorate the class with the products created by pupils to inspire them.

1. Curriculum (4) Peer-training for setting up class rules by teachers and students. (January 2015)

4.1.2.3 Purpose

To give teachers opportunities to share their experiences and learn from each other.

4.1.2.4 Method

- To conduct workshops and trainings for teachers regarding the methods of organizing activities in class.
- To recommend teachers to carry out setting up class rules at the beginning of the new school year.
- To decorate the class with the Rule Board created by students for inspiring them.

4.1.3 Training on the CRC for parents

1. Time: September 2014, December 2014, May 2015

Documents:

a. Training materials on the Convention on the Rights of the Child of "Save the children"

Will "Corporal Punishment on Children" really be necessary? of Radda Barnen

Picture cards

Feedback sheets

Method: conversation, exposure

Content:

a. Preface on "the Convention on the Rights of the Child"

b. Preface on the fundamental sense of the convention which are represented in 8 contents as follows: 4 groups of rights, 3 rules and one process.

c. A preface on the provisions of the group of rights to be protected and the group of rights to participate

d. The group of parents discussing the rights given to their children ⇒ presentation.

e. Feedback from the parents of the pupils regarding their orientation of implementing the rights of children.

4.1.4 Training on the CRC for students

1. Time: August - September 2014, May 2015

2. Method: Discussion, group work, organizing the corners, designing posters of classroom rules, organizing a talk show and a contest.

3. Documents:

a. Propagation of "the child rights" in primary school, Radda Barren.

Application of the child rights to schools, Save the children

Building a friendly learning environment for children, Save the Children

4. Content 1:

a. Brief introduction on the Convention of the Rights of the Child

b. Introduction on the Group of the Rights to be protected:

Do children need protecting? Why?

In your opinion, in what circumstances do children need protecting?

The contents of the child rights to be protected

Individuals and teams who have responsibilities to familiarize with the child rights to be protected. Individuals and team are responsible for familiarizing with the children's rights on protection.

c. Introduction on the Group of the Rights to participate

Do children need to participate in all matters? Why?

How often do you participate in?

The content of the child rights' to participate.

Your feelings and thinking + if you can participate in solving issues

Content 2: To carry out activities to build a friendly learning environment.

Setting up a mailbox "Speak-up" and building the activities of "Your opinions are more important":

4.1.4.1 Purpose

Encouraging and creating favorable conditions for children to speak up what they expect and do not expect; their happiness and sadness; their expectation in learning; family matters; worries that they cannot directly confide them to their teachers.

Helping the elders (their grandparents, parents, and teachers) and friends understand children's thinking to have a solution, assistance and creating conditions to satisfy the need of children.

4.1.4.2 Method

Setting up a mailbox "Speak-up" in class

Encouraging children to write letters.

Weekly, teachers check the mailbox.

Discussing with the rector about "Dos and Don'ts" in receiving and handling the children's opinions about their teachers.

Organising and launching the pupils to implement "Your opinions are important"

Teachers will handle or refer the pupils' opinions to whom that are concerned.

Recording the opinions (binding).

- a. Pupils participate in building and monitoring the implementation of the internal rules and convention of the class

4.1.4.3 Objective

To facilitate children to build a moral standard with which they need to comply, depending on the child's awareness and as a result children will be self-aware of performing.

4.1.4.4 Method

Use a questionnaire to collect the pupils' opinions on Dos and Don'ts regarding learning activities, discipline, communication, behaviours...

Teachers and pupils will discuss to agree on dos and don'ts.

The finalised internal rules will be compiled by the pupils themselves and posted at a formal place in the class.

- a. Pupils participate actively in group activities:



Students of Nguyen Van Troi Primary School are presenting their ideas of the Class Rule Board



Students of Luong The Vinh Primary School decorate their Class Rule Board

4.1.4.5 Purpose

To facilitate children to work in groups with different friends; to train self-confidence and presentation skills before a crowd.

4.1.4.6 Method of implementation

Teachers and pupils will hold discussions and define the criteria of learning activities in groups

Teachers will split pupils into groups and regularly form new groups in learning activities.



Students of Nguyen Van Troi Primary School (above) and Luong The Vinh Primary School (below) are confident to share their ideas in groups

Teachers will observe to help less confident and inactive pupils.

- a. Teachers and pupils will entertain outside the class

4.1.4.7 Purpose

To create a friendly and joyful environment for pupils;

To enable the pupils to reveal their skills;

To enable teachers and pupils entertain together for mutual understanding.

4.1.4.8 Method

Teachers learn and collect opinions of pupils about the need of entertainment and discovery of surrounding world.

Teachers discuss and agree with pupils about the form of activities held outside the class.

Teachers discuss with the rector.

The headmaster plans and cooperates with the teachers to implement.

4.1.5 Step 3 Training and repeating – reflections on the work (all)

We have carried out the project as planned and observed, talked to teachers and pupils to record positive changes.

4.1.6 Step 4 Applying questionnaires to check

We have used a list of questions to check (see appendix)

We planned and made the questions for teachers, parents and students.

We have got lots of positive feedback from them after carrying out the project and in the future we also welcome more useful ideas.

4.1.7 Step 5 Meeting with students, and their parents

We held a meeting at the end of December when the first semester of the study year ended and in May 2015 for listening and discussing with parents and students on the implementation and awareness of the child rights as well as setting class rules.

5. Results

We have prepared three kinds of questions for students, teachers and parents to get the feedback from them after certain time applying this project. Some examples:

Did you attend to build your class routines? (For students)

Do you usually listen to your students' sharing? If yes, how is your attitude? (For teachers)

Do you punish your children when they make mistakes? How? (For parents)

To students:

Be aware of their Rights.

Be more active in learning and playing.

Be more confident in communication, especially they love talking and sharing to their teachers.

Be happy to share to their friends and help each other if necessary.

To teachers:

Be aware clearly of child's value and the clear gradually the prejudice which is that students must follow school rules and classroom disciplines.

Be more confident to change the teaching methods and design lots of different activities that make lessons more interesting and attractive.

Be aware of create a closed and friendly relationship between teachers and parents.

To schools:

The teaching and learning environment has been improved; students go to school punctually and happily.

The educational qualification has been also developed.

To parents:

Be more aware of Child Rights, therefore there has been gradually no definition in which children must follow their parents' decision.

Be more interested in their children's feeling and spirit.

Respect their children always and listen to them actively.

Give their children chances to participate in school activities.

Results from the list of questions:

Students understand CRC during class periods: 1175/1200 (97.9%).

Students enjoy learning during class periods: 1145/1200 (95.4%)

Students express their opinions: 1200/1200 (100%)
Teachers understand CRC: 122/122 (100%)
Teachers can carry out well the child's right of participating: 120/122 (98.3%)
Teachers do not use whips in educating students: 122/122 (100%)
Parents understand CRC: 1050/1200 (87.5%)
Parents can carry out the child's rights of participating: 1005/1200 (83.75%)
Parents can take care of their child well: 980/1200 (81.2%)

6. Discussion and Reflection

The results showed that not only does this project changed the teachers but also the children in terms of attitude and action. These two groups are inter-correlated since the teachers' change of the way of setting up class routines led to that of the students' understanding about CRC had an influence in the teachers' awareness. In addition, the children are aware of CRC and know how to protect others and to be protected by participation. Undoubtedly, this project did support the movement "Friendly schools, active students" by MOET.

The teacher's behaviours have been improved. They are happier and friendlier in communicating and know how to listen and respect students' hobbies personalities. Moreover, they are more interested in students' opinions and co-operate them to solve problems in life. However, a few teachers still do not know how to communicate friendly such as greetings at the beginning and the end of the lesson, saying "Thank you" when necessary, praise students well-timed to encourage them or using appropriate solutions when students make mistakes.

Students can learn in a friendly environment. Their projects have been displayed on the board so they feel very happy. In addition, students are praised by teachers and respected by their friends in class therefore they are able to recognize their values and abilities. From here, they are more confident to develop their creativity.

Likewise, parents also experienced the big change in their points of view of how to educate their children through getting educational information from school's conferences. Then they take part in school activities actively. Without their approval and determination in putting the project into action alongside with the implementation at school, we cannot reach the target.

We learned that in order to put the project into action to achieve the goal, it is not the work of any individual but the whole community "School-Family-Society". Another point is that we should believe in students when giving them a power and letting them play the key role in project planning since they may surprise us. Last but not least, the stronger connection among members of CRC network is, the more successful the project can be.

6.1 Personal reflections

As principals, we have made use of the method of sharing and entrusting responsibility to the Vice Principals, the Secretary of Youth Union, the Chair-person of Labour Union, etc. so that they - together with us - cooperated to take actions to reach the final goals. Up to present, we have obtained good results when the concepts of Child Rights with *the 3Ps* have been reflected not only on teachers and staff's mind but also in their action, as well as students' and parents' ones. I feel quite certain that in a near future, this will be the same for everyone at Nguyen Van Troi and Luong The Vinh Primary Schools.

7. Way Forward

Teachers and students continue setting up class rules at the beginning of each school year.

School leaders continue observing teachers' using active methods in setting up child-friendly environment.

School leaders and teachers will have more contact with parents about CRC (through questionnaires, contact books, meetings, and school activities).

School leaders are going to organize a get-together for the school and parents as well as children to discuss on CRC in order to reach an agreement in bringing up, communicating and protecting children at home and at school.

We continue holding more outdoor activities to improve student's confidence as well as the relationship between students and teachers, students and students, teachers and parents.

8. List of References

Law on Child Protection, Care and Education

Per Wickenberg, Agneta W Flinck, Ulf Leo, Bodil Rasmusson, Richard Stenelo & Bekeret Yebio, Taking child right seriously-Reflections on five years of an International Training Programme, Media-Tryck.

Rachel Hodgkin & peter Newell, Implementation Handbook for the Convention on the Rights of the Child, United Nation Publications, 2007.

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