

The Results of Islamic Behavior Promotion through a “Village Youth Club” among Youth in Ban Sarong, Khao Tum Sub-district, Yarang District, Pattani Province

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Received: September 23, 2014 Accepted: November 22, 2014 Online Published: February 12, 2015

doi:10.5539/ass.v11n5p80

URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/ass.v11n5p80>

Abstract

This action research aimed to investigate the results of Islamic behavior promotion through the use of a “Village Youth Club” among youth in Ban Sarong, Khao Tum Sub-district, Yarang District, Pattani Province. The data were collected from four groups of participants consisting of religious, local, and youth leaders, and parents through brainstorming sessions participated by 10 representatives from each group totaling 40 people, and through focus group discussions participated by 10 representatives from each group totaling 40 people. Content analysis was conducted using the principles of logic to compare with related concepts, theories, and research reports along with the context. The results revealed that there was improvement in youth’s behaviors after they participated in the project to promote Islamic behaviors. Youths who behaved against Islamic principles began to give importance to and realize the importance of Islamic behaviors by taking part in praying in the mosque, fasting during Ramadan, staying away from all vices, especially gambling, dressing themselves according to the Islamic dress code, doing community service, and participating in more community activities. The results of this study could benefit related individuals and organizations in forming policies and strategies to promote and support youth, especially those whose behaviors are not in accordance with Islamic principles, to behave in the Islamic way.

Keywords: behavior promotion, Islamic behaviors, village youth club, Islamic way

1. Introduction

Muslim youth must strictly lead their lives according to Islamic principles that form the way of life unique to Muslims who must follow the principles specified in the Quran and take the Prophet Muhammad as the role model. It is a regime of life that fuses the principles of faith, practice, and moral and ethics together so well that secular and religious activities cannot be separated; it is the way of life that Muslims the world over must follow on to the future and cannot be changed (Anmunajid, 2004; Laeheem & Baka, 2010). However, the present social situation with technological advancement that changes quickly affects the Muslim way of life directly and indirectly resulting in youth’s changing way of life to follow the modern trends and to embrace modern values as well. They indulge in technological advancement so much that they become slaves of the modern values. For example, they are interested in exciting and fun activities that are presented through media; they are addicted to technology and more interested in general education than religion; and they dress fashionably without taking Islamic code of dressing into consideration. Moreover, they have friends of the opposite sex and have relationships that are off limits of the religious principles, which is an important cause of behavior that violates Islamic principles that has become social problems. For example, female youths that do not wear headscarves, and those who wear them but dress in such a way that shows their body shapes. Some youths use drugs, some have behaviors that deviate from their own sex, have premarital sexual relationships, are addicted to gambling, going to entertainment places, do not pray, do not fast, etc., (Anmunajid, 2004; Annadwee, 2004; Laeheem & Baka, 2010). This corresponds with a study by Laeheem & Baka, (2010) who found that most Muslim youth in the three southern border provinces have a way of life that is not in line with Islamic principles and social norms.

They have friends and do activities off the limits without considering whether the activities they do together are nonsense and making troubles. With friends of the opposite sex, they hold hands, kiss, and have pre-marital sexual relationships. They do not give importance to religious subjects; do not spend their free time usefully; gamble and go to night entertainment places; dress in modified styles to keep up with the trend and do not cover their bodies as specified by the religion. They abandon praying and fasting; do not study the Quran; do not volunteer and even avoid doing community service, and refuse participating in community activities (Laeheem & Baka, 2010). Such youths' behaviors have become complicated and chronic problems for Muslim society for many decades. Moreover, these problems cannot be solved by only anyone organization but cooperation is needed from all related individuals and organizations (Mahama, 2009).

Thus, it can be seen that Muslim youth at present live their lives enjoying exotic and modern lifestyles and following trends under the ever changing and developing society, which make them imitate fashion models and peers. They lack role models that are correct according to religious principles. It is, therefore, necessary to solve the problems by promoting these youths to behave more in the Islamic way. Available primary data indicate that at present there are no particular official organizations responsible for concretely promoting youth to have Islamic behaviors. Most of them are local and religious leaders who do it according to the role they are responsible to take, and they solve the problems independently making it inefficient, ineffective and not successful, as it should be. In addition, it has been found that each community has its own way and activities to look after Muslim youth. Therefore, they all have different problem-solving methods, and most of them use activities that lack youth's participation and do not meet youth's needs, which result in a lack of cooperation from youths, some of whom, as a result, are not being looked after (Laeheem, 2012). In addition, youths with and those without risk behavior (normal youths) need Muslim leaders to look after them in different ways. The needs among most youths with risk behavior were at a moderate level when it comes to being looked after by Muslim leaders, especially in terms of their relationships with friends of the same sex, education, how to spend free time, how to dress, their relationships with family and relatives, with the community, and on the community service. Their needs were at a high level on their relationships with friends of the opposite sex, prohibitions on all vices, and religious practice. While youths with risk behavior' needs were at moderate and high levels, those of youths without risk behavior (normal youths) were all at a high level. This indicates that youths with risk behavior needed and were ready, to some extent, for Muslim leaders to look after them so that they have Islamic behaviors (Laeheem, 2013a).

One way to promote youth to have Islamic behavior is to establish a "Village Youth Club" using the mosque as the center for operation of the club. The club should specify clearly its administrative structure, committee members' roles and responsibilities, and activities. Religious and local leaders are to participate as advisory committee for the club and play the role in supervising the club's operations closely. It is important that emphasis should be on both religious and social activities and/or projects that meet the needs of youth, focus on mutual benefits of the community, and do not violate Islamic principles. Some of such activities or projects are, for example, knowledge provision, learning and teaching, training, admonition, invitation, advice and practice, etc. Financial support should be from Zakat, fund raising activities such as donations from Friday prayers, tea parties, Khao Yam (rice and vegetable mixed) parties, clothes selling, organizing a weekly flea market at the mosque and collecting booth rent from sellers, selling books and VCDs about the religion, etc. In addition, the club could write official letters requesting donations or financial support from private and government organizations such as Tambon Administrative Organization (TAOs), Provincial Administrative Organizations (PAOs), municipal councils, factories, partnerships, shops, and other organizations (Laeheem, 2013b).

The abovementioned problems prompted the need for this study related to the actual use of a "Village Youth Club" to prove whether or not it could promote youths to have Islamic behavior, and how, by inviting related individuals and organizations to participate in all the research steps from the thinking process, planning, making decisions, implementing, follow-ups and evaluation. The results of this research would be useful for determining ways to promote and support youth to have Islamic behaviors, and to provide assistance to youths with risk behavior or youths with behaviors that are not in line with Islamic principles so that they would be taken care of to make their behaviors in accordance with Islamic principles.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Socialization

Socialization is the process of transferring knowledge, thoughts, attitudes, ideologies, cultures, and personalities through social institutions such as the family, educational institutions, mass media, peer groups, the workplace, and other social organizations. This process helps to make a person's character suitable for society; it promotes

and supports interaction among people and regulates their social doings; it molds their personality and teaches them about society and the different ways of life adopted by others within it (Popenoe, 1993). Socialization is the process of learning about the behaviors and actions necessary to a person's changing status and role (Theodorson & Theodorson, 1967) by which that person adjusts his or her behaviors in the direction of social norms (Adivatanasit, 2002). Moreover, socialization refers to the long-term learning process by which a person learns important social values, symbols, behaviors, beliefs, and normative behavior in the social system of which that person is a member (Thitiwattana, 2004). It is the process of transferring knowledge, thoughts, attitudes, ideologies, and personalities from one generation to another generation of social members. This process can be direct and indirect and occurs through the agency of social institutions and its aim is to produce a person whose personality, interactions, and practice accord with those desired and expected by society.

Socialization has four important goals: to provide training for people to learn skills that are necessary for living in society in order to survive and to live happily; to enable people to communicate effectively and develop their ability in speaking, reading, and writing; to enable people to adopt basic beliefs and social values and to harmoniously become part of society; and to enable people to develop their "identity" as the foundation of personality development (Thitiwattana, 2004). Socialization is a necessary process within human society because if socialization of a new generation of social members did not take place, society could neither be developed nor survive. According to Pajjopakaree, (2010), the benefits of socialization can be stated as: 1) the building of discipline for social members to make them coexist happily. Social organizations function to teach members how to behave properly and to enable them to anticipate how others will behave in a certain situation, 2) to build inspiration, ideology, attitude, and belief for members of society so that they have unity and work together with the same ideology towards the same goal and thus create progress for society, and 3) to build the knowledge and skills necessary for citizens to live within society.

2.2 Religion and Socialization

A level of knowledge about religion and participation in religious activities are factors that influence the behaviors of youths. Within a society that values religious belief, those youths who have a high level of knowledge about religion and participation in religious activities have a high level of behavior that conforms to social norms. This is because within societies ordered on the basis of religious belief, religion is an important agent of socialization which acts as a guideline and provides people with goals against which they can order their actions according to standards based on morality, a perception of good and evil, self-discipline, and a determination to order their activities according to a clearly stated religious code based on the belief that religion enables people to have morals, morality, and to be able to distinguish between good and evil (Thepsitha, 1998).

Most Islamic socialization occurs through a system of providing knowledge and understanding as well as educating people about Islamic principles. This process not only transfers knowledge, experience, and skills from one generation to the next but also has a broad meaning that covers all aspects of life including acting as a process of life training, instilling intelligence, and training both the body and mind in order to produce perfect humans. The process of education in Islam aims to train and refine the mind, transfer religious and secular knowledge, and foster morals, morality, and discipline. Thus, education within Islam can be characterized as being a process of life-long education that develops all aspects of a human being, be it spiritual, intellectual, physical, or mental. It is a response to the purpose of creating human beings which is to be servants of Allah and to be His representatives on earth to make members of society moral and prosperous (Narongraksakhet, 1997; Mahama, 2009).

Islamic socialization through the education process also has the goal and purpose of seeking favor from Allah for the future life as well as eliminating illiteracy, protecting religion and the existence of Islam, and planning how to meet the needs of society. It also seeks to develop people who have habits and personalities in accordance with religious principles, and who have confidence in their way of life; to create good people who have morals so that they will lead happy, peaceful, and prosperous lives within society (Mahama, 2009). Further, encouraging adolescents to better understand Islamic Principles and to strictly perform religious practice will not only make them behave righteously but will also allow them to live happily based on Islamic teaching (Khagphong, 2004; Chairasit, Chansawang, & Permark, 2005). In addition, providing them with knowledge, understanding and a good upbringing will influence their pattern of behavior both in the present and in the future (Sear, Maccoby, & Levin, 1957). Bhanthumnavin, (2003) notes that appropriate behavior in adolescents generally, is positively affected by their upbringing and providing knowledge and a better understanding of Islamic principles is a part of the process by which knowledge, experience and skills are passed from one generation to the next. Through this process, a person will be strengthened both physically and spiritually and will be wise, knowledgeable, and disciplined as well as ethical (Narongraksakhet, 1997; Mahama, 2009). Additionally, the cultivation of Islam can

be considered as a process enhancing people's ability to respond to social requirements. A person's character will be developed in accordance with religious principles and as a result he or she will become a moral, ethical person who can live happily in society (Mahama, 2009).

Therefore, the more adolescents are committed to religion, the more they can control their actions and behaviors in the way that is desired and expected by society. They will feel free to do wrong only when their commitment to religion or social rules is destroyed.

3. Limitations

This action research was conducted on the implementation of a "Village Youth Club", which was a result from a research project by the researcher (Laeheem, 2013b), to promote youths to have Islamic behaviors. It was implemented with youths in Ban Sarong, Khao Tum Sub-district, Yarang District, Pattani Province. After the operations, youths' behaviors were analyzed. The data were collected from four groups of participants consisting of 10 religious leaders, 10 local leaders, 10 youth leaders, and 10 parents through brainstorming sessions and focus group discussions.

4. Methods

4.1 Key Informants

This research emphasized on the participatory process in which individuals and organizations concerning supervision for youth participated. The key informants were divided into four groups: religious leaders (such as Tok Guru, Tok Imam, Tok Bilal, Tok Koteb, and the Islamic committee of the mosque, etc.); local leaders (such as Kamnan or sub-district headmen, Sarawat Kamnan or deputy sub-district headmen, Phu Yai Ban or village headmen, Phu Chuai Phu Yai Ban or assistant village headmen, municipal council members, and Tambon Administrative Organization council members, etc.); Thai Muslim youth leaders; and representatives of parents and guardians.

4.2 Data Collection

The researcher collected data in the following steps.

- 1) Organizing a brainstorming meeting attended by 10 representatives of religious leaders, 10 representatives of local leaders, 10 representatives of youth leaders, and 10 representatives of parents and guardians to analyze ways for promoting Islamic behaviors among youths using the "Village Youth Club".
- 2) Putting into practice the promotion of Islamic behaviors according to the outcomes of the brainstorming meeting in 1. The practice or operation lasted for 8 months from January 2014 to August 2014.
- 3) Providing knowledge concerning techniques to the Village Youth Club Committee. This was conducted three times.
- 4) Following-ups (four times) of the practice by paying on-site visits to discuss, exchange, and give moral support to the Village Youth Club Committee.
- 5) Organizing a group discussion attended by 10 representatives of religious leaders, 10 representatives of local leaders, 10 representatives of youth leaders, and 10 representatives of parents and guardians to analyze Islamic behaviors among youths after the operation of the research.

4.3 Data Analysis

The data collected from the abovementioned steps were analyzed by categorizing them into issues of the research problems before content analysis was performed using the principles of logic to compare with related concepts, theories, and research reports along with the context.

5. Results

The promotion of youths to behave according to Islamic principles was conducted by establishing a village youth club called "Sarong Youth Conservation Club", providing knowledge and techniques, following up of the operation, and organizing focus group discussions with representatives of Muslim leaders, of youth leaders, and of parents and guardians to analyze Islamic behavior among Thai Muslim youths (especially youths whose behaviors violate Islamic principles). After the promotion with the practice of caring for youth the Islamic way, the following interesting findings were found.

5.1 Praying

The key informants said that youths who attended the project had changed their attitudes and behaviors, realized and given more importance to praying, which was different from the way they had been in the past when they did not pray very often and some even neglected praying entirely. This was reflected in the following statements.

“...This project has made youths who usually avoided praying improved by beginning to pray with other youths in the mosque at least three times a day, and two more times at home. This is a very good improvement. For me, I will try to persuade those youths to pray at the mosque five times a day in the future...”

(Mr. Zakariya; a religious leader).

“...Every time I hear the Azan (the call for prayers to pray at the mosque), friends invite all other youths in the project to pray together at the mosque making some of them feel joyful, fun, and happy...”

(Mr. Sulaiman; Chairman of the Sarong Youth Conservation Club).

“...In the past, I usually lived a nonsense life and did not pray regularly but after participating in the project, a youth group who have Islamic behaviors, and religious leaders invite me to pray with them at the mosque everyday. So now I realize and see the importance of praying more than before and it has improved my life, too...”

(Mr. Koni; project participant).

“...During the past six months, I have noticed that my son prays more and sometimes he even prays with me that makes me so happy to see that my son behaves according to the Islamic way. I used to be very unhappy when my son did not pray at all....”

(Mr. Safaee, father of a project participant).

Thus, it can be seen that the group of youth who did not behave according to the Islamic principles that participated in the project began to see the importance of praying by being invited by youths who behave according to the Islamic principles and by religious leaders. When they began to pray regularly, they began to absorb and have good attitudes, realization, and a behavior of praying has been instilled as part of their lives. Moreover, this group of youth have been socialized with Islamic principles that religious and youth leaders have tried to make project participants to understand that every Muslim must strictly practice their religion because those who do not practice it strictly will be punished in the next world. Particularly, praying is of extreme importance because it is a major pillar of Islam. Muslims must refrain themselves from doing bad things, and if they pray regularly, they will love and want to perform other religious practices such as fasting and donating to the poor, etc.

5.2 Fasting

The key informants said that during the past Ramadan (July 2014), all the youth who participated in the project fasted because the project required them to fast everyday. At the mosque, in the evening, sometimes, religious leaders and Muslim academics were there to fast and to give talks on Islam. During the last 10 days of the Ramadan, all the youths who were project participants were invited to perform I'tikaf together at the mosque. This means that individuals try to have a period of retreat in a mosque for the purpose of worshipping Allah, and to detach themselves from worldly burdens and family to seek for contentedness that empowers their energy and potentiality that will be mechanisms contributing to making their lives smooth and better. This can be seen in the following reflections.

“...Youth who participated in this project fasted strictly and completely the whole month and they participated in activities related to fasting such as cooking, reading the Quran, studying Islam, breaking the fast, and Islamic sermons, etc. They also participated in performing the I'tikaf at the mosque during the last ten days of the Ramadan even though some of them had never participated in it and have never fasted before...”

(Mr. Shukri; a religious leader).

“...Some youths who participated in this project had never fasted before while others had never fasted the whole month of Ramadan but after participating in this project they fasted with other youths and did activities related to fasting that made them happy, fun and they enjoyed fasting during the past whole month...”

(Mr. Hafifi; a youth leader).

“...In the past, I never fasted even though I was old enough to do it because I wondered why I had to fast but after participating in the project, I understand the philosophy of fasting after listening to a lecture by a religious academic. I accepted the mistake I made by having neglected fasting in the past years, and from now on I will be determined to fast every year...”

(Mr. Adul; a project participant).

“...In the past Ramadan month, I noticed a big behavioral change in my son from a person who never performed any religious practice to a person who sees the importance of fasting after fasted, and he is very strict with his

praying. I am really surprised and I thank Allah for showing my son the right way and opening his heart for practices according to Islam principles...

(Mrs. Robiyah; mother of a project participant).

Thus, it can be seen that the group of youth who used to violate Islamic principles and had a chance to join the project began to see the importance of fasting. They attended religious lectures by religious academics because they were invited by youths who behaved in accordance with Islamic principles as well as religious leaders, and they participated in activities related to fasting, too. All these had enabled them to absorb and have good attitudes and realization as well as see the importance of fasting, in addition to being socialized with Islamic principles during the last six months before the Ramadan when they learned more about the principles. Then, they began to pray, as praying is one of the major Islamic pillars. They could refrain from doing bad things, and turn to loving and wanting to practice other religious activities as well.

5.3 Being Involved with Vices

Some youths who participated in this project used to have behaviors that were against Islamic principles by being involved with vices such as drug abuse, gambling, and going to discotheques, etc. However, after their participation in this project, they distance themselves from all vices because they had opportunities to listen to sermons that aimed to make youths realize that being good Muslims, they must worship Allah. Moreover, they must not be involved with all vices that violate Islamic principles; they must keep Allah in their mind all the time, and go towards the religion and regularly do religious practices. These are reflected by the following statements.

"...The youths who participated in this project have changed in that they keep themselves away from vices that are all taboos for every Muslim because they destroy our good culture and beautiful traditions, and they are causes of the unrest and chaos in the present society. The project put emphasis on the teachings of Islam for youth to follow and on using the mosque as the center for youth to meet and do activities. Youth must go to mosque and listen to more sermons so that they can distance themselves away from drugs abuses and all bad things. Youths who used to be involved with vices, especially drugs and gambling have begun to abandon such behaviors and turned to do more religious activities..."

(Mr. Hanafi, a local leader)

"...My friends who used to be addicted to gambling and going to entertainment places, after having participated in this project, they gave up gambling and going to entertainment places. These are results of having received knowledge and understanding from listening to religious lectures or sermons, talking and exchanging information about the religious principles, and being looked after by all parties concerned..."

(Mr. Nawawi; a youth leader).

"...After attending the project, I've never gone out at night, I gave up football gambling and using drugs, and turned to religious practice such as praying, fasting, doing community service, and dressing according to the religious principles..."

(Mr. Abdullah; a project participant).

"...During the time my son attended the project, I was so proud and happy that he realized and was determined to practice the religion, and stopped being involved with vices..."

(Mrs. Sulma; mother of a project participant).

As can be seen, the youths who participated in the project distance themselves from all vices such as drug abuses, gambling, going to discotheques, etc. that are taboos for all Muslims. The project attempted to instill in the project participants awareness of how harmful all vices were, and that they had to avoid and distance themselves from all the vices. The project also attempted to prevent vices from youths' lives.

5.4 Dressing

Key informants stated that youths who used to behave against Islamic principles had dressed in such fashion influenced by mass media such as television and magazines so they had imitated the way local and international movie stars and singers dressed. So, the clothes they had used had not covered the parts of their body required by religious principles. However, the way they dressed became more in accordance with the religious principles after participating in the project. This can be seen in the following statements.

"Before participating in the project, these youths thought that dressing according to Islamic principles is out of date, and they, consequently, competed in dressing in what they thought was a modern way, and the way they dressed could not tell whether they were Muslim or not. Female youths wore clothes that were tight and showed

their body shapes to be attractive to the opposite sex. They wore tight trousers that showed part of their limbs and tight short-sleeve or sleeveless blouses. Some wore short blouses and short skirts and did not wear headscarves while others had their hair dyed and their hairstyle changed, and wore jewelry with strange designs. For male youths, they wore shorts and t-shirt printed with strange patterns or animals. They dyed their hair and changed their hairstyle, and they wore strange jewelry. However, after participating in the project they have changed to dressing in accordance with Islamic principles. Whether the youths are male or female, they must dress in a way that is proper for their being Muslim. They must realize that dressing in such a way that others can see the parts of the body that should be covered according to Islamic principles is a sin. The clothes they wear must be polite and cover all the body parts that are required by Islamic principles because dressing correctly according to Islamic principles gives them the value of being good Muslims and are admired by people in the society.”

(Mrs. Fatima; a local leader).

“...After the group of youth who behaved against Islamic principles had participated in the project, they changed to dressing according to Islamic principles. Female youths wear headscarves (hijap) that are large enough to cover their hair completely, and wear long loose blouses in plain colors and without flower patterns. Male youths wear long sleeve shirts and trousers in polite colors and without flower or other patterns. Dressing this way is considered suitable, polite, tidy, and indicates that the person is a good Muslim and is admired by people in the society...”

(Mr. Khalik; a religious leader).

“...Before participating in this project, I enjoyed dressing like movie stars and singers and being after the modern fashion. I dressed in a sexy way showing my body shape so I wore tight clothes or clothes that showed parts of my body that should have been covered according to Islamic principles. I liked wearing low-waist pants, a short tight skirt, and a tight top that showed my navel. But after participating in this project, I feel guilty and I have changed to dressing according to Islamic principles so that it is suitable for my being a Muslim because it is polite, tidy, and covers all the body parts required to be covered. I also wear a large and thick hijab (headscarf), not a see-through one. I wear a long loose dress not tight clothes that show my body shape. I wear clothes with plain colors and without patterns of flower patterns; the clothes that show only my face and my palms. This makes me feel myself valuable and a good Muslim who is admired by people in the society...”

(Miss Khodijah; a project participant).

“...After my son participated in the project, he changes the way he dresses to be in accordance with Islamic principles. He dresses in a way that is suitable, polite, tidy and proper for the time and place. He wears a long sleeve shirt, and trousers that are in plain colors, not dazzling, and without flower patterns and pictures printed on them. This is different from before his participation in the project when he used to dress in a way that was against religious principles...”

(Mrs. Sulaikha; mother of a project participant).

As can be seen, youths who participated in the project have changed the way they used to dress to be suitable for the time and place, and they no longer imitate movie stars or singers, and do not follow the fashion that is incorrect and against religious principles. In addition, female girls realize that they should not wear heavy and dazzling makeup, and should not dress like the opposite sex. This shows that Muslim youths dress correctly and they must think that dressing correctly is doing something good for Allah. If they think this way, they will dress according to religious principles. If they think that they dress to show off and to go after the fashion, they will dress against Islamic principles. Youth are in the age that enjoys imitation, and the way Muslim youth dress has changed tremendously. Wearing clothes that shows the curves of their bodies has become fashionable. Some youths wear short headscarves made of very thin material thinking it is fashionable. They think wearing tight tops and trousers is modern but actually it is strongly against religious principles. Very few youths wear Kurung and Banong, or a large top, socks, and a large headscarf. They usually think of movie stars without thinking of religious principles. The way people dress can change their lives. For example, if they dress in such a way that is sexy and tempting, it can bring them harm.

5.5 Doing Community Service and Participating in Community Activities

The youths who used to behave against Islamic principles and then participated in this project also used to avoid doing community service and avoid participating in community activities because they used to spend most of their time in their studies and friends, and used to think that such service and activities were for adults to do. However, after participating in this project, these youths realize the importance of doing community service and

activities and participate in doing them. Some of them even think that they must be good role models in accordance with Islamic principles. They are determined in being leaders in thinking and inventing new things for use in doing community service and activities continuously. Youths need to love, to be in harmony and to have good relationships with their community in addition to giving cooperation to do good deeds and useful activities for their community such as develop the mosque and their neighborhoods, etc. This is to develop their community so that it is prosperous. This can be seen in the following statements of key informants.

“...The youths who participated in this project have changed themselves to be individuals who are dedicated to the public and have become an important force in passing down social, religious, cultural, and good heritage. They have become individuals who realize and give importance to doing community service and participating in community activities with earnest willingness, unity, cooperation, and assistance to society. This is very different from the way they were in the past when they did not pay much attention to either doing community service or participating in community activities. They used to isolate themselves or stay in their own groups without paying much attention to the community they live in. They avoided doing activities that required sacrifice and did not give as much cooperation as they should have because most of them thought that community service and activities were nonsense and a waste of time. They avoided even religious community service such as developing the mosque, the cemetery, and Tadika schools including religious training, etc...”

(Mr. Nawawi; a religious leader).

“The youths who participated in this project realize and see the importance of doing community service and participating in community activities such as developing the mosque and the village, etc. They are different from the way they were before participating in the project when they seldom participated in doing community service and community activities because they did not spend their free time in the correct way. They thought only about having fun and they forgot about the society they lived in so they chose to do only activities that they were interested in.”

(Mr. Sulaiman; President of the Sarong Youth Conservation Club).

“The youths who participated in this project have begun to give importance to activities in community service and participate in community activities with more willingness. This is partly because youth leaders and religious leaders play their roles in giving knowledge and understanding to the youths, and being good role models for them. Additionally, these leaders provided opportunities for the youths to participate in operations of the activities from the beginning to the end of the project. For example, they allowed the youths to participate in organizing village development activities, the mosque fair, cemetery development activities, repairing Tadika schools, and developing the mosque, etc. The youths now give good cooperation without being forced or asked to. They are willing to participate when they know about it because they are aware of their duties, when and what they should do. This shows that our society is simple. We help each other and live together like brothers.”

(Miss Anisah; a project participant).

It can be seen that youths who participated in the project cooperate in doing community service and community activities because they consider it is their responsibility to realize and give importance to the benefits of society. Most youths think that they have power physically and mentally to do useful things for their society and community. Islam promotes youth to cooperate, do good deeds that are useful for society in order to make them good individuals who have ethics and morals, and to instill in them the values of working for the community to develop it and make it prosperous and with stability by developing it according to Islamic principles. This is different from the past when these youths did not pay attention, did not give importance to but avoided doing community service and participating in community activities because they thought more about their own interests than the public interests. They used to think that participating in such activities was a waste of time for their studies and occupations, so most of them lived in their own way and did not do anything for society. They usually avoided community activities and did not cooperate or get together to work for the public unless they received something in return. Therefore, it can be seen that some youths did not give cooperation in participating in activities because they were obsessed with modern technology and advancement such as telephone, television, and the Internet, etc.

6. Discussion and Conclusions

The results of the study indicate that after the youths who used to have behaviors that were not in accordance with religious principles participated in the project that promoted Islamic behaviors using a “Village Youth Club”, their behaviors have changed in a better way and they have begun to have Islamic behaviors. They have changed from being youths who used to abandon and neglect praying and fasting and used to be involved with

vices to being good youths. They have given up gambling, dressing against religious principles, and paying no attention to community service and activities. Consequently, they have become being youths who see importance of praying together with others at the mosque, fasting in the Ramadan, keeping away from all vices, dressing according to religious principles, and paying attention to doing more community service and participating in more community activities. The abovementioned results of the study reveal that promotion of Islamic behaviors using a “Village Youth Club”, through which Islamic religious activities were applied such as meetings using the principles of consulting (Shura), delivering sermons, training and practice, studying the Quran together with other people (Halaqah), and ethics training, etc. The operations of the project corresponded with expectations of Muslim society in instilling in youth the importance of practicing the religion strictly, and never abandon or neglect the practice of praying, fasting, studying the Quran, seeking knowledge about the religion, and making donations, etc. Youth must practice the religion correctly according to the rules specified in the Quran and follow the role model of the Prophet Muhammad. Most importantly, youth must be able to examine and determine what are approved or not approved for them to do when following the role model of the Prophet Muhammad. Particularly, praying and fasting are the practices that all Muslims must do because they are mandatory and cannot be neglected. The practice of praying and fasting shows the individuals’ faithfulness to Allah, and the practices help refine the mind of the individuals who practice them. The practices include daily reading of the Quran, paying Zakat, mandatory praying five times a day and voluntary praying, donating, fasting every Monday and Thursday, doing good towards ones’ parents and people around them, etc. It is important for youth to study, seek knowledge about the religion, and carry out religious practice correctly because this can make them good role models for the next generation (Laeheem & Baka, 2010).

In addition, promoting Islamic behaviors using a “Village Youth Club” is management and operation that focus on socialization employing the religious institution as principal representative. It is socialization and instillation of awareness in youth correct Islamic principles. In this club, youth leaders with Islamic behaviors and Muslim leaders give admonitions, persuade, and provide good role models for the youths. As a result, the youths have increasingly learned and absorbed more Islamic behaviors and begin to practice what they have observed. They realize and see importance of religious practice, being public-minded, and having Islamic behaviors. This corresponds with Adivatanasit (2002), Thitiwattana (2004), and Laeheem (2013b)’s findings that carrying out a project to change youths’ behaviors by giving importance to religious principles and applying them in providing knowledge, understanding, and instilling in youths correct attitudes and ideology can make them behave in the ways desired by society. In addition, such a project can make youths behave in the ways that are suitable and in accordance with religious principles and social norms. According to Narongraksakhet (1997), Thepsitha (1998), and Mahama (2009), the most suitable method for developing and correcting behaviors that violate religious principles and social norms is applying religious principles in conducting activities of a project. This is a very important process used in training and socializing youths’ mind in order to make them behave according to social norms and religious principles. Furthermore, Khagphong (2004), Mahama (2009), and Laeheem & Baka (2010) state that applying Islamic principles in changing youths’ behaviors that are against religious principles can promote youths to have Islamic behaviors. This is supported by the results of the studies by Laeheem (2012), Laeheem (2013b), and Laeheem (2013c) which found that giving knowledge and understanding of religious principles, conducting strict religious practice, and instilling in youths ethics and morals according to Islam are major factors that make Muslim youths behave the Islamic way.

Thus, as can be seen, promoting Islamic behaviors using a “Village Youth Club” could make youths change their way of life to be in the Islamic religious framework because it is a process that develops youths’ behavior and to make them behave in a desirable way. They are trained so that they know social rules and regulations; instilled with disciplines, Islamic ethics and morals; instilled with awareness of what is right or wrong, proper or improper, trained to feel guilty doing sins or something that is wrong or against morality and traditions (Cohen & Orbuch, 1990; Thitirat, 2004; Sereetrakul, 2009). Moreover, this process emphasizes provision of knowledge and understanding about Islamic principles—faith, practice, and ethics and morals. This process socializes the mind and enhances intelligence, body and soul, and can enable youths to have Islamic behaviors and become Muslim youths who are complete with morals, ethics and disciplines. Additionally, the process emphasizes that youths must realize that it is their duty to study about Islam in order to take it as the system of their lives and that they must be able to practice it in their everyday life correctly and able to live in society peacefully (Narongraksakhet, 1997; Mahama, 2009). Besides, change of behavior or improved behaviors can enable youths to be accepted by society because their behaviors have changed to be in line with social norms and religious principles that are resulted from a process of socialization (Wenzel, 1983; Aaro, Wold, Kannas, & Rimpela, 1986).

Therefore, changing youths' behavior so that they have Islamic behaviors require understanding, needs, expectations, and goals of the youths because it is one way to understand their feeling and emotion, and to receive good response from them. Bronfenbrenner (1979), and Rosenstock, Strecher and Becker (1988) state that changing youths' behavior to the way that is desirable for society requires understanding of the method of socialization taking into consideration the needs, expectations and goals of the youths by linking people with the social structure. This is because the social structure can shape the youths the way they would like to be. According to Hendry, Mayer, and Kloep (2007), changing youths' behavior requires inspiration, achievement motivation, and achievements they will receive by setting clear goals, for example, to enhance their own prestige, philosophy, value, self-adaptation to freedom, their relationships with people in power, with peers, etc.

The results of this study could help Islamic religious organizations and those in the government sectors to apply in forming good policies and concrete strategies for promotion and support for youths whose behaviors are against religious principles to return to behaving the Islamic way. This could be done by providing opportunities to family, educational, and religious institutions to participate in developing and promoting Islamic behaviors among youth in a more concrete way using a process of socialization. The reason is the process can train, teach, advice, and instill in youth awareness of social norms and Islamic principles. Moreover, a process of socialization can transfer knowledge, thoughts, attitudes, ideologies, cultures and personalities to enable individuals to behave in a way desired by society and corresponds with the social model. The process can enable youth to understand and adopt values and norms of the society they live in, and can have positive influence on their present and future behavior. Regarding the family institution, it is the first social unit that plays the most important role in building good quality members to have good personality and to be good persons, particularly, in promoting youth to have knowledge and understanding of Islamic teachings and principles. Furthermore, the family institution instills in youth morals and ethics and encourages them to practice the religion strictly, to have behavior in accordance with the social norm, and to develop their personality, character, mind, emotion, and intelligence in congruence with Islamic principles that enable humans to lead their lives well and correctly, and make society peaceful. Thus, related individuals and organizations must have good and concrete policies and strategies in promoting Islamic behaviors. For example, they must instill in youth awareness of leading their lives following the good role model of the Prophet Muhammad, organize Islamic ethics and morals camps in communities regularly and continuously, holding activities and training to give youth knowledge about the religion, and encourage them to follow Islamic principles. Moreover, they must promote and strengthen the family institution to be able to control and look after their children in the framework of Islamic principles. In addition, related individuals and organizations should provide assistance and promotion for youth to perform religious practices strictly, provide knowledge and understanding about Islamic teachings and participation in Islamic activities, etc. The results of this study indicate that these methods can make youth return to have more Islamic behaviors.

Acknowledgements

This work was supported by the Higher Education Research Promotion and National Research University Project of Thailand, Office of the Higher Education Commission.

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