

SEMINAR ON
**CAMPUS SECURITY AND CHILDREN
INJURY EMERGENCY AID**
FOR AFRICAN-ENGLISH SPEAKING COUNTRIES



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Seminar Report

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is the outcome of the seminar held in Beijing, China from 22 April to 05 June 2014. It was held at the Academy for International Business Officials (AIBO)¹ which is under the aegis of the Chinese Ministry of Commerce. Delegates came from 9 countries, including Mauritius². During two weeks we were given a comprehensive insight on the way they manage the security of their schools (campus security) and on how they practise child safety measures. Injured children who require medical attention represent financial costs both to their families and the government. The course was centred on one particular aspect: prevention of accidents and minimization of hazards. Rather than a corrective approach, a preventive one is adopted by Chinese authorities in managing the safety of children. These children are expected to become future responsible and conscious citizens who in their turn will transfer the same values and principles to their children.

We got a glimpse of the Chinese culture when we visited the Great Wall and the Forbidden City – two major landmarks in Chinese history. We also made a field trip to Shanghai.

¹ & ² See *Appendix* on page 8

SEMINAR REVIEW

Introduction

The seminar started with an introduction on China's national condition. We got a comprehensive lecture on the evolution of the country's economic, political and social development. China is now opening itself to the world and wishes to share its best practices. The theme of the seminar was Campus Security and Children Injury Emergency Aid. The focus of the seminar was on children. A child is a person below the age of 18 (legal age for adulthood). Injuries may refer to drowning, road accidents, suffocation, burns, violence, poisoning or falls. According to United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) data, injuries are the leading cause of death for children 5 to 14 years of age, and the third leading cause of death for children below the age of 5. Child injury is now considered the most significant health problem for children.

Course Contents

China has a Disaster Education programme which is included in the syllabus at schools. Since the country is frequently hit by earthquakes, typhoons, floods and even tsunami, students are introduced to the effects of these calamities at a very young age, i.e. during pre-primary and elementary education. Students practice safety during fire drills. They learn how to use equipment such as fire extinguishers and perform plays illustrating what to do in a variety of dangerous scenarios. They are constantly reminded thereafter during their middle and higher education. The methods and course contents differ depending on the age of the students but the bottom line is: how to escape and mitigate the severity of those disasters. The programme is not examinable but it is a powerful tool given to students.

One of the core aspects of school administration is safety management, be it for the personnel or students. Since China has the one-child policy, officially the family planning policy, Chinese give great importance on the safety of their children. There are laws and regulations which guarantee the security of students at schools. Each school devises its own safety management plan consisting of several structures: social responsibility, on-duty supervision, responsibility contract and three-level responsibility.

China has highly regulated procedures for practically every emergency situation: gas leakage, accidents, epidemics, drowning and many more. These procedures are included in the school curriculum. A yearly evaluation is made on the performance of the school in security management. We were told that a person applying for the post of head of school has to take part in a security knowledge test. If he fails, he does not get the post!

Every year, more than 100,000 children die because of injury-related causes in China. But deaths by injury are only the tip of the iceberg as research has shown that for every injury-related death, four children are permanently disabled. Out of the 10 million Chinese children who are injured every year, nearly 8 million need medical attention, a financial burden for many families. Since 2004, the Beijing Working Committee for Women and Children, in collaboration with UNICEF, has started a pilot project called 'Safe Beijing'. The project is focused on establishing models of 'Safe Home', 'Safe School' and 'Safe Community'. The main strategy to reduce injury is to promote safe behaviour for children, make the environment safe for children and improve rules, regulations and policies to better protect children.

The project puts children at the centre of its activities. With their participation, environmental risk factors are identified and community safety plans are developed. The children help spread safety knowledge and skills they have learned within their own families and communities. In many neighbourhoods, where the project has been implemented, parents meet regularly to share experiences and discuss new ways of safeguarding their children. They learn several easy solutions to make their home much safer for their children. As example:

- **People now only buy furniture with round corners, so that children cannot bump their heads any more.**
- **Finger safe door stopper are placed on doors to prevent door slamming; protecting fingers from painful cuts and bruising**
- **Knives and hot water bottles are put in high places, so that they cannot reach them.**
- **When electrical outlets are not being used, they are covered with purpose-made tapes.**

If these measures are not taken into consideration, though simple in appearance, they may have dire consequences in case of accidents.

Officers from the Red Cross Society of China were among the resource persons for the seminar. They focus on tasks like disaster response and preparedness, first aid training, health care and community service projects and the dissemination of the international humanitarian aid. They have made and distributed free copies of a comic book called 'Family First Aid Manual' to students. They helped us identify vulnerable groups, those particularly prone to injuries, in schools. We worked on case studies through group work. We were given a practical demonstration on performing CPR (Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation)³ - an emergency procedure performed in an effort to manually preserve intact brain function until further measures are taken to restore spontaneous blood circulation and breathing in a person who is in cardiac arrest.

We had a topic on nutrition and health for children. We learnt on child growth patterns and common mistakes adults make while raising children. Later, we studied China statistical reports and found thought-provoking facts, some of which are:

- Children death caused by injury and violence account for 9% of the mortality rate, equalling death resulting from AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis together!
- Children's heads account for a larger proportion of injuries than their body.
- Drowning is the highest cause of child death.

Chinese Culture

A former Chinese ambassador gave us a panoramic lecture on Chinese history and culture. We discovered Chinese cuisine which includes styles originating from the diverse regions of China. The staple foods of Chinese cooking include rice, noodles, vegetables, and sauces and seasonings. We visited the Great Wall and the Forbidden City⁴ in Beijing. We made a field visit to Shanghai, the largest Chinese city by population and the largest city by population in the world. We visited the Expo 2010 Park. Through our guide's explanation, we almost witnessed the transformation of the fishing village into the world's busiest container port.

³ & ⁴ See Appendix on page 9

IMPLEMENTATION

A School Superintendent requires a constant adaptation to the ever changing pattern of students' behaviour and school environment. The need for continual learning and training therefore becomes necessary. The Campus Security and Children Emergency Aid Training Course provided me a good opportunity to learn on important aspects of school security management.

The safety of the campus is a matter of prime importance in the proper functioning of the school. This course helped me to learn and understand the different ways of managing security. I studied the skills and best practices which I intend to use as a benchmark for improving my school campus. My job requires me to prevent accidents within the school. I acquired new skills on how to mitigate accidents.

Children injury and emergency aid is not an unfamiliar term to me. Every day I am confronted with various cases of student injuries, some of which at times require emergency treatment. The course helped me compare and adopt the different methods of providing aid to injured students. I learnt methods of how to stabilize, diagnose and prepare injured students for transport during emergency situations. Proper support, counselling and reporting are yet other facets of handling crisis situations and knowing how to react when faced to such situations can often save lives. The course helped me in knowing these facets.

Chinese authorities have devised a concept called 'Palm PC' designed for students. Since youngsters are very keen in using their mobile phones, they have been given access to a step by step first-aid application on their mobile phones. In Mauritius, this concept can be introduced on the Tablet PC. Students facing an event requiring medical attention may have recourse to this application where aid is not easily available.

This seminar course gave me an international exposure and provide for a yardstick which I wish to capitalize on. Through this I aim to raise the level of savoir-faire and professionalism on the aspects described-above at my school.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of all the measures mentioned in the seminar would of course not be appropriate in the Mauritian context due to our geopolitical, topography, educational and social system. Nor our best practices can be implemented in theirs without taking our cultural differences into considerations. I believe that an in-depth study is required to seek the best approach to be adopted towards school safety and children injury emergency management. Mauritian authorities have a Cyclone and Other Natural Disasters Scheme. However, this scheme is not known by everybody, especially children. Such useful information must be disseminated to the public so that in the case of an emergency, the general public knows exactly what to do.

Group discussion among students on topics like child safety, crisis situation preparedness and emergency first aid must be encouraged at schools. The outcome of those discussions could be documented. At the end of the day those documents could become the standard operation procedures for any event. These standard procedures can then be included in the school safety management manual.

APPENDIX



Academy for International Business Officials (AIBO)



Group photo with delegates from Cameroun, Ethiopia, Ghana, Malawi, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Zanzibar, Zimbabwe



Inside the Seminar Class



A delegate learning CPR



At Tiananmen Square (Forbidden City in background)



Issue of certificates during the Closing Ceremony

