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# The Implementation of Child Participation-based Approach through Forum Theatre to Address Violence against Children

Study case of North Jakarta Community Center for  
Children of Red Nose Foundation in Cilincing,  
Indonesia

By:

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September 2019

A research project submitted to Van Hall Larenstein University of Applied Sciences in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Masters in Management of Development, with specialization in Gender, Youth and Social Inclusion

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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this research for myself, thank you for not giving up.

## **ABSTRACT**

This research explored the implementation of Forum Theatre as an alternative tool to addressing VAC issue in NJCCC in order to incorporate anti-violence program into the existing program of RNF. As a researcher, this research aims to put into practice the knowledge and skill I gained during my study year in Van Hall Larenstein University of Applied Science, especially as a facilitator of change. To carry out this research, I conducted a fieldwork to my home country and NJCCC in Cilincing for total six weeks. I interviewed RNF staffs, conducted Forum Theatre sessions which were combined with FGD to discuss about violence experience with the children and performed two Forum Theatre plays in NJCCC hall. To finish up, I carried out participant observation and informal conversations with the staffs and children to gained deeper information and clarify the data collected to increase research validity and reliability.

This research found that RNF's way to addressing violence against children case in the community especially in NJCCC have been straightforward. Through strengthening the internal force by making sure that the staffs shares the same understanding about violence and bringing the violence case to be discussed in internal meeting to collectively formulate the solution, implementing Agent of Change program and by spreading the anti-violence message through beautiful murals in the wall of NJCCC to reach a wider audience. Through this research I found that the children from all three groups who participates the research have experience violence in almost every setting of their life. Some of the children even thinking that they are deserves a punishment from their parent when they made a mistake.

The implementation of Forum Theatre indicated as a tool that can accommodates children to exercise their agency to deal with violence. The children are able to act out towards their goal that they pictured as an ideal situation regarding violence. I observed that the children's behaviour transformed throughout the Forum Theatre session from being hesitated to talk about their experience to successfully transform their story to an inspirational play. Forum Theatre was also able to engaged wide audience to initiate even bigger discussion to talk about a topic that they were comfortable to talk about before.

This research concludes that Forum Theatre is indeed can be used as an alternative tool to addressing VAC issue in NJCCC in order to incorporate anti-violence program into the existing program of RNF. Furthermore, Forum Theatre also serve as a medium to facilitates children to exercise their agency through their involvement in the process and as an engagement tool to parent and community.

**Keywords:** Forum Theatre, Violence Against Children, Agency

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## CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

### 1.1 Background

*“There can be no keener revelation of a society’s soul than the way in which it treats its children.-  
Nelson Mandela”*

The quote above seems too far from home when I read it for the first time years ago. With only a little understanding of children and their world, I used to think that their education, well-being and behaviour are merely the responsibility of their parents and whoever lives with them in the same house. It has nothing to do with society or whom do they interact. However, my recent fieldwork showed me that it indeed takes a whole village to raise a child.

I was warmly welcomed by a group of children when I visited North Jakarta Community Center for Children (NJCCC) in Cilincing for the first time. After the kids left, the Psychosocial Manager of Red Nose Foundation (RNF) told me that most of those kids had experienced violence since the early year of their childhood. They were exposed to violence from their peers, siblings, relatives and even their parents; it continually occurs, to the point where they do not seek for protection and internalised it themselves. It is a situation that none of us would imagine how a child spends their whole life.

Looking into the bigger picture in the global context, it is estimated that up to 1 billion children aged 2-17 years have experienced physical, sexual, or emotional violence or neglect in the past year (S, et al., 2016). If we refer to the population data provided by United Nations which estimated that the number of child population is 2.5 billion (United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2019), the ratio of children who experience violence would be 1:2.5 which is not a small number. In the context of Indonesia, although the central government has incorporated many SDGs target into its own “Medium Term Development 2015-2019”, including target number 16.2 of SDG: *“to end all forms of violence against children and translate it into child protection and violence prevention program”*, but the violence prevalence rate in Indonesia is still high (Fulu et al. 2013).

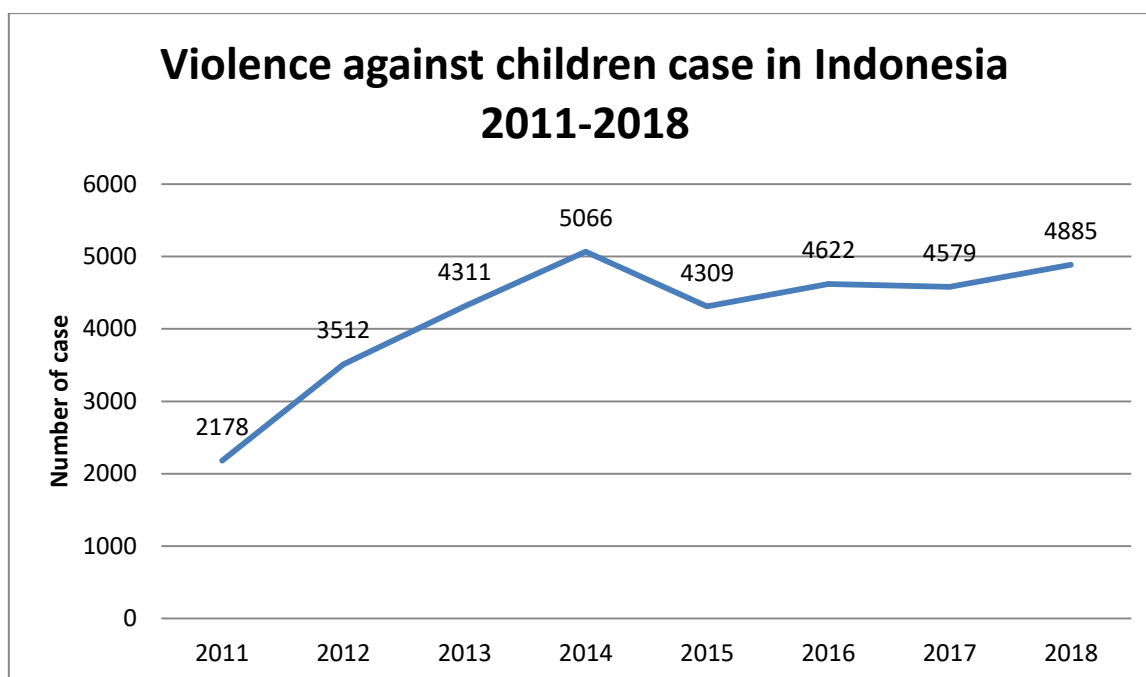
The Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (Kemen PPPA) launched the results of the 2018 National Survey of Life and Child Life Experiences (SNPHAR 2018). Survey results show that 1 in 17 boys and 1 in 11 girls have experienced sexual violence. 1 in 2 boys and 3 in 5 girls have experienced emotional abuse. Furthermore, 1 in 3 boys and 1 in 5 girls experience physical violence. It can be concluded that 2 out of 3 children and adolescent girls and boys in Indonesia have experienced violence throughout their lives (KEMEN PPA, 2019).

The results of SNPHAR 2018 also show that children are not only victims of violence, but also perpetrators of violence. 3 out of 4 children report that the perpetrators of emotional and physical abuse are friends or peers. The most-reported perpetrators of sexual and non-contact sexual violence are friends or peers (47% -73%) and around 12% -29% of boyfriends become perpetrators of sexual violence (KEMEN PPA, 2019).

Indonesian Commission for Child Protection (Komisi Perlindungan Anak Indonesia, KPAI) recorded at least 4.885 cases of violence against children (VAC) in 2018. KPAI notes that the number of VAC cases in Indonesia from 2011 to 2018 continues to increase significantly. However, we have to keep in mind that VAC cases are like an iceberg phenomenon. What is visible on the surface is much smaller than

what is not visible. According to Yohana Yambise, The Minister of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection, *"The violence data that is published so far is data that has been reported through service institutions in the districts/cities. We do not know how much data on actual violence against children. Most likely the data that is not reported far more than the data reported."* (KEMEN PPA, 2019).

The number of violence against children in Indonesia showed in the graph below:



**Figure 1.1.2 Number of Violence against Children Case in Indonesia (Chandra, 2019)**

From the graph above, we can see that the reported case had decreased from 2014 to 2015 and 2016 to 2017. Unfortunately, this does not necessarily mean that there are indications of a reduction in the prevalence rate of cases of violence against children in Indonesia. KPAI noted that there were at least three reasons for the decline in the number of public complaints. First, there are more child protection institutions established at the regional level. These institutions can accommodate complaints related to violence cases from the community. This opinion is based on data from the Directorate General of Corrections at the Ministry of Law and Human Rights. The number of children in the Special Child Development Institute (Lembaga Pembinaan Khusus Anak, LPKA) is increased from 2,319 in 2016 to 2,409 in 2017. The increase shows that there are still severe problems regarding an increase in the number of cases of violence against children.

Secondly, KPAI claims the massive advocacy for child protection has contributed to the reduction in the number of complaints. Community behaviour to protect children is considered to be getting better. Violation cases are also reduced even though they still exist. Third, the growing number of child-friendly programs in various institutions is seen as affecting reducing the number of complaints. For examples, the existence of child-friendly puskesmas (community health centre), child-friendly schools, and child-friendly pesantren (Islamic boarding school) helped push down violent complaints even though their scope was still limited (Rahadian, 2017).

Children all over the world have the right to be protected from violence, regardless of their economic and social circumstances, culture, religion or ethnicity. The reasons why it is not easy to tackle VAC is mainly because it takes many forms, including physical, sexual, and emotional abuse, and may involve neglect or deprivation. Violence also occurs in many settings, including the home, school, community and over the Internet. The protection of children from all forms of violence is a fundamental right enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). However, violence remains an all-too-real part of life for children around the globe with both immediate and long-term consequences (UNICEF, 2012).

As required on UNCRC, children under the age of 18 have the right to participate in areas that affect them, including their protection (Febrianto, 2018). Thus, any form of intervention that affects children's lives should consider their right and perspectives. They should be recognised as people with dignity and evolving capacities; that they are empowered and assisted in speaking out, have their views heard and become an integral part of processes (Save the Children, 2007).

Febrianto (2018) argue that child protection can be improved through meaningful participation of children and young people to ascertain their realities and respond. One of the ways to increase children participation to fight violence is to implement tool or method that actively involve them in the process rather than see them merely as a target or object. Forum Theatre, one of the tools from the arsenal of Theatre of the Oppressed by Augusto Boal offers many activities and tools to encourage children's participation.

This research explores the implementation of Forum Theatre as one of the participatory tools to fight VAC. Forum Theatre is a type of theatre created by the theatre practitioner Augusto Boal, one of the techniques under the umbrella term of Theatre of the Oppressed. Through Forum Theatre, children are encouraged to narrate their own story; as a result, we could see their story about violence from their perspective. Through this research I will study the methods, techniques and content of Forum Theatre to fight VAC by analysing its capacity to exercise children's agency and raise awareness.

## **1.2 Red Nose Foundation: Creating a safe place for underprivileged children**

This research is commissioned by Red Nose Foundation (RNF), or Yayasan Hidung Merah, is a non-profit organisation which focuses on arts and education for children and youth (from 7-25 years old) based in Jakarta, Indonesia. RNF is aware of the fact that their beneficiaries also have the potential to experience violence. Currently, the foundation works to help local underprivileged children build dreams and to become positive contributors to society in two locations. The first learning centre is located in a poor fishermen community in Cilincing which located in the shores of North Jakarta and the second learning centre is located in a trash scavengers' slum area in Jurangmangu Timur, South Tangerang.

In achieving its goal to improve the quality of life of underprivileged children and the communities and providing them with a safe place, both physically and emotionally, where they learn life lessons, experiment with their limit, and define themselves, RNF runs several different programs. The three significant programs that serve as a foundational structure to RNF's outreach are (Red Nose Foundation, n.d.):

- **Art and Education Outreach Program (AEOP)** is the foundation's flagship program that currently provides 75 hours of art and education classes for 280 underprivileged children across Jakarta every week
- **Formal Education System Support Program** is RNF's attempt to create systematic change by working within the channels of education and government organisations. This program encompasses school renovation projects and full scholarships and partial scholarship provision for students.
- **Hidung Merah Performance Troupe** is the foundation's program for advanced students to gather with like-minded teenagers and children from several international schools and other arts-based foundations to share skills and experiences. The troupe also holds **Red Nose Relief** tours to conflict- or disaster-affected areas.

In general, children and youth in marginalised communities often experience limited access to personal development opportunities. Such problems occur due to various technical and social barriers; including literacy, language, trauma-related, cultural, or financial barriers. In their intervention areas, these barriers are explicitly presented in the scene and often lead to the children not having, or being stripped off, their right to be fostered and grow as they supposed to be (Red Nose Foundation, 2018).

RNF use Social Circus as one of their social intervention tools as they believe that it provides children and youth with accessible empowerment opportunities that will help them to achieve personal and social development. Social Circus itself is referred to the growing movement toward the use of circus arts as mediums for social justice and social good. It uses alternative pedagogical tools to work with children and youth who are marginalised or at social or personal risk. Through Social Circus, children can develop physically confident and understand the capabilities and limits of their bodies; it also fosters human connection and belonging (Wise Fool New Mexico, 2019).

Social circus empowers children by combining the values of education, physical arts, and life skills. RNF use circus on two fronts, the first one is to ignite the communities' interest in joining RNF through various performances throughout the year, including school performances and through the Annual Community Circus (Red Nose Foundation, 2018). The second use is to impart life skill values through the classes which follow a curriculum that focuses on developing self-esteem and social awareness. As students learn to do juggling, plate-spinning, flower stick, gymnastics, and acrobatics, they also learn essential life values along the way. This life values include responsibility, respect, confidence, and collaboration (Red Nose Foundation, 2018).

### 1.3 Research Problem

Like other children in any part of the world, children who participate actively in RNF programs also have the potential to experience violence. Problems such as poverty, gender inequality, harassment, and domestic violence are evident. Many of the children, if it is not all, do not seek for protection but rather keep experiences of violence to themselves and internalise them. Domestic violence at home and harassment at school makes them feel unsafe. This constant exposure to stress and poor living conditions cause insecurity which undermines their self-esteem and learning capacity. Therefore, they cannot even focus on studying, let alone realising their full potential and become positive contributors to their surroundings (Red Nose Foundation, 2018).

Children exposed to violence and other adversities are more likely to drop out of school, have difficulty finding and keeping a job, and are at heightened risk for later victimisation and/or perpetuation of interpersonal and self-directed violence, by which violence against children can affect the next generation (WHO, 2019).

As one of the effort to address VAC in one of their intervention areas, NJCCC in Cilincing, RNF through Innovation Award: Bridge to A Promising Future from Estee Lauder Co. and Empower run a year-long program called Agent of Change (AoC). This program aims to develop safe spaces by facilitating local adolescents, primarily girls, to take an active role in influencing their communities to abandon domestic violence practices (Red Nose Foundation, 2018).

In order to reinforce the exposure of AoC program, RNF has held Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with parents of children, teachers and local government in two different sessions to discuss violence and the underlying cause of it. From that discussion, RNF found that the parents are not well informed about the forms of violence. *"I do not know that what I have been doing to my children is violence."* said one of the parents who participated in the FGD session to RNF staff. That statement made it clear that this issue should be addressed in order to fight VAC. Taking into consideration of the lifelong impact of VAC for the children itself, their family and the community, it is crucial for all the stakeholders to work hand in hand in reducing the prevalence rate of violence against children.

RNF as commissioner lacks information on how they can incorporate anti-violence program in their existing programs since AoC program has officially ended and how to reach wider audience to raise their awareness. This research will try out Forum Theatre as proper strategy to incorporate an anti-violence program within the existing program of RNF which using art-based approach. Conducting this study in RNF's intervention area will offer alternative methods to its contribution in eliminating violence against children agenda as advocated in the Sustainable Development Goal number 16 which stresses on promoting peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

#### **1.4 Research Objective**

This study aims to explore the possibility of Forum Theatre as an alternative methodology to generate information and addressing VAC issue in North Jakarta Community Centre for Children (NJCCC) in Cilincing. The findings of this research can be used as recommendations to incorporate anti-violence program in the existing RNF programs.

As a researcher, this research aims to put into practice the knowledge and skill I gained during my study year in Van Hall Larenstein University of Applied Science, especially as a facilitator of change.

#### **1.5 Research Questions**

This research will study the implementation of Forum Theatre to generate information and addressing violence against children as well as the way to raising awareness of the community towards this issue. This will be done by exploring how Forum Theatre works to capture children experience and help them exercise their agency.

To reach these aims, this research aims to answer the following **main research question**:

**"How does Forum Theatre works to address violence against children and help children to exercise agency in Red Nose Foundation programs?"**

In order to answer the main question, the following sub-questions will be answered:

**Sub-questions:**

1. How has RNF addressed violence against children throughout their program?
2. What kind of experience do children in Cilincing have regarding violence?
3. How does Forum Theatre help children exercise agency to deal with violence?
4. What are the challenges and preconditions to consider when implementing Forum Theatre addressing violence against children?

## CHAPTER 2 SETTING UP THE SCENE

### 2.1 Defining Violence against Children

There are several definitions of violence used, depending on the focus and approach taken to it. The UN Study on Violence Against Children (2006) definition of violence draws on Article 19 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child: *“all forms of physical or mental violence, injury and abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse”* as well as the definition used by WHO in the World Report on Violence and Health (WRVH) (2002): *“the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against a child, by an individual or group, that either result in or have a high likelihood of resulting in actual or potential harm to the child’s health, survival, development or dignity.”* This study will refer to the definition used by WHO in WRVH as it is explained broader area and level where children might experience violence.

The WRVH presents a typology of violence that, while not uniformly accepted, can be a useful way to understand the contexts in which violence occurs and the interactions between types of violence. This typology distinguishes four modes in which violence may be inflicted: physical; sexual; and psychological attack; and deprivation. It further divides the general definition of violence into three sub-types according to the victim-perpetrator relationship (WHO, 2019):

- **Self-directed violence** refers to violence in which the perpetrator and the victim are the same individual and is subdivided into *self-abuse* and *suicide*.
- **Interpersonal violence** refers to violence between individuals and is subdivided into *family and intimate partner violence* and *community violence*. The former category includes child maltreatment; intimate partner violence; and elder abuse, while the latter is broken down into *acquaintance* and *stranger* violence and includes youth violence; assault by strangers; violence related to property crimes; and violence in workplaces and other institutions.
- **Collective violence** refers to violence committed by larger groups of individuals and can be subdivided into social, political and economic violence.

This study will further focus on the interpersonal violence in the home, school and community setting.

- **Forms of violence against children**

Types of violence against children by the Central Office of Integrated Services for Women and Children (Kantor Pusat Layanan Terpadu untuk Wanita dan Anak-anak or P2TP2A) which is also the definition of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the World Report on Violence and Health, World Health Organization, 2002 (INFODATIN, 2018):

1. Physical Violence: hit, slap, kick, punch.
2. Emotional Violence: violence in the form of words that scare, threaten, insult, berate and curse violently.
3. Sexual violence: pornography, indecent acts/child sexual abuse.
4. Abandonment and neglect: all forms of negligence that violate the child's rights in fulfilling nutrition and education.

5. Economic Violence (Exploitation): employing underage children with economic motives, child prostitution.

- **Impact of violence on children**

Violence against children has lifelong impacts on the health and well-being of children, families, communities, and nations. Violence against children can **Invalid source specified. 1) Result in death**, for example homicide which often involves weapons such as knives and firearms, **2) Lead to severe injuries**, from physical fighting and assault which possibly leading to disability, **3) Impair brain and nervous system development**, exposure to violence at an early age can impair brain development and damage other parts of the nervous system, **4) Result in negative coping and health risk behaviours**, children exposed to violence and other adversities are substantially more likely to smoke, misuse alcohol and drugs, and engage in high-risk sexual behaviour. They also have higher rates of anxiety, depression, other mental health problems and suicide, **5) Lead to unintended pregnancies**, induced abortions, gynaecological problems, and sexually transmitted infections, including HIV, **6) Contribute to a wide range of non-communicable diseases** as children grow older. The increased risk for cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes, and other health conditions is mainly due to the negative coping and health risk behaviours associated with violence, **7) Impact opportunities and future generations**, Children exposed to violence and other adversities are more likely to drop out of school, have difficulty finding and keeping a job, and are at heightened risk for later victimization and/or perpetuation of interpersonal and self-directed violence, by which violence against children can affect the next generation.

Other than the physical and mental impact on the individual victim, violence against children also has impact on national economies. For example, youth violence in Brazil is estimated to cost nearly US\$ 19 billion every year. Meanwhile in United States, the annual coast of child maltreatment is estimated US\$124 billion. Indeed, investing in violence prevention is a question of good governance and respect for human rights (ChildFund, 2014)

The results from Survey on Violence Against Children conducted by The Ministry of Women Empowerment and Child Protection show that the impact of physical / sexual / emotional violence on children's health shows more or less the same pattern between the age groups 18- 24 who experienced violence before the age of 18 years and the age group 13-17 who experienced violence in the last 12 months. But there is a difference in the impact felt by boys and girls (KEMEN PPA, 2017)

More than 75 percent of men aged 18-24 years who experience violence before they are 18 years old are smoking, while more than 33 percent of them drink liquor / drunk. For the boys' age group 13-17 years who experienced violence in the last 12 months, almost half of it is smoking, while 31 percent drink alcohol. Meanwhile on a group of girls aged 13-17 years, besides the impact on smoking which is quite large (13 percent) there are also other impacts such as hurting them self, thinking of suicide and drug use.

It seems that the impact of emotional violence experienced by girls mentally and psychologically much more worrying. About 43 percent of women aged 18-24 who experience emotional violence hurt themselves, while those who tried suicide and thought of suicide were 34.4 percent and 32.6 percent respectively. The same thing was also seen in girls in the age group 13-17 years who experienced violence in the last 12 months, even though with a lower percentage (KEMEN PPA, 2017)

- **Risk factors**



Violence against children is a multifaceted problem with causes at the individual, close relationship, community and societal levels, this study will focus on the risk factor in close-relation and society level without neglecting risk factors from another level. Important risk factors are (WHO, 2019):

- **Individual level:**
  - biological and personal aspects such as sex and age
  - lower levels of education
  - low income
  - having a disability or mental health problems
  - being lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender
  - harmful use of alcohol and drugs
  - a history of exposure to violence.
- **Close-relationship level:**
  - lack of emotional bonding between children and parents or caregivers
  - poor parenting practices
  - family dysfunction and separation
  - being associated with delinquent peers
  - witnessing violence between parents or caregivers
  - early or forced marriage.
- **Community level:**
  - poverty
  - high population density
  - low social cohesion and transient populations
  - easy access to alcohol and firearms
  - high concentrations of gangs and illicit drug dealing.
- **Society level:**
  - social and gender norms that create a climate in which violence is normalized
  - health, economic, educational and social policies that maintain economic, gender and social inequalities
  - absent or inadequate social protection
  - post-conflict situations or natural disaster
  - settings with weak governance and poor law enforcement.

## 2.2 Children's Agency

One of the key ideas in the social studies of childhood is the recognition that children are social actors; they have agency (Abebe, 2019). Agency has defined the ability to define one's goals and act upon them and refers to the thoughts and actions taken by people that express their individual power. It can also define as the power people have to think for themselves and act in ways that shape

their experiences and life trajectories. Agency is about more than observable action; it also encompasses the meaning, motivation and purpose a child brings to their activity, their sense of agency, or other forms of power. Agency can take individual and collective forms (N.L, 2019)

Agency has both positive and negative meanings in relation to power. In the positive sense of the 'power to', it refers to people's capacity to make their own life-choices and to pursue their own goals, even in the face of opposition from others. The concept of agency has become so pervasive that it has come to represent something that all children should have the right to exercise (Abebe, 2019; Durham, 2011). Agency can also be exercised in the more negative sense of 'power over', in other words, the capacity of an actor or category of actors to over-ride the agency of others, for instance, through the use of violence, coercion and threat

In this context, I draw my understanding of agency as the ability of children to define their goal and act upon them. To elaborate, although it can be understood that agency is mostly related to the 'power within' of the children but the positionality of children is influenced by another factor that needs to be examined and acknowledged (Febrianto, 2018).

The used of children agency in terms of their life choice is tend to get over-ride by adults agency. As a legal minor, children have no right to vote and limited legitimacy to make some decisions without the approval of their guardian. With that being said, children (especially younger children) typically have few opportunities or resources to advocate on their own behalf in decision-making processes, despite the UNCRC principles having been agreed by almost all countries (Sumner, 2010). Furthermore, Sumner (2010) also argue that children's limited voice is often compounded by a lack of legitimacy of children's perspectives in many societies and the frequent invisibility of children in public policy debates (despite accounting for sometimes more than half of the population).

Based on my understanding of agency mentioned earlier, I will study the agency of the children by exploring their goal related to the violence practices around them and analysis how they act upon it through the implementation of Forum Theatre. To analysis how children can exercise their agency in order to deal with violence in daily life setting I will use the taxonomy of agency of Lister (2004) which divide the practise of agency from everyday matters of 'getting by' and 'getting back at' (meaning rebellious behaviour) to more strategic matters of 'getting out' and 'getting organised' (meaning collective action).

### **2.3 Forum theatre for social change**

Theatre of the Oppressed is the umbrella term for Forum Theatre, Image Theatre and other participatory theatre made by Augusto Boal in 1970s. In the 1960s, he began developing interactive acting and directing techniques in his home country, Brazil. His innovative work with peasants in the rural and urban areas of his country shook political structures—so much so that after Boal's imprisonment, torture, and exile, his activist theatre work continued to flourish underground. Boal's approach was revolutionary in part due to the influence of Paulo Freire's theory of critical pedagogy known as *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970) (Mitchell & Freitag, 2011).

Quoting Osterlind (2008) from Uppal (2016) Boal's fundamental hypothesis for the Theatre of the Oppressed is that if someone who is oppressed performs an action in theatrical fiction, it will enable them to perform the same in real life. In another way, children are able to exercise their agency by "rehearsing" their life through Forum Theatre. Furthermore, Boal also refers to theatre as a means of promoting social and political change. Specifically, Theatre of the Oppressed framework shows

significant promise for mobilizing masses toward community dialogue and social change (Mitchell & Freitag, 2011).

Forum Theatre as one of the concepts from Theatre of the Oppressed can be used as a tool for social change as the performances illuminate the problems and encourage awareness (Uppal, 2016). Through its participation in Forum Theatre, children will actively involve to speak up about their life and experience.

This interactive theatre developed by Augusto Boal of Brazil. In the Forum Theatre, the actors will dramatize social problems, or “oppression” that occurs in the community, for the community’s views (Flores, 2000; and Babbage, 2004). Forum Theatre will end with an unresolved problem. Then, the audience (spectators) are given the opportunity to stage to explore solutions to the above problems through play. Forum Theatre is widely used in schools to address the issue of racism, sexual prejudice, violence, and bullying (Balakrishnan & Thambu, 2014).

Forum theatre begins with a short performance, either rehearsed or improvised, which contains demonstrations of social or political problems. At the conclusion, the play will begin again with the audience being able to replace or add to the characters on stage to present their interventions; alternate solutions to the problems faced (Boal, 1985)

The presentations include one person who acts as the ‘joker’, a facilitator for the forum theatre session. They are to hold an impartial view of the interventions, ask the audience to evaluate what happened at the end of an intervention, facilitate the interventions such that each spect-actor is able to complete their intervention before another is free to enact their intervention, and to be watching out for interventions which are implausible and ask the audience to decide whether the intervention is a ‘magic’ solution (Boal, 1992).

## CHAPTER 3 HOW THE STUDY WAS CONDUCTED: THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Study area

RNF currently works in two locations, Cilincing Sub-District and Jurangmangu Timur Sub-District. This study will be conducted in one of two aforementioned locations of RNF intervention programs, North Jakarta Community Center for Children (NJCCC) in Cilincing Sub-District. Cilincing Sub-district is located in the northern coast area of Jakarta, Indonesia. In Cilincing, RNF is working to help underprivileged children on a poor fishermen community. NJCCC is selected as the focus study area because of the higher prevalence rate of violence against children case compare to the other intervention area in Jurangmangu Timur Sub-district. The map of Cilincing Sub-district is shown below:

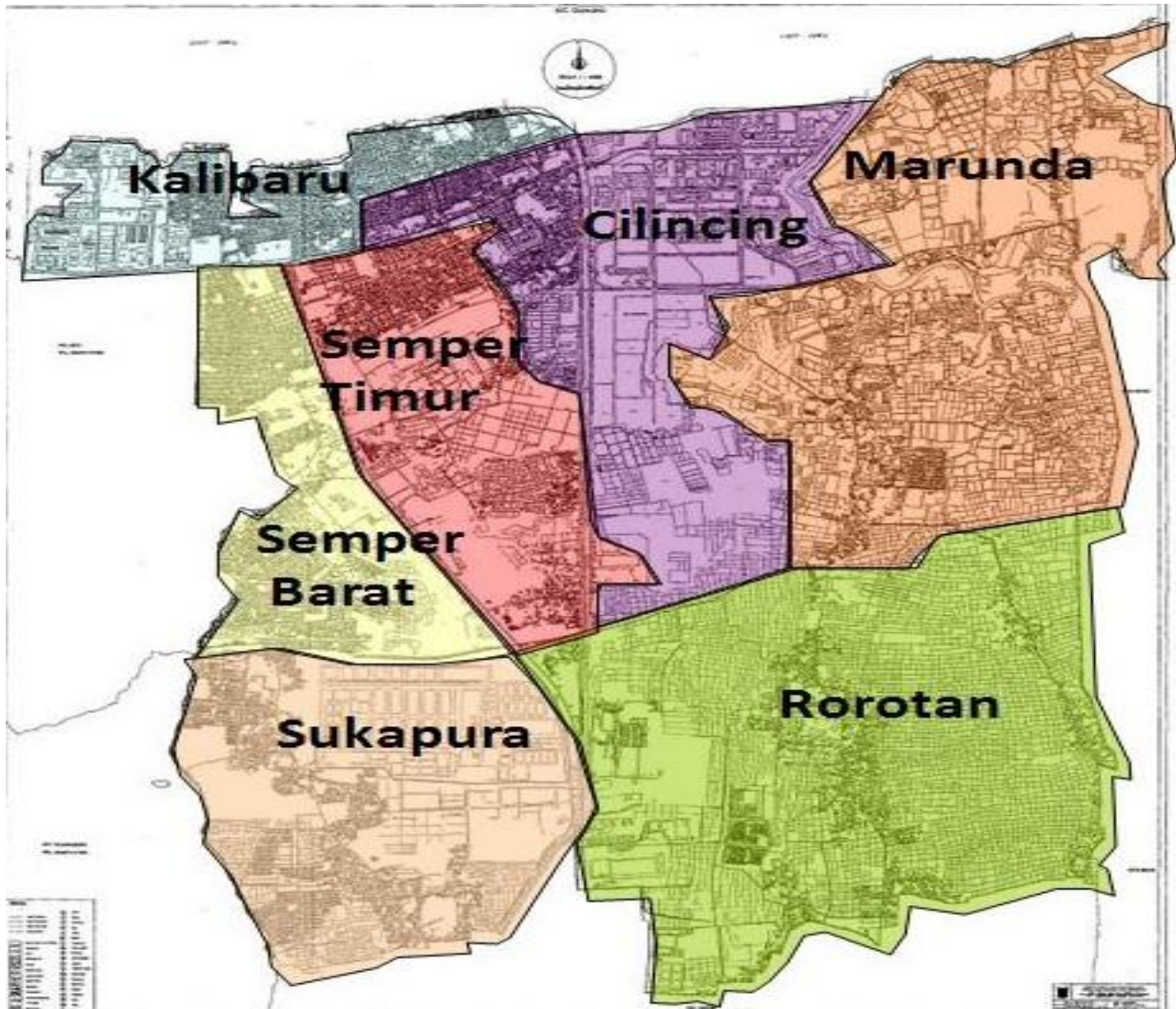


Figure 3.1.3 Map of Cilincing Sub-District (Kecamatan). The study area is marked by the purple area. (Source jakarta.go.id)

### 3.2 Research Design and Strategy

This research is a Participatory Action Research (PAR) where I emphasize the participation and action of all people who participate rather than merely treat them as a respondent. One of the reasons to

choose PAR is to give the children their rights to be fully involved in the research about their experience and that will affect their life. This research is a dynamic educative process and an approach to taking action to address a problem which seeks full collaboration by all participants (MacDonald, 2012). As I mentioned earlier, children under the age of 18 as enshrined in UNRC have rights to participate in the area that affects their life. Through this research, children were actively involved in the research implementation especially during the making of Forum Theatre performance; the children actively shared their stories and turned it into a theatre performance with minimum supervision from me. While one group performed their story, the other group diligently paid attention to the story and gave feedback to change the situation of the crisis.

Dr Michael Wrentschur on one of his book chapters, *Forum Theatre as a Participatory Tool for Social Research and Development: A Reflection on 'Nobody is Perfect' – A Project with Homeless People*, stated that participation and cooperation characterize the research process - He emphasizes the research as *their* research process, referred it to the research participant – which comes into play in group and community context (Wrentschur, 2008). On the other research by Meghna Guhathakurta, she mentioned that participatory action research or its Bengali equivalent *Gonogobeshona*, as a way of collective self-inquiry and self-development leading to holistic awareness and collective action, therefore came to play an active part as one of the many ways in which the marginalised in society could be reached and awakened (Guhathakurta, 2007).

A qualitative approach is used to see the perspective of the community in Cilincing Sub-district towards violence issue and awareness level of the surrounding environment towards violence against children. It was relevant to use qualitative approach for this study as it will explore social interactions, systems and process. It provides an in-depth understanding of the ways people come to understand, act and manage their day-to-day situations particularly related to sensitive issue like violence (IWH, 2011). As for the Action research it also serves as an interactive inquiry process that balances problem-solving actions implemented in a collaborative context with data-driven collaborative analysis or research to understand underlying causes enabling future predictions about personal and organizational change (Reason & Bradbury, 2001).

During the fieldwork, I hired a research assistant to help me document all the session and co-facilitate the group work. She has an extensive skill on videography which helps me to document the research process. She also helps me to put together the recorded videos and pictures. In addition to that, she also helps me captured information that I missed to noted and discussed it with me after the session. The Psychosocial Manager from RNF also helped me she make the children feel more comfortable during the sessions and give additional information outside the interview with her.

### **3.3 Research Methodology and Source of data**

In general, this research process is divided into the following steps:

The **first** step was to contact RNF as my commissioner in order to get deeper understanding of the issue and expectations from both parties. This initial contact also includes asking permission to access information and data regarding the program, to have direct contact and engage with their beneficiaries to design and implementing the research.

The **second** step was to conduct an interview with RNF staffs to gain information on the program design process and how RNF works to fight violence against children. On the first day of the field work, the interview questions were discussed with the Program Director to assign the right person to

be interviewed. From that discussion it was decided to interview the Program Director herself, Executive Director, Psychosocial Manager, Art Supervisor and two circus instructors. Another interview was conducted with a researcher from Deakin University regarding the use of People's theatre in the context of rural community in Indonesia. The contact details were obtained from one of the article found during literature review process.

The **third step** following up on the interviews, four Focus Group Discussions (FGD) were conducted to get a better understanding of children's experience regarding violence and how they deal with it. These FGDs also include some bridging sessions for the Forum Theatre performances. The first three FGD sessions were involving eight children who were selected based on the following criteria: girl and boy, age between 10-15 years old and from three groups which were from children who participates the AEOP program, children who dropped out from the program and children who do not participate the program and live in NJCCC area. The last two groups were meant to be the control group. From those criteria, fifteen children were randomly selected and invitations were sent prior the session. However, only four children (one more child came on the second day) from the AEOP participants group and four children (two more children came on the second day and these two children did not participate on the last day) from non-AEOP participants group participate the FGD. None of the children from dropped out group came, RNF staff gave a precaution about it before as most of the dropped out children were actually not actively involved in the program before they dropped out. As nine participants and one control group would be sufficient for an FGD no new attempt was made to invite more participants.

The **fourth** step, after the interview session and some conversations with the Psychosocial Manager, I decided to add one more FGD session with the *Agen Perubahan (Agent of Change)* children to gain more information about how they reflect to their role as *Agen Perubahan*, their experiences, knowledge and agency regarding violence as they were trained in the AoC program. In this session Human Sculpture and Theatre Image were used to explore more tools from Theatre of the Oppressed in addition to Forum Theatre. Image theatre is a performance technique in which one person, acting as a sculptor, moulds one or more people acting as statues, using only touch and resisting the use of words or mirror-image modelling (Boal, 1985) while Human Sculpture is frozen images representing their experiences, feelings, ideas, oppressions, and/or dreams for the future (Anamuh, n.d.)

In addition to all the formal session with the children and RNF staffs, I will also use data and information that I gained through my informal conversations with them. During the session, some children often asked permission to finish their homework from school first with the help of RNF staff. While waiting for that, I initiated a conversation with the rest of the children; although these conversations were not initially meant to dig deeper about them however I gained much information from them regarding their experience witnessing and experiencing violence. The information that I gained from this informal session will be used as additional data.

### 3.4 Data Analysis

The data gained from the entire interview, FGD and Forum Theatre Performances were documented and organised based on the theme of the sub-questions. Results were presented in descriptive narrative, table, pictures and video.

## CHAPTER 4 RESEARCH FINDINGS

This chapter presents and describes the major findings of the research. Each finding will be presented in four sections based on each sub-questions of the research. Unlike the general research, due to the nature of my research as a PAR and written from my perspective as the researcher thus my point of view in presenting the result will be very visible. Furthermore, in some part of the result presentation I will describe it in chronological order to show the readers the transformative action of the children and other parties involved in this research. Where applicable data will be presented in graphic and picture to complete the explanation that has been given.

### 4.1 Forum Theatre Sessions

A series of sessions, in which in this report I called as FGD since it was also involving active and focus discussion within the group, was conducted prior to the Forum Theatre performance with the children. I designed the activities for the Forum Theatre sessions by combining material and activities from a Training manual to raise awareness of Domestic Violence from GTZ Promotion of Women's Rights (Muller, n.d.) And Interactive Youth Theater (IYT) Manual book (Breed, 2012).

There were four sessions with three different groups; for the first three sessions were conducted with a group of children who are AEOP participant and a group of children who are Non-AEOP participant. The **first** session was an introduction session with the children group, I ask them to introduce themselves and mentioned their favourite food to make the session more fun. After that, I communicated to them about the research; ask their consent to take their pictures and the process that they will go through for the next couple of days. Following that the children wrote a story about their daily activities and shared it to the class.

The **second** session was conducted the next day with the same group of children with the addition of one child from AEOP participant group and two children from Non-AEOP participant group. We started the session by recapping the previous session and played an energizer game. Following to that, I gave them a short presentation about the type of violence and followed with discussion about their experience regarding violence; the experience could be from their own experience, from what they heard from other people or from what they have seen. Later on, I asked them to categorise the experience they shared based on the type of violence using flipchart and post-it. Through this activity I can see their understanding of violence and its forms; for the children, through this activity they can recognize unwanted behaviour that they experience. This activity was also aimed to generate story from them for the Forum Theatre play.

Following that activity, the children were working in group, the AEOP participants and the Non-AEOP participants, to share their elaborated story within the group. My research assistant and I were facilitated this group sharing to ensure that the children feel comfortable while sharing the story and remind the other group member to respect their friend's story. The discussion went well as the children showed their support to their friend and shared similar experience. After the discussion finish, I asked them to choose the story that they want to perform for the Forum Theatre build the scenario from that story. The children from Non-AEOP participant were hesitant to make their scenario because they were shy, thus I asked them to change the character name to whomever they like and they chose to use their favourite singer and movie character's name which make them more comfortable later on. I ask them to not mention the owner of the story in order to keep the opinion of the spect-actor unbiased.





**Picture 4.1.1 The children are working on their scenario (Source: Research documentation)**

After they finished with the scenario, we conducted an activity for Forum Theatre. The first activity was called Character Walk where participant was asked to walk across the room and when I mention certain emotion or character they have to walk while demonstrating the mentioned emotion or character. The purpose of this activity is to practice embodying different characters through physicality of the participants. The activity went well, at first they were shy and held their expressions but after several tries they started to be very expressive



**Picture 4.1.2 The children expressed "surprise" emotion (Source: Research documentation)**



This activity was followed by Forum Theatre rehearsal where each group of children rehearse their story and adding various elements to complete their stories such as property, background and character development.

The **third** session which also my last day with this group was started by recapping our previous session and followed by the final rehearsal session before the performance later on that day. The Forum Theatre performance played in two rounds. The first round played inside the room where only the involved groups present and I acted as the joker. After each performance I initiated the feedback from the spect-actor by asking some questions such as:

- *What happened? What did you see?*
- *What was the main problem?*
- *Did you recognize this issue in your daily life?*
- *Who is the main character - who seems to be the hero/heroine/victim of the story?*
- *Who is the person who is the cause of this problem/villain?*

After that I told them that the group would play another round of their story , this time they can yell “Stop!” at any point in which they think that the protagonist could have done something differently to create a different outcome. The same process was repeated for the other group. Feedback session of Forum Theatre was conducted after the performance.



Picture 4.1.3 One of the group performance (Source: Research Documentation)

The second round of the performance was played in front of the other children (5-17 years old) who were on their class in RNF and teacher in the big hall of NJCCC. The children performed the story that already got feedback from their peer on the first round of the play which aims to share the message and raise their awareness about violence. There were approximately 30 people attended the second play. After the performance, the audience were asked about their intake of the story and it followed by a short remark from the Psychosocial Manager of RNF about what should they do when they experience a similar thing.

The **fourth** session was conducted with the children who are part of the AoC Team. This session was started by the introduction of the participants and me followed by the explanation about the research and all the session. After that, I asked some questions regarding violence to refresh their recollection about violence issue. Following that activity, we conducted an exercise called *Human Clay* where they were grouped as a couple and acted as The Oppressor and The Oppressed. They instructed to form their partner's body to show how an oppressor and the oppressed typically look like. The purpose of this exercise is to know how they perceive an oppressor and the oppressed.

The last activity with this group was to make an Image Theatre where they were instructed to make two images that illustrates the most common violence and how they deal with that situation. The groups were divided into two groups of three people and make their own version of the image.



**Picture 4.1.4 One of the example of the Image Theatre (Source: Research documentation)**

The result and methodology about Forum Theatre and Image Theatre will be described in detail in the result chapter as it is also part of my research result.

## **4.2 Talking about “The Elephant in the Room”: How has RNF Addressed violence against Children throughout its Program**

I interviewed RNF staffs and studied their annual reports in order to get the information on how RNF has addressed violence against children throughout its program. RNF way to address violence throughout their program is straightforward. The findings will be presented below:

- **Strengthening internal force**

RNF which initially only had two programs in the early years of its establishment, Social Circus and English class program, did not have a program or special staff to handle cases of violence that they realized were experienced by the children in NJCCC. RNF Executive Director explained to me on our interview session that when they first received a report about violence case of one of their student they held an internal meeting to discuss the issue and find the best solution to it. In 2016, RNF hired a Psychosocial Program Manager who will be the focal point to handle the violence and gender inequality issue.

Since then they have begun to focus on dealing with issues around children's mental health, violence and gender equality that often go unnoticed. RNF also periodically conduct assessments on children related to their self-esteem, value and soft skills development as well as children's understanding related to violence and gender equality. The result from this assessment will be used to adjust their program can possibly use to design a new program.

*“Usually what happens in the field will be recommended to management then we will develop it and include it in the program.”* RNF Executive Director, 2019.

Another essential thing is to make sure that the entire teaching staff of RNF have the same understanding related to violent behaviour among the children as well as the best way to immediately response to it when it happens.

*“I am not always there to monitor children's behavior and remind them that they are doing something wrong with their friends. If all teachers have the same understanding, the message delivered to children will be universal so that they will be easier to understand ”*RNF Psychosocial Program Manager, 2019.

- **Implementing Agent of Change program**

Through the Innovation Award: Bridge to A Promising Future from Estee Lauder Co. and Empower, RNF runs a year-long program called Agent of Change (AoC) as one of the effort to address VAC in one of their intervention areas, NJCCC in Cilincing. This program aims to develop safe spaces by facilitating local adolescents, primarily girls, to take an active role in influencing their communities to abandon domestic violence practices (Red Nose Foundation, 2018).

In AoC program, RNF assisting the children in working together shaping their own safe place. It took form as “the happy spaces” in the NJCCC garden - with the help of Jakarta Berkebun (Jakarta-based urban farming community)- and a happy corner in the library where children can read books, craft various things, play board games, and discuss their ideas. These children also took an active role in maintaining these happy spaces with minimum supervision throughout the year.

As the of AoC program, RNF creates a group of 15 adolescents, mostly girls, and they call it an Agent of Change (Agen Perubahan in Indonesian language). These adolescents learned gender equality concept and anti-violence behaviour through art in the psychosocial classes. In the former, they learned about Equality of and respected each other despite existing gender differences. In the latter topic, students are introduced to forms of abuse, the negative effect it causes, and the measures needed to address it whether as a witness or as a victim (Red Nose Foundation, 2018). After being fully equipped with all the knowledge and skills needed, the Agen Perubahan children went to schools to promote gender equality and anti-violence to their peers.

In order to reinforce the exposure of AoC program, RNF has held Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with parents of children, teachers and local government in two different sessions to discuss violence and the underlying cause of it. In the coming years, RNF committed to holding more parents engagements to ensure the adoption of better parenting method and creating an accommodative support system.

- **Spread the message through their strongest power, Art**

RNF surely know one of their strongest powers, art-based approach, and nicely use it to spread a positive message about the anti-violence campaign to wider audience. As part of AoC program, RNF collaborated with an Australian mural artist as volunteer and a visual artist from Jakarta they collaborated with the children to create anti-violence message and translate it in the form of a mural image that adorns the outer wall of the NJCCC. The aim is to attract the attention of the passer-by who mostly from the local community; that way, they will be exposed to the anti-violence behaviour through beautiful mural.



**Picture 4.2.1 Mural on the NJCCC wall (Source: Research documentation)**





Picture 4.2.2 One of the mural design “let's love each other” (Source: Research documentation)



Picture 4.2.3 Another mural on NJCCC wall about living in peace (Source: Research documentation)

#### 4.3 “I saw him running with blood coming out of his head”: Children’s experience regarding violence

In order to open the discussion on the first day with the children about their experience, I asked them to write their typical daily activity; from that story I asked them whom they encountered and where they spend most of their time. This activity was meant as a bridging session before I asked them about their experience regarding violence. At first they were very hesitant to answer my question then I decided to play some games to break the ice. After the game they started to get more comfortable and voluntarily share their story. Since I only had one hour on the first day, I did not talk further about the violence.



**Picture 4.3.1** The children were writing their daily activities story (Source: Research Documentation)

On the second day of my session, I started the discussion with a short presentation about the type of violence which I focused on physical, emotional and sexual violence as these types are the most common type of violence that happens in their life setting based on the information the RNF Psychosocial Manager. Following to that I proceed with discussion about their experience regarding violence; the experience could be from their own experience, from what they heard from other people or from what they have seen but at the end they told me that these are their own experience although they also mentioned forms of violence from other people. Later on, I asked them to categorise the experience they shared based on the type of violence using flipchart and post-it (the girls chose pink post-it and the boys chose yellow post-it). There are five boys and eleven girls from three different groups who participated in this activity. As for the session with *Agen Perubahan* group on different occasion I used the same methods to gather information about their experience.



Picture 4.3.2 The children categorise the type of violence (Source: Research documentation)

The outcome from these activities are summarised in the categories below:

- **Emotional Violence**

The forms of emotional violence that were mentioned by the children are presented in the picture below:



Figure 4.3.1 Forms of Emotional Violence that children experienced. The bigger the word size means the more often the word is mentioned by children (Source: Visualised based on data gained during the FGD session)

In this context, bullied and mocked are distinguished in reference to the different term used by the children. Bullied (*di-bully*) is referred to the use of superior strength or influence to intimidate someone, typically to force them to do something; while mocked (*diejek*) is referred to the act of



make fun of someone by calling their parent's name or other name with negative connotation mostly based on their physical appearance such as fatty (*gendut*), the black one (*si item*), shorty (*si kuntet*), etc.

One of the girls from Non-AEOP participant group shared that sometime she got shunned by her friend, *"I don't know why, maybe because I'm so shy. I felt it hard to initiate conversation with my friend or maybe they don't like to play with me."* Another child from AEOP participant group said, which later on agreed by the other children, *"I hated it when my friend used my parent's name to make fun of me, I don't get why they did that."* On the other session with AoC group, one of the girls shared her experience being gossiped with her peer and how this thing impacted her, *"I don't have any confidence to walk in front of my friend after that nor I have courage to tell them the truth. I should have stand up for myself right? But it was hard for me."*

All of the children mentioned that they were bullied by their friend, siblings or adult (detail of the perpetrator will be explained in another part), while being mocked was mostly experienced by the girls' group and being gossiped, ostracized, shunned and underestimated was experienced only by the girl's group. I asked the boys group about the form of emotional violence that was only experienced by the girls and majority of them said that those things were never happening to them as the boys are not into gossiping and more into "physical thing". I noticed that the similar gendered-specific forms of violence repeated in other types of violence.

- **Physical Violence**

The forms of physical violence that were mentioned by the children are presented in the picture below:



**Figure 4.3.2 Forms of Physical Violence that children experienced. The bigger the word size means the more often the word is mentioned by children (Source: Visualised based on data gained during the FGD session).**

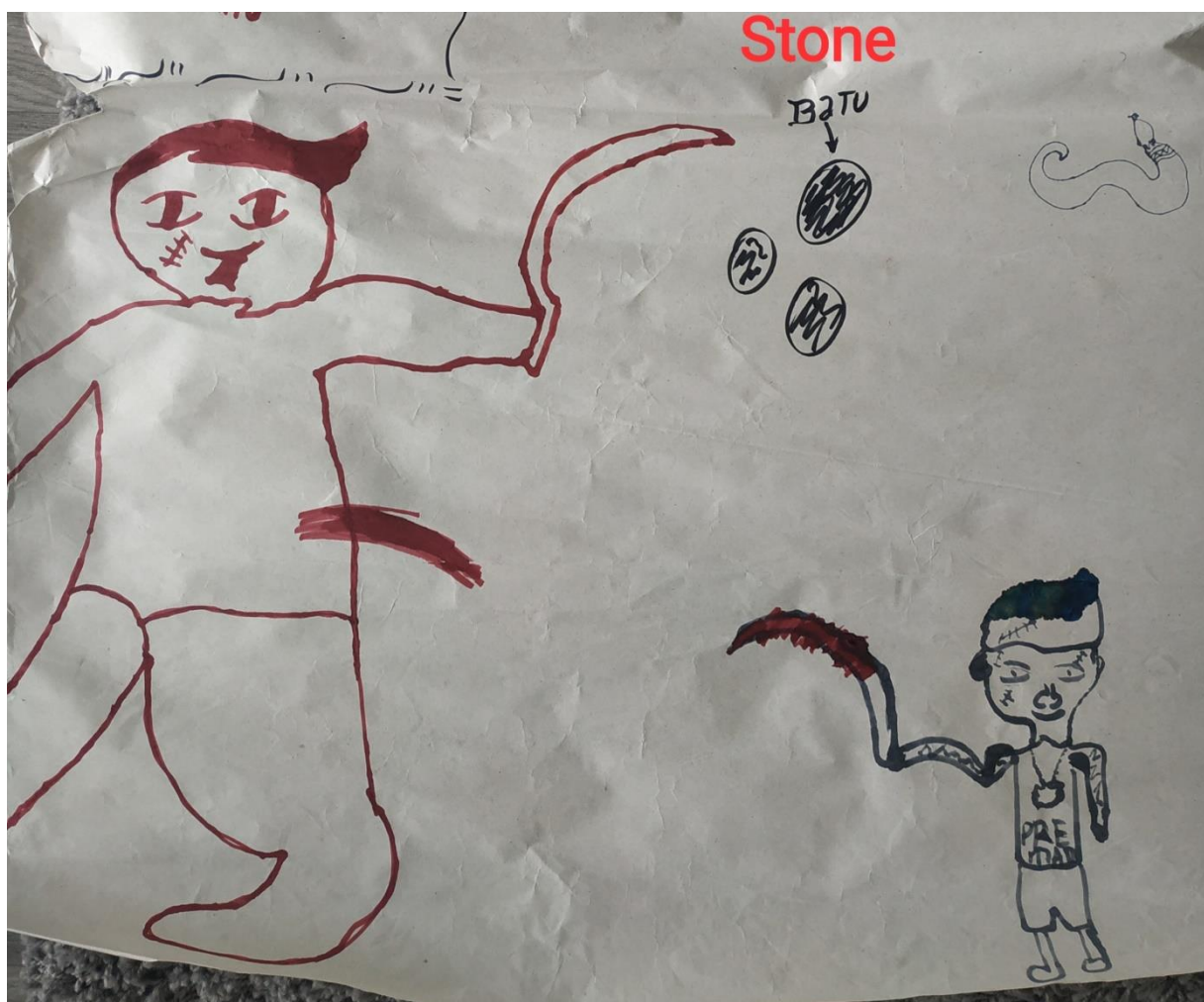
For the physical violence, I noticed that not all the girls put their post-it to the "Physical Violence" flipchart as the boys said before that the physical things are more associated with boys. The girls agreed to that statement as they thought that they are not as strong as the boys physically hence



they are not really involved (received or doing) in physical violence. However, the girls mentioned that when they had argument with their girlfriend it most likely will end up with pulling each other hair (*menjambak*), slapping or pinching each other but it is not common for boys.

One of the boys from the AEOP participant group told me about his friend at school who harmed himself by injured his hand with a sharp object to attract the attention his girlfriend. He called this action as *nge-bucin* referring to the act of hurting or scarifying yourself to prove your love to someone you love, usually after you got rejected or being dumped. His school immediately handled the case but he said, in which the other group member who came from different schools agreed, that this kind of case happened a lot among their friends.

In one of the informal conversations that I had with the children, they told me a story about when they saw a riot in their neighbourhood. They were mentioning all the detail of the incident clearly and in a casual way. *"I saw him running with blood coming out of his head"* said one of the boys and it responded by the other boys *"I remember that, he took revenge after that."* And later on these boys even drew the incident in the "Physical Violence" flipchart to show me even when I did not ask them to do so.



Picture 4.3.3 The drawing of the riot from the children's perspective (Source: Research documentation)

- **Sexual Violence**

The Psychosocial Manager helped me to explain about this type to the children. The forms of sexual violence that were mentioned by the children are presented in the picture below:

Cheek pinched without consent  
**Catcalled**  
Kissed without consent

**Figure 4.3.3 Forms of Sexual Violence that children experienced. The bigger the word size means the more often the word is mentioned by children (Source: Visualised based on data gained during the FGD session).**

The most common kind of catcalled that they received was being called “*Hey pretty*” (Hai cantik) or got whistled when they walked in front of a group of young adult men. As for the boys, only one experienced being catcalled and got his cheek pinched by an adult without his consent.

While discussing this matter, I noticed a significant difference between the children groups. The children from AEOP participants group are more open to discuss this and will listen to what their friend said. They will shout “*Hey, respect please*” if anyone in the room were not respecting each other. While the children from Non-AEOP group were quieter and needed more supervision which understandable considering that NJCCC was a new place for them and talking about their personal experience with new people was not easy as well.

In general, children will react to their friend story when they feel familiar with the experience and followed with a similar experience. I noticed that these children were not judging their friend’s story but instead they respected their friend, on some occasions they even gave their friend encouragement verbally or by patting their shoulder.

In addition to the type of violence, we were also talking about another element of violence such the place where they usually experience it, the perpetrator and what they think might cause the violence itself



Figure 4.3.4 The cause of violence from children’s perspective. The bigger the word size means the more often the word is mentioned by children (Source: Visualised based on data gained during the FGD session).

Joking around with their friends was mentioned the most as the most common cause of violence as one of the children said *“We usually started joking but sometimes we will end up overboard and hurt our friend.”* And the same goes with the racial jokes; for example calling someone by their racial background e.g. *“Dasar Ambon”* (referred to someone with dark skin color) or *“Soloness Princess”* for someone who is very slow referred to one tribe in Central Java. Asking your friends to pay back their debt to you was also mentioned as one of the causes that could lead to violence. One child put *“Made mistake”* as one of the causes of violence and when I asked him the reason of it, he said *“When I made mistake, my parent would hit me. But that’s fine; it’s the way to discipline me.”*



Figure 4.3.5 The place where they usually experience violence. The bigger the word size means the more often the word is mentioned by children (Source: Visualised based on data gained during the FGD session).

Public space such as the field, mentioned as the most common place where they experienced violence followed by house, school, seafront and street. Since they live in the shore area, they like to play in the seafront where there is a limited parent or adult supervision so they often experienced violence in this area.



**Figure 4.3.6 the most common perpetrator. The bigger the word size means the more often the word is mentioned by children (Source: Visualised based on data gained during the FGD session).**

Adults (*orang dewasa*) was mentioned as the most common perpetrator by the children, when I clarify about who were included in this category they told me it includes all the adults other than their parents and relatives. The second most mentioned is friends followed by parents, siblings, relatives and teacher.

Through the Forum Theatre play and Image Theatre it was clear that children still perceived the victim as someone who is weak and powerless. In one of the play, the children portrayed the victim as a geek (wearing glasses, holding books and walk awkwardly) while the perpetrator portrayed as someone strong and brave. They even said it in the dialog “Hi, *look at that geeky boy. Let’s ask him for money!*”. Although some of the children from the Non-AEOP participant program were laughing during the scene where the victim fell because somehow it looked funny for them but all the children from both groups said that the story resonates for them.





Picture 4.3.4 A victim portrayed by the AEOP Participant group (Source: Research documentation)

On the other occasion with the AoC group, we conducted Image Theatre when I asked them to make two images. The first image is the most common violence experience from their daily life and the second image is how they portrayed as the ideal condition should be.



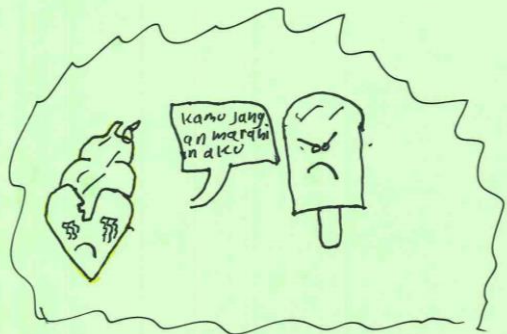

Picture 4.3.5 Image Theatre from AoC group (Source: Research documentation)


From both of the group, they portrayed physical violence as the most common violence that they experience. The left picture portrayed a boy who hit his girlfriend with a stick while the other girl calm her down and the ideal picture of this situation is that they make up with the help of the other girl. On the right picture it portrayed that a boy beat his friend while the girl did not do anything to help and for the ideal picture they visualised the two boys make up with the help of the girl who was just being a passive bystander.

#### 4.4 How Forum Theatre help children to exercise their agency to deal with violence

In this context, I draw my understanding of agency as the ability of children to define their goal and act upon them. I will first present some of the children's drawing about their goal related to the violence situation and followed by the content of the play from two groups in order to fully understand how Forum Theatre facilitates children to exercise their agency to deal with violence. The children were very clear about their goals or what they want regarding the violence issue with very little supervision from me.

Table. 4.4.1 Children's goal regarding violence

	<p><b>Don't be mad at me</b></p>
<p>Nam Putra</p> <p><u>STOP kekerasan emosional</u></p> 	<p><b>Stop emotional violence</b></p>

	<p><b>I really want us to make peace</b></p>
	<p><b>I want this world to be peaceful</b></p>

From the pictures above we can see how the children visualised their goal through the drawings, the first drawing visualised how she wants to stop being scolded; the second drawing want people to stop emotional violence, the third and the fourth drawing want the world to be peaceful.

#### ○ **Content of the play**

Events portrayed in both plays highlight the different experience of the children regarding violence. Both plays comprise a moment when the protagonist encountered unwanted behaviour from the antagonist in different settings; both of the stories are not correlated to each other.

The Non-AEOP participant's group narrates the story of a girl who was having a bad experience on her way to meet her friend. A man walked towards her out of nowhere and pinched her cheek (In the original story, this man kissed the girl. However, they changed the story while they developed the script. The owner of the story said she was too shy to share the story). While the girl still in shock, the man runaway and disappear into thin air. After she put herself together, she runs to her friends at the park and tells them what was happen to her. Her friends were shocks but they don't know what to do. The play ended with her friend tried to stop her from crying.





**Picture 4.4.1 Forum Theatre play from group 1, the scene where the perpetrator who wore a white t-shirt (she acted as a man) ran away after he pinched the girl with pink hijab's cheek (Source: Research Documentation)**

The response from the spect-actor (AEOP-Participant group) was given after I (as the joker) initiate by asking questions mentioned in the "Forum Theatre sessions" part and discussed with the spect-actor about the problems that appeared in the play as well as the possible solutions to overcome the problem. The responses from the spect-actor are as follows:

- One boy asked her to fight back the man by screaming and held the man's hand. The outcome of this response was the girl was able to catch the man and defend herself.
- The closure remark from the spect-actors was that they satisfied with the outcome of the play and hoping that the girl will really able to do so in real life.

The play from the AEOP-participant group was about a boy who was stopped by two thugs and was asked for money by force on his way back home from the school. The boy refused to give them money and end up being beaten with the thugs. This story also depicted the common scene in which two bystanders who were too scared to help the boys and decided to run away without helping him.





**Picture 4.3.2 Forum Theatre play from group 2, the scene where the victim was attacked by the perpetrator and the two bystanders (the girls on the left side of the picture) did not do anything (Source: Research documentation)**

Same as the previous group, The response from the spect-actor (Non-AEOP Participant group) was given after I (as the joker) initiate by asking questions mentioned in the “Forum Theatre sessions” part and discussed with the spect-actor about the problems that appeared in the play as well as the possible solutions to overcome the problem. The responses are as follows:

- The spect-actors suggested the protagonist fight back and scream for catch attention so he can manage to run from the thugs. The outcome of this response was the boy got even more beaten because the thugs were angry.
- Another response was for the bystanders to not only see it but asking for help from other people to stop the thugs.
- During the debrief session, one of the boys told me that this is his story but he felt uncomfortable to play as the protagonist as he still feeling uneasy about the incident.

Throughout the Forum Theatre session, children were able to exercise their agency by clearly and comfortably defining their goal prior the session started and acted it out through their story and their involvement in the formulation of the way out of the unfavourable situation for them.

I noticed the transformation of the children from the entire group especially those from the Non-AEOP participant from being very shy to even mention their name to confidently proposed feedback on the Forum Theatre plays. The sense of belonging to the issues that occur makes them eager to participate and taking role to contribute to the change.

#### **4.5 Challenges and Preconditions**

Bearing in mind that this is the first time I have conducted a Forum Theatre independently, I have encountered several obstacles and noted several preconditions that should be considered for holding a Forum Theatre in the future. The first challenge I encountered was when I was designing activities for the FT session. The fact that I didn't know the situation at NJCCC and the children made it difficult for me to choose the right activities and tools to use. Thus I need to adapt some changes in the field when the activity and the tool were not fit the needs. This decision was also related to time availability, knowing exactly how much time you needed and how much time available is essential to design your session.

Due to the schedule of RNF, I was only able to have three hours per day (for the exception of the first day where I only had one hour) to implementing my session. During my session, some children often ask permission to finish their homework which reducing the time slot that I had. If possible, spare some time in your agenda will help to maximize your sessions. The limited time I have to implement Forum Theatre was limiting me to explore another potency of the children. It would have been better to have more days to carry out proper preparation stages for Forum Theatre as well as a designated session to talk about the issue. However, being able to visit NJCCC prior my session started to get familiar with the children, teacher and the room help me to find the solution.

I also had the challenge to carry out my role as a joker; Joker plays an essential role in the whole Forum Theatre process, especially during the performance. At all cost, joker should avoid actions which could manipulate or influence the audience. With that being said, joker is not allowed to draw any conclusion which is not self-evident. Joker also has to open to possible discussion in interrogative rather than confirmative form. Preparing a note with a list of question will be a great help when the discussion is not running as planned.

As for the preconditions, I noted some things that should be considered in the future. First is the confidentiality of the story. One of the essential things for when children share their life stories is to make sure they feel safe to open up and share the stories. If in the future their story will be developed into a Forum Theatre plot, make sure to ask for their concern and keep the confidentiality of their story.

Secondly, the composition of the group should be considered. It will be better to group the children with not too big of an age gap to make sure that the experience can resonate to the other member of the group. It also related to the power relation within the group as children who have a big age gap tend to feel that they have more power than the smaller child which will affect the group dynamic.

Lastly, there is no wrong or right feedback or solution for the Forum Theatre plays. If you feel like the feedback is not making sense or "too magic" to happen, it will be better to explore more of the other possibility of the action. Being judgemental or straightforwardly telling the children that their feedback is wrong would hinder their process from exercising their agency.

## CHAPTER 5 DISSCUSSION

### 5.1 Creating a safe place for children and beyond

Protecting children from the exposure of violence is complex as it involves much more than keeping them safe. In line with this statement Myers and Bourdillon (2012), argue that our objective should always be to promote their well-being and development. RNF since its inception has been fully committed to providing a safe place for children by addressing the violence issue and its underlying cause through their program as well as values they teach to the children. The implementation of AoC program was one of their effort to keep their commitment, this program was not only aimed to provide safe space but also to increase children agency to deal with violence eventhough they are outside the range of RNF.

The lesson given by the RNF regarding Violence makes children more sensitive in seeing situations and thinking more critically about non-classical forms of violence. Through the implementation of Forum Theatre and added with the findings of the image theater activity it is visible that their understanding of violence is still around the standard forms and that produces visible effects on the appearance while not aware of the less visible form of violence such as neglection or demeaning their peer's dreams.

Moreover, RNF also promotes the well-being and development of the children through the life skill the children got from Social Circus and psychosocial assistance. This was confirmed by the statement of all the AEOP participant's group; for example, a boy who has been joining the program for two years said that *"I used to spent my free time after school in internet café to play games until night so I don't have time to do my home work. But after I joined RNF I almost never go to internet café and always do my home work right after school because they teach us to be discipline."*. Another boy added *"before joining RNF, I was rude and disrespectful to older people, but now I know that it not a good thing to do."* The other children from AEOP participant group agreed to these statements.

I learned that children of *Agen Perubahan* group felt additional peer pressures when they carry out their duty as the agent of change for their community especially when they have to reprimand they friend who did a wrong thing. One of the *Agen Perubahan* members told me, *"Sometimes I am afraid to reprimand my friend who did wrong because one of my friends used to call me an 'outdated hero'."*

### 5.2 Why forum theatre?

Augusto Boal refers his use of theater as a "rehearsal for the transformation of reality". Furthermore he defines Theatre of the Oppressed as

*a system of physical exercises, inventive games, image techniques and special improvisations whose goal is to safeguard, develop and reshape the human objective, by turning the practice of theater into an effective tool for the comprehension of social and personal problems and the search for their solutions* (Mitchell, 2011).

The implementation of Forum Theatre could potentially improve the anti-violence and child protection program since it wil encourage meaningful participation of children and young people to ascertain their realities and respond (Febrianto, 2018). Children are often seen as a voiceless social being; many policies relating to their livelihoods actually do not involve them. Whereas, it enshrined

in UNRC that they have rights to participate in the area that affects their life. From my point of view the children are in fact not voiceless but from time to time the policy maker or those who were designing child-related program are not involving children. With the pretext of being the “voice of the voiceless”, we actually take away their chance to be heard.

Forum Theatre is able to facilitate children to exercise their agency, adopting Lister’s (2004) taxonomy of agency she recognizes that agency stretches from everyday matters of ‘*getting by*’ and ‘*getting back at*’ (e.g. rebellious behaviour), to more strategic actions of ‘*getting out*’ and ‘*getting organized*’ (e.g. collective action) (Febrianto, 2018). Through Forum Theatre the children are managed to exercise their agency through ‘getting out’ of their comfort zone to talk about their violence experience, ‘getting by’ through juggling with the peer pressure and their own fear to open up to trustworthy person, and ‘getting organized’ through their involvement in the Forum Theatre processes and their attempts to raise community’s awareness about violence practices. All this time, the agency of children in NJCCC has been supported by the presence of NJCCC itself and support from RNF staff as well as their parent (who let them participate in RNF programs).

Working together with the children for Forum Theatre is enabling their chance to tell the story from their point of view. Moreover, they are also able to work together among themselves to formulate the solution. The process of generating solutions through theatre embodies Freire’s (1970) concept of *authentic thinking*, in which all who are involved become interdependent, growing together in their common effort to transform their reality (Mitchell, 2011). This is where the role of the facilitator is needed to ensure that every child has the right to express his thoughts and feel safe to tell what happened to them. In the debrief session, one of the child shared in the group that, sometime he still not feel safe to share about his bad experience to his peer or other people because of he afraid that someone would use it to strike him back in the future.

Furthermore, Boal’s techniques of Forum Theatre allow participants to share and create authentic group thinking or problem solving. Those who are involved become responsible for their own learning and that of those around them. It is through the process of authentic thinking that individual audience members begin to form a community of problem solvers (Mitchell, 2011). In line with that statement, Dwight Conquergood’s (1985) *dialogic conversation* in which performance is used to “bring together different voices, worldviews, value systems and beliefs so that they can have a conversation with one another”

Forum Theater activities, such as script writing, the acting and the discussion in between the play provide tremendous learning experience specifically related to aspects of moral understanding, moral awareness, moral and social behaviour. Actors and audience members co-create a narrative in which individual action makes social change a tangible reality (Balakrishnan & Thambu, 2014).

As a communication tool to spread the awareness of violence practices in the community, Forum Theatre is a crowd gatherer by its nature like any other theatre play. On the last Forum Theatre performance in the big hall of NJCCC, everyone who was in the building immediately stops their activity to watch the performance. They were very attentive to the play and were actively engaged in the discussion about the play afterward. Forum Theatre could support the engagement of the mural in NJCCC wall to spread the message and raising awareness of the community.

RNF actually used to have a theatre program but the Psychosocial Manager told me that the program did not go well because the children were not very interested. However, upon seeing the reaction of the children while doing Forum Theatre activities, she was surprised to see how excited and active the

children were while following all the step, she said *"I think it might be because it is their own story, they feel like they own it."*

The sense of belonging to the story and being able to be part of the transformative change is one of the attractions points of the Forum Theatre. All of the children involved said that Forum Theatre is their favorite part of the whole research process. They felt contented when they succeed to turn their bad experience into a play that could inspire their peer. However, the confidentiality of the story should always be the thing to considered keeping the space safe. One of the children said *"I'm actually not comfortable talking about my experience of violence, but if my story can be useful for my friends so they can avoid similar incidents then I'm okay"*.

### **5.3 Reflection as a researcher**

#### **Contribution of the study**

This study would contribute to add the existing knowledge on anti-violence against children practices which will highlight the potential of maximizing children's agency in order to fight violence against children. Moreover, this study will also serve as a reference point of the usage of Forum Theatre as a research and communication tool for future research about sensitive issues. Theatre is one of the most communicative tools to raise awareness but this tool has not yet been properly used by organisations in addressing issue of violence against children. This study will provide an image how Forum Theatre works to address the issue of violence against children that would be useful for other organisations or programs working on this field.

#### **Limitation and influencing factors**

One of the biggest challenges to finish this research was when I had to change the direction of my research. At first this study focused on the effect of RNF program on violence against children case in Cilincing with the assumption that RNF doesn't have anti-violence program as they called AoC is a campaign. However I learned that AoC is in fact one of RNF temporary program which makes most of my argument on my research proposal invalid. After consulting this to my supervisor, we decided to change the focus to the implementation of Forum Theatre as an alternative methodology to incorporates anti-violence program to the existing program of RNF.

The sensitivity of the issue is one of the factors that limit this study, it was challenging to find suitable methods to gain information and stories from the target groups. During my study at school, I received a workshop about Forum Theatre as part of the Facilitation for Change module and became familiar with the methods. This led me to the decision to use Forum Theatre as my research tool and also to study the possibility to use it as alternative methods for my commissioner.

Another challenge was the availability of the case data, for example the data from the Commission of Child Protection in Indonesia mostly only covered the reported case of violence. This fact could lead us to think that we can see violence cases entirely through the numbers on the report, in fact, the missing of reported data means that there are still a large number of unreported violence cases in the community. The missing information on violence case does not mean the absence of it in reality.

In terms of the research sampling, the study sample group used in this research include a small and purposive sample group which does not allow the study to be generalised to other children in the

same situation. As with all qualitative studies utilising self-reports, the results primarily provide the perspective of the subjects on their reality and the meanings they ascribe to this reality. However, this study produces a detailed and informative picture of the children involved.

The core responsibility of a researcher working with children is to protect them from potential harm and ensure that they benefit from the results of the study. Prior to this project, I have never worked with children before and always very cautious when I have to say something to them. On my first session with them, I used the term “unwanted behaviour” instead of violence to open up a broader discussion and avoiding discomfort for the children to talk about a sensitive issue with a stranger. However, they started to use the term violence as it is more understandable for them.

Out of all the research phase, answering the question about children’s experience regarding violence was one of the hardest parts of this research project but also the one that gave me the biggest lesson. It is important to understand the children situation, their experience and knowledge about violence before we proceed to Forum Theatre since the issue will be contextual. I was struggling to find the right way to make the children feel comfortable to share their story with me, considering that I was a stranger for them and the topic was also very sensitive and taboo. I started by not treated them merely as my study object but rather as a human with voice and emotion therefor I acknowledge their hesitation if they did not feel comfortable to open up to me.

While talking about sexual violence, there are some girls who posted “Rape” and “Molestation” on the flipchart. I was shocked because I thought that I really experience that. But after I privately confirm about it to the child who posted it, she said that she knew it from television and not from her own experience. Based on the consideration that we focus on the children experience, I decided to not include “Rape” and “molestation” in the recapitulation.

### **The complexity of Forum Theatre**

Although I had a lesson about Theatre Forum and tried to be a joker / facilitator before but the complexity of the elements of the Theatre Forum made me a little overwhelmed. This factor made me very cautious about the questions I asked and concerned about the response from the audience. Forum Theatre has a lot of components that can be explored more deeply with adequate time and team. I wish to have another chance of implementing Forum Theatre in the future.

To conclude my reflection as the researcher, I realized that my identity as someone new for the community in NJCCC and as a student from a European university, influenced my position in this research. These conditions created certain limitations and barrier during my field work. I am fully aware that there is some room for improvement in this research.

## CHAPTER 6 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 6.1 Conclusion

This research explored the implementation of Forum Theatre as an alternative tool for addressing VAC issue in NJCCC in order to incorporate anti-violence program into the existing program of RNF. As a researcher, this research aims to put into practice the knowledge and skill I gained during my study year in Van Hall Larenstein University of Applied Science, especially as a facilitator of change. To carry out this research, I conducted fieldwork to my home country and NJCCC in Cilincing for total six weeks. I interviewed RNF staffs, conducted Forum Theatre sessions which were combined with FGD to discuss violence experience with the children and performed two Forum Theatre plays in NJCCC hall. To finish up, I carried out participant observation and informal conversations with the staffs and children to gain deeper information and clarified the data collected to increase research validity and reliability.

This research found that RNF's way of addressing violence against children case in the community especially in NJCCC have been straightforward. Through strengthening the internal force by making sure that the staff shares the same understanding about violence and bringing the violence case to be discussed in internal meeting to collectively formulate the solution. Implementing AoC program was also one of the ways RNF encouraging the children and community to abandon violence practices. Lastly, RNF is spreading the anti-violence message through beautiful murals in the wall of NJCCC to reach a wider audience.

Through this research I found that the children from all three groups (AEOP Group participant, Non-AEOP participant and *Agen Perubahan* group) who participates the research have experience violence in almost every setting of their life. Some of the children even thinking that they deserved punishment from their parent when they made a mistake. However they found RNF as a safe place from violence they received outside NJCCC.

The implementation of Forum Theatre indicated as a tool that can accommodate children to exercise their agency to deal with violence. The children are able to act out towards their goal that they pictured as an ideal situation regarding violence. I observed that the children's behaviour transformed throughout the Forum Theatre session from being hesitated to talk about their experience to successfully transform their story into an inspirational play. Forum Theatre was also able to engaged wide audience to initiate even bigger discussion to talk about a topic that they were comfortable to talk about before.

Lastly, through this research I noted some challenges and preconditions when implementing Forum Theatre. First, the time availability to implement Forum Theatre was limiting me to explore another potency of the children. Second, the confidentiality of the story is one of the essential things for children when they share their life stories. We have to make sure they feel safe to open up and share the stories. Obtaining their consent before we use their story in Forum Theatre is essential. Third, being an unbiased joker/facilitator while facilitates Forum Theatre session is essential. Joker should avoid actions which could manipulate or influence the audience.

I conclude that the way Forum Theatre works to address violence against children is as a medium for children to be part of the decomposition of the problems moreover through Forum Theatre children will actively involve being part of problem solving; Forum Theatre also works as means of communication tool to spread the anti-violence message to wider audience; and as one of the

engagement tool to involve parents and other stakeholders. Forum Theatre is able to facilitate the children to increase their agency to deal with violence through its tools and activities. Children are given a safe space to share their experience to convince them that they have support system. by rehearsing the unwanted experience through Forum Theatre, children are expected to be able to do the same in real life.

## **6.2 Recommendations**

The objective of this research was to explore the possibility of Forum Theatre as an alternative methodology to generate information and addressing VAC issue in North Jakarta Community Centre for Children (NJCCC) in Cilincing. The findings of this research will be used to formulate recommendations to incorporate anti-violence program in the existing RNF programs. Based on the findings and conclusions of this research, I came with these recommendations:

Firstly, I recommend adopting Gender-sensitive approaches in order to mitigate children's risk of violence and to address specific care and support needs. With the presence of gender-based violence found through this research, it is crucial to address gender discrimination which is not only cause many forms of violence against girls but also contributes to the broad neglect and acceptance of violence against girls as a social norm. Perpetrators are often not held to account and girls are discouraged from speaking out and seeking care, support and protection. While these problems are pronounced in the lives of girls, many forms of violence against boys also go underreported, often because of issues related to stigma and shame (UNICEF, 2014) .

Secondly, in order to strengthen the understanding of the contextualised violence issue in NJCCC and as well in another intervention area of RNF, I recommend RNF to conduct refreshment session or meeting regarding violence issue and the underlying issue. Along with the interventions carried out by RNF we expect the transformation of the society; thus the strategy should be adapted to the new situation. If applicable, I also recommend making a handbook for the internal staff is also advised considering the sustainability and the consistency of the violence case handling.

Thirdly, in order to maximize the advantage of using the tools and activities of implementing Forum Theatre as a methodology to generate information and addressing VAC issue in NJCCC, I recommend conducting a proper preparation workshop for Forum Theatre. There should be at least warm-up activities and lead-in activities to make the participant familiar with Forum Theatre; Main activities and energizer activities. Boal's book of Games for Actors and Non-Actors (Boal, 1992) and other Forum Theatre manual book for example from Interactive Youth Manual – UNICEF can be used as reference.

Fourthly, I recommend using Forum theater to engage parents through a play addressing the violence issue from their perspective. This play could initiate a discussion about the underlying issue of the violence practices and could lead to formulating solution or the way out of the common violence practices. Encouraging the sense of belonging of the issue and more importantly being the part of the change to the parent could deepen the engagement with the parent.

Lastly, further research could be conducted on the effectiveness of another form of Theatre of the Oppressed as well as the narrative analysis of the play to analyse how victim and perpetrator perceived. Another future research recommendation is to conduct research about the impact of witnessing violence on children's well-being and development.



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