10-1-2012

Human Trafficking and Education: a Qualitative Case Study of Two NGO Programs in Thailand

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Human Trafficking and Education: a Qualitative Case Study of Two NGO Programs in Thailand

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University of Georgia
Social Foundations of Education
The Problem

• Human Trafficking is a world-wide social justice and human rights issue.

• Little is known about micro-level actors, particularly NGOs with educational components, working to prevent human trafficking and protect victims and at-risk populations.
• Interest and research in human trafficking is growing.

• Data in the field are NOT reliable, comparable, generalizable (Laczko, 2006).

• Most studies are macro-level (national, international)
• Micro-level practitioners gain perspective on ways to incorporate educational components into their prevention work, and navigate complex contextual factors.

• Macro-level practitioners gain perspective on NGOs and micro-level issues faced by NGOs.
1. What are the basic characteristics or features of two NGOs in Thailand?
2. What are the processes, interactions and issues of two NGOs in Thailand?
3. How do these processes, interactions, issues and features impact students, teachers and staff?
4. What contextual factors impact students?
5. How do these contextual factors impact students?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Questions</th>
<th>Rationale</th>
<th>Sources/Data Types</th>
<th>Analysis for all 5 questions</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| 1. What are the basic characteristics and features of two NGOs in Thailand? | Gaining teachers, staff and students perspectives on processes, interactions, issues and features may give a broader perspective. | -Interviews of students, staff, teachers, including transcripts and related memos  
- Observations of students, staff, teachers, including field notes and memos  
-Photos  
-Documents | Constant Comparative Method (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) - informal content analysis and coding using themes and patterns throughout the research process. |
| 1. What are the processes, interactions and issues of two NGOs in Thailand? | Strategies that staff and teachers use to keep students in school may shed light on the issues that the students, teachers and staff face. | -Interviews of students, staff, teachers, including transcripts and related memos  
- Observations of students, staff, teachers, including field notes and memos  
-Photos  
-Documents | Converging and diverging themes (Patton, 2002) |
| 1. How do these processes, interactions, issues and features impact students, teachers and staff? | Large numbers of kindergarteners attend the DEPDC school and the number of students decrease as the grade level increases leaving few in grade six to complete the program. CPDC also has difficulty retaining children, particularly older children. | -Interviews of students, staff, teachers, including transcripts and related memos  
- Observations of students, staff, teachers, including field notes and memos  
-Photos  
-Documents | Qualitative visual analysis of photos and documents for evidence of thematic findings, content and contextual details (Knoblauch, Baer, Laurier, Petschke, & Schnettler, 2008) |
| 1. What contextual factors impact students? | Issues at work in the broader community may influence student’s educational choices | -Interviews of students, staff, teachers, including transcripts and related memos  
- Observations of students, staff, teachers, including field notes and memos  
-Photos  
-Documents  
-Literature review | |
| 1. How do these contextual factors impact students? | Issues at work in the broader community may influence student’s educational choices | -Interviews of students, staff, teachers, including transcripts and related memos  
- Observations of students, staff, teachers, including field notes and memos  
-Photos  
-Documents  
-Literature review | |

- Outlines the state of human trafficking research
Typical current research:
- “Snapshots”
- “Guesstimate”
- National and International level studies
- Journalistic exposés
- Policy focused

Globalization and Education
- International and comparative education
- Post-colonial studies
• Qualitative Case Study
  ◦ Comparative two-site case study of Two Thai NGOs with education components

• Data
  • Interviews of students, teachers and staff
  • Field notes of observations at the sites and around Thailand
  • Photographs of locations and Thai context
  • Documents provided by NGOs
  • Memos on transcripts, field notes, documents
• Settings: Mae Sai and Pattaya
  ◦ Comparative aspects of locations and contexts
  ◦ Comparative aspects about programs and educational components
  ◦ Comparative aspects of populations served

• Sampling of locations and interviewees:
  ◦ Teachers and Staff at both locations
  ◦ Children approximately 10 years old and older
Main site: Development and Education Programme for Daughters and Communities (DEPDC) located in Northern Thailand in Mae Sai on the border of Myanmar.
Akha hill tribe village where at-risk children originate
Music Class at DEPDC’s Patak Half Day School, Mae Sai Thailand
Thai Language Class, DEPDC
Secondary Site: Children’s Protection and Development Center (CPDC) in Pattaya, Thailand on the Southeastern coast
- Notorious sex tourist destination
CPDC’s shelter, 2009
CPDC construction, 2010
CPDC’s completed shelters, 2011
Data Analysis

- Constant Comparative Method  
  (Glaser and Strauss, 1967)
- Inductive reasoning
- Case Study
  - Open Coding  
    (Patton, 2002; Creswell, 2007)
  - Focused Coding  
    (Charmaz, 2006)
  - developing categories  
    (Strauss and Corbin, 2008)
  - refining categories into thematic findings  
    (Glaser and Strauss, 1967)
Two-site Case Study

• Basic descriptions of both NGOs
  ◦ Programs
  ◦ Curriculum

• Changes over time at both NGOs
  ◦ Groups of children served
  ◦ Program changes
  ◦ Funding issues
  ◦ General goals
  ◦ Facilities
  ◦ Accreditation
Thematic Findings

- **Problems**
  - Statelessness
  - Poverty
  - Other Problems: family problems, family pressure to work, border issues, language issues, funding issues, community/social pressure to work, staff retention issues, mental health, government accreditation, cultural barriers

- **Benefits for children**
  - Literacy, life skills, protection, opportunity and access, care, confidence, free, relationships

- **Goals**
  - Education Goals
  - Work Goals
  - Altruistic Goals
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<th>Number of instances in the data Students</th>
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<td>Cultural barriers</td>
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**Findings**
• Change
• Fear
• Vulnerability
• Millenium Development Goals
• Education For All Goals
• The work of NGOs in Thailand, world-wide
• Human trafficking policy vs practice
• Immigration policy
DEPDC’s education program went through grade 6 and did not transition students well to Thai government schools
  ◦ High dropout rate for Patak Half Day School

CPDC only stabilized students temporarily and transitioned children to partner government schools
  ◦ High retention rate of children
  ◦ Successfully placing students in work opportunities with partners, education options such as technical/vocational school
Limitations

- Two NGOs in different contexts
- Translation
- Time in the field
• More research on human trafficking NGOs
• Other ways education is used as prevention and protection
• Longitudinal work on individual students
• Link between social media and human trafficking

Future Research