PRYCA and its contribution to school dropouts and quality of life of youth in Puerto Rico

An analysis of the 8 core components of PRYCA and how these influence the life of youth on the island.

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Introduction

The issue on school dropouts has a great effect on societies and when a country faces the problem, it is mostly the largest problem in its educational system. This counts as well for Puerto Rico, the island faces a problem with school dropouts and it is clear that intervention programs are desired to give support on solving this problem and therewith to increase Quality Of Life (QOL) of youth. In Puerto Rico, Puerto Rico Youth ChalleNGe Academy (PRYCA), is one of these intervention programs and therewith, this field research answers the following research question: *"How does PRYCA contribute to the quality of life of its students?"* The program believes that there are 8 core components that could improve the QOL of youth that dropped out of high school and use these as a common thread in the program. The following sub research question gives support on answering the main research question with a focus on these components: *"What are the 8 core components of PRYCA and how does the program apply them?"* The second research question is: *"How aware are the participating youth of the 8 core components of PRYCA?"* The third and last sub research question is: *"To which degree do the 8 core components contribute to the goals of the program and the QOL of the participating youth?"*

PRYCA is a program that intervenes in the lives of youth after they drop out of high school. The first chapter of this thesis, the theoretical framework, therefore describes theories on school dropouts, intervention programs, and quality of life (QOL). The degree to which intervention programs are important for the QOL of school dropouts will be clarified by emphasising on social exclusion, which is a consequence of dropping out of high school and has an excessive impact on the QOL of youth. The different perspectives on the size of the high school dropout problem on the island are described in the second chapter, which shows the governmental opinion versus the academic view on this topic. As well, similar intervention programmes in Puerto Rico are discussed to compare the position in which PRYCA is situated and the impact of the government reforms to the topic. In the third chapter, the outcomes of the field research are being presented. The theory of school dropouts, intervention programs, and QOL, combined with the current situation of school dropouts in Puerto Rico and the outcomes of the fieldwork on PRYCA are the answer to the main research question, which will be elaborated in the conclusion. The conclusion also contains a final answer on the main- and sub research questions.

Chapter 1 Theory behind dropouts, intervention programs, and QOL

In order to analyse if PRYCA, as an intervention program, contributes to the QOL of high school dropouts, theories on these subjects need to be emphasised. The most related subjects are discussed; school dropouts, intervention programs, and QOL.

High school dropouts

When a child fails high school there are severe negative consequences, it affects the individual, their families, and the society around them on a great scale. It appears that school dropouts have a higher probability of becoming dissatisfied with their lives, be depressed, and feel isolated (Larsen and Shertzer, 1987; Tidwell, 1988). Children that drop out of school are more likely to use drugs and alcohol, engage in violent and criminal behaviour, and join gangs (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency, 1999). The phenomenon of school dropout is one of the largest problems within educational systems in numerous corners of the world (NESSE, 2009) in Sub-Saharan Africa there are many young people who graduated from high school without any other skills and competences that are necessary for integration in the social and labor market, such as knowledge, attitudes, and practical know-how. Different individuals define the definition of 'school dropout' or 'early school leaver' in different ways; therefore the concept of youth leaving school early is very complex and hard to measure (Tukundane, Minnaert, Zeelen and Kanyandago, 2015). The causes of people leaving school early are very wide, the problem could appear from individual issues but also from family, school, and community problems (Zeelen, van der Linden, Nampota, and Ngabirano, 2010). Every person that drops out of school is different and faces different challenges and circumstances and therefore diverse solutions are needed (Tukundane et al., 2015).

Calculating an accurate drop out rate is almost impossible as schools have a broad variation in defining the problem (Hale, 2001). According to Lally (2009), the term 'dropout' is an incorrect way of defining someone who leaves school early, as young people also leave school to start other employment or training goals. The term 'school dropout' creates a negative image of people leaving school by blaming them, though, there are other factors that could play a role in a decision of a child to quit school (Cassidy and Bates, 2005; Conen and Rutten, 2003). For the above mentioned reasons, Tukundane et al. (2015), use the term 'early school leaving' in their report, which is derived from Cullen's (2000, p.10) definition: 'early school leaving can be understood as young people leaving school before the legal school leaving age and/ or leaving school with limited or no formal qualifications'. Another result that appears when one leaves

school early is that it disadvantages young people and numerous ways of social exclusion appear (Bridgeland, Dilulio and Morison, 2006) Economic, political, cultural, or social systems control social integration of people in a society, when a person is socially excluded; he or she is being blocked out fully or partially from any of these systems (Walker and Walker, 1997, p.8). It does not only have a negative effect on a person economically, but it also has an impact on discrimination, physical environment, human rights, and psychologically (Percy-Smith, 2000). Social exclusion involves less learning opportunities and a lack of skills to study (Zeelen, 2004), as well as it affects their personal development and socio-economic situation in the future (Lally, 2009). After being excluded socially, a person's life choices, opportunities, personal development and access to services are shortened, as well as benefits that they could potentially gain by education such as; social mobility, self-worth, and improved income, are reduced. Such benefits spread further then the individual, the family, the local community, and overstep the state and national boundaries (Schargel and Smink, 2001, p.239). The negative effects of school dropouts on society include: national income, lower tax revenues, higher demand on social services, more crime, and poorer health levels (Levin, 1972).

All the above mentioned consequences and problems that come along with school dropouts show that interventions are needed that focus on young persons that leave school early and teach them the skills and competences that they need in life to fully integrate in society. These intervention programs would help young people with their access to career opportunities, changes in life, and in gaining social capital (The National Economic and Social Forum, 2002, p. 8).

Intervention programs
According to Prevatt and Kelly (2003), the development of programs to support school dropouts is challenging, as the path that leads to a child dropping out of school is complicated. Over the past decade, several research strategies and improvements in the evaluation of such programs have been made, though a lot of similar methodological, conceptual, and design insufficiencies still exist (Prevatt and Kelly, 2003). As mentioned in the theory on school dropouts, intervention programs should offer young people that dropped out of school the necessary competences and skills so that they can integrate in society, which would help this group to get access to career opportunities and life chances (The National Economic and Social Forum, 2002, p. 8). There are a lot of different types of intervention programmes all over the world that focus on school

dropouts on a national and regional level. Each of the programs are structured and managed differently and are sponsored by numerous institutions and organizations (Tukundane, et al., 2015).

The existing intervention programs on a global level have been used from kindergarten through 12th grade with different emphasises. Due to Prevatt and Kelly (2003), the existing programs concentrate on psychosocial skills development, teacher training in child behaviour management, mentoring and supportive relationships, and academic enhancement. Tukundane et al., (2015) names the following types of intervention programs on a national and regional level: vocational and skills enhancement programs, return to education programs, career guidance programs, work-based learning programs, programs aimed to provide qualifications for further education, and training programs that equip young people with the skills necessary to enter employment. It appears to be more beneficial and cost-effective to have intervention programs that support and assist students that are at-risk, instead of first dropping out and use intervention programs afterwards (NESSE, 2009). Thus, most of the intervention programs interfere in the process that would lead youths to drop out of school and are therefore mainly focused on preventing instead of solving the problem. It is predicted that strategic responses at different stages in the process of leaving school early, leads to less school dropouts. Despite that, these programs are already set up since the 1980s, research shows that early school leavers are still a problem in many, especially developing, countries in the world (Zeelen, van der Linden et al., 2010). Olmec (2007, p. 25) argues that, 'no one model or intervention can fully address the problem because each initiative has its own limitations and critiques'. For this reason support intervention programs, retention and re-entry into mainstream education programs are needed to tackle the problem of school dropouts. Guidance, counselling, coaching and emotional support are important factors of intervention programs, intensive support is one of the key qualifying factors in these programs (Currie, Foley, Schwartz and Taylor-Lewis, 2001),

Youth that drop out of school are facing great challenges and pressures from the mainstream school system they left and from the community they come from, counselling and guidance is essential, when these young people take this second or alternative chance, guidance and counselling are the main tools to support them emotionally (Zeelen, Rampedi, and Boerkamp, 2010). Research has shown that a person who leaves school early needs to be approached in a personalized and special way as

every individual has a unique background. It is more effective to adapt a program to the unique circumstances and characteristics of the person (Olmec, 2007). In the intervention programs for school dropouts, methods that create motivation to learn and are focused on the individual student are encouraged in order to enable self-study that is constructed on the strengths of the individual and supports their weaknesses (Schochet, Burghardt, and McConnell, 2008). Apart from the general curriculum, school dropouts have many different abilities, interests, and needs. Many of them are on different academic, mental, and social development levels, this asks for a varied and broad study curriculum and one that adapts to the local contexts of all students (Weyer, 2009).

There are several aspects that create well-organized intervention programs. One of these aspects is the relationship between teachers and students. Students involved in intervention programs mostly choose for ones where the relationship between the two parties is good, communication is perceived as important, and where teachers are patient (The Hybrid Workgroup, 2002). McGrath (2006) and Olmec (2007) agree that there should be a safe and culturally sensitive environment between participants and teachers; Leong (2002) adds that there should be respect between students and teachers and students should feel comfortable. One of the reasons that the relationship between teachers and students is of great importance is that some of the youth drop out of school because the lack of a safe school environment. In order to meet this objective, teachers should have wide expertise, be committed, and receive specified training to learn how to work with this group of people (Tukudane and Blaak, 2010). Youth that follow these programs should be involved in important aspects of the program such as; decision making, planning, organizing, and evaluating so that they feel that they belong and that they are part of the community (McGregor and Mills, 2012). Including all stakeholders in the surrounding community is another important aspect when setting up intervention programs. Stakeholders should be taken into account when identifying, implementing, evaluating, monitoring, and designing the interventions (Zeelen, Rampedi, et al., 2010). Stakeholders within the community are individuals, families, communities, and nations; each of these should be involved in solving the problem of school dropouts in their region since they are all affected by it. Another reason for communities to be involved in building up the curriculum of these programs is because they benefit from youth returning to the community after finishing with the programs (Tukundane, et al., 2015). Another important factor that needs to be taken into account is that the youth participating in intervention programs should receive recognition and

certification for their achievements (UYDEL, 2006). As many of these young people have a low self-esteem because of the problems they have had in mainstream education and/ or in the community. As well, intervention programs are sometimes seen as negative and society sees them as 'programs of failures' (Tukundane and Blaak, 2010). Nevertheless, certification and qualification is needed in order to enter the labour market. The last essential element that intervention programs should require is constantly evaluate and monitor the progress of the youth and the operation of the intervention programs against the objectives and preferred results (Currie, et al., 2001; Gallagher, 2011). If programs are not well monitored and evaluated, it is certain that they fail the achievement of their objectives. All stakeholders from the communities should participate in this process (Tukundane, et al., 2015). Other important aspects that are part of effective intervention programs are: offering the possibility to create an individualized learning plan (UYDEL, 2006) and small class sizes which creates a lot of individual attention (Gallagher, 2011). Most of the studies reviewed by Tukundane et al., (2015) show that a 'one-size fits all' approach is not the right method in support programs and divined the following conclusion for workable intervention programs: 'interventions that seem to be effective are those that cautiously work towards combating social exclusion and preparing young people to become active citizens through acquisition of skills and the expansion of their future opportunities and choices. Programs that address the multiple disadvantages and needs of young people through flexible and holistic approaches tend to be attractive and meaningful to early school leavers'

An individual quality of life
As this research is focussed on how PRYCA have impacted the quality of life of the youth individually, this theory describes QOL on an individual level. The theory described is meant for individuals with a disability but could be applied for any individual as the definition on QOL described in this theory is widely employable and is substantiated in a way that it is applicable to any individual. As stated in the theory on school dropouts at the beginning of this chapter, it appears that school dropouts have a higher likelihood of becoming dissatisfied with their lives, be depressed, and feel isolated (Larsen and Shertzer, 1987; Tidwell, 1988). Thus youth that apply for PRYCA have restrictions in several aspects of QOL as well, whereas there is an overlap.

QOL is an occurrence with multiple complex sides that consists of 8 essential areas that compose a persons' well being. The 8 areas that are related to QOL were originally

authorized and created through a widespread review of international literature on QOL within the area of intellectual and closely related developmental disabilities (IDD), behaviour, mental health, aging, and special education (Schalock and Verdugo, 2002). The 8 areas include: material well-being, physical well-being, emotional well-being, rights, social inclusion, interpersonal relations, self-determination, and personal development (Schalock, Verdugo, Gomez, and Reinders, 2016). Besides the structure of the 8 areas of QOL, the hierarchical nature of the concept has been assessed, 3 higher order aspects have been acknowledged by Wang, Schalock, Verdugo, and Jenaro, (2010) and Gomez, Verdugo and Arias (2011); social participation (interpersonal relations, rights, and social inclusion), independence (personal development and self-determination), and well being (emotional, material, and physical well being). Several theoretical models include the areas on QOL that create personal and family well being, and indicators that are related to the perceptions, conditions, and behaviours of QOL that give an implication of a persons' or family's well being (Schalock, et al., 2016).

One should focus on a person-environmental interaction and the way personal competence and environmental demands and opportunities that result from the interacting factors. There should be a contextual understanding between individual and environmental factors. There are two types of factors: moderating and mediating factors. A moderating factor modifies the form of strength of a relation and revises the relation between two variables. A mediating factor shows indirect causation, relation, or connection as it influences the connection between the independent variable and outcome (Farmer, 2012; Frazier, Tix and Barron, 2004). Strategies that focus on quality development and involve the development of personal talents, maximize personal involvement, facilitate personal growth opportunities, and the provision of individualized support could enhance someone's QOL. The 3 main strategies are personal involvement, individualized support, and personal growth opportunities. The first strategy, personal involvement develops the level of motivation of a person by increasing self-regulation and autonomy, such as personal goal setting, self-management, self-reinforcement, self-instruction, and self-evaluation. Another point that develops is self-determination, such as choice making, self-advocacy, and decision making (Schalock, et al., 2016). Individualized support, the second strategy has the goal to promote education, interests, personal well being, and development of an individual and the improvement of personal functioning. There is observed evidence that this type of support develops the personal results of a persons' quality of life (Claes, van Hove, Vandevelde, van Loon, and Schalock, 2012). The third and last component that focuses

on quality development of a persons' life, personal growth opportunities, is based on three testable propositions. First, personal growth opportunities are related to quality enhancement strategies that make the realization of individual possibilities easier (Reinders and Schalock, 2014). Second, the interplay between individual potential (microsystem), family and organization policies and practices (mesosystem), and societal circumstances on a macro system level, create personal growth opportunities for an individual (Chiu, Kyzar, Zuna, Turnbull, Summers, and Gomez, 2013). Third, personal growth opportunities should expose people with their capacities, in this way this focuses on what people are able to do and be and there is no minimum threshold needed to actively participate in life activities and nobody is excluded based on a cognitive impairment. Motivation and strategies that people develop to know their abilities disappear when one ignores the fact that development is related to processes and outcomes (Sen, 1999).

Social structures related to quality of life

A social development of satisfaction of needs can be defined by Abraham Maslow's concept of need hierarchy in society. Maslow defines that people have the need to develop their potentialities to the fullest, people have a hierarchy of needs aiming to meet and when a need is fulfilled, it gives permission to fulfil another need on a higher level. This hierarchy of needs are ordered from lower-order to higher-order needs: biological needs (e.g., oxygen, food, water etc.); safety needs (e.g., physical and psychological security); social needs (e.g., friendship, belongingness, need for affiliation etc.); esteem needs (e.g., need for achievement, recognition, success etc.); and self-actualization needs (e.g., need for creativity, self-fulfilment, self-expression, integrity etc.). Lower-order needs have a higher ascendency and are tend to be fulfilled before higher-order needs. Concerning quality of life it includes that goals of citizens of a specified society or community are defined by means of developmental needs in hierarchical order. To find the need satisfaction level of members of a particular community, an assessment of human needs has to be done (Malsow, 1954).

After assessing human needs, it is possible to help a population to a greater satisfaction of higher-order needs. A theory proposed by M. J. Sirgy (1986) on human developmental needs includes: human developmental needs are served by societal institutions such as water works, utilities, agriculture (biological needs), health services, police, emergency facilities, judicial system (safety needs), leisure, recreation facilities, social products and services (social needs), employment services, intra-organizational services (esteem

needs), arts, theory, aesthetics (self-actualization needs). This proposition puts forth a classification of societal institutions that is based on the different hierarchically ordered human needs on a developmental perspective (see figure 2).
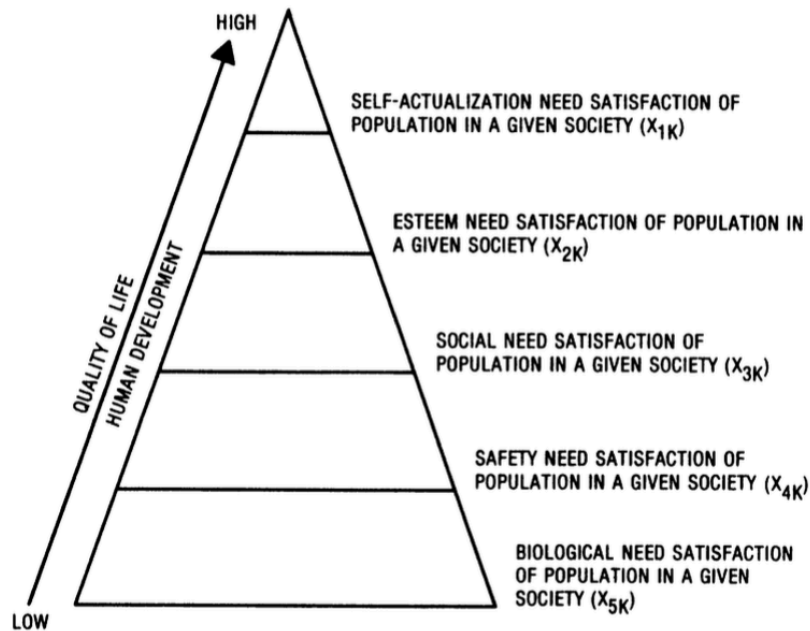
Figure 2: A Human Developmental Perspective of Quality of Life (Sirgy, 1986)

Katz and Kahn (1978) formed a classification of societal institutions; they have distinguished the following organizations: productive/ economic, maintenance, adaptive, and managerial/ political organizations. All of these are different kind of societal structures or institutions viewed as subsystems of a society and play an important role in the maintenance and improvement of the particular community. Maintenance institutions are mainly involved in the training and socialization of human resources and have an organizational role in the setting of a society; schools and churches are an example of such institutions (Katz and Kahn, 1978).

PRYCA is a maintenance institution, this means that only this type of institution in this theory is countable for PRYCA and therefore only this one will be highlighted in this chapter. Maintenance institutions vary from a focus on "basics" to "creativity", which includes that every type of these institutions could be working and focusing in a different way, depending on the current situation of the particular society. If a maintenance institution is able to reach a production of a highest degree of quality of life within society depends on if most individuals in a particular society have met their

lower-order needs yet. If society did not meet their lower-order needs, they are still concerned with survival issues and are not yet on a level where they can work on their higher-order needs. This would mean, for a maintenance institution, that it should focus on basic education and training as these two elements of education are meant to involve adaptive behaviour, which is linked to satisfy lower-order needs in society such as getting a job in order to earn a living. Creativity on the other hand could mainly work in a society where individuals are busy satisfying their higher-order needs such as self esteem, socializing, and self-actualization needs. This could lead to more creativity in education and training because these communities and societies can afford to. Creativity is viewed as adaptive behaviour designed to satisfy higher-order needs (Hawkins, 1983).

M. J. Sirgy (1986) states that a moderate quality of life is mostly seen in a society where maintenance societal structures emphasize on basic education and training and where individuals work on satisfying their lower-order needs. In societies where maintenance societal structures focuses on basic and creative education and training, quality of life is a lot higher as these societies are mostly already gratified in their lower-order needs. In societies where individuals work on their higher-order needs, a creative institutional structure should not be focused on strong basic education but should build on basic education. As a conclusion one can state that the greater the need in satisfaction from lower-order to higher order needs, the greater the quality of life of that society.

The phenomenon of school dropouts has an effect on different levels in society, when a country faces the problem; it is often the largest problem in its educational system. The effects of school dropouts are serious; one of the consequences is social exclusion, which causes a person to be fully or partially blocked out from economic, political, cultural, or social systems in a society. This shows that if the problem 'school dropouts' occurs, it is certain that something needs to be done and that the quality of life of this person is being damaged. This is when intervention programs emerge; these programs support young people to achieve access to career opportunities and life chances again. It is important that intervention programs hold on to a personalized and individual approach for every person in the program, as every human has a unique background. Social exclusion as well leads to an impact on the quality of life of a person; intervention programs should be established to contribute to a higher quality of life on an individual but as well on a broader level.

Chapter 2 Puerto Rico in context

To find out the performance of PRYCA in Puerto Rico concerning school dropouts, being an intervention program, and QOL, these subjects are put into context. In this chapter the different perspectives on the size of the high school dropout problem on the island are described, which shows the governmental opinion versus the academic view. Similar intervention programmes in Puerto Rico are discussed to compare the position in which PRYCA is situated and the impact of the government reforms to the topic.

Education in Puerto Rico

The subject of this research is about school dropouts in Puerto Rico in combination with the influence of PRYCA in the lives of the youth. In order to obtain a better understanding on the subject, this chapter starts with an introduction in the education system of Puerto Rico for both the private and public sector. The education system in Puerto Rico is divided in four levels: preschool, elementary school, intermediate school, and high school. Preschool contains (pre) kindergarten, elementary school covers first to sixth grade, intermediate school (escuela intermedia) includes 7th to 9th grade, and secondary school (escuela superior) covers tenth to twelfth grade. In 2003-04 the following division was visible: 40,673 children were enrolled in (pre) kindergarten, 272,719 in elementary schools, 137,773 in intermediate schools, and 114,598 in high schools. Puerto Rico passes the countries in Latin America with the most educated population; in Chile and Argentina the average schooling of labour force in 2003 was 8.5 years, in Peru 7.8 years, and in Uruguay 7.7 years. Besides the average of other Latin American countries and the average worldwide, Puerto Rico as well exceeded that of several Western countries such as Denmark (10.6 years), Great Britain (11.0 years) and France (8.9 years) (Bosworth & Collins, 2003). The island of Puerto Rico has undergone one of the largest developments in education of the world between 1960 and 2000. Where in the beginning of this period the average schooling of the labour community contained 6.2 years, in 2000 this number doubled to 12.2 years. In 1898, Puerto Rico became territory of the United States, the public elementary and secondary school systems where centralized and state-controlled. In 1960 the educational systems where still centralized but there were 7 educational regions initiated in order to offer more structure to the governance system (Lopez 1992). In the late 1980s, several discussions began to initiate reforms, until then there were no significant changes in the system.

When looking to the ability to keep students in the system after graduating from secondary school matches the number of the U.S., which is highly ranked on the list of

the world's leading countries when looking to enrolment of students in to higher education (Ladd and Rivera-Batiz, 2006). The average annual income for male high school dropouts in the U.S. in 2001 was $ 19,225; the income of the ones who did have a high school diploma was $ 26,399 (Wirt, and Livingston, 2001), for women the difference was even worse. When looking to employment, dropouts are less likely to be employed then graduated people and they have a lower status and lower paying jobs (Steinberg, Blinde, and Chan, 1984; Timberlake, 1982). The adult population attending different levels of education in Puerto Rico increased as well, starting in the 1940s. In 1940 adults attend school for an average of 2.7 years, in 2000 this number increased to an average of 11 years of schooling. The average schooling of the working population (age of 15 years and older) in Puerto Rico rose with 6 years between 1960 and 2000, which passes the average of 3.2 years worldwide by far (Lopez 1992).

The Puerto Rican Academic Achievement Tests (PPAA) are a set of standardized achievement tests provided by the Department of Education of Puerto Rico that evaluate the academic achievement of students on the island. The results of the PPAA for public and private schools showed that between 40 and 48 per cent of the students in the 11th grade were proficient in Spanish, English, and science, while only 10 per cent of the students were proficient in mathematics. The results of the PPAA that are done with students from only the private sector, have shown that between 70 and 81 per cent of students in all grades were proficient in Spanish, English, and in cognitive thinking. The lowest achievement was in mathematics with 68 per cent of proficient students. The results of the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) show that the average scores for Puerto Rico in the areas of mathematics, science, and reading are below the average for the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and Latin America; they are positioned on number 58 of the 65 educational systems that participated in the tests. The OECD is an organization that represents the national averages in education among OECD member countries. The results of the 2013 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) in mathematics showed that both the fourth grade and the 8th grade were lowest in all US jurisdictions. The NAEP is a project of the National Centre for Education Statistics (NCES) that gives information on academic achievement of students in various areas. In Puerto Rico the NAEP measures achievement in 4th and 8th grade mathematics. The average scores that are obtained in the College Assessment and Admission Tests have shown that the highest score in the public sector was for mathematics; while for the private sector it was English. For all

subjects counts, including verbal and mathematical reasoning, private sector students scored higher than the public sector.

The number of institutions on post-secondary non-university level has increased in the years 2013-2014 from 292 to 302; the number of students dropped from 74,537 to 62,280; the total number of teachers fell from 8,761 to 7,773. The percentage of male students rose from 40.7 per cent to 42,9 per cent; the proportion of students per teacher decreased from 8.5 to 8.0. On University level there where 18 institutions in the academic year 2013-2014, the number of students increased from 62,579 to 62,687 and the number of teachers increased from 4,962 to 5,174. The number of male students decreased from 42,9 per cent to 42,2 per cent and the proportion of students per teacher decreased from 12.6 to 12.1. In the private sector (profit and non profit sector) the number of institutions remained at 70, the number of students decreased from 182,916 to 178,481, and the number of teachers decreased from 10,848 to 10,711. 42 per cent of the students were male and the ratio of students per teacher remained at 16.8 (Disdier, 2016). When looking to tertiary level of education, the total enrolment of students attending university rose from 23,500 in 1949-50 to 200,000 in 2002-03. The most important player in public higher education in Puerto Rico is the University of Puerto Rico where enrolment of students rose from less then 20,000 students in 1960 to almost 70,000 students by 2002-03. Next to the University of Puerto Rico, the system of higher education consists of smaller, career or vocationally oriented institutions. Private institutions of tertiary education expanded even faster, where 62.7 per cent of all students in higher education are attending a private institution (Commonwealth of Puerto Rico - Council on Higher Education, 2004). The number of students in special education dropped from 130,212 to 123,754 (The Institute of Statistics of Puerto Rico, 2016). In the year 2010-2011 the dropout rate of children in Puerto Rico was between 1.33 and 7.83% depending on the grade. In the school year 2014-2015, 25% of all enrolled students were attending secondary school; in absolute numbers this involves 101,437 children (Disdier, 2016). Within the population with the age of 25 year and older, between 2010 and 2014; 18.2 per cent are schooled less then the 9th grade, 9.8 per cent completed 9-12th grade but did not obtain their diploma, 26.8 per cent are high school graduated, 12.5 per cent did college but without a degree, 9.1 per cent have an associate's degree, 17 per cent a bachelor's degree, and 6.6 per cent have a graduate or professional degree (Disdier, 2016).

With the increase in enrolment in colleges and universities comes along a great increase in the amount of people that attained a college degree or more. Between 1960 and 2000 the amount of the population with a college degree rose with 14.7 per cent (Rivera-Batiz, Francisco and Santiago, 1996). In 2000 due to the analysis of 2000 Census Bureau data, Puerto Rico had 20.2 per cent of adults aged 25 - 64 with a college degree, which puts the island above or on the same level with member nations of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and above developing nations with similar levels of per capita income. Public spending on higher education has risen rapidly between 1980 until 2003, with an amount of $ 7,182 per student in 1980-81 to $ 15,099 in 2002-03 for the University of Puerto Rico. The relatively high spending on higher education per student does not count for the private sector, which spends an average of $ 4,507 per student in 2000-01. The amount of students per faculty member does not match when looking to the difference in spending in the public and private sector. In the private universities there is a ratio of 14.9 students per faculty member, in the public sector, which is less funded, 23.7 students (NCES, 2003). In both the private and the public sectors, there are more female then male students, in 2002-03, 39 per cent of the students were male. In 2000, women with an age of 25 years or older that attended schooling beyond high school was 40.1 per cent, for men this percentage was 34.7 per cent. A conceivable motive for this difference is that women need a higher education in order to obtain a respectable job then men, women have higher rates of unemployment and lower salaries then men. In 2000, women with a college degree have 93 per cent chance of being employed, where women with a high school diploma have 77 per cent chance, and women without a high school degree have a chance of only 63 per cent. Women need a higher education in order to earn similar salaries as men, women with a college degree earn approximately $ 23,000, which is 70 per cent higher then women with only a high school diploma but still less then the average earnings of men with a college degree (U.S. Department of Commerce, 2003). In 2000, 40 per cent of children in Puerto Rico under the age of 6 years lived in families where both parents were in labour force, which is a relatively low percentage comparing to the United States. This could be the case because women work in the informal sector instead of in labour force, which includes domestic services such as, cleaning, sewing, cooking, catering, and childcare services. In 2000 in Puerto Rico, 34 per cent of the women were in labour force with an age of 16 years and over. It is common in Puerto Rico that grandparents take care of their grandchildren while both parents are working; they are the main caregivers for young children (Mather, 2003).

Between 1980 and 2003 the enrolment of school children in public schools declined with 20.6 per cent, the enrolment moved from public to private schools where numbers where increasing. The total enrolment decreased with 7.4 per cent in this period, reasons are a decline in fertility and migration of the population outside of Puerto Rico. Though this trend did not have influence on the percentage of children attending school, the Census Bureau data concluded that in 2000 98.9 per cent of the children enrolled in elementary school and 91.3 per cent in secondary education. By 2003, a quarter of students in elementary and secondary school were attending private schools (Rivera-Batiz, 1993 and Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, 1994, 1996a, 1998, 2000, 2004a). The amount of school children attending private schools in Puerto Rico in 2003 was 25 per cent and doubled compared to the amount in 1980 and is as well double the amount in the United States. The socioeconomic difference between the children attending public and private schools is extreme; the average income of children going to public schools is approximately one third of families with children in private schools. Thus, the poverty rate of households with children in public schools is 66.8 per cent, which is three times as high as the poverty rate of children going to private schools (23.0 per cent) (Collins, Bosworth and Soto-Class, 2007). Private schools offer a broader academic environment, especially in English teaching, have fewer problems with discipline and are mostly safer then public schools. For these reasons, people tend to choose private schools over public schools when they are able to afford them (Coleman, James, Hoffer and Kilgore, 1982). Private schooling has grown from relatively small institutions for the elite population in the 1960s to a much larger system in 2003 (Lopez Yustos, 1992). Funding of private schools goes through tuition, fees, private sources, and the federal government. While Puerto Rico's constitution only allows public schools to use state and local public funds, the private sector receives federal funds from the U.S. government for which they can apply through the Department of Education of Puerto Rico. The established elite private schools diver from the new set up ones, which shows a difference in academic standards between the two. A license obtained from the General Council of Education is needed in order to operate a private school and have to be regularly renewed but do not require an academic review. The council accredits private schools but only on the request of the particular institution, there is no instrument to monitor the quality of private schools at the moment. Since private schools have an increasing heterogeneity and there are more and more lower-quality institutions, test scores in the private school system are decreasing. The public school system feels the consequences of the growth of the private sector, since students leaving the public system are the more able ones, scores in the public system drop, which makes it hard to convince the families that the public system

is not failing. This leads to more children leaving towards private schools and so the cycle endures (National Centre for Education Statistics (NCES), 2003, 2004a).

Different views on dropout rates in Puerto Rico

There are contradictory views of the data and information on the subject of school dropouts in Puerto Rico. On one side the Institute of Statistics of Puerto Rico (ISPR), a governmental organization that publishes statistics on education and school dropouts on the island, states that the drop out rate for secondary schoolchildren in the grades 7 to 12 was 0.81 per cent in 2015, which included 1084 children out of 133.951 (Estado Libre Asociado de Puerto Rico, 2016). They also conclude that the drop out rates for males are higher than females with an average in the 2011 school year of 58 per cent males and 42 per cent females. The statistics show that the drop out rates seem to increase when the grade level increases and drop out rates peak around the eleventh grade for both sexes (Disdier and Cabán, 2016). As there are no data collecting systems to measure drop out rates in the U.S. or Puerto Rico, public schools make the decision on how they obtain the data themselves, that they then eventually hand over to the ISPR. Event drop out rates are used by schools to report to the ISPR, this method counts the drop out flow over a year but does not tell much about the total number of dropouts over time. ISPR also receives rates from surveys completed by young people about their schooling, the so called: 'status dropout rates'. Respondents fill in reports and based on that, the percentage of people that completed high school and the percentage that dropped out is estimated. Surveys tend to under-represent jailed and lower income populations and respondents tend to avoid admitting to having dropped out of school (Allison and McEwan, 2005).

On the other hand a study done by Allison and McEwan (2005) suggests that the situation of school dropouts in Puerto Rico is not as good as projected by the ISPR. They point out that the rate of dropouts on the island is much higher than indicated by the ISPR and that the official reports of the government on the height of the school dropouts rates in Puerto Rico show extremely low rates. The lack of data collection systems to measure drop out rates anywhere in the U.S., including Puerto Rico, causes inaccuracy in the data. Instead of the existing drop out figures from ISPR that come from public schools on the island, Allison and McEwan (2005) used cohort methods to estimate drop out rates. All of their cohort methods share common advantages on estimating dropouts as they are based on enrolment figures of students in school. The high out-migration of Puerto Ricans and the high murder rate of youth on the island are incorporated in their

analysis. Using these methods they conclude that 14.1 per cent of youth between 16 to 19 years old are not enrolled in education and do not have a high school diploma.

A third view that is worth mentioning is the one of Collins, Bosworth, and Soto-Class (2007) in their book: 'The Economy of Puerto Rico; Restoring Growth'. They indicate that one in five students who begin their first grade in school do not finish their fourth year; this proportion increases to one in two among low-income students. Many policymakers in Puerto Rico agree that the drop out rate is still excessively high and can be seen as a serious problem, possibly one of the most serious problems in the educational system on the island. They agree with the opinion of Allison and McEwan regarding the height of the drop out rate and use similar methods on estimating dropouts. The academics use cohort methods to calculate the school drop out rate, these methods rely on enrolment figures which is less difficult for schools to track then event drop out rates and these do not have a negative reflection on schools.

As Puerto Rico is territory of the U.S. and follows their laws and legislations, the drop out rates of Puerto Rico are compared to the ones in the U.S. In the U.S. in general, 3.4 per cent of students dropped out of school in 2012 (Allison and McEwan, 2005). This percentage is a lot higher than the ones published by the ISPR for Puerto Rico but a lot lower than the percentage of Allison and McEwan. This makes the given drop out rates of the government doubtful since the level of income on the island is considerably lower than that of the U.S. and thereby, lower incomes are mostly a consequence of lower educated population. Another important region to compare the Puerto Rican drop out rates with is Latin America, the continent in which the island is located. In a study done with 18 Latin American countries on school dropouts, around 37 per cent (about 15 million) of Latin American adolescents between the ages of 15 and 19 drop out of high school throughout the school year, and almost half of those who drop out do so before completing primary education. In several countries most of the dropouts occur after completing primary school, often during the first year of secondary education. Furthermore, 1.4 million children never attended school or dropped out before completing the first year of primary school. In countries with high levels of education, drop out rates in urban areas lay between 16 and 25 per cent; in lower-income countries the drop out rate is 37 per cent, where in countries with a lower level of primary education coverage, dropout affects between 40 and 50 per cent of the teenagers. In urban areas of Argentina, Chile and Panama, the overall drop out rate during primary and secondary school affects 1 in 5 adolescents, this number rises to 1 in

3 in urban areas of El Salvador, Guatemala and Nicaragua. In rural areas, 2 out of 5 adolescents aged 15 to 19 drop out of school before completing high school in Brazil, Colombia, and Peru, while in Bolivia, Honduras, and Mexico 2 out of 3 do so, and in both groups of countries around 80 per cent of school dropouts are concentrated during or at the end of primary education (Gajardo, 2003).

Despite that the amount of children dropping out of school is possibly higher than acknowledged by the government of Puerto Rico, numbers have fallen drastically between 1990 and 2000. One of the reasons for the decrease in drop out rates could be the implementation of school reforms in 1990 by the government of Puerto Rico. A major renovation of the school system in Puerto Rico was passed by the government, who signed it into a law in 1990 named "The Organic Law of the Department of Education (law 68, passed on August 28, 1990)" Although the rise in expenditures and reforms on public education did not have the desired results, there is a correlation visible between falling numbers of school drop out rates and the government reforms in 1990 (Collins, Bosworth, and Soto-Class, 2007). Later, in 2001 the U.S. set up a law named: 'No Child Left Behind Act', which was equally implemented by the Puerto Rico Department of Education. This law involves that all states, including Puerto Rico, should test their students every year from grades 3 to 8 in order to assess if schools have made yearly progress (Vázquez-Calzada, 1988).

Both the ISPR and the academics have analysed the problem on high school dropouts in Puerto Rico, the difference between the two parties is that the ISPR agrees on a much lower drop out rate than the academics as they both use different methods to do research on this subject. The data that the ISPR receives for their rates comes from public schools and surveys, it is uncertain to what extend these sources are reliable given the subjectivity. The methods used by the academics appear to be more reliable while they do not depend on subjective decisions of schools and respondents but on enrolment figures that create a positive view of schools. The drop out number of other Latin American countries shows a significant difference to the numbers given for Puerto Rico by the government (0.81 per cent) and the academics (14.1 per cent). For an island located in a similar region it is very unlikely that the difference between drop out rates is this large. Even the highest estimated drop out rates of Puerto Rico shown by the academics are lower compared to drop out rates of countries with high levels of education in Latin America (16 to 25 per cent), again, a drop out rate of 0.81 is then questionable. In countries such as Chile, Argentina and Panama, which are the more

developed countries of the continent, still 20 per cent of the youth drops out of school, the difference to the numbers in Puerto Rico is then again remarkably large.

Because there has been a decrease in the amount of school dropouts in Puerto Rico since the reforms in 1990 and at the same time the government publishes a drop out rate of 0.81 per cent, there is a risk that the government underestimates the amount of school dropouts and therefore does not invest enough in education to solve the drop out problem. A consequence could be that many children are at home being socially excluded without government awareness. Besides the reforms, Puerto Rico also participates in the 'No Child Left Behind Act' of the U.S., which forces the island to control school outcomes and numbers. Drop out numbers have decreased tremendously since the reforms of the government in 1990 concerning the U.S. Census Bureau, though this institution probably receives the drop out rates from the government of Puerto Rico and therefore it is difficult to estimate the accuracy of the data.

Other experiences with intervention programs on high school dropouts
There are several types of intervention programs running on the island of Puerto Rico; programs that support the youth after dropping out of high school and programs that prevent the youth from dropping out. PRYCA is a program that supports the youth after they drop out of high school, the program served 4871 students since the start in 1999, it has an average drop out rate of 89 per cent, and receives a minimum of 400 students a year. One of the intervention programs that is comparable to PRYCA is Nuestra Escuela, the project runs since 2001, has an average drop out rate of 3 per cent, and receives 360 students per year. The difference between the 2 programs is that PYRCA receives support from the government, uses military discipline, has 1 campus, and the program serves the youth between 16 and 18 years old. Nuestra Escuela on the other hand is a non-governmental organization, does not use military discipline, has 3 campuses, and serves people with an age between 13 and 21 years old (Nuestraescuela.org, n.d., Irizarry, Quintero and Pérez Prado, 2006, Irizarry, 2008). A striking difference is visible in the drop out rate though, both programs have a low drop out rate but the rate of Nuestra Escuela is a lot lower than the one of PRYCA. Another program to compare with PRYCA is Centros de Apoyo Sustentable al Alumno (Center for the Sustainable Support of Students), set up in 2005 by the Government of the island, through the Puerto Rico Department of Education. About 14 Alternative Schools and 1170 students are linked to the CASA Project, which are non-profit organizations that support students between 15 and 21 years old that left the public school system for at least six months and then

return to school to obtain their high school diploma. One of the outcomes of a research done on ten schools that participate in the CASA Project is that at average of 117 students are registered per school per year and an average of 48 students graduated per school in 2014-2015 (Disdier, 2013). The average age of the students is 17 years, most students joined CASA in the ninth grade (between 14 and 16 years old) and the majority of the students come from urban neighbourhoods (55 per cent). A large group of these students live below the poverty line as 68 per cent of the participants receive government aid. The difference with the CASA project and PRYCA is that CASA supports schools that are linked to the program and PRYCA is a program in itself. Another important difference is that of the registered students, only an average of 41 per cent graduates, where at PRYCA an average of 89 per cent of the students graduate. There are several comparable projects to PRYCA that support high school dropouts in Puerto Rico, supported by the government and programs that stand on their own. This shows that the issue of high school dropouts is relevant on the island and that the government as well give support to these projects. Besides that the government states provides a drop out number of 0.81, the importance of the issue is definitely recognized.

Quality of life of youth in Puerto Rico and the Caribbean
Children that grew up in poor families, often come to school less ready to study, have difficulties in making the shift from school to work, and lose more knowledge during the summer months (Rivera-Batiz and Fransisco, 2003). Schools situated in neighbourhoods with low incomes attracting a higher concentration of low-income students, tend to have lower student achievement rates, school delay, and higher drop out rates. This shows that neighbourhoods have an important impact on the learning development of the students. Economic dislocation, a violent environment, and the lack of social capital affects learning by distracting the learning process and reduce educational expectations (Grogger, 1997). The socio-economic status of children with the age of 12 to 18 that drop out of school is lower then the ones that stay in school (Santiago and Diaz, 2012). Referring to the theoretical framework, children that drop out of school have a higher perspective of becoming dissatisfied with their lives, be depressed, and feel isolated then children that stay in school (Larsen and Shertzer, 1987; Tidwell, 1988; Reyes-Rodríguez, Rivera-Medina, Cámara-Fuentes, Suárez-Torres, and Bernal, 2013). Above-mentioned factors have a negative influence on the QOL of youth, which means that it is important for them to not drop out of school and receive an education in order to retain a good QOL. When focussing specifically on youth in Puerto Rico, research shows that low level of education is one of the factors that influences depression among youth on

the island. Depression is an important factor of influence on their QOL, where education is one of the key causes of depression. Thus, when youth do not obtain the necessary education and drop out of high school, their QOL will be lower (Reyes-Rodríguez, Rivera-Medina et al. 2013). In general, QOL in Puerto Rico differs in different levels in society, people with a low per capita income are affected in their mental and physical health and thereby their overall QOL. On the contrary, a lower QOL could as well affect the socioeconomic status of a person (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2002).

To provide a greater image of the QOL of people in the region of Puerto Rico, information on QOL in Jamaica will be discussed. Research have shown that the economic situation of parents, moderate religiosity, and the significance of the nation's social security programs for youth, are all important factors in the QOL of youth in Jamaica. The findings of this research as well have shown that it is important for youth with the age of 18 to 25 years old that their parents and the nation itself take care of them and that religiosity plays a large role. Another outcome included that the economic situation, including growth and development of the nation has an impact on the nation itself but as well it enlarges the chance of youth becoming involved in criminality to subsidize for the less social assistance they receive. It appears that the QOL of Jamaican youth is being influenced by the economic situation of the household, religiosity, and the situation of the welfare of the state. It appeared that youth who had a moderate religiosity had 4 times a bigger chance of having a greater QOL comparing to youth with a low religiosity (Bourne, 2009).

The fact that dropping out of high school has an influence on the QOL of youth in general and particularly in Puerto Rico is very clear. Education is an important factor to maintain and/ or improve QOL of Puerto Rican youth. The fact is that all children should attend school, which at this moment is not the case in Puerto Rico. Although the numbers provided by the government and the academics on school dropouts differ, every school drop out is one too many, which shows that there is definitely a problem. For this reason, intervention programs are needed to support high school dropouts before they drop out of school and catch them after they drop out. Looking at the Puerto Rican context, there are several of such intervention programs running and the government does support some, it is therefore clear that to some extent, the authorities do acknowledge that investments are needed to support the problem of high school dropouts. Since there are governmental and non-governmental intervention programs,

the drop out problem is apparently of such degree, that there is a need for such programs in order to fully solve the problem. Because it could be possible that the government does not possess accurate drop out rates of the island, it could be that the problem seems to be smaller than it actually is. Thus, there is the possibility that the government does not support intervention programs enough to help all dropouts in Puerto Rico since their drop out rates could be inadequate. When this is the case, the QOL of youth in Puerto Rico is lower than it should be because of a lack of investments and support in education coming from higher up.

Chapter 3 The contribution of PRYCA towards QOL of youth in Puerto Rico

In order to find the answer to the research questions, a number of research methods were applied; one of these methods was field research, which was done from the 20th of November 2016 until the 15th of January 2017 at different places in Puerto Rico. At the location of PRYCA in Fort Allen, Juana Díaz in the south of Puerto Rico, 14 interviews with staff of the program were conducted and 1 telephone-interview with the senior project manager of the Institute of Statistics of Puerto Rico. Another interview has been conducted with two academics of the department of Education, specialized in school dropouts at the University of Puerto Rico (UPR). In this research there are 3 different groups that filled in surveys; staff of PRYCA, students currently participating in the program and students graduated from the program (see Appendix 1-3). The group of participating youth contained a total of 232 persons, of which 100 per cent completed the survey and with a 75,9 to 24,1 per cent male to female division. Furthermore, 37,1 per cent completed 9th grade, 42,7 per cent 10th grade, and 20,3 per cent 11th grade. The group that was researched was called group 17-01 and participated in the program from the 14th of October 2016 until the 23rd of March 2017. Of the graduated youth, 22 out of 225 students that graduated in the second semester of 2015, 22 filled in the questionnaire which is a response of 9,8 per cent, of which 86,4 per cent was male and 13,6 per cent female. Of this group, 54,5 per cent attends university, 18,2 per cent is working, 13,6 per cent is attending a technical college, and 13,6 per cent does something else in life. Furthermore, 34 of the 103 employees working for PRYCA including the management team, teachers, and other staff members filled in a questionnaire.

Structure of the program

The organization where PRYCA is part of contains a clear hierarchical structure, which starts and ends in the U.S. The order from the overarching organization until the project itself is as followed: National Guard Bureau (NGB), National Guard Youth Challenge Foundation (NGYCF), National Guard Youth Challenge Program, and Puerto Rico Youth Challenge Academy (PRYCA). The staff working at PRYCA is classified in the following hierarchical order; Program Director (Matilde Almodóvar Acosta), Deputy Director (Fernando Quiñones), Program Coordinator (William Sánchez), Administrative Coordinator (Keyla Fernández), Budget Analyst (Luis Torres), Training Coordinator/ Quality Control (Roberto Dekony), RPM Coordinator (Katherine Gómez), Logistic Director (Francisco Pérez), Instructor Lead (Joseline García), Counselor Lead (Shelisa Bermudez), Nurse Lead (Daisy Ramos), Cadre Supervisor (Michael Rodriguez), Management Information System (Amaury Centeno), Food Service Administrator

(Armando Colón), cadres (in service of the National Guard of Puerto Rico), and other staff such as teachers and other employees. Almost every management employee has been interviewed and asked to explain about their main task in the program, and as an addition, their opinion on the programs' objectives. The function of the program director is to administrate the program, such as the management of the program and administrative and operational tasks and her main personal objective: *"Our priority is to rescue at-risk youth who have dropped out of high school and give them a second chance to grow on an academic level and we provide the 8 core components to make them better citizens".* The deputy director supports the program director in her duties and with policies, as well as standard operation procedures and he runs the operational part of the program. As an objective he states: *"Our vision is to reclaim youth at risk and make them join the academy to create good citizens and make them gain values to become different people in their community".* The program coordinator runs the operations of the program such as calendars, planning, and activities that put the program on a running basis, day by day. His main objective is: *"The mission is to train each drop out and give them the tools to be successful".* The budget analyst verifies the program budget, keeps the financial balance, discusses and proposes the budgets coming with the NGB in the U.S. His main objective in the program is "*To foresee youth between 16 to 18 years old to learn to live life by teaching them the right tools".* The training coordinator coordinates trainings that involve staff of the program, he gives them all the necessary tools so that they are able to do their work well and prepare them for participation in the program. His second task is quality insurance such as inspection of the barracks. His main objective: *"Give back that missing structure that the youth needs in their near future".* The RPM coordinator is responsible for the recruitment, placement, and mentoring of the cadets and coordinating all activities around that. Her objective: *"Rescue young people who are potential candidates for the program, take them out of their community and give them hope to continue with the next phase in their lives."* The instructor lead is the academic director of the program, her main task is the regulation of the given education, oversee the purchase of NGB equipment. Her objective on the program is: *"To offer school dropouts regulations so that they can return to live their lives in their own way, which could include study, work, or community service. At least integrated again in the society with the necessary skills to be a responsible citizen."* The counsellor lead takes care of the emotional stability of the youth during their whole period in the program, this includes mental, health, socially and with their family." Her objective is: *"To rescue at risk youth who do not have external opportunities to be able to follow their goals or to get to know their own skills and we give them a second chance."* The nurse lead is the

supervisor of everything that has to do with the medical department, such as preparation of medications, contact with relatives, file documentation, and speak with the cadets about their treatment and conditions. Her objective of the program includes: *"That the young person comes out of the program as a different person and we want to help society where we can."* The cadre supervisor is responsible for the 24/7 security of the cadets and teach them values of life as they do in the army, such as honour, integrity, loyalty, personal courage, and self service. His objective: *"Making better citizens, we have to teach them that they have to give more to the community as the community gives you something and you have to give something back."* The food service administrator is responsible for the service of food; breakfast, lunch and dinner. He creates the menu's, arranges the logistics of the external services, and manages the team. His objective: *"Rescue young people who do not want to go to school and have negative thinking."*

The total endurance of the program is 17 months, which includes a Pre-ChalleNGe phase of 2 weeks, a Residential phase of 20 weeks, and a Post-residential phase of 1 year. As the project works with a semi-military discipline, the boys wear their hair short and the girls have their hair in a bun, they wear military uniforms, and are referred to as cadets. In the Residential phase, various activities are organised concerning the 8 core components of the program: *leadership, responsible citizenship, service to community, life coping skills, physical fitness, health, nutrition, and sexual education, job skills and academic excellence.* Next to these activities, they are educated to obtain a General Educational Development (GED) certificate, a high school diploma or get the permission to return to high school (National Guard Youth Foundation A, n.d.). Using a target of 400 graduates per year, PRYCA always performs above target with an average of 225 graduates per cycle and 2 cycles per year (PRYCA, 2016). The program has the following admission criteria to enter the program; voluntary entry, age must be between 16 and 18 years old, not enrolled in school for at least 6 months, at least accomplished 9th grade, free of drugs, unemployed or low-income employment, and legal resident of the U.S. and its territories.

The outcomes of interviewing the staff of the program show that the 8 core components are the main tools with which they work. They all stand behind this method of education and most of them agree that the youth in the program develops their interests in the 8 components after being in the program for a longer period of time. A part that was missing concerning most of the staff was the dedication of the parents in the lives of their children and their dedication to the program. As William Sanchez (Program

coordinator) pointed out: *"We need to have more workshops with the parents, we need to try to find what is going on in each family so that we can prepare the cadet to the circumstance of the problem that he will find in his home."* The program involves parents by giving them a clear introduction at the beginning of the process, by organizing meetings throughout the whole period of participation of their child, they let the cadets send postcards, and make sure they receive something back. As Shelisa Bermudes (Counselor lead) stated: *"I do not only focus on the cadet, I focus on the whole family. That is why we organize activities for the relatives and the cadets together, so that the family can see how their child is doing."* The most striking aspect that came out of the interviews is that every staff member agreed on the same element that makes the program work: 'collaboration'. In every interview 'collaboration' turned out to be the key element to represent the program, as Joseline García (Instructor lead) stated: *"The key of this program is the passion and vocation in which we work together."* Management and employees all agree that having a good collaboration between staff results in a positive reflection on the cadets, which means that their motivation and performances improve. The military structure as well came out as a positive element of the program, staff agreed that the structure and discipline of a military focus has a positive outcome on the cadets. As Joseline García states: *"The quasi-military discipline gives a structure to the students that will support them for the rest of their lives."*

The degree of contribution to PRYCA of the 8 core components
In this section the first sub research question will be answered: What are the 8 core components of PRYCA and how does the program apply them? To answer this question, interviews and surveys were conducted with almost every member of the management team and several staff members of the program.

As stated in the first part of this chapter, the 8 core components are the running elements of the program, all staff members agree on that. Every component contributes to the program as a separate element. After observing the program and being in contact with cadets and staff members of PRYCA, it became clear to which extent and in which way every element participate in the program. To learn about *leadership*, every week another cadet gets the lead in his or her peloton, this person organizes the group when they marge from one place to the other within the area of the program. As well, this person asks for permission to teachers if it is allowed for the peloton to enter the classroom and so on. Every cadet does 40 hours of *community service* during the residential phase of the program to learn about *responsible citizenship* and to take

responsibility for the community around them and for themselves. Katherine Gómez (RPM coordinator) pointed out that service to the community as well helps the cadet to get work experience that helps them finding a job after graduation or university. The next component, *job skills*, which includes a RPM course, where they learn how to write an application, how to behave at a job interview, and they get the chance to think about their goals in live. Having a structured living environment, such as following a tight and structured day-to-day schedule, gives the cadet the chance to learn about *life coping skills*. As well they learn about how to deal with their emotions, by receiving guidance from their personal mentor. *Physical Fitness* is being applied during the morning ritual, before the cadets have breakfast they have a physical training and several physical activities are organized where the cadets can voluntarily participate in. One of these activities is the Turkey Run, which was organized while the researcher was visiting PRYCA. Physical Fitness is followed by *health, nutrition, and sexual education*, this component should make sure that the right decisions are made concerning the type of food that is served. *Academic excellence*, the last component has the largest share in the program and includes high school; the cadets follow classes every day from 8.30h to 15.30h.

PRYCA uses a strategy that includes counselling and mentoring during the complete period of the program and a year after graduation, which corresponds with the theory that school dropouts should be approached in a personalized an special way as they all have a unique background. As every person that enters the program has a unique background, they could all be placed on different levels in the Pyramid of Maslow. One of the outcomes of the interviews with staff is that their good collaboration is projected on the youth in the program; this gives the youth a sense of belongingness and affiliation, which corresponds with the level of 'social needs' in the Pyramid of Maslow. Most of the persons entering the program have graduation as their main goal, which fits with the level of 'esteem needs' where the need for achievement, recognition, and success is visible. The level of 'safety needs' is being fulfilled by the component *physical fitness* and via the guidance they receive through mentoring during the Residential phase. The RPM department of PRYCA takes care of the need for self-actualization by providing an hour per week of RPM classis, which partly includes the formation of live goals on a short- and long-term period.

When analysing the questionnaires and interviews with staff members, all agree on the fact that every cadet comes to PRYCA with graduation as a main purpose and that there

is definitely space for improvement of the 8 core components. When asking the staff about how they think the program is performing, they all react positive, though there is always space for improvement and most of them point out exactly what they think needs to be done. For *leadership* and *community service* counts that not all cadets get the possibility to complete these components since these are not sufficiently offered by the program. Armando Colón (Food Service Administrator) explained that the breakfast and lunch is organized and financed by the state, the dinner is his responsibility, he states: *"All food they eat is integral, which they do not like as they are not used to this type of food, I even do not like it."* He as well points out that he agrees on the fact that there is not enough food to serve; especially in the mornings the food is too light. One of the staff members stated that there should be levels in which the program educates as every person that enters has a different background. When looking at the class sizes, concerning Fernando Quinones (Deputy Manager) the amount of cadets in the classes at PRYCA are too large compared to the size of the classrooms and he would like to expand the territory of the program, this corresponds with the theory about this subject, Gallagher (2011) states that small class sizes are needed in order to create individual attention. The outcomes of the interviews done with staff of PRYCA show that the connection with the surrounding community is not developed in the way they would want to. PRYCA organizes workshops for parents, does its best to involve them by organizing events, and motivate parents to send postcards to their children but still most of the respondents in the interviews agree that there should be improvement in involving parents in the program.

Awareness and support of the 8 core components by participating youth
This section elaborates on the research done with the participating students and the graduated students of PRYCA. Several questions that were asked in the questionnaires are analysed in order to find out the degree of awareness of the cadets towards the 8 core components and to what extend do the components help them through the program.

When asking the participating students to name the 8 core components of the program, 87,5 per cent filled in all components, this means that 12,5 per cent missed out on 1 or more of the components. This number shows that a great part of the participating students is aware of what the program wants to teach them, which results in a great dedication of the students towards PRYCA. Another striking outcome is that even though the staff of the program is convinced that the students are mostly linked to the

component *academic excellence*, this component stands on the 5th position in the row of component awareness of the students. Reason could be that the questionnaires were conducted 1,5 month after the cadets started with the Residential phase, which means that their opinion on which components are important in their lives change. It is as well possible that the staff is not fully aware of what the students find important, thus that they think that *academic excellence* is the most important component but in reality the students care more about *community service*. *Responsible citizenship* was the most forgotten component by far, as shown in table 1, 8,2 per cent did not include this one, which is understandable as 'citizenship' is a far more abstract concept then the other components.

Table 1

Included and not included core components by participating youth

	Included in %	Non included in %
Responsible Citizenship	91,8	8,2
Physical Fitness	96,6	3,4
Job Skills	97,0	3,0
Academic Excellence	97,4	2,6
Leadership	98,3	1,7
Life Coping Skills	98,3	1,7
Health, Nutrition, and Sexual Education	98,7	1,3
Community services	98,7	1,3

To give an overall view of the how the program performs, the drop out rates of the program are specified. Since the start of the program in 1999 there have been a total 5,320 persons graduated from PRYCA. In the first year of operation, 103 out of 111 students graduated (92,8 per cent), in the last cycle in 2016/2017 (the cycle that ran throughout the research period) 225 out of 257 students graduated (87 per cent). The average percentage of students graduating from PRYCA in the last 16 years was 89 per cent. As PRYCA only accepts voluntary entry, the youth that enters is already at a point where they themselves want to develop and accomplish something in life. By interviewing several staff members, it became clear that the type of person that applies for PRYCA is not situated at the bottom of the ladder in life and they already have the courage and motivation to move forward. This means that they, at the moment they enter the program, are already steps ahead compared to youth that dropped out of high

school without any motivation to go back to school. The fact that they are situated in this position could be of influence on the graduation rates of the program. It is unclear what aspect has given these persons the drive to apply for PRYCA after being a high school dropout. As children that drop out of school are more likely to use drugs and alcohol, engage in violent and criminal behaviour, and join gangs (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency, 1999), the youth that applies for PRYCA can be seen as very brave and full of perseverance. One of the cadets in the program explained his motivation for the program: *"I wanted to improve my life and therefore quit smoking weed 2 weeks before the project started, every morning I trained for 45 minutes and drank lemon to get the weed out of my body. At this moment I am very proud of what I have achieved, I am even 1 of the 5 cadets that is nominated for cadet of the month!"*

Most of the participating students (15,5 per cent) agreed that the educational part or the program is the most positive element, although this component was not ranked mong the highest when analysing the component awareness. As well when asking the graduated youth, which aspects improved most after graduating, the most given answer was 'education' (27,3 per cent). Becoming a responsible citizen is as well one of the most named positive elements, which is striking since the participating youth scored lowest in awareness of this component. Reason for this difference could be that the youth does not realize that it is one of the components, though they do see the importance of it. The complete list of what the participating youth finds positive about the program can be found in Appendix 8. The most negative element of PRYCA contains, far above the others, 'not enough food' (27,2 per cent), which matches the opinion of Armando Colón (Food Service Administrator). As he points out that most of the food is financed by the state, this problem comes from higher up in the hierarchy. It is unclear if the management team of the program tried to solve this problem already but did not succeed because of the lack of control or there is still something to be done by the management team. The remaining list can be found in Appendix 9. In table 2 can be seen how PRYCA is performing with placing students a year after graduation. An average of 28 students out of 220 students per year was not placed, translating this into percentages this includes that an average of 87,1 per cent of all graduates in the period between the first cycle of 2013 to the first cycle of 2016 was actually placed.

Table 2
Amount of placed graduates per cycle, divided by placement after 12 months of graduation

	Class 1301	Class 1302	Class 1401	Class 1402	Class 1501	Class 1502	Class 1601 (6th month)
University/ vocational training	161	140	151	129	151	129	165
Work	38	34	45	32	36	57	30
Military service	2	2	2	2	6	2	1
Community service	5	3	3	5	2	5	5
Total not placed	26	41	23	25	28	32	24
Total students	232	220	224	193	223	225	225

To answer the second sub research question, the strategy of PRYCA with its 8 core components definitely support the youth in achieving their goals since the outcomes of this research show that the participating youth is generally aware of what the program stands for, including the 8 core components. As well, they are very positive towards the program offered by PRYCA and the rates of graduation and placement are high.

The effect of PRYCA on the QOL of participating youth

The participating and the graduated youth both define QOL as 'their way to live life'. *Their* way to live life is a broad concept but when looking to some of the other answers given, it could be interpreted as an overall meaning for what they actually want to point out, which includes health, responsibility, future and goals, family, work, economics, values, education, community service, quite life, and physical fitness (see appendix 7 and 10). When placing all elements together in one definition on QOL formulated by the youth, it would be as followed: *"QOL means to live my live my way by succeeding my values, be responsible for everything that I find important and work on my future goals."* The theory of QOL on an individual level shows that there are 8 areas that describe the phenomenon of QOL; material well-being, physical well-being, emotional well-being, rights, social inclusion, interpersonal relations, self-determination, and personal development. When looking to the definition of the youth on QOL, not all theoretical areas are countable for every person, though all areas are mentioned when looking at the given answers in Appendix 7. The answers of the youth when asking which components contribute most to their QOL matches with the definition of the participating youth on QOL, as can be seen in table 3. *Health, nutrition and sexual Education* stands on top of the list with 66,4 per cent for both participating and graduated youth which corresponds with their answers on the question about what does QOL means in their eyes. When looking at the components that need the most

improvement, *health, nutrition and sexual education* stands again almost on top of the list for the participating youth with 17,7 per cent (see table 3). As one of the respondents that participates in the program stated: *"Negative elements of the program are that we shower with a time limit, they do not allow us to shave, and we do not receive enough food."* Thus, when comparing these results, it turns out that the most important aspect in QOL concerning the youth is at the same time the component of which they think, needs the most improvement in PRYCA. This outcome could leads us towards three conclusions; 1) PRYCA does not contribute enough to the most important value of the youth. 2) Because the youth find this aspect of such importance, they set the bar high and expect more for this component. 3) This value is important for them because they run against it every day (not enough food or time for personal hygiene) and people always want what they do not have.

Table 3

To what extend do the components need improvement, participating youth in per cent

	Yes	No
Community services	19	81
Health, Nutrition, and Sexual Education	17,7	82,3
Academic Excellence	11,6	88,4
Leadership	9,1	90,9
Physical Fitness	8,2	91,8
Responsible Citizenship	6,5	93,5
Life Skills	5,6	94,4
Job Skills	3,9	96,1

Table 4

Contribution core components to QOL by the participating youth in percentages

	A lot	Quite a bit	In between	Little	Barely	No response
Health, Nutrition, and Sexual Education	66,4	20,3	9,5	0,9	1,3	1,7
Physical Fitness	65,5	24,6	5,6	0,4	1,7	2,2
Life Skills	49,6	39,2	5,6	1,7	0,9	3
Responsible Citizenship	44,4	38,4	6,9	2,2	0,9	7,3
Community services	41,8	37,9	11,6	2,6	3,0	3,0

Leadership	39,7	38,4	13,8	2,6	3,0	2,6
Job Skills	39,2	41,8	12,5	2,2	0,9	3,4
Academic Excellence	34,9	42,2	15,1	4,3	1,7	1,7

When combining the answers of 'a lot' and 'quite a bit', a difference in order appears (table 5), *physical fitness* stands on top of the list with 90,1 per cent, followed by *life skills* with 88,8 per cent and after that comes *health, nutrition, and sexual citizenship* with 86,7 per cent, which was positioned on top in table 3. As the answers 'quite a bit' and 'a lot' lay very near to each other, this table could be as well interpret seriously. Still *health, nutrition, and sexual education* is positioned in the upper part of the list, of which can be concluded that it is still considered as an important component. Though, *physical fitness* is positioned on top, which correlates with the view the youth has on QOL. The same counts for *life skills*, where for the question on QOL the most frequently given answer was: "the way to live my life." The outcomes of the graduated youth are of great difference as *academic excellence* stands on top of the table with 68,2 per cent, as can be seen in table 6. This difference might have appeared since these students are now studying and have a greater realization of the importance of this component.

Table 5

Contribution core components to QOL by participating youth in percentage - combined

	A lot/ Quite a bit	In between	Little/ Barely
Physical Fitness	90,1	5,6	2,1
Life Skills	88,8	5,6	2,6
Health, Nutrition, and Sexual Education	86,7	9,5	2,2
Responsible Citizenship	82,8	6,9	3,1
Job Skills	81	12,5	3,1
Community services	79,7	11,6	5,6
Leadership	78,1	13,8	5,6
Academic Excellence	77,1	15,1	6

Table 6

Contribution core components to QOL by graduated youth in percentage - combined

	A lot/ In		Little/	No response

	Quite a bit	between	Barely	
Responsible Citizenship	68,2	0,0	0,0	31,8
Academic Excellence	68,2	9,1	10,0	22,7
Leadership	68,2	4,5	9	18,2
Community services	59,1	9,1	4,5	27,3
Health, Nutrition, and Sexual Education	59,1	4,5	4,5	31,8
Life Skills	54,6	4,5	0,0	40,9
Physical Fitness	40,9	27,3	13,6	31,8
Job Skills	36,3	4,5	4,5	54,5

Overall, youth have a very positive attitude towards the contribution of the components to their QOL. When asking the participating youth the question if they think PRYCA contributes to their QOL, 97per cent answered with 'yes', 2,6 per cent with partially, and 0,4 per cent with 'no'. As well the graduated youth scored high answering this question, 90,9 per cent answered 'yes', 9,1 per cent 'partially', and no one with 'no'. Concerning the components, not only *health, nutrition and sexual education* received high ranked answers, almost all components were ranked as 'quite a bit' and 'a lot' and almost none were ranked 'barely' or 'a little' when looking to the contribution to QOL. One of the respondents who currently participates in the program stated: *"Because of PRYCA we will have more success in our lives. Many of us came from the streets and this program helps us to become a better citizen."* At least 80 per cent of the participating youth agrees that there is no improvement needed for any of the components, the graduated youth (with a lot less respondents) has a minimum of 63,6 per cent that agrees on no improvement necessity, which is still more then half of the respondents. Another important fact is that 43,5 per cent of the respondents did not fill in anything when asking which component could be improved. When asking the graduated youth to what extend PRYCA had an effect or change their values in life, 50 per cent agrees that PRYCA had 'a lot' of influence on their lives, 36,4 per cent chose for 'quite a bit', 9,1 per cent 'in between', 0,0 per cent 'a little', and 4,5 per cent 'barely'. These outcomes again show that PRYCA has a positive impact on the lives of youth and, more important, the youth as well recognize this positive impact. The overall opinion of both groups on the contribution of PRYCA towards their QOL is extremely positive and as well their overall view on the program is very optimistic. Concerning the participating and graduated youth, the 8 core

components definitely improve their QOL. The negative aspects mentioned are daily confronts and structural, which means that only small adjustments will increase their well-being such as more food, more time for personal hygiene, and more time to eat.

Conclusion

School dropouts have a higher perspective of becoming dissatisfied with their lives, be depressed, and feel isolated and therefore have a lower QOL. As well, school dropouts have a negative influence on their own lives, their community, and the community they live in. For these reasons it could be stated that it is very reasonable for governments to set up intervention programs to solve the problem. As pointed out in the theoretical framework, negative effects of school dropouts on society include: national income, lower tax revenues, higher demand on social services, more crime, and poorer health levels (Levin, 1972). This theory supports the fact that school dropouts are of large influence on the economic, social and political well-being of a country and therefore an intervention program such as PRYCA is definitely needed. The drop out rate in Puerto Rico could be calculated from different perspectives as specified in the contextualization of this report, though every high school dropout is one too many and therefore every intervention program has an alibi. When combining this theory with the results of this research in chapter 3, it appears that PRYCA is an organization that contributes to the QOL of Puerto Rican youth that dropped out of high school by using its 8 core components. The components they use are all widely accepted and the main part of respondents supports this way of solving the drop out problem in Puerto Rico. As well the staff working at PRYCA is very positive about the functionality of the program and all of them support the 8 core components. Due to the participating youth, graduated youth and the staff there are several aspects of the program that could be improved such as the component *health, nutrition, and sexual education*, though these aspects are not large enough for them to create a negative opinion or to state that the program does not improve their QOL.

It does appear that it is more beneficial and cost-effective to have intervention programs that support students that are at-risk instead of taking care of them after they drop out of school. Despite the preventive programs, intervention programs for youth that already dropped out of school are always needed and PRYCA is one of them. The part that is striking after accomplishing this research is the fact that there are different numbers published on school dropouts in Puerto Rico, which causes concerns on the level of support coming from the government for this problem. Taking PRYCA as an example, all cycles are filled up and besides PRYCA there are plenty of intervention programs operating on the island. Staff at PRYCA all agree on the fact that the program runs very well since the rates on students that graduate and the rates on students that are placed within a year after graduation are high, for PRYCA counts that this could be

the case because of the fact that the youth enters the program voluntarily. For the other programs on the island, there is no research done on the reason behind high graduation rates.

In their strategy, PRYCA uses all 8 areas that are described in the theory on QOL by Schalock, et al. (2016) in the first chapter of this paper; material well-being, physical well-being, emotional well-being, rights, social inclusion, interpersonal relations, self-determination, and personal development are areas that are all included in the strategy by using the 8 core components. As well in the second chapter, where the context of Puerto Rico is described, it shows that the QOL of youth in Puerto Rico does decreases when they do not follow education. The participating and graduated youth are generally very positive about the program when looking to awareness of the 8 core components and the degree of contribution of these components to their QOL. Combining the fact that the strategy of PRYCA is accepted by the youth and that it matches with the scientific theory on the subject shows that the PRCYA definitely contributes to the QOL of youth in Puerto Rico. Most of the intervention programs are being rated due to objective criteria to check if they have a quality feature, though the aspects that are less easy to measure from an objective point of view are the ones that are more difficult to measure objectively, which are love, warmth and involvement of the personnel towards the youth. Out of the interviews in this research came that this was one of the main objectives and tools to run a good working program.

Based on the results and limitations of this research, a number of recommendations are given regarding the continuation of research on this subject. Restrictions of this research is to broaden the group of graduated youth to a higher amount of respondents and to change the questioning in the surveys to a less suggestive manner, in this way the reliability and feasibility of the research could be improved. Methodologically, it is advisable to base future research on the difference between current operating programs for school dropouts. In the current research the subject is partly described in chapter 2, though it could be interesting to investigate which project works more efficient and has better outcomes and therewith, which methodology could be applied best. It could be interesting to do research on the difference between youth entering the program, check it after 1 month and check it by the end of the program. More research could be done on other intervention programs on the island to find out the reason behind the high dropout rates of these programs. Anther interesting topic to do research on could be,

when students would not enter voluntarily, if PRYCA would still have the same graduation rates.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Cuestionario PRYCA para jóvenes en el proyecto

Mi nombre es Kim Szerman y soy estudiante en la Universidad de Leiden en Holanda, cursando el Master de Estudios Latinoamericanos. Actualmente estoy escribiendo mi tesis y mi pregunta principal de investigación es:

¿Cuáles son los componentes operacionales y no operacionales de PRYCA y hasta qué punto sus 8 componentes centrales contribuyen a la calidad de vida de los jóvenes?

Para responder a esta pregunta de investigación, ¡necesito su ayuda! Bajo aquí encontrarás un cuestionario, tus respuestas a estas preguntas me ayudarán a escribir mi tesis y no menos importante, ayudaré al programa en su desarrollo. Muchas gracias por su apoyo y si tiene alguna pregunta o si cree que podría tener información para mí uso que sea valiosa para mi investigación, no dude en ponerse en contacto conmigo. **Su respuesta a este cuestionario es anónima y se mantiene totalmente confidencial.**

1. ¿Sexo?
   o Femenino
   o Masculino

2. ¿Edad?
   o 16 años
   o 17 años
   o 18 años
   o otro: _____

3. ¿Educación: qué grado has completado?
   o Grado 9
   o Grado 10
   o Grado 11
   o Otro:_____

4. ¿Crees que PRYCA contribuirá a tu calidad de vida?

o Si

o Parcialmente

o No

5. ¿Podrías nombrar los 8 componentes centrales del PRYCA?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

6. ¿Hasta qué punto los 8 componentes centrales han contribuido a tu calidad de vida?

Componente	Apenas	Poco	Ni mucho Ni poco	Bastante	Muchísimo
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					
6.					
7.					
8.					

7. ¿Mirando los 8 componentes centrales, hay alguno de ellos que haya perdurado? En caso afirmativo, ¿cuál?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

8. ¿Según tu visión, qué significa calidad de vida?

_____

_____

9. ¿Cuál son los elementos positivos del PRYCA?

_____

_____

10. ¿Cuál son los elementos negativos del PRYCA?

_____

_____

11. Mi pregunta central de investigación es:

¿Cuáles son los componentes operativos y no operativos del PRYCA y hasta qué punto sus 8 componentes centrales contribuyen a la calidad de vida de los jóvenes?

Si tienes cualquier información adicional importante que podría utilizar para responder a esta pregunta de investigación, puedes mencionarla aquí y será muy bienvenida:

_____

_____

Cuestionario PRYCA para jóvenes graduados

Mi nombre es Kim Szerman y soy estudiante en la Universidad de Leiden en Holanda, cursando el Master de Estudios Latinoamericanos. Actualmente estoy escribiendo mi tesis y mi pregunta principal de investigación es:

¿Cuáles son los componentes operacionales y no operacionales de PRYCA y hasta qué punto sus 8 componentes centrales contribuyen a la calidad de vida de los jóvenes?

Para responder a esta pregunta de investigación, ¡necesito su ayuda! Bajo aquí encontrarás un cuestionario, tus respuestas a estas preguntas me ayudarán a escribir mi tesis y no menos importante, ayudaré al programa en su desarrollo. Muchas gracias por su apoyo y si tiene alguna pregunta o si cree que podría tener información para mí uso que sea valiosa para mi investigación, no dude en ponerse en contacto conmigo. **Su respuesta a este cuestionario es anónima y se mantiene totalmente confidencial.**

12. ¿Genero?
   - o   Femenino
   - o   Masculino

13. ¿Edad?
   - o   16 años
   - o   17 años
   - o   18 años
   - o   otro: _____

14. ¿Cuál es tu situación de vida actual?
   - o   Trabajo
   - o   Instituto
   - o   Universidad
   - o   Ejército
   - o   Otro:_____

15. ¿Piensas que PRYCA contribuyó a tu calidad de vida?

o Sí

o Parcialmente

o No

16. ¿Podrías nombrar los 8 componentes centrales del PRYCA?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

17. ¿Hasta qué punto los 8 componentes centrales han contribuido a tu calidad de vida?

Componente	Apenas	Poco	Ni mucho Ni poco	Bastante	Muchísimo
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					
6.					
7.					
8.					

18. ¿Mirando los 8 componentes centrales, hay alguno de ellos que necesite mas desarrollo? En caso afirmativo, ¿cuál?

o _____
o _____
o _____
o _____
o _____
o _____

- ○ _____
- ○ _____

19. ¿Según tu visión, qué significa calidad de vida?

_____

_____

20. ¿Cuál son los elementos positivos del PRYCA?

_____

_____

21. ¿Cuál son los elementos negativos del PRYCA?

_____

_____

22. ¿En qué medida el haber participado en el PRYCA afecto
    o cambio tus valores?
    - ○ Apenas
    - ○ Poco
    - ○ Ni mucho ni poco
    - ○ Bastante
    - ○ Muchísimo

23. ¿Que aspectos de tu vida han mejorado después de que te graduaste en el PRYCA?

_____

_____

24. Mi pregunta central de investigación es:

¿Cuáles son los componentes operativos y no operativos del PRYCA y hasta qué punto sus 8 componentes centrales contribuyen a la calidad de vida de los jóvenes?

Si tienes cualquier información adicional importante que podría utilizar para responder a esta pregunta de investigación, puedes mencionarla aquí y será muy bienvenida:

_____

_____

Appendix 3

Interviewee	Function	Discussed topics	Place and date	Duration
Ana Helvia Quintero and Rafael L. Irizarry	University of Puerto Rico, department of Education – professors and researchers	Knowledge and opinion on PRYCA - contribution PRYCA of school dropouts in PR - obtain contact information of the Ministry of Education.	University of Puerto Rico – San Juan, 30-11-2016	63.27min
Orville Disdier	Institute of Statistics, Department of Education, Puerto Rico - Senior project manager	General and in depth information about school dropouts in PR and in comprehension with PRYCA.	PRYCA (telephone), 19-12-2016	35 min
Matilde Almodovar Acosta	PRYCA - Program Director	Core tasks - goals and missions of PRYCA, the youth and the difference between the two groups - possible improvements of goals/ missions/ core components - working- and non working components of PRYCA - objective towards quality of life - the use of military discipline	PRYCA, 5-12-2016/ 19-12-2016	PRYCA, 32.59min/ 23.24min
Fernando Quiñones	PRYCA - Deputy Director	Same as above	PRYCA, 25-11-2016/ 19-12-2016	50.59/ 30.43min
Katherine Gómez	PRYCA - RPM Coordinator	Same as above	PRYCA, 8-12-2016	71min
Joseline García	PRYCA - Instructor Lead	Same as above	PRYCA, 19-12-2016	14.21min
Michael Rodriguez	PRYCA - Cadre Leader	Same as above	PRYCA, 8-12-2016	24.46min
Roberto Dekony	PRYCA - Training Coordinator/ Quality insurance	Same as above	PRYCA, 13-12-2016	41.18min
Luis Torres	PRYCA - Budget Analyst	Same as above	PRYCA, 13-12-2016	39.36min
Shelisa Bermudez	PRYCA - Counsellor Lead	Same as above	PRYCA, 13-12-2016	44.50min
William Sánchez	PRYCA - Program	Same as above	PRYCA, 14-	35.02min

	Coordinator		12-2016	
Daisy Ramos	PRYCA - Nurse Lead	Same as above	PRYCA, 14-12-2016	9.31min
Armando Colón	PRYCA - Food Service Administrator	Same as above	PRYCA, 15-12-2017	8.39min
Melissa Torres	PRYCA - Teacher	Same as above	PRYCA, 14-12-2016	9.08min
Angel Bernaldi	PRYCA - Employee RPM	Same as above	PRYCA, 20-12-2016	10.21min
Hector Milán	PRYCA - Mentoring office	Same as above	PRYCA, 8-12-2016	3.22min

Encuesta contratistas PRYCA

Mi nombre es Kim Szerman y soy estudiante en la Universidad de Leiden en Holanda, cursando el Master de Estudios Latinoamericanos. Actualmente estoy escribiendo mi tesis y mi pregunta principal de investigación es:

¿Cuáles son los componentes operacionales y no operacionales de PRYCA y hasta qué punto sus 8 componentes centrales contribuyen a la calidad de vida de los jóvenes?

Para responder a esta pregunta de investigación, ¡necesito su ayuda! Bajo aquí encontrarás un cuestionario, tus respuestas a estas preguntas me ayudarán a escribir mi tesis y no menos importante, ayudaré al programa en su desarrollo. Muchas gracias por su apoyo y si tiene alguna pregunta o si cree que podría tener información para mí uso que sea valiosa para mi investigación, no dude en ponerse en contacto conmigo. **Su respuesta a este cuestionario es anónima y se mantiene totalmente confidencial.**

1. ¿Para qué departamento de PRYCA está trabajando?
   - Profesores
   - Cadres
   - Logística
   - RPM (Recruitment Placement Mentor)
   - Control de Calidad
   - Departamento Enfermería
   - Departamento Administrativo
   - Departamento Académico
   - Departamento de Consejería
   - Administrador del Servicio de Alimentos
   - Supervisor del Cadres
   - Consejero Líder
   - Instructor Líder
   - Director Logística
   - Coordinador RPM (Recruitment Placement Mentor)
   - Coordinador de Adiestramiento / Control de Calidad
   - Analista de Presupuesto
   - Coordinador Administrativo

- ○ Coordinador del Programa
- ○ Sub Director
- ○ Director del programa
- ○ Otro:_____

2. ¿Cuanto llevas trabajando en el programa?

   _____

3. ¿Piensas que PRYCA contribuyó a la calidad de vida de los jóvenes?
   - ○ Si
   - ○ Parcialmente
   - ○ No

4. ¿Podrías nombrar los 8 componentes centrales del PRYCA?
   1. _____
   2. _____
   3. _____
   4. _____
   5. _____
   6. _____
   7. _____
   8. _____

5. ¿Hasta qué punto los 8 componentes centrales, según usted, han contribuido a la calidad de vida de los jóvenes?

Componente	Apenas	Poco	Ni mucho Ni poco	Bastante	Muchísimo
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					
6.					

7.					
8.					

6. ¿Mirando los 8 componentes centrales, hay alguno de ellos que necesite mas desarrollo? En caso afirmativo, ¿cuál?

   1. _____
   2. _____
   3. _____
   4. _____
   5. _____
   6. _____
   7. _____
   8. _____

¿Por   que?:

_____

_____

7. La definición sobre la calidad de vida de la Organización Mundial de la Salud (OMS) es la siguiente:

   "Las percepciones de los individuos sobre su posición en la vida en el contexto de la cultura y los sistemas de valores en los que viven y en relación con sus metas, expectativas, estándares y preocupaciones."

   ¿Está usted de acuerdo con la definición mencionada anteriormente de la OMS?
   o Si, por que: _____

   _____

   o No, por que: _____

   _____

8. ¿Cree usted que PRYCA sigue la definición de la OMS?
   o Si, por que: _____

   _____

   No, por que: _____

   _____

9. Mi pregunta central de investigación es:

¿Cuáles son los componentes operacionales y no operacionales del PRYCA y hasta qué punto sus 8 componentes centrales contribuyen a la calidad de vida de los jóvenes?

Si tienes cualquier información adicional importante que podría utilizar para responder a esta pregunta de investigación, puedes mencionarla aquí y será muy bienvenida:

_____

_____

Cuestionario PRYCA para jóvenes en el proyecto

Mi nombre es Kim Szerman y soy estudiante en la Universidad de Leiden en Holanda, cursando el Master de Estudios Latinoamericanos. Actualmente estoy escribiendo mi tesis y mi pregunta principal de investigación es:

¿Cuáles son los componentes operacionales y no operacionales de PRYCA y hasta qué punto sus 8 componentes centrales contribuyen a la calidad de vida de los jóvenes?

Para responder a esta pregunta de investigación, ¡necesito su ayuda! Bajo aquí encontrarás un cuestionario, tus respuestas a estas preguntas me ayudarán a escribir mi tesis y no menos importante, ayudaré al programa en su desarrollo. Muchas gracias por su apoyo y si tiene alguna pregunta o si cree que podría tener información para mí uso que sea valiosa para mi investigación, no dude en ponerse en contacto conmigo. **Su respuesta a este cuestionario es anónima y se mantiene totalmente confidencial.**

1. ¿Sexo?
   - Femenino
   - Masculino

2. ¿Edad?
   a. 16 años
   b. 17 años
   c. 18 años
   d. otro: _____

3. ¿Educación: qué grado has completado?
   a. Grado 9
   b. Grado 10
   c. Grado 11
   d. Otro:_____

4. ¿Crees que PRYCA contribuirá a tu calidad de vida?
   a. Si
   b. Parcialmente
   c. No

5. ¿Podrías nombrar los 8 componentes centrales del PRYCA?
   1. _____
   2. _____
   3. _____
   4. _____
   5. _____
   6. _____
   7. _____
   8. _____

6. ¿Hasta qué punto los 8 componentes centrales han contribuido a tu calidad de vida?

Componente	Apenas	Poco	Ni mucho Ni poco	Bastante	Muchísimo
1.					

2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					
6.					
7.					
8.					

7. ¿Mirando los 8 componentes centrales, hay alguno de ellos que haya perdurado? En caso afirmativo, ¿cuál?

   1. _____
   2. _____
   3. _____
   4. _____
   5. _____
   6. _____
   7. _____
   8. _____

8. ¿Según tu visión, qué significa calidad de vida?

_____
_____

9. ¿Cuál son los elementos positivos del PRYCA?

_____
_____

10. ¿Cuál son los elementos negativos del PRYCA?

_____
_____

11. Mi pregunta central de investigación es:

¿Cuáles son los componentes operativos y no operativos del PRYCA y hasta qué punto sus 8 componentes centrales contribuyen a la calidad de vida de los jóvenes?

Si tienes cualquier información adicional importante que podría utilizar para responder a esta pregunta de investigación, puedes mencionarla aquí y será muy bienvenida:

_____
_____

Cuestionario PRYCA para jóvenes graduados

Mi nombre es Kim Szerman y soy estudiante en la Universidad de Leiden en Holanda, cursando el Master de Estudios Latinoamericanos. Actualmente estoy escribiendo mi tesis y mi pregunta principal de investigación es:

¿Cuáles son los componentes operacionales y no operacionales de PRYCA y hasta qué punto sus 8 componentes centrales contribuyen a la calidad de vida de los jóvenes?

Para responder a esta pregunta de investigación, ¡necesito su ayuda! Bajo aquí encontrarás un cuestionario, tus respuestas a estas preguntas me ayudarán a escribir mi tesis y no menos importante, ayudaré al programa en su desarrollo. Muchas gracias por su apoyo y si tiene alguna pregunta o si cree que podría tener información para mí uso que sea valiosa para mi investigación, no dude en ponerse en contacto conmigo. **Su respuesta a este cuestionario es anónima y se mantiene totalmente confidencial.**

25. ¿Genero?
    o   Femenino
    o   Masculino

26. ¿Edad?
    o   16 años
    o   17 años
    o   18 años
    o   otro: _____

27. ¿Cuál es tu situación de vida actual?
    o   Trabajo
    o   Instituto
    o   Universidad
    o   Ejército
    o   Otro:_____

28. ¿Piensas que PRYCA contribuyó a tu calidad de vida?
    o   Sí
    o   Parcialmente
    o   No

29. ¿Podrías nombrar los 8 componentes centrales del PRYCA?
    1. _____
    2. _____
    3. _____
    4. _____
    5. _____
    6. _____
    7. _____
    8. _____

30. ¿Hasta qué punto los 8 componentes centrales han contribuido a tu calidad de vida?

Componente	Apenas	Poco	Ni mucho Ni poco	Bastante	Muchísimo

1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					
6.					
7.					
8.					

31. ¿Mirando los 8 componentes centrales, hay alguno de ellos que necesite mas desarrollo? En caso afirmativo, ¿cuál?

    1. _____
    2. _____
    3. _____
    4. _____
    5. _____
    6. _____
    7. _____
    8. _____

32. ¿Según tu visión, qué significa calidad de vida?

_____
_____

33. ¿Cuál son los elementos positivos del PRYCA?

_____
_____

34. ¿Cuál son los elementos negativos del PRYCA?

_____
_____

35. ¿En qué medida el haber participado en el PRYCA afecto o cambio tus valores?
    - Apenas
    - Poco
    - Ni mucho ni poco
    - Bastante
    - Muchísimo

36. ¿Que aspectos de tu vida han mejorado después de que te graduaste en el PRYCA?

_____
_____

37. Mi pregunta central de investigación es:

¿Cuáles son los componentes operativos y no operativos del PRYCA y hasta qué punto sus 8 componentes centrales contribuyen a la calidad de vida de los jóvenes?

Si tienes cualquier información adicional importante que podría utilizar para responder a esta pregunta de investigación, puedes mencionarla aquí y será muy bienvenida:

Appendix 7

Definition QOL concerning youth in program

Definition QOL?	Outcomes	%
Way of life	61	26,3
Healthy	36	15,5
Responsible	24	10,3
Future	16	6,9
Family	14	6,0
Work	14	6,0
Economics	13	5,6
Values	12	5,2
Good schooling	11	4,7
Community service	9	3,9
Quite life	8	3,4
Phisical fitness	7	3,0
Be happy	7	3,0
Money	6	2,6
Housing	6	2,6
Plenty of food	6	2,6
Respect society	5	2,2
Feel about myself	5	2,2
No worries	5	2,2
Good citizen	5	2,2
Dev. Human being	4	1,7
Personality	4	1,7
Higiene	4	1,7
Be positive	4	1,7
Achieve goals	4	1,7
A better world	4	1,7
Take care of body	3	1,3
Behaviour	3	1,3
Independent	3	1,3
8 components	3	1,3
Live with peace	3	1,3
Have discipline	3	1,3

Future Job	2	0,9
Survive life	2	0,9
Stay strong	2	0,9
Vision of life	2	0,9
Achievements	2	0,9
Organized	2	0,9
Security	2	0,9
No drugs	2	0,9
Something to wear	2	0,9
Make right decisions	2	0,9
Have resources	1	0,4
Sleep/eat/work/study	1	0,4
No money/ no material	1	0,4
Enjoy life	1	0,4
Time management	1	0,4
Prepared for problems	1	0,4
Be a millionaire	1	0,4
Routine in life	1	0,4
Emotional/ mental	1	0,4
Friens	1	0,4
Communication fam.	1	0,4
Leadership	1	0,4
Be prepared for life	1	0,4
Be in a good place	1	0,4
Live in the moment	1	0,4
What I need	1	0,4
Motivation	1	0,4
Think different	1	0,4
Comfortable	1	0,4
No criminality	1	0,4
Economy of country	1	0,4
Electricity	1	0,4
Stable life	1	0,4
Know how to live life	1	0,4
Be succesfull	1	0,4

New life/ new opp.	1	0,4
Memories with others	1	0,4
Principles	1	0,4
Support family	1	0,4
Discipline	1	0,4
Put good things in pract.	1	0,4

Appendix 8

Outcomes positive elements PRYCA concerning youth in program

Positive	Outcomes	%
Academics	36	15,5
Disciplined	32	13,8
Phisical fitness	31	13,4
Responsibility	21	9,1
Future/ move foreward	21	9,1
Leadership	20	8,6
Learn to respect	19	8,2
Become better person	19	8,2
Work in teams	13	5,6
Improve life	11	4,7
Community service	9	3,9
Job skills	8	3,4
Independent	8	3,4
Values	8	3,4
Motivation	7	3,0
Values family	7	3,0
Health	7	3,0
Teach about life	6	2,6
Always support cadet	6	2,6
Timemanagement	5	2,2
Cook well	5	2,2
Change behaviour	4	1,7
Live together	4	1,7
Prepare for life	3	1,3
Have goals	3	1,3
Organize	3	1,3
Way of thinking	3	1,3
Counselling	3	1,3
Be someone	3	1,3
Militar experience	3	1,3
Start new	3	1,3
Goals	2	0,9

Have diet	2	0,9
Positive approach	2	0,9
Teach good things in life	2	0,9
Change to positive attitude	2	0,9
Teachers	2	0,9
Sleep enough	2	0,9
Friends	1	0,4
Worry about health cadet	1	0,4
Saved my life	1	0,4
Follow instructions	1	0,4
Be an adult	1	0,4
Marches	1	0,4
Songs	1	0,4
Courage	1	0,4
Integrity	1	0,4
PRYCA has everything to change a person	1	0,4
Many activities	1	0,4
Learn to communicate	1	0,4
Routine	1	0,4
Open eyes for real life	1	0,4
Social life	1	0,4
Be productive in society	1	0,4
Be better youth for the world	1	0,4
Learn new things	1	0,4
No drugs	1	0,4
Best decision a youngster could make	1	0,4
Think about yourself	1	0,4
Cadres	1	0,4

Appendix 9

Outcomes negative elements PRYCA concerning youth in program

Negative	Outcomes	%
Not enough food	63	27,2
Nothing	40	17,2
Distance family	21	9,1
Red phase (pay for others)	16	6,9
Not enough free time	14	6,0
Not enough time for study	12	5,2
Not smoke	7	3,0
Not enough time to shower	6	2,6
Wake up too early	5	2,2
Scream	5	2,2
No use telephone	4	1,7
Fight between other cadets	4	1,7
Not enough time to rest	3	1,3
No connection opposite seks	3	1,3
Not speak	3	1,3
Timetable	2	0,9
"Corrective Action" (Acciòn correctiva)	2	0,9
No call to family	2	0,9
Eat fast	2	0,9
Shortage period program	1	0,4
More integrals (food)	1	0,4
Not get out	1	0,4
Can not buy anything	1	0,4
Share room	1	0,4
Serious	1	0,4
Family (but know it's good)	1	0,4
More activities weekend	1	0,4
Time to write postcards	1	0,4
Eat something different	1	0,4
Not shave	1	0,4
Bitterness of staff	1	0,4
Only drink water	1	0,4

Classes too quick	1	0,4
Wait for bathroom	1	0,4
Too many exercises	1	0,4
Too many rules	1	0,4
More teamwork at school	1	0,4
Teachers	1	0,4
Other students talk too much	1	0,4
Wait for food	1	0,4
No support staff	1	0,4
Not enough cards	1	0,4
Old showers	1	0,4
No doors in barracks	1	0,4
No leave on weekends	1	0,4
No respect cadet to cadet/ cadre	1	0,4
No privileges	1	0,4
Just get used to environment	1	0,4
More tolerant	1	0,4

Appendix 10

Definition QOL concerning graduated youth

Definition QOL	Outcomes	%
How I live	3	13,6
To achieve goals and dreams	3	13,6
Be healthy	2	9,1
Responsibility	2	9,1
What I do	1	4,5
Improvement personal skills	1	4,5
Enjoy everything	1	4,5
Normal	1	4,5
Good citizen	1	4,5
Discipline	1	4,5
Respect	1	4,5
Adult	1	4,5
Life in order	1	4,5

Definition QOL concerning graduated youth

Appendix 11

Outcomes positive elements PRYCA concerning youth in program

Positive	Outcomes	%
Become better person	5	22,7
Change lifestyle	4	18,2
Better QOL	2	9,1
Discipline	2	9,1
Responsibility	1	4,5
Protect family	1	4,5
Obey family	1	4,5
Value family	1	4,5
Physical fitness	1	4,5
Learn to be positive	1	4,5
Achieve goals	1	4,5
Work in teams	1	4,5
Hygiene	1	4,5
Learn to integrate in society	1	4,5
Service to community	1	4,5
The organization	1	4,5
Teach importance of preparing	1	4,5
Work	1	4,5
Help with future	1	4,5
Better grades	1	4,5
Time management	1	4,5
Academics	1	4,5

Appendix 12

Outcomes negative elements PRYCA concerning youth in program

Negative	Outcomes	%
Nothing	6	27,3
Distance family	1	4,5
Not enough food	1	4,5
Out of 'comfort zone'	1	4,5

Appendix 13

Improved aspects in life of graduated youth after PRYCA

Improvements	Outcomes	%
Education	6	27,3
Responsibility	4	18,2
Work	3	13,6
Future/ goals	3	13,6
As a person	2	9,1
Take decisions	2	9,1
Character	2	9,1
Behaviour	1	4,5
Time management	1	4,5
Physical development	1	4,5
Mental development	1	4,5
Way of being	1	4,5
QOL	1	4,5
Honest	1	4,5
Mentality	1	4,5
Respect	1	4,5
As a citizen	1	4,5
As a colleague	1	4,5
More organized	1	4,5
Achieve what I want	1	4,5
Life Skills	1	4,5
Self-esteem	1	4,5
Community service	1	4,5
Family values	1	4,5