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**“Listening to the Neglected Whispers of
Jakarta: Understanding Poor Children’s
Outdoor Play”**

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This document represents part of author's study programme while at the Institute of Social Studies. The views stated therein are those of the author and not necessarily those of the Institute.

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List of Acronyms

ISS	Institute of Social Studies
PKK	Pembinaan Kesejahteraan Keluarga (<i>Fostering Family Welfare</i>)
RPTRA	Ruang Publik Terpadu Ramah Anak (<i>Child Friendly Integrated Public Spaces</i>)
UNCRC	The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
PAM	Perusahaan Air Minum (<i>Drinking Water Company</i>)

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Abstract

Living in a high-density neighbourhood, Jakarta's poor children face limited outdoor play spaces, which creates unequal conditions when compared to wealthier children. Appreciating Jakarta's poor children as experts of play, this research reveals how these children value outdoor play and play spaces. Furthermore, the research also analyses the factors that shape their outdoor play.

Conducting qualitative research with an ethnographic approach, this study combines participant observation, photographs, map drawings, ranking, transect walks, and informal interviews as methods to collect data from multiple sites: RPTRA Intiland Teduh, RPTRA Manunggal and non-designated outdoor play spaces around these neighbourhoods. It is important to highlight that children's perspectives are the main focus of this research.

Outdoor play is a part of poor children's daily lives in Jakarta. Before the establishment of designated outdoor play spaces (RPTRAs), these children only had alleyways, streets, abandoned plots, and other non-designated play spaces. However, they also have their own reasons as to why they are still playing in both types of play spaces.

It is important to highlight that the main drivers for the children playing outdoors are the need for sufficient spaces to (physical) play and the need to socialise with other children (peers). Due to children's eagerness to play outdoors, these play spaces have become laboratories for creativity, which can be seen in how they use, modify, and create new functions from what they find in their play spaces.

This research found that geographical factors, generational relations, and gender and class differences play important roles in shaping poor children's outdoor play in Jakarta. First, from the perspective of geographical conditions, and in determining which outdoor play spaces children use, a large play space consisting of natural elements is their preference. Secondly, generational relations shape their outside play time in the form of parents working hours, school hours, and religious-based customs (e.g. Muslim prayer time). Moreover, generational relations are also significant with regard to how adults determine equipment, schedules, activities, and rules. Furthermore, parents' transferal of values also creates the risk of religious-based bullying and discrimination in children's play outdoors. Finally, gender and class differences also influence children's social relations in outdoor spaces.

Relevance to Development Studies

This research is relevant to development studies by highlighting the perspectives of urban poor children with regard to how they value outdoor play and outdoor play spaces. As one of the subjects of development, children have the right to the city regardless of their social and economic backgrounds. They have a right to use and value any place within the city and participate in urban development planning. By applying an ethnographic approach, this study provides more freedom for the child participants to lead the fieldwork and freely express their thought on outdoor play. Focused on analysing the factors that affect and shape urban poor children's outdoor play, this study is based on the discourse of the new sociology of childhood, including the concept of children's agency, generational relations, and children geographies. The results of this study provide important considerations for the government in relation to designing, implementing, and evaluating child-friendly city programmes.

Keywords

Adults, agency, childhood, children, child-friendly, ethnographic approach, generational relations, geographies, Jakarta, outdoor, play, poor, RPTRA, social actor, social construction, spaces, urban.

Chapter 1. Living in a High-Density Neighbourhood: Poor Children's Struggle to Play Outdoors in Jakarta

1.1. Poor Children's Outdoor Play in Jakarta

It is the first day of my fieldwork and I find myself walking through a narrow alleyway in the sub-district of Karet Tengsin, a poor neighbourhood in Central Jakarta. It is a hot sunny day, but no sunrays filter through the densely built-up environment. A group of young children suddenly runs past. I have to stop walking and step aside in order to make way for them. They run recklessly past me, playing hide-and-seek. When standing there, I notice another group of children playing with a plastic ball on the corner of a small abandoned yard. They are playing football and imitating their football idols, whose names are printed on their T-shirts.

Urban poor areas in Jakarta are evidently not designed to accommodate children's play. This happens because, somehow, rapid urban development has caused a change in land function in the city, which has been affected by the loss of open public spaces commonly used by children as playgrounds. Living in a poor, high-density neighbourhood places a constraint on urban children's outdoor play. This was reflected during my observation, where children in such neighbourhoods end up playing in places that are not supposed to be playgrounds, such as streets, alleyways, bridges, and other abandoned places filled with garbage, which are less safe. I could see how their desire for outdoor play drives them to maximise the use of their surroundings in playing creatively and resourcefully.

Their habit of playing outdoors every day or even during the day strengthens the evidence that outdoor play is one of children's basic needs for their growth and development. However, this stands in stark contrast with the designated playgrounds one finds in wealthier neighbourhoods, often just a few kilometres away. This indicates that Jakarta faces conditions of great inequality between poor and wealthy children in relation to outdoor play. The wealthier children can easily access playgrounds close to their residences, or they may even have outdoor playgrounds in their own yards, together with modern security systems.

Jakarta provides significant access to well-paid jobs, improved infrastructure, and high-quality education and health. Therefore, many people from Indonesian rural areas move to Jakarta in order to find a better life, and this massive wave of urbanisation has significantly increased population density in the city. Ministry of Home Affairs Republic of Indonesia (2015) states that Jakarta is Indonesia's most populous urban area, with more than ten million people living in an area of 664,01 km². In 2010, its population density was 14,518 people/km², which has gradually increased to 15,328 people/km² in 2015, with the overall population density in Indonesia being 134 people/km² (BPS Statistics Indonesia, n.d.). The direct impact of high population density in Jakarta is overcrowded housings and neighbourhoods, especially in the poorer parts of the city.

As the opening vignette illustrates, this creates an environment in which there is little space for children to engage in outdoor play.

Various authors have, from different perspectives, confirmed the importance of play for children. For some, play is an essential need for children's healthy development. Bartlett (1999:68) argues that "play is a basic human drive and is fundamental to children's development". Next to the 'need' for healthy child development, play may also be understood in terms of rights. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) Article 31 states that a child has the right to play and enjoy leisure time and recreational activities (United Nations 1989). Furthermore, Lester and Russell (2010:1-53) argue that children with sufficient play activities have lower risk of stress or boredom. Play has a role in children's "physical development and sensory pleasure, emotional release, expressing their feelings, ideas, and creativities, expressing their autonomy and independence, abilities improving, increasing social and language skills, experiencing adventure and risk" (Churchman 2003:106).

This study is also inspired by Bartlett (1999:68) who argues that play is a connecting medium for increasing cognition, emotion, learning processes, and social abilities in children's future lives. These benefits can be more easily fulfilled through outdoor play, where children can be active and play freely.

The Indonesian government has fully embraced the discourse of children's rights as a part of human rights, which has been evidenced through the establishment of a national policy on child protection, which states that "every child has the right to survival and to grow and develop and is entitled to protection from violence and discrimination" (The Government of Indonesia 2014). As part of this initiative, each local government, including that in Jakarta, has been encouraged to create and develop child-friendly cities across the country (The Government of Indonesia 2014). The Child-Friendly Cities initiative aims to develop policies that will create environments to support children's lives and development. In addition, it aims to mobilise all resources and potential partners in the country's cities in order to formulate strategies, programmes, activities, and budgets for increasing the capabilities of cities to build Child-Friendly Cities. One of the expected outputs is the provision of spaces to promote child participation.

In aiming towards the goal of child-friendly cities, the Jakarta Government established open public spaces, called *Ruang Publik Terpadu Ramah Anak/Child-Friendly Integrated Public Spaces (RPTRA)*, in high-density poor neighbourhoods.¹ Currently, there are 184 RPTRAs in Jakarta (as of February 2017)² spread throughout all the city's municipalities, which provide safe and appropriate spaces for children to play and learn as a part of their development process. RPTRAs are designed as child-friendly community centres and the government actively engages many stakeholders in the running of the programme. However, based on the initiative's blueprint, children are one of the

¹ Personal communication with the representative of The Government of Jakarta on 29th April 2017.

² Ibid.

most important stakeholders, given that the main aim of the programme is to accommodate children's outdoor play.

According to the governor's regulation on the RPTRA programme (the Government of Jakarta 2015), this programme adapts the indicators of the Child-Friendly Cities initiative, due to Jakarta's efforts toward developing a child-friendly city. However, despite this programme specifically stating that its priority is the fulfilment of children's rights and needs, the Jakarta Government did not involve children in the initial assessment or design of the RPTRAs.³ As a consequence, the RPTRAs must be understood as adult-designed spaces, which raises the question as to how (middle-class)⁴ adult-imagined ideas about children's outdoor play relate to urban poor children's actual play. Moreover, I believe that, through my research, I can address the knowledge gap regarding children's outdoor play in urban poor neighbourhoods, especially from the children's perspective.

In sum, my research focuses on children's outdoor play in poor high-density neighbourhoods in Jakarta. I do so by privileging children's own perspectives on outdoor play and focusing on their play activities, both in designated play areas and non-designated areas. Drawing on the child-centred approach and a qualitative research methodology, I will show how these differently-designed urban areas affect children's play and how, in turn, children use these areas to initiate and practice their own play activities. Furthermore, the research underscores the importance of an understanding place as socially constituted, among other things, through generational relationships and how such power relations have a bearing on children's everyday outdoor play.

1.2. Research Question(s)

I based my research on the core research question: *"How do urban poor children in Jakarta value outdoor play and play spaces, and what factors shape their outdoor play?"*

To answer this research question sufficiently, the following sub-research questions will be addressed:

- a. Research sub-question 1
How do poor children value outdoor play in Jakarta?
- b. Research sub-question 2
How do poor children utilise and value designated (RPTRA) and non-designated outdoor play spaces in Jakarta?
- c. Research sub-question 3
What factors shape poor children's outdoor play and play spaces in Jakarta?

³ Personal communication with the representative of The Government of Jakarta on 29th April 2017.

⁴ The policy formulators and makers mostly come from the middle-class family/community

1.3. Research Objective

The main purpose of this research is to provide a picture of poor children's perspectives with regard to how they use and value outdoor play and outdoor spaces, both designated (RPTRA) and non-designated, in Jakarta. In addition, this study aims to determine the factors that shape the current construction of the outdoor play of Jakarta's poor children. In the end, I believe that this study, which focuses on children's perspective, could be an important input for the further development of RPTRAs and the government of Jakarta's Child-Friendly Cities' initiative. Understanding children's perspectives and experiences will be essential, especially for the decision making of urban planners (Gleeson et al. 2006:153).

Chapter 2. The New Sociology of Childhood as a Theoretical Framework

In analysing this research paper, I will use the new sociology of childhood as the underlying framework. This body of work emphasises two major points: understanding children as social actors and understanding childhood as a social construction.

First, it recognises “children as social actors” who “play an active role” in their relationships with other human beings, both adults and other children (Hendrick 2008:40-65; Matthew 2007:324). In their daily socialisation activities, children are able to learn and adopt adult’s daily practices. Further, they can also modify what they learn based on their own way of thinking or even create their own daily practices (Matthew 2007:324). In the other words, they are not just passively driven by adults during their childhood, but are actively engages in shaping the process of socialisation.

According to this viewpoint, Jakarta’s poor children are social actors who have a role in shaping Jakarta’s social life. Moreover, these children also determine the success, or otherwise, of the Child-Friendly Cities programme. Therefore, in utilising an ethnographic approach, I place Jakarta’s poor children as the subject of this research. I encouraged these children to express their ways of thinking and to share their daily life experiences of outdoor play. All the findings and results of my research are based on observations of and experiences with children, supported by children’s information, stories, and gestures during the fieldwork (Hagerman 2010:75). I agree that children have knowledge, interests, and abilities regarding their own life experiences, which may be different from those of adults (Langsted, 1994; Dahl, 1995; Mayall, 2000; Clark & Moss, 2001; as cited in Einarsdottir, 2005:525). They value things differently from both from adults and other children. Once children are actively engaged in the social interaction of their own lives, adults cannot, without the involvement of children, simply apply their own perspectives or experiences to children’s needs. Therefore, it becomes important to actively involve children in the research. Moreover, in viewing children as social actors, this study also analyses how they adapt to and interact with their living places and the broader society within which they are placed.

Second, the new sociology of childhood highlights the notion of “childhood as a social construction” (Morrow 2011:4), which refers to the social process through daily interactions and actions by which an individual or group of individuals continuously creates their reality (James and James 2012:122). As part the concept of social construction, the representation of childhood can vary depending on the context, such as the social-economic areas and communities where children live (Mayall 1994). This study cannot be separated from the other inter-related issues or factors such as ethnic, gender, class, geographical, and age relations (Ansell 2005:20-21, and James, A. and Prout, A. 1997:8-9), all of which can influence and shape the process of childhood.

Above all, as Christensen and James (2000b:176) argue, children's competences cannot only be measured by their age (physically and psychologically), but also by the prevailing local contexts where they live and grow.

Children's Agency

In the new sociology of childhood, children capacities as social actors lead to the concept of agency (Morrow 2011:11). With their agency, children create autonomy and power (Punch 2001:23-35). According to this research, Jakarta's poor children have the agency to value and experience any type of outdoor play, both that designed by adults or by children themselves. These children also have their own preferences regarding the kinds of outdoor play spaces that are comfortable and suitable for them, or whether they want to play individually or in a group. Such a perspective highlights how children make their own decisions to act, think, and express themselves freely (Abebe 2013:71-92).

However, children's own choices are also influenced by various factors (mostly external) that exist in their daily lives. Agency also needs to be seen as relational and is, among other things, shaped by generational relations, which are interconnected with power relations and not deal with the relationships between children and adults but also between children themselves (Cele 2006:202). Power relations between children arise from various factors, such as age, class, religion, and gender differences, and they are common in Jakarta, as an urban area with people from various backgrounds and characteristics. The gaps between the rich and the poor, the older and the younger, majority and minority religions, and boys and girls contribute, to a certain extent, to how Jakarta's poor children, specifically in two targeted areas, view and experience outdoor play and play spaces.

Furthermore, besides the power relations, another factor affecting how children make their own choices is related to the characteristic of children's geographies, which includes the condition of their physical living spaces, the form of their daily activities, and their social interaction with adults and other children (Robson and Klocker 2007:135-139). Living in poor high-density neighbourhoods in Jakarta certainly provides a different experience for children with regard to adapting to and dealing with the limited spaces available for their need and right to play.

Generational Relations

In understanding the new sociology of childhood, Mayall (2000:121) and Alanen (2001:12) emphasise the important role of the concept of generation, including age relations, which is related to the social process of children's daily lives. As social actors in a particular society, children experience various interactions with different generational groupings, such as adults, older or younger children, and their peers. Qvortrup, Corsaro, and Honig (2011:72) state that the concept of generation has two dimensions. First, it focuses on the relation between older and younger generations, and secondly it also points to the importance of intra-generation relationship (i.e. peer relationships).

In this research study, I emphasise the first dimension of this concept, which is children's relationships with older-age groups, especially adults. This is aligned with the argument of Alanen (2001:19-21), in that the concept of generation points, more often than not, to the relationships between children and adults.

As mentioned above, generational relations are linked to the children's agency, especially with regard to the notion of power, in which children tend to have less power than adults (Alanen 2001:19-21). According to Punch (2001:24), this asymmetric power relation with regard to "*who*" control "*what*" in the social relationship between children and adults affects autonomy. Cele (2006:25) argues that the competence of children in creating geographical space is limited due to their lives in adults' structured domains. Adults tend to see children as immature human beings, both physically and mentally, such a perspective means that children are not considered as able to make their own decisions or act wisely without the involvement of adults.

This research study shows how generational relations influence the way children use and interpret outdoor play and outdoor play spaces. These generational relations also have various contents, influenced by variables such as class, age, religion, and gender. Different variables affect different relations.

Children's Geographies

This research draws on children's geographies, which combines the concept of childhood with the notion of spatiality. The study of children's geographies is strongly connected with the discussion of children as social actors, specifically within the urban environment, which is the focus of this research (Holloway and Valentine 2000:1-20). Furthermore, Philo (2000:243-256) has also emphasised that the social context of children's everyday lives and their daily interactions influence how children's geographies work in practice.

Children's geographies (1) highlights the necessity of place; (2) explores the surrounding in which children conduct their daily activities (including spaces for playing, living and learning); and (3) examines the concept of childhood in relation to spatial studies, including how social interaction occurs in different places, especially in the everyday lives of children Holloway and Valentine (2000:5-15).

In the notion of play, Skelton (2009:1442) states that "play and the spaces of play are very well-established but dynamic facets of geographical research with children". Therefore, following Cele (2006:36), I explored children's "abstract and concrete experiences and use of space": concrete experience is related to the types of play and play spaces that children use every day, as well as the people they interact with during their play time, while the abstract experience is related to the process and value for them in using those places and conducting several types of play, such as their social interaction, memories, and values.

In other words, children's geographies relate to how we understand children as individuals with regard to their interaction with particular places and with people within these places (Cele 2006:29). In this research, the particular places are poor high-density neighbourhoods in Jakarta, which are commonly used as outdoor play spaces for the children who live in those neighbourhoods. In addition, children's interaction and relation with such place, both geographically and socially, shapes their perspectives and experiences of outdoor play.

Chapter 3. Research Methodology

3.1. Methods of Data Collection (Qualitative Method: Ethnographic Approach)

This research adopts a qualitative methodology and utilises an ethnographic approach. Through this method, I have more opportunity to listen, feel, see, and think from the participants' views (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007:2). Such an approach helps me to learn the meanings and processes of urban poor children's perspectives and experiences in using and valuing outdoor play spaces in their everyday lives, particularly in Jakarta. James (1998:246-256) has pointed out that ethnography is the most suitable approach for learning about and understanding children's ways of thinking.

Following the ethnographic approach, I started my fieldwork by being a volunteer in two RPTRAs for four weeks (mid-July to mid-August 2017). As a participant observer, I was immersed in children's daily activities - mostly playing – both in the RPTRAs and neighbourhoods around the RPTRA. I conducted participant observation and individual data collection consisting of photographs, map drawings, transect walks, rankings, and/or informal interviews. I used these methods to encourage children to express their ideas based on their own experience and knowledge (Mauther 1997, Alderson, 2000; Christensen and James, 2000, as cited in Einarsdottir 2005:525). I believe that these methods, applied as unique “communication tools”, allowed me to uncover and explore children's voices and experiences (Hagerman 2010:68) beyond the boundaries of verbal and written communication. In addition, I gave the children the option of where and when they wanted to undertake each method, so they would be comfortable during the process.

The photographs method was used to understand play through the children's eyes. I lent the children my small digital camera so they could capture any activities in outdoor places that they defined as play. In this sense, they had an opportunity to express their own views. When they held and tested the camera, I could see how excited and curious the children were because, for some of them, it was their first time using a camera. Regarding the issue of security in Jakarta, it was necessary for me to monitor them from a distance, without being actively involved in the picture-taking activities.⁵ Therefore, the children remained in charge and followed their own ways of defining play. I believe that this approach did not affect the children's independence in conducting the photographs method. After each participant had taken some pictures, I invited them to explain the results of the photographs, i.e. what types of play they had captured as well as how, where, and with whom they usually conducted those activities.

⁵ I only accompanied the participants from Karet Tengsin Subdistrict (RPTRA Intiland Teduh) in doing photographs. It is because I put my concern on the situation around the neighbourhood where several thugs existed.

Secondly, I utilised the map drawing method. In this sense, I asked children to draw two pictures: (1) a free-form drawing, which was determined by themselves, and (2) a picture of their daily play spaces in their neighbourhood. This method aimed to help the children describe where they played or what kind of places they used in their daily play. Through this method, children are able to express their own understandings and their minds freely. Moreover, a map drawing is also useful in helping children treasure where they were and where they are now. It stimulates their imagination and memories and shows how they recognise their world (Punch 2002:331). The participants in the research drew, in detail, a map of their house, neighbourhood, and play spaces. Even though some of them lived in the same neighbourhood, they drew it differently and in their own way.

Figure 1 Children's Maps



Source: Author's fieldwork (2017)

Using the maps, the participants and I started transect walks along the neighbourhoods. This method aimed to evoke their memories in using the daily play spaces within the neighbourhood. Tanner (2009:6) found that people tend to have strong memories about their residential environment and its dynamic as a part of their lives, including their “secret places of childhood and adolescence” to play. It is also important to note that some places that appeared in the discussion with the children during the transect walk were not in the map drawing process.

In addition, to explore how urban poor children value different play spaces, I used ranking (of the outdoor play spaces in the children's maps) and informal

interviews with the children. The ranking aimed to identify the children's favourite places for outdoor play and those that they used most frequently.

Basically, all the aforementioned methods aimed to complement each other in order to collect all the required information during the fieldwork. I added some informal interviews to each method in order to obtain deeper information. To ensure the children's comfort during this research, I negotiated with them regarding the type of method they wanted to use, the places they wanted to visit or use during the research process, and the schedule for the next meeting. I considered this necessary due to my belief that different children would have been more comfortable expressing themselves through different research methods. Einarsdottir (2005:525) argues that negotiations between the researcher and participating children can be used as the way to achieve child-friendly research methods.

After the fieldwork was finished, I wrapped up the findings and then referred them back to the children for validation (Leonard 2007:147-148), verifying them one by one with each child.

Conducting research with children requires a different approach than that used with adults. Emotional and personal consideration played an important role. I had to develop an approach ensuring that any potential stress that might have occurred during the research was minimised, a happy atmosphere was maintained, and the researcher's domination was eliminated in order to make sure the children could express their minds freely, in addition to adapting to their mood quickly. Furthermore, I believe that it was important to boost the bargaining power of the children by giving them the freedom to decide what, how, with whom, where, and in what form they wanted to draw, take a photo, visit, or explain ideas to me, so that the research results were based on their own views and experiences. I put the children into the position of being the experts in this research, who well understood the photographs and drawings they made and the in which they shared their stories with me (Einarsdottir 2005:527).

Additionally, in this research, I also aimed, to some extent, to quantitate the qualitative data obtained from all the methods by providing charts to support the data analysis.

Above all, to reveal the children's preferences in this research, I will present the results of the observations, summaries of interviews (including direct quotations from participants during the transect walks and interviews), and participants' photographs, maps, and ranking information.

3.2. Engaging Multi-Sited Research

I undertook a multi-sited ethnography with urban poor children in two targeted neighbourhoods: The sub-district of South Petukangan in South Jakarta, where RPTRA Manunggal exists, and the sub-district of Karet Tengsin in Central Jakarta, where RPTRA Intiland Teduh exists. In each neighbourhood, I covered both designated and non-designated outdoor play spaces as my target research

areas. In this study, a designated outdoor place means any outdoor area established by adults (e.g. the government) that is open publicly for playing and for recreational purposes, RPTRAs being one such example. In contrast, a non-designated outdoor play space means any outdoor area that is not designed as a children's playground but is used by children to play, such as small alleyways, streets, bridges, or other abandoned spaces within the neighbourhoods.

At the beginning of the research, I conducted an initial survey in four other sub-districts in Central Jakarta and South Jakarta, due to them being overcrowded residential areas. However, the RPTRAs in these sub-districts were actually located in middle-upper class areas. Due to the difficulty of finding available space, some RPTRAs were built in the nearest possible locations, sometimes in the middle-upper class areas. In the end, I chose the South Petukangan and Karet Tengsin sub-districts as my research areas because the RPTRAs of these areas are located within poor, high-density neighbourhood areas.

This research does not necessarily represent the general condition of urban poor children in Jakarta, with regard to how they use and value outdoor places to play. Due to having a relatively small sample of participants, my aim was to learn about a particular issue in a particular place (O'Leary 2004:104). Nevertheless, this research outlines perspectives and experiences of children that are rarely recognised by adults. For this reason, the findings could be of use for the government in considering how to create environments that are friendly for children.

3.3. Participants

In this study, I focus this study on the perspectives of the urban children who live in two targeted poor, high-density neighbourhoods. The children ranged from six to eleven years old (middle childhood) because, at this age, children are more commonly engaged in physical play in outdoor places (Pellegrini and Smith 1998:579). Through actively involving the children, I can privilege children's genuine points of view on how the issues affect them. Children's perspectives will enrich Jakarta's policy-making process on urban planning related to children's issues, which often neglects children's voices due to "adult's perception that children are incompetent, unreliable, irresponsible, and immature" (Horschelmann and van Bleek 2012:159). The UNCRC, in Articles 3 and 12 states that policy focusing on children should consider children's interests, and the children have the right to provide a view on every issue related to them (United Nations 1989).

At the beginning of the research, the approach was to have 20 participating children (ten boys and ten girls). However, before the research ended, 23 children, (thirteen boys and ten girls) took part in the research. From 23 participants, 16 children took part in all the methods, while the others only engaged in some of the methods, due to their consent and preferences. Moreover, to complement the findings, I also conducted unstructured conversations with the RPTRA's administrators during my volunteering.

I engaged in a flexible approach, adapting to the current situation of the children at any given time. Such flexibility is related to the number of participants and the kinds of method that I was using during the research. A special case during my research in the Karet Tengsin sub-district (where RPTRA Intiland Teduh exists) can illustrate this flexibility: besides the 23 participants that I regularly interacted with, I also communicated with a boy and a group of six boys. The boy did not want to be involved as a main participant because he was not confident in drawing; he just wanted to observe our activities and spend time with us. I respected his choice and allowed him to follow us. This situation resulted in us having several informal conversations. He was very open with regard to sharing his point of view and experiences of play and play spaces. For the group of boys, I interacted with them during my football playing time with children. The idea to conduct a spontaneous group discussion with them in order to enrich the information came up as I was waiting for my participants in the RPTRA Intiland Teduh's hall. I decided to proceed as a group because I did not want to ruin their chosen method of gathering, and we had a conversation as well for approximately one hour.

3.4. Ethical Considerations

An important consideration at the beginning of my research was to obtain access and consent from this group of children. In so doing, there were “multiple layers of gatekeepers” that needed to be consulted in order to access this group of children (Leonard 2007:133-156). At first, I contacted the children's parents, the RPTRA administrators, *Rukun Tetangga (RT)*⁶ leaders, the Jakarta Government, and the children themselves in order to inform them all about my research purpose and plan. After this, I asked for the children's consent.

Getting the children and all the gatekeepers' consent was very crucial for this research, as it evidenced my respect for their rights. Punch (2002:323) stresses that “the central difference between research with children and research with adults is related to the ethical issues”, due to the consideration that children are vulnerable and less powerful than adults. I always ensured that children were fully informed about my research purpose and what their involvement would be, and I asked permission if I wanted to share their research results with others or take picture of their daily activities. This consent was given voluntarily and was renegotiable, so the children could withdraw from the research or modify their level of participation at any stage of the process. I highly respected every single choice that the children made.

3.5. Reflexivity and Positionality

It is necessary to pause for a moment and try to stand outside the research process. This provides me, as a researcher, with an opportunity to build my understanding and ability to reflect critically on the research process (O'Leary 2004:176). I tried to absorb and re-understand every challenge and dilemma that arose during the research.

⁶ Neighbourhood association

In this research, I faced the dilemma of being an insider and an outsider at the same time. On the one hand, as an insider, I did not face any difficulty in understanding the cultural background of Indonesia, particularly in Jakarta, because I was born and had lived in Jakarta. I can easily understand the local language or slang that the children use in their daily lives. On the other hand, I also an outsider because, in this case, I am an adult who was attempting to understand the perspectives and experiences of urban poor children in Jakarta about a particular issue. In attempting to nullify the generational gap between the children and me, I let them take the lead in activities while following their rules. I did not create any new game or fun activity for the children. This approach created a comfortable level of interaction between us, and I easily gained the children's trust. The circumstance helped me capture on the dynamics of their play activities (O'Kane 2000:111). According to Gold (1958:220), the researcher and participants are aware of the necessity of a deep relationship between them in the field

Moreover, even though I had lived in Jakarta, I had never visited such neighbourhoods. It was my first time to walking, sometimes sideways, through such narrow alleyways; it was so dark that I could not see what was under me or above me. It was difficult to imagine how the children played in such alleyways in their everyday lives.

The governor's election, which made religion an issue of increased sensitivity, has resulted in serious political polarisation between Jakarta's citizens. The majority religion of the residents in the two targeted research areas is Islam, while I am a Christian (the minority). In this research, my positionality was challenged when there was a risk of bullying by a group of children because of religious differences. At first, I tried not to intervene as an outsider observer, but then the condition necessitated intervening in order to prevent the condition worsening. In the end, since the children have agency (Hagerman 2010:66), I left it to them to determine their actions and reactions.

Chapter 4. Conceptualising Play amongst Urban Poor Children in Jakarta

4.1. Play as Part of Children’s Daily Lives

“Everyday after school I play with my friends. Sometimes in the RPTRA, sometimes in the *kompleks*⁷. I go home in the evening when my mother called me to go home.” (Tere, 8 years old girl, 19 July 2017)

Similar statements were made by children from both areas during the transect walks, indicating that urban poor children in the Karet Tengsin and South Petukangan sub-districts play in outdoor spaces almost every day. From my interactions with the children, I realised that the outdoor environment offered an opportunity for wider spaces in which to play. Outdoor play provides a particular space for children to express their mobility and explore their experiences within their environment, such as “what they do, with whom, when and where, obviously within the constraints of what others want to do” (Churchman 2003:106).

Figure 2 Outdoor play is a part of children’s daily lives



Figure 2a



Figure 2b



Figure 2c



Figure 2d

Source: Author’s fieldwork (2017)

⁷ It is a local term of middle-upper class residence (e.g. real-estate housings).

The habit of playing in outdoor spaces starts at an early age (under five years old) in Jakarta, where children are accompanied by their parents or relatives when playing outdoor. After completing household tasks, parents (especially mothers) use this opportunity in accompanying their children to socialise with each other. Eventually, this habit and interactional pattern tends to be repeated, therefore becoming a communal social activity.

In looking at Figure 2c and 2d, we can see that some adults accompany their children while they play in the RPTRAs. In addition, parents (generally mothers) start making conversation with each other while taking care of their children. In this sense, I noticed a certain pattern with regard to the time at which children of a certain age, together with their mothers, played in outdoor spaces.

During my research in the targeted locations, I noticed that, at the weekdays, the observed children usually played after school in the afternoon, starting from 12pm. The younger children (grades 1-4) usually played earlier from 12pm to 3.30pm, while the older ones (grade 5-junior high school) played later, after 3.30pm. This happened because older children are at school for longer. Figure 2a shows a group of children from grade 1-4 playing in the high-rise housing's fish pond after school time. In Jakarta, most primary school classes are held from the morning to the afternoon. During daylight hours, the number of children who play outside will gradually increase with each passing hour. The peak time for children to play outside is around 3pm to 5.30pm. After that time, fewer children play outside due to religion-based wisdom concerning *Maghrib* and *Isha* time (Moslem prayer) from 6pm to 8pm. Therefore, Muslim adults, who make up the majority of citizens in Jakarta, tend to forbid children to play (especially outside their houses) during this time.

At the weekend, I observed that children's play time in outdoor spaces was longer, lasting from the early morning to night time, with the same exception for *Maghrib* and *Isha* prayer. This is because, for many schools in Jakarta (especially public schools), there are no lessons on Saturday. In Figures 2b and 2d above, we can see children in their pyjamas playing outside in the early morning.

It is clear, therefore, that poor children's outdoor play time in Jakarta is largely structured by adults through parents' working hours, school hours, and religious-based values.

4.2. How Urban Poor Children View Play

In order to understand how urban poor children view "play", I started with the photographs method. I saw how they excitedly managed the camera and explored the various locations they used for playing. At first, they started to walk around the RPTRA, taking pictures of their friends playing football in the field (see Figure 3a), playing baseball, running or *kejar-kejaran, tak benteng, tak sandal, tak bola*, and *tak buaya* along the walking path, looking at fish in the fish pond, playing with cats, playing with toy guns, playing hide-and-seek in the garden, playing Lego, sitting in the hall, playing in the swing area (as shown in Figure

3b), playing on the slide and seesaw (as shown in Figure 3d), and sitting and chatting with others in the gazebo or under tree (as shown in Figure 3c).

Figure 3 Children’s photographs on forms of play in the RPTRA



Figure 3a



Figure 3b



Figure 3c



Figure 3d

Source: Author’s fieldwork (2017)

Then, they continued to explore their neighbourhood. I saw they were running and jumping from one spot to another confidently. Through outdoor play, the children had learned and understood their surrounding well. From this activity, I realised that the limitations of outdoor play facilities triggers their creativity in utilising and exploring their surroundings more. Moreover, I noticed that they saw the surrounding differently when compared to adults. They looked at each place based on its possibility for playing. For example, a girl brought the camera and went to a ‘secret’ small corner of the subsidised high-rise housing and found a group of boys playing musical instruments using broken antennas, used cans, and wooden sticks, as shown in Figure 4a.

Moreover, they enthusiastically looked for other children who might be playing in the vacant lots, streets, alleyways, fish ponds, other middle-upper class residential areas, or high-rise housing areas, some of which can be seen in Figure 4. There were some pictures with children playing football or with toy cars in the high-rise housing yard, fishing or just watching fish in the pond (see Figure 4c), climbing trees in the middle-upper class residential areas; running or *kejar-kejaran* in the alleys, playing with cats or playing on a wooden stairway in the alley (see Figure 4b), using mobile phones and the internet in the subsidised high-rise housing yard; cycling and rollerblading on the street, sitting under trees, or sightseeing around the middle-upper class residence (Figure 4d).

Figure 4 Children's photographs of forms of play in non-designated outdoor play spaces



Figure 4a



Figure 4b



Figure 4c



Figure 4d

Source: Author's fieldwork (2017)

During the photographing, one of the participant asked me politely:

“Can I also take a photo of our play spaces even though nobody’s there?” (Dilla, 10 years old girl, 20 July 2017)

I accepted her idea in order to enrich the research findings. When there was no one playing in those areas, the children kept taking photos of the play spaces.

Figure 5 A participant with her map drawing and ranking (Figure 5a) and her photograph, which shows one of the non-designated play spaces (Figure 5b)

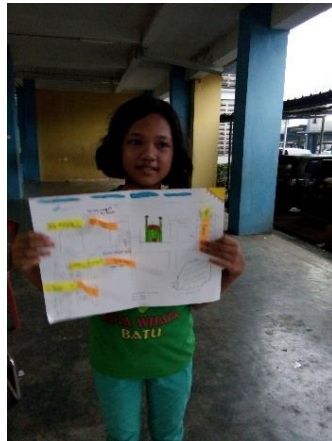


Figure 5a

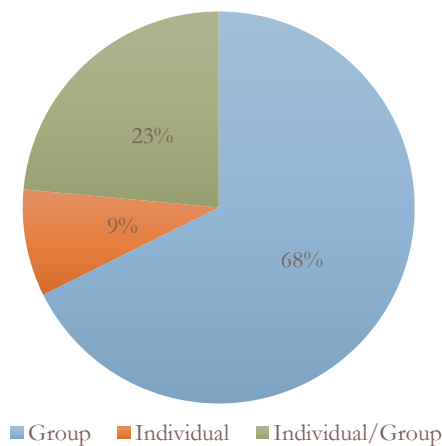


Figure 5b

Source: Author's fieldwork (2017)

I combined the previously-mentioned data collection tools with my own observations. In this sense, I observed children's daily outdoor play in designated and undesignated play spaces and focused on what kinds of activities they played regularly, where their play spaces were outside of their homes, how they conducted each play activity, at what time they usually played, and who they played with. To determine the trend, I arranged the time of observation for the whole day (morning, afternoon, and evening settings) in Karet Tengsin and South Petukangan sub-districts, both on the weekdays and at the weekends. I also gathered information from the children through informal interviews regarding the types of play they usually conducted, which completed my previous finding from the observations and the photographs. In analysing the children's perspectives of what play is, I developed the following categories:

Figure 6 Types of play based on the number of participants



Source: Author's elaboration (2017)

From Figure 6 above, we can see that the most play activities were conducted in groups. The children had agency to choose whether to play alone or with peers.

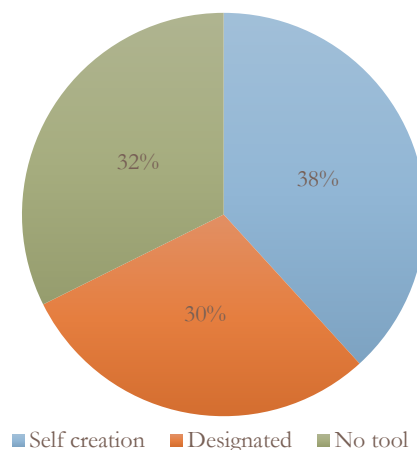
They also had the freedom to determine their playmates during outdoor play. All the participants argued that, through outdoor play, they could easily keep in touch with their peers, which would be very difficult if they just played inside their houses. As found in one informal interview during the transect walk below.

“I can meet all my friends when I play outside. My mother does not allow me to bring my friends into the house because she said it is too dense and noisy.” (Hanum, 9 years old girl, 2 August 2017)

At their age range, children’s social abilities are increased, and therefore they have a higher willingness to engage in more time with their peers (Bartlett et al 1999:30). In the other words, their play meets the “need to belong” (Hughes 1991:98) common at this age.

This finding agrees with a study from Switzerland, showing a supportive relationship between outdoor play and social relations (Conservative Party 2008, as cited in Gleave and Cole-Hamilton 2012:13). Through play in open spaces, children have more opportunities to make friends and learn to socialise with others. Children can learn various words and values through their interaction with friends, and outside play can increase their communication and social skills. In this sense, children learn how to work in teams, problem solve, give positive feedbacks, and develop awareness and sensitivity towards helping each other. Handel (2017) argues that socialisation is a natural human need as a social actor, which develops from early childhood with other human beings (such as family, school, and peer groups). Hagerman (2010:65) emphasises that “the child is an active agent in its socialisation and does not turn out exactly as socialising adults wish”. In this sense, children are active participants in their own socialisation (Hagerman 2010:65).

Figure 7 Types of play based on the types of tools used



Source: Author’s elaboration (2017)

Figure 7 shows that tools were used in 68% of the children’s play activities. However, it is important to note that, in order to maximise the opportunity of outdoor play, children attempted to adapt and improve what was provided by their environment. For instance, I observed that play activity tools were not

always those provided by adults. The children increasingly became ever more creative (Bartlett et al. 1999:85) in using any second-hand or broken materials around them, converting them as required for games or to resemble the real play tools.

For example, in the Karet Tengsin sub-district, the children played *balang rintang* at the fish pond in the high-rise housing yard area by utilising used tires and broken chairs or tables, as shown in Figure 2a; they played slide by using the cement ramp in a motorcycle garage of the high-rise housing, as shown in Figure 10b; they used a big water tank to play *gajah-gajahan*, as shown in Figure 10d or used motorcycles parked in the communal garage of high-rise housing to play *motor-motoran* as part of mother-child role play; they used a broken bamboo to play *bamboo putar* or modified some broken antennas and unused cans as instruments to play music, as shown in Figure 4a. In South Petukangan sub-district, the children played baseball with a plastic bottle as the stick and a broken ball as the ball (see Figure 8a), went fishing with hand-made fishing rods in the abandon ponds (see Figure 4c), played with bricks at the construction sites (see Figure 10c), or pretended to ride a horse using the horse statue at the gate to the middle-upper class residence (see Figure 10a). In this sense, we can see how their imaginations were being used and expressed during this time.

With established equipment, RPTRA provides designated games to play with while the neighbourhood offers more freedom. However, sometimes the children kept playing their invented games while using RPTRA equipments/facilities. Furthermore, they managed to adjust or modify some of the RPTRA facilities, which were actually for other activities, in order to conduct their own, self-designated forms of creative play. For example, they used slide equipment to play hide-and-peek, the recognition board pole to climb (see Figure 8b), the slide pole to play *tak benteng* or just to climb and sit on top of the slide and act like a 'lighthouse keeper' who looks around the area, and the *taplak meja* path arena to play baseball, *kejar-kejaran*, *tak sandal*, or *tak bola* (see Figure 8a); further, they adjusted the cement bench, swing, and gazebo as facilities to play *tak buaya* and they used sand from the RPTRA to role-play cooking (see Figure 8c), or the tables from the hall to play *Lego* gun shooting (see Figure 8d).

Figure 8 Children modified the use of facilities in the RPTRA to play



Figure 8a



Figure 8b



Figure 8c



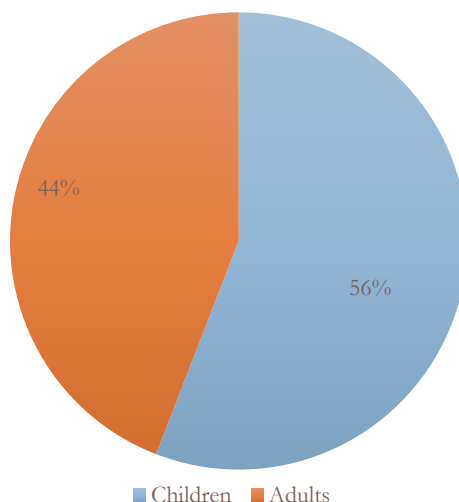
Figure 8d

Source: Author's fieldwork (2017)

With their agency, these children decided what kinds of tools they needed. Through self-creation and modification of some designed play facilities, they were able to express their imaginations and preferences in play. They realised that they were the main actors in their experiences, so they could initiate their experiences at the same time as increasing their autonomy in choosing and deciding something based on their needs and desire in relation to play.

Figure 9 shows the division of play based on who created the play activities.

Figure 9 Types of play based on the creator of the game



Source: Author's elaboration (2017)

Once I had explored their types of play deeper, I realised that there were many play activities created by the children themselves that may have been unknown to the adults. They tended to be more creative in creating their own play/games with their peers, e.g. *tak benteng*, *tak sandal*, *tak bola*, *tak buaya*, *kena-kenaan*, and types of role-play activities or pretend play (cooking, mother-child, doctor-patient, *gajah-gajahan*, pretending to be a parking attendant⁸, and *motor-motoran*). The children made their own rules for particular types of play. Sometimes, even if there was an activity designed by adults, the children played it according to their own rules. I noticed this when they mentioned the name of the game, accompanied by a brief explanation of how to play the game.

I realised that play activities designed by adults and accompanied with instructions tended to limit the children's opportunities for developing their agency, especially with regard to creating their own forms of play (Craft, et al. 2012:48-61).

Furthermore, pretend play, as one activity often undertaken by children, was mostly created from children's observations and fantasies regarding adult's daily life activities (Smith 2010:89-90). Some play activities tended to imitate real life, with some modifications by the children (Churchman 2003:106). They defined and created their own meaning according to their world. Bartlett et al. (1999:22) argues that through role-play activities (i.e. pretend play), children increase their skills to explore possibilities and transform their living environment.

⁸ Being a parking attendant is a common informal occupation in Jakarta for the urban poor, and some children imitate adults in this occupation. Children say that it is interesting to lead vehicles' drivers to the correct parking lot.

Figure 10 Children being creative in outdoor play



Figure 10a



Figure 10b



Figure 10c



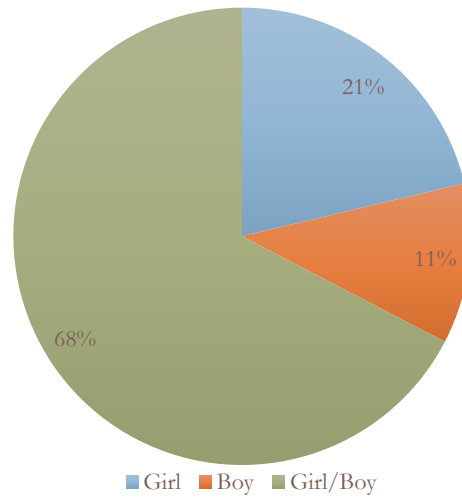
Figure 10d

Source: Author's fieldwork (2017)

These kinds of activities were created and applied by the children before the RPTRAs, as designated play spaces, existed in their neighbourhood area. They mostly played such activities in non-designated outdoor places near their houses, such as small alleyways, streets, vacant lots, middle-upper class residential areas, and the subsidised high-rise housing area.

Here, I found that role-play activity or pretend play had a strong correlation with creativity. The creativity of the children in exploring many things during play time empowered them to perform their ways of thinking and feeling, as well as increasing their knowledge (Bruner 1986). Vygotsky's theory points out that the ability of children to be creative is called imagination (Vygotsky 2004:7-12). Their imagination comes from the daily behaviour in reality they have experienced through seeing or listening to other human beings, or even carrying out the related behaviour themselves. Furthermore, through their play activities, children reproduce or adjust real human behaviour into their own meanings, supported by their memories and experiences (Vygotsky 2004:12-24).

Figure 11 Types of play based on gender differences

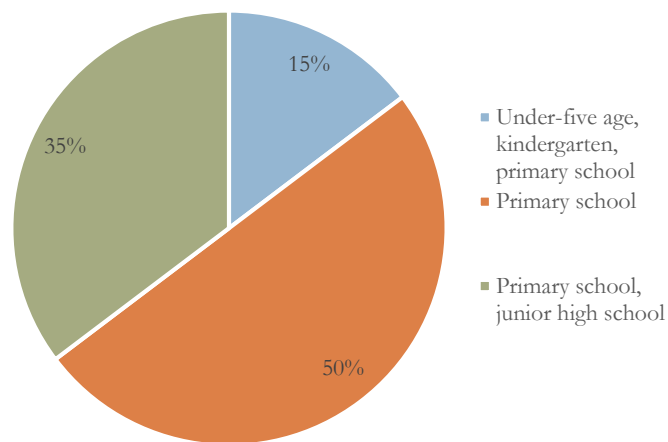


Source: Author's elaboration (2017)

There were some play activities that seemed to be mostly played by certain genders. While Figure 11 shows that there were many outdoor activities that could be played by both girls and boys, there were some gender-specific activities that played by the children. For example, the boys often played football, climbed, or played toy cars, while the girls jumped rope and role-played cooking or mother/child activities. These types of play tended to be conducted when children played with the same-sex children (Hughes 1991:128-129). Boys tended to dominate playing football.

Although there was a tendency for children to play with the same-sex peers, I observed some girls playing football with the boys, even though there were still some boys who tended to underestimate the ability of girls to play football. This means that, even though there was a significant pattern of gender-based types of play, the boundary was loose.

Figure 12 Types of play based on the age range of the participants



Source: Author's elaboration (2017)

Figure 12 shows that half of total of outdoor play is conducted only by primary school children, while the other half is made up of primary school children and those in kindergarten or under the age of 5, or primary school children and junior high school children. This finding was revealed during the participant observation. In this sense, outdoor play tends to be dominated by primary school children, who are at the stage of middle childhood, a finding which is in accord with a previous study in the United States stating that children at primary school age take part in active and dynamic play activities more often than other children, especially after school time (Pellegrini and Smith 1998:579).

However, there were some divisions within primary school children in regard to choosing a playmate based on what grade they were. In this case, generational relations were operating between the younger and older children. For example, with regard to playing football, I found that there was an age-group division in that the children who were in grades two to four (primary school) usually played in one group and the children in grades six to junior high school tended to make up their own group to play football, or *kejar-kejaran*.

If the older boys wanted to play football when the younger children were playing, there was a tendency for the younger boys to be moved from the field in order to change positions with the older boys. Similarly, when the older girls played *tak benteng* on the walking path and garden of the RPTRA or were sitting on the cement bench (see Figure 3c), the younger girls who were there before tended to be moved to another spot in the RPTRA to play with their peers. This shows how a conflict of interest in using space can be determined by age differences within children's groups (Horschelmann and van Blerk 2012:10). Age differences can create unequal power relations between two groups of children, where younger children tend to have less power than the older ones. This unequal power relation is, in turn, strongly related to the autonomy (Punch 2001:24) of the play spaces. This interactional pattern illustrates how both groups of children (older and younger ones) negotiate their time and spaces in playing with each other (Punch 2001:23-35). Furthermore, due to the social and cultural context in Indonesia, children tend to be taught to respect older ones, whether they are older children or adults. Therefore, younger children tend to give up their spaces to older children without complaint.

Overall, in my research, I found that the children liked to play almost any activity every day and they enjoyed playing very much. This was not because someone else (i.e. adults) had ordered them to do it, but because they wanted, chose, and valued the play themselves. A previous study has noted that one of the characteristic of play is when the related activity is carried out by children, through their own volition, and without any force from others (Churchman 2003:106).

Additionally, there were some play activities that were not played regularly every day, some of which were seasonal games or activities that had 'certain trend time'. This meant that, when an activity was a hype (in fashion), one could be sure that most of the children would be playing it. The seasonal timing was determined by the children themselves. For example, flying kites and using fire

crackers were generally done by boys in the month of Ramadhan (the Muslim holy month), and rope jumping was generally played by the girls at a particular time.

Based on the findings above, I argue that the children described play as a physical activity that needs to be conducted in outdoor places, where they can move freely and explore spaces as much as possible, even if it is often unstructured movement. Essentially, children's agency with regard to outdoor play is illustrated in how they make their various choices from aforementioned outdoor play categories and organise their own play activities.

Chapter 5. Utilising Outdoor Places to Play

5.1. RPTRAs: Jakarta's Designated Place to Play

It was nice to sit on the bench in the RPTRA while waiting for the children. The shadow of the trees and the cool breeze helped to reduce the temperature from the sun, which beats down on Jakarta for 12 hours every day. Spending hours here doing this research almost every day helped me realise how important this kind of open space is for a tropical city like Jakarta.

The first time I arrived in RPTRA Intiland Teduh (Karet Tengsin sub-district), I was surprised. I did not expect that the government would have managed to build an RPTRA in such a neighbourhood. This RPTRA is located in a poor, very high-density neighbourhood (within an area of subsidised high-rise housing and slums). From informal interviews with the RPTRA's administrator, I discovered that, before being transformed into an RPTRA by the Jakarta government, it was a vacant lot used for parking.

I observed that this RPTRA was mostly used by children under the age of five, as well as primary and junior high school children. The location of RPTRA Intiland Teduh is very close to these children's houses, separated only by a small traditional market. There are some narrow alleyways, requiring the residents to walk aside when passing each other, which connect the houses and the RPTRA. The RPTRA has two small gates (a front gate and back gate). The front gate is usually open from 5am to 6pm, while after 6pm visitors need to use the back gate.⁹ In addition, there is a middle-upper class residential area and a subsidised high-rise housing area near to this poor neighbourhood.

Figure 13 shows some activities undertaken in RPTRA Intiland Teduh. Figure 13a illustrates young children playing slide and seesaw, while Figure 13b shows a group of boys playing football on a mini basketball field, which the older boys tended to dominate. Figure 13c shows some younger children sitting and relaxing under a tree while waiting for their chance to play football, and Figure 13d shows the RPTRA's location at the corner of the neighbourhood, surrounded by subsidised high-rise housing, a mosque, and a traditional market.

⁹ Actually, the formal opening hour is from 5 am to 10 pm. however, according to the local community and RPTRA administrators' agreement as a respect to the regular Moslem praying time, the RPTRA is closed temporarily during 6 pm to 8 pm. After that time, everybody can enter the RPTRA again from the back gate.

Figure 13 RPTRA Intiland Teduh - Karet Tengsin sub-district



Figure 13a



Figure 13b



Figure 13c



Figure 13d

Source: Author's fieldwork (2017)

The second designated play space that I observed was RPTRA Manunggal, in the South Petukangan sub-district, which is similar to RPTRA Intiland Teduh in that it is a poor, high-density neighbourhood. The RPTRA administrator stated that, before being transformed into an RPTRA, it was a disputed land that was then purchased by the government.¹⁰ Due to its size, which is larger than RPTRA Intiland Teduh, RPTRA Manunggal has a larger variety of visitors, ranging from babies, young children, teenagers, and adults (mostly women).

On one side, this RPTRA is linked to the rented housings for middle-poorer class residents. To go to this RPTRA, children from this area usually walk through a small alley and enter the back gate of the RPTRA. On the opposite side, there is a wide front gate that is directly adjacent to the main street, which connects to the highway and the wealthier residences not far from the RPTRA's location. Figure 14 illustrates some activities held in RPTRA Manunggal, e.g. children playing accompanied by their parents (see Figure 14a), younger children watching an event held by teenagers on the badminton field (see Figure 14b), children sitting and relaxing on the terrace of the hall during sunlight (see Figure 14c), and both boys and girls playing together on the facilities, such as the swing and slide (see Figure 14d).

¹⁰ Informal interview with RPTRA administrator (14 July 2017).

Figure 14 RPTRA Manunggal – South Petukangan sub-district



Figure 14a



Figure 14b



Figure 14c



Figure 14d

Source: Author's fieldwork (2017)

As designated outdoor play spaces, RPTRAs have certain facilities, such as sport fields for playing football, basketball, or badminton (RPTRA Manunggal has two fields, while RPTRA Intiland Teduh has one small field), gardens, walking paths, swings, slides, seesaws, libraries, hall, lactation rooms, administrator's offices, toilets, medicinal herbs gardens, fish ponds, PKK¹¹ marts, gazebos/cement benches (place to sit, lie down, or relax), and *taplak meja/tapak gunung/dampu* patterns. Most of the child participants stated that they enjoyed playing in the RPTRA because it provided sufficient outdoor play spaces with various play facilities, which was difficult to find in their over-crowded neighbourhoods.

“It is nice to play in the RPTRA because it is clean, not like the traditional market, and I can use many play facilities there.” (Dilla, 10 years old girl, 18 July 2017)

Another participant boy also stated:

“Luckily RPTRA has a field for us to gather and play football. Because the football field in *PAM baru* residence is usually used by adults however it is much bigger than RPTRA's.” (Galuh, 8 years old boy, 24 July 2017)

¹¹ Fostering family welfare

Moreover, I also noticed that there was no significant gender domination in utilising the RPTRA. In this sense, from my observations, both girls and boys displayed the same frequency and opportunity of playing in the RPTRA or other outdoor places, except the RPTRA's fields, which were more often used by the boys. Once, while playing with the girls in RPTRA Intiland Teduh, one of them said that,

“We (a group of girls) want to play football too. Let's play football together, sister! Please, tell the boys so we can also play.” (Ani, 9 years old girl, 31 July 2017)

Considering their over-crowded housing, it is not a surprise that these children generally try to find larger open spaces, and the RPTRA has this advantage when compared to their previous outdoor play spaces, such as alleyways, streets, or traditional markets. In the RPTRA, they can move freely, as one of my participants told me during the ranking process,

“...the area is larger and full of fresh air.” (Marna, 11 years old boy, 29 July 2017).

Moreover, another benefit from the provision of trees or gazebos in the RPTRAs is that they are useful for protecting children from sunburn and from the hot weather on the sunny day. I remember that, when I was playing with a group of girls in the midday sun, one of the girls suddenly said:

“Let's move under the tree! We can continue our play there.” (Tuti, 10 years old girl, 21 July 2017)

This is as an indication of the need for shade, trees, or other vegetation during children's play time.

There are also some play tools provided in the RPTRA, such as *congklak*, *angklung*, and Lego. At the beginning, there were also a plastic ball, a basketball, and some shuttlecocks to play at the field. However, once those tools were broken or lost, the administrators did not replace them with the new ones anymore, because they have a limited budget for maintenance.¹² Hence, every time the children want to play on the fields, they need to bring their own or wait for a friend to bring theirs.

During the weekend, the RPTRAs were visited by both children and adults, starting from early morning to the evening. In the early morning to the afternoon, the visitors were mostly children and their parents or caregivers. The children usually used the slide, seesaw, and swing to play, or just played *kejar-kejaran*, while the other played football. In the morning, the adults usually did some stretching or exercises in the walking path area. Due to many people being there, and there only being one seesaw, one slide, two swings, and a small pitch

¹² Interview summary with RPTRA administrators (July – August 2017)

for playing football, the children needed to wait in a queue in order to take turns using those facilities. Additionally, in the evening, there were more teenagers in the RPTRAs, sitting back and talking to each other, indicating that they also had limited outdoor spaces in which to socialise with their peers.

From all the facilities, the slide and swings were generally used by children under the age of five as well as a few primary school children in the morning at 7-8am or late afternoons after 3pm. The seesaw was often used by primary school children after 1pm. The football field was predominately used by the boys, but sometimes a group of girls also played football there in the afternoons and evenings, both primary or junior high school children. The walking path was used by babies who were still learning how to walk (with their caregivers) and by children who were playing “*kejar-kejaran*” or running around. The children also usually sat under the trees or on the cement benches and talk to each other. Some of them liked to climb in the RPTRA (on the swing or slide poles, the recognition board pole, trees, or fences), as in Figure 8b, when they did not want or have the opportunity to use the swings, slide, or seesaw, or field for their play time. The hall was used by children or teenagers, especially in the afternoons and evenings, to play Lego and *congklak* and to do theatrical exercises, group homework, and the RPTRA’s regular activities (e.g. *marawis*, *angklung*, and dancing).

One interesting finding is that the library was usually locked by the administrators. Visitors who wanted to use the library needed permission from the administrators and only then would they open it. However, from my observations and the children’s information, at that time of my research the administrators in RPTRA Intiland Teduh were not allowing any visitors, including children, to use the library for the reason that they were in a RPTRA competition period (in July 2017) that required everything to be neat and tidy. This condition was slightly different for RPTRA Manunggal where it was easier to obtain permission to use the library. A participant said this during our conversation:

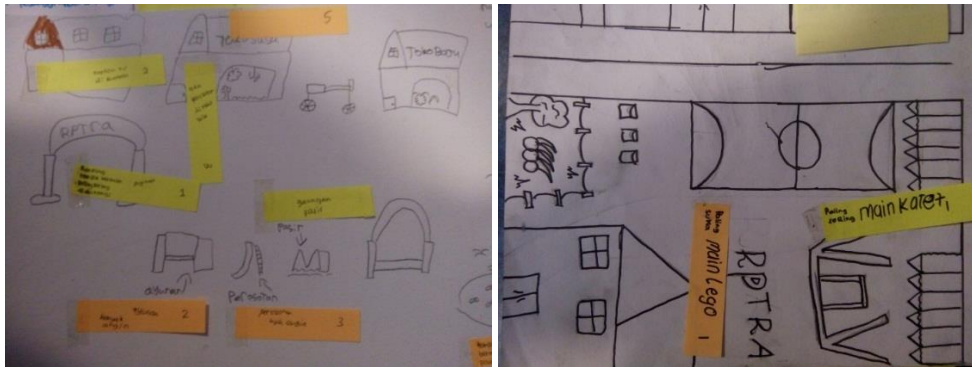
“Bunda did not allow us to use the library because the RPTRA competition is coming, and the library should be tidy and clean. Today they open it is just because you are here.” (Andra, 10 years old boy, 18 July 2017)

This finding illustrates the gap between the blueprint for the RPTRAs’ purpose and the reality (conflict of interest) that was experienced by the children as the main targeted visitors of the RPTRA, a conflict of interest which limits children’s access to the library.

From the participants’ maps, I realised that the children viewed the RPTRA as one of their play spaces. They drew, in great detail, each of the facilities in the RPTRA that was used by them in their daily lives, such as the swings, the football field, the slide, or the garden. From Figure 15, we can see some of the areas and facilities in the RPTRA, such as the football field, swings, garden, fence and gate

of RPTRA, slide, hall, and fish pond. This indicates what type of play facilities were in the children’s minds when they were asked to describe an RPTRA.

Figure 15 Children’s Map Drawings – the RPTRA as one of their outdoor play spaces



Source: Author’s fieldwork (2017)

Most of the children in both neighbourhoods confessed that they felt happy with the existence of the RPTRA because they had more access to play with several facilities. Many participants highlighted the field as the most frequent and favourite area for playing because it had more space, not only for playing football but also other outdoor play activities such as running, *tak bola*, *tak benteng*, cycling, or rollerblading. Even if the small field in RPTRA Manunggal had been designed as a badminton field and the mini field in RPTRA Intiland Teduh was designed as a mini basketball field, the children tended to use them as football fields. This highlights two things: first, there is a gap of way of thinking between the children and adults on the need of play facilities that suitable for children; second, due to RPTRA’s role as a community centre too, the existed badminton field could be designed for adults, not children.

Others chose the swing or the small garden in which to play, which, beforehand, could be only accessed at school or at other commercial playgrounds. Most of the children called the RPTRA *taman* or garden, and the female administrators of the RPTRA were called *bunda taman*.¹³ The notion of *taman* or garden was used because it is a common place to play and is symbolic of a beautiful place, while the notion of *bunda taman* can be as a form of bonding between the children as visitors and the administrators. This means that the children are encouraged to be comfortable within the RPTRA environment.

¹³ *Bunda* means ‘mother’; *taman* means ‘garden’. Mostly the administrators of RPTRA are women (from six administrators in one RPTRA, there is only one man, who is usually called *Bang* means ‘big brother’, but the children more often interact with the women than the man).

Figure 16 Regular activities organised by RPTRA administrators



Figure 16a



Figure 16b



Figure 16c

Source: Author's fieldwork (2017)

It is important to note that there are two main interests in the RPTRAs. The RPTRA is not only used as a children's centre but also as a neighbourhood community centre. Therefore, a compromise between these two interests is unavoidable and children face the risk of being neglected in favour of the adults (community). Leonard (2007:443) states that societies around children significantly influence children's geographies. This can be seen from the residents (adults) who lived in the surroundings of the RPTRA and who utilised this open space for several events, both formal and informal, such as meetings, gymnastics, socialisation, celebrations, training, or workshops. There is a regular schedule of activities in the RPTRA arranged by the administrators and supported by the government. Some activities are led by a facilitator or trainer, paid for by the government, e.g. *maramis* training (see Figure 16a), *angklung* (traditional musical instrument) training (see Figure 16b), first aid simulation training by a group of senior high school students (see Figure 16c), dancing, taekwondo, artworks (drawing, painting, and colouring), or watching movies.

The administrators posted the schedule on the announcement board. The activities were not only for children but also for teenagers and adults in the area. If someone wants to hold additional activities in the RPTRA, they must be reported to the RPTRA's administrators who will then arrange the additional schedule. Some children were interested in and enjoyed the regular (scheduled)

activities organised by the RPTRA administrators because they had never tried them before. However, not all the children participated the activities because, for some RPTRAs, there were certain regulations or requirement relating to different regular activities, such as age requirements or maximum quotas for joining a particular activity. In addition, it was sometimes the children's choice not to join. In this sense, some children preferred free-form play (unstructured play activities by themselves) in the RPTRA without any restrictions or rules from adults. Further, they said that they were too tired after school to take part in structured activities with particular rules.

Initially, these regular (scheduled and structured) activities were provided by the RPTRA administrators to accommodate children's interest and talents.¹⁴ However, from the findings, I found that the intervention of such regular play activities tended to limit the children's freedom and ability to lead themselves in their own experiences (Matthew and Rix 2013:249).

I experienced the dynamic of how adult and children's interests interacted with each other. While I was playing Lego with the children in the RPTRA Manunggal's hall, there was another adult group who wanted to use the hall and the administrators asked us to move the activity into the library or gazebo. Later, I learned that there was a scheduled gymnastics session twice a week, arranged by a group of women, and sometimes both RPTRAs are used by adults for particular events, such as meetings, training, or workshops.

This multi-function of the RPTRA means that children need to share their 'play space' with adults, which accords with a study in Norway by Norberg Schulz where urban spaces are used as community meeting points in which people from various backgrounds or age groups in the neighbourhoods interact and take part in activities together (Acar 2013:302).

I could see that various reactions from the children when they had to share their 'play space' with others or when they had to move. A few children complained to the administrators or showed their disappointment, but the majority just accepted it without argument or registering their disagreement. I observed that the children's unstructured (free) play did not tend to be considered as an 'event', and therefore it was likely to be replaced by the adults' events. This means that, in the context of this use of time and space, children's lives are dominated by adult's way of thinking (Ennew 1994). These children faced difficulties in negotiating their desire to play in the particular space they wanted, because they lacked power when compared to the adults (Punch 2001:23). In the end, as Mayall (2001:121) has pointed out, "obedience and acceptance are commoner than resistance and rejection".

The RPTRA's administrators also provided a set of rules that should be followed by the visitors, including the children. I found that each RPTRA has their own regulations for the visitors (written or unwritten), such as those related to Wi-Fi and the opening hours of the RPTRA, as well as the use of the hall, Lego, the

¹⁴ The informal conversation with the RPTRA administrators.

library, the toilet, or the field. However, the communication was mostly unwritten between the administrators and the visitors (especially the children), and it seemed conditional and could be changed regularly. This means that the RPTRA administrators become gate keepers in such play spaces for children. For example, officially, the RPTRA is open from 5am to 10pm. However, adapting to religious-based (Muslims) values, the RPTRA always closes from 6pm to 8pm. Therefore, adults always do not allow children to play outside during these time including within the RPTRA. However, some children do not always obey this rule. Sometimes, they still try to hide behind the sliding pole in the RPTRA so they can keep on playing, while other children continue their play time outside the RPTRA (e.g. in the alleyways). After 8pm in RPTRA Manunggal, very few children, teenagers, or adults came to do leisure activities. However, RPTRA Intiland Teduh does not open again after 8pm, except at the weekend.

Another rule in RPTRA Intiland Teduh was that children with school uniforms were not allowed to play inside the RPTRA. In this sense, they needed to change from their uniforms in order to enter the RPTRA. The administrator stated that this was a form of discipline. This situation was obeyed by most of the children, but they were not comfortable changing from their uniforms directly after school, because they said it takes time and they might be get roped into chores by their parents, so some of them preferred to play outside the RPTRA.

I also found a space division between two distinct groups of children. For example, in RPTRA Manunggal, there are two football fields. The younger group of children tended to play football in the small field and the older ones play on the big field. The younger group was more comfortable playing on the small field because they would not be driven out by the older ones in the middle of playing. However, in RPTRA Intiland Teduh, due to it only having one small field, which had actually been designed as a basketball field (but which was usually used for playing football), the younger children usually played football first for a couple of hours and then the older children would take over the field to play football.

From my fieldwork in these two RPTRAs, I argue that generational relations (between adults and children or between different children's age-groups) shape the everyday practice of children's outdoor play in designated play spaces. This can clearly be seen from the following aspects: how adults designed the equipment to be provided in the RPTRAs, how adults arranged the scheduled activities, how adults divided the RPTRAs into spaces for children and adults' interests, how adults set the rules for using the RPTRAs, and how older groups of children dominated particular spaces in the RPTRAs. The consequence of play space division in the RPTRA is that some children decide to play in the non-designated play spaces.

5.2. Non-Designated Outdoor Play Spaces for Jakarta's Poor Children

Jakarta's poor children live in a significantly dense neighbourhood which has also been used as their playground. Their dense neighbourhood can be seen from Figure 17 (a and b).

Figure 17 The neighbourhoods in Karet Tengsin (a) and South Petukangan Sub-district (b) drawn in Google Earth¹⁵

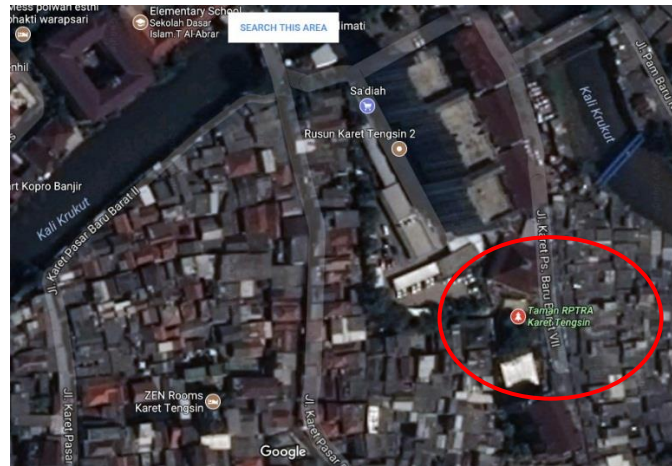


Figure 17a

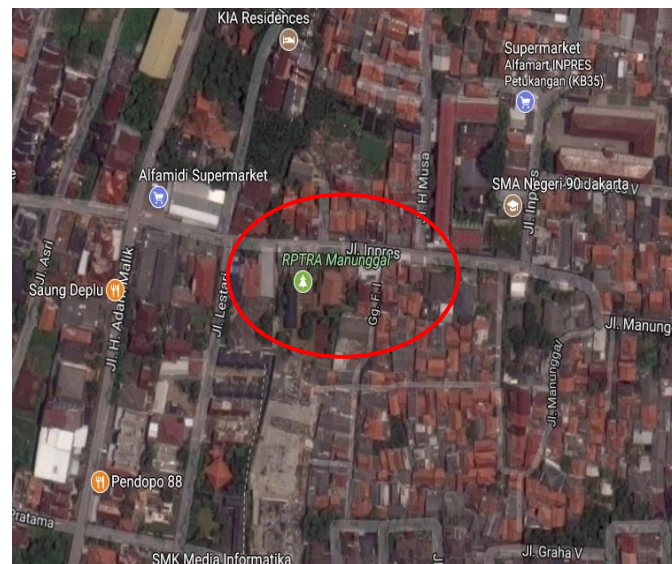


Figure 17b

Source: Google Earth (2017)

During the observation and transect walks in the Karet Tengsin sub-district, I could see that their housing area was significantly dense. I walked through narrow alleyways without sufficient air circulation and light, as shown in Figure

¹⁵ Red circles indicate the location of RPTRAs in the neighbourhoods.

18b. This condition limits children playing or moving freely. Some boys said that, before the RPTRA existed, they used to play in spaces far away from their homes (especially to play football) because they preferred larger spaces, whereas their parents warned them not to play too far from home. From some of the pictures below, we can see the condition of the neighbourhood. Figure 18a shows a traditional market, which is directly adjacent to some slums. Figure 18c shows the road in the *PAM baru* (middle-upper class) residential area, and Figure 18d shows the subsidised high-rise housing terrace and yard, which is commonly used by the children to play football, toy cars, or *bamboo putar* and to use the internet.

Figure 18 Karet Tengsin sub-district and its neighbourhood



Figure 18a

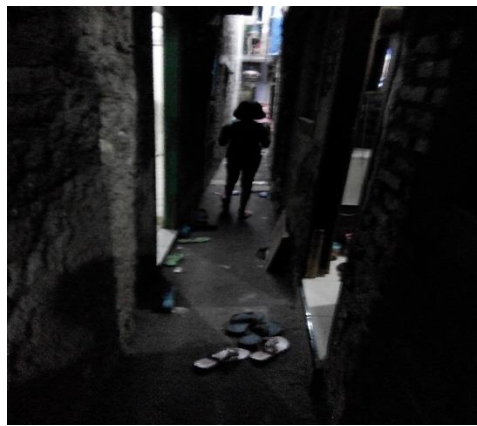


Figure 18b



Figure 18c



Figure 18d

Source: Author's fieldwork (2017)

South Petukangan sub-district is dominated by rented housing, inhabited by poor residents. Before the RPTRA was established in this neighbourhood, most of the children played in the middle-upper class residential area, located near to this neighbourhood, due to the fact that it is less dense.

Figure 19 South Petukangan sub-district and its neighbourhood



Figure 19a



Figure 19b



Figure 19c



Figure 19d

Source: Author's fieldwork (2017)

Figure 19a and 19b show the alleyways along the rented housing. Children often play there as the nearest play spaces to their house. Figure 19c shows a 'secret shortcut' from the poor neighbourhood to the middle-upper class residential area, so that children did not need to walk through the main gate for that area. I learned of this shortcut from my transect walk with the boys in the picture. Furthermore, a part of the middle-upper class residential area can be seen in Figure 19d above, which clearly shows that the roads along the area are much larger than the alleyways alongside the children's housing. Therefore, many children who lived in the poor neighbourhood liked to play in the wealthier residential area.

These photographs are supported by the children's map drawings and rankings,¹⁶ as shown below. The maps and rankings in Figure 20 show that, for the non-designated outdoor play spaces, the children often played in the alleys and subsidised high-rise housing area (Figure 20a); on the streets and football field

¹⁶ The yellow sticky notes show the outdoor spaces that children frequently used to play, while the orange sticky notes show the outdoor spaces that were favourable to play.

in the middle-upper class residential area (Figure 20b); on abandoned land with a fish pond (Figure 20c); and in the middle-upper class residential areas and in front of their houses (Figure 20d).

Figure 20 Children’s map drawings – non-designated play spaces in their neighbourhoods¹⁷

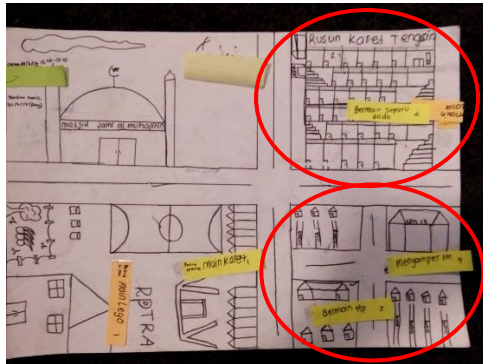


Figure 20a

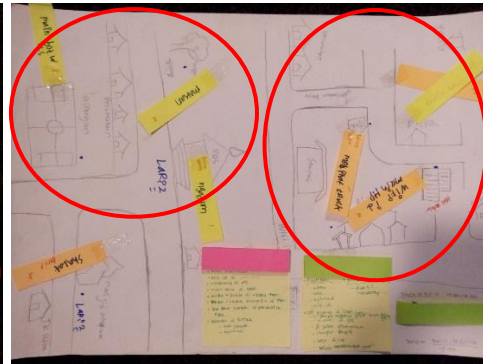


Figure 20b

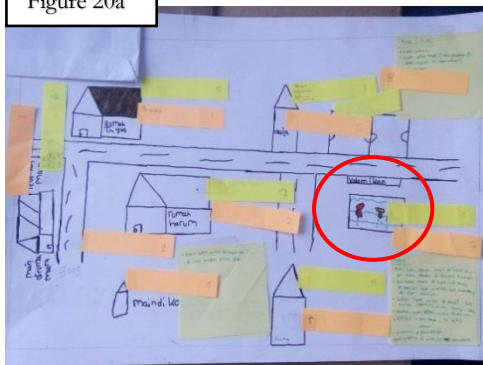


Figure 20c

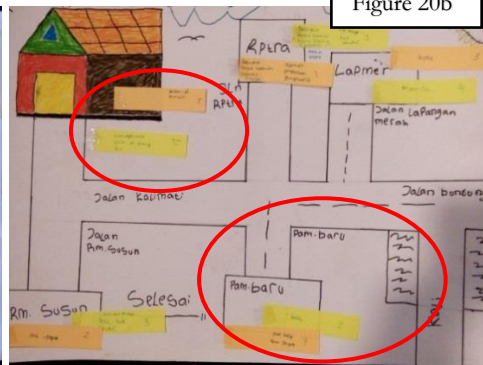


Figure 20d

Source: Author’s fieldwork (2017)

Based on the maps, photographs, transect walks, and informal interviews with the child participants, I determined various spaces that could be utilised by the children for outdoor play. In the neighbourhood surrounding RPTRA Manunggal (South Petukangan sub-district), the children usually played in the (1) streets, (2) alleys, (3) middle-upper class residential area, and (4) abandoned land or vacant lots with fish ponds. On the other hand, the children who live around RPTRA Intiland Teduh (Karet Tengsin sub-district) often utilised the (1) streets, (2) alleys, (4) *PAM baru* (middle-upper class) residential area (with a football field inside as one of the facilities in this residence), (5) subsidised high-rise housing yard and terrace, (6) river bridge (the connection between the middle-upper class residential area and the slum area or high-rise housing area), (7) a small space in front of the Mosque, (8) the graveyard, and (9) the traditional market. Table 1 summarises what the children played in their neighbourhoods.

¹⁷ Red circles indicate the drawing of non-designated outdoor places that usually used to play by children in both locations.

Table 1 Non-designated outdoor play space in two research areas

No	Place to play	Name of the play activity
1	Streets	Cycling, running, pretending to be a parking attendant in the street construction, playing with scooters or rollerblading.
2	Alleys (in front of the houses)	Cooking role play, playing ball, hide-and-seek, running, riding bicycles or skateboards, mother-child role play or <i>rumah-rumahan</i> , playing with cats and fish, shooting with toy guns, or just sitting and conversing with peers.
3	Middle-upper class residential areas (wealthier residences)	Playing ball, walking around and sightseeing, cycling, climbing trees and picking fruit, playing football on the football field, sitting and talking with each other under the trees, climbing the horse statue and pretending to ride it, playing with bricks at construction sites, shouting and laughing with each other, running or <i>kejar-kejaran</i> , or <i>taplak meja/ tapak gunung/ dampu</i> .
4	Vacant lots (with fish pond)	Fishing with rods made by themselves with wood branches and using thread and hooks they found in the surrounding area, <i>taplak meja/ tapak gunung/ dampu, tak buaya, tak sandal, tak bola, kena-kenaan, tak benteng</i> .
5	Subsidised high-rise housing yard	Rollerblading, skipping rope, cooking role-play, playing with the stair slide/cement ramp in the garage, playing with water around the fish pond, playing scooters, browsing or playing online games, playing football, playing toy cars, climbing trees, cycling, mother-child role play, <i>motor-motoran</i> at the motorcycle garage, <i>kejar-kejaran, bamboo putar, tak sandal</i> , running, shooting toy guns, playing <i>halang rintang</i> at the fish pond using used tires and broken chairs, and playing <i>gajah-gajahan</i> .
6	River bridge (connecting the wealthier residential areas to slum areas)	Near the high-rise housing, there is a river bridge. The children sometimes play with firecrackers or ride the cart that is parked on the bridge, especially at the weekend.
7	A small space in front of the Mosque	Playing hide-and-seek, running, or <i>kejar-kejaran</i> .
8	Graveyard	Playing with kites and firecrackers, cooking eggs using stones and wood as a temporary stove and then eating them together.
9	Traditional market	Playing hide-and-seek, running, or <i>kejar-kejaran</i> .

Source: Author's elaboration (2017)

I conclude that the urban poor children who live in both sub-districts tend to look for large spaces to play in their neighbourhood. Some boys said that they were not comfortable playing in the alleys near their houses because they are too

narrow to play in (e.g. run and play hide-and-seek), or they would play at the graveyard more often because it is large enough for them to play.¹⁸

The poor children in the Karet Tengsin sub-district chose to play in the *PAM baru* area (the middle-upper class residential area) or the subsidised high-rise housing yard because such areas are large and smooth for them to play football, run, cycle, or rollerblade. Some boys argued that, even when the RPTRA already existed, they still preferred to play football in the subsidised high-rise housing area or in the football field in the *PAM baru* (middle-upper class) residential area across the river, because the football field in the RPTRA was too small for them. They said that they could only play football in a 3-3 formation¹⁹ in the RPTRA, while in the subsidised high-rise housing area, they could play in a 5-5 formation²⁰, and on the real football field like in *PAM baru*, they could play in a 7-7 formation²¹. They preferred a wider space to play football because they could play with more team members without any limitations of space.

Similar conditions were also evidenced in the South Petukangan sub-district. Most of the poor children regularly played in the wealthier residential areas before the RPTRA was established near their homes. In addition, this finding may have connected to my initial observations and survey of four other sub-districts. Although the RPTRAs were located in wealthier residential areas, the visitors were mostly children from the poorer high-density residential areas. This strengthens my argument that the urban poor children in Jakarta desperately need the outdoor play spaces.

Moreover, most of the children preferred natural outdoor spaces, consisting of vegetation (shade, trees, or a garden) and providing sufficient circulation of fresh air. Such natural elements cannot be found if they play within their houses. In the middle-upper class residential areas in both sub-districts, there is some shade from trees or plants along the roads or in gardens, which also provide cool breezes during sunny days. The children like to walk around these areas and sit under the trees or even climb them to pick the fruit and eat it together. I can see how vegetation becomes an element that needs to be provided in over-crowded neighbourhoods. Additionally, the findings on how some children like to watch fish, fish in the pond, or just play and interact with cats indicate that children are enchanted by the animal world, which usually cannot be separated from natural elements.

Furthermore, I also found that children from different socio-economic classes (i.e. the children from poorer areas and the children from wealthier areas) do not play together in outdoor spaces, such as the streets along the middle-upper class residential areas. This is in accord with a previous study in the context of Global South, in that there is a class division between the rich and poor that can be illustrated from the use of open spaces (Horschelmann and van Blerk

¹⁸ Unstructured group discussion with six boys in RPTRA Intiland Teduh - Karet Tengsin Sub-district (31 July 2017)

¹⁹ Each football team consists of three players

²⁰ Each football team consists of five players

²¹ Each football team consists of seven players

2012:111). This study explained that wealthier families tended to suggest that their children should limit their scope of their play space outside of their houses, the main reason being security prevention (Horschelmann and van Blerk 2012:111). However, I assume that the real reason for limiting their children playing outside is more to do with their stereotypes against the poorer residents. In Jakarta, there are two local terms²² that people use to distinguish groups of children based on their living place: *anak kampung* and *anak kompleks*. *Anak kampung* is a term for children who live in poorer residential areas, and the stereotype is that they are unmannered and unhygienic and have a low level of education. In contrast, *anak kompleks* is a term for children who live in the wealthier residential areas (e.g. real-estate). They have been stereotyped as having better manners and a better education, as well as being more hygienic. *Anak kompleks* mostly spend their time at home with their house facilities, while *anak kampung* spend most of their time outside their homes. This kind of stereotyping creates a distance or gap in their relationship. When both groups play outside, they tend to play separately, because the parents of *anak kompleks*'s seldom allow their children to play with *anak kampung* in order to avoid any negative influences.

So in this case, there was no social class interaction between the children in outdoor play spaces. On other words, the spatial interaction does not always lead to the further social interaction.

5.3. Restrictions in Utilising Outdoor Play Spaces

I recognised that there were some spatial boundaries faced by children in accessing places to play. The first spatial boundary related to the suggestion or level of restriction from the parents to not play too far from home. Besides this, there were some particular places forbidden to children because they were considered as dangerous by parents, such as at the vacant lot with fish ponds in the South Petukangan sub-district, due to the risk of drowning or being hurt because of a great deal of broken glasses there. In order to protect their children from danger, parents tended to control and minimise children's outdoor play spaces (Valentine and McKendrick 1997:223). This method of control results in children not feeling independent when playing. I remember what a boy said to his friends when we were going to the abandoned fish pond:

“Do not tell my father if we go there, promise me!” (Rian, 8 years old boy, 7 August 2017)

Secondly, the children in the South Petukangan sub-district, who frequently played in the middle-upper class residential area (particularly before the RPTRA existed), were informally restricted from playing there by some of the middle-upper class residents because adults in these areas stigmatised that the children as having bad habits when playing, such as making noise or vandalising property. I experienced this once when I was on a transect walk with a group of boys to this area; the boys were playing near the horse statue and they tried to climb it

²² As a common knowledge in Jakarta.

in order to pretend to ride the horse, while laughing loudly (see Figure 10a). Suddenly, a man shouted and ordered them to move away from the statue, and the boys and I ran away. Similar occurrences also happened in the Karet Tengsin sub-district when children were playing football in the subsidised high-rise housing terrace (see Figure 18d) or when a boy or a girl tried to climb the water tank at the corner of the yard to play *gajah-gajahan* (see Figure 10d); in such cases, a security guard came and ordered them to stop their activities.

In such cases, I can see how adults in these neighbourhoods become actors who define spaces according to the social and economic background of the residents. This practice effects on where and how Jakarta's poor children play in their daily lives.

From this research it is evident that generational relations are significantly affected by age relations (restrictions), mostly between adults and children, and also class relations between poor and rich children. Therefore, it can be concluded that generational relations is a main issue in the restriction of outdoor play.

5.4. Possible Risk of Playing Outdoors

It is obvious that playing outdoors in a non-designated area is risky. The most noticeable risk being safety. For example, playing on the Jakarta's streets, which are full of motorcycles, is dangerous. On the other hand, outdoor play spaces like RPTRAs are established to prevent the harm or danger that can be happen to children in non-designated play spaces. However, I found that there is still a risk of harm when children play in designated open spaces, such as bullying and marginalisation. In RPTRA Manunggal, I found a case of bullying²³ conducted by some Muslim (majority) children against Christian (minority) children. Some Muslim children tend to avoid playing with minority religions. In this sense, they are told by their parents to only play with peers from the same religion. Some of the children even suggested that I should not play with children from minority religions. As Leonard (2007:437) argues, "the innocent spaces of childhood, such as streets, parks, and other public places have become redefined as areas where children are in potential danger from other children".

The next day, I decided to follow up this bullying case, and I met three children who often get bullied for religious reasons. Fortunately, at that time, the RPTRA was not too crowded so I was able to conduct an interview with each child. I found out that one of the children was aware of the religious-based bullying she faced, while the other two were not. However, she had built up a defence mechanism by remaining silent, and she did not reply every time she was bullied, as her mother had told her to. However, the other two children told me that they did not understand the reason behind the bullying they experienced. I suspect that it was related to the level of understanding, given that the first victim was already in 4th grade, while the other two were in the 1st and 2nd grade at

²³ This bullying case cannot be used as a general conclusion for other RPTRAs due to the lack of data available.

primary school. Due to this bullying case, these three children did not play in RPTRA as much as other children. This finding is in accord with previous findings stating that some children prefer to avoid places for playing that make them feel uncomfortable or unsafe (Leonard 2007:442).

Religious-based bullying and discrimination, sadly taught by parents, has become an important factor affecting how Jakarta's poor children play in outdoor spaces. Therefore, this phenomenon supports my argument that generational relations and religious differences, with regard to how parents transfer certain values to their children, shape the construction of children's outdoor play.

Chapter 6. Revealing the Face of Poor Children's Outdoor Play in Jakarta

Urban poor children in Jakarta are confronted with limited outdoor places to play due to living in extremely high-density neighbourhoods. Focusing on an outdoor play in the context of poor and high-density neighbourhoods, this research aimed to answer the following research question: *‘How do urban poor children in Jakarta value outdoor play and play spaces, and what factors shape their outdoor play?’*

Conducting qualitative research with an ethnographic approach, I used a combination of the participant observation, photographs, map drawings, rankings, transect walks, and informal interviews as methods to collect the data. This research focused on two high-density sub-districts, Karet Tengsin (Central Jakarta) and South Petukangan (South Jakarta), both with regard to their designated outdoor play spaces (RPTRA Intiland Teduh and RPTRA Manunggal) and non-designated outdoor play spaces around those neighbourhoods.

For Jakarta's poor children, outdoor play is a part of their daily lives. In outdoor spaces, they play both in groups and individually and with or without tools, in addition to taking part in self-creative or designated, as well as age and gender-based, play.

The urban poor children value and utilise both designated (RPTRA) and non-designated outdoor play spaces differently, based on the characteristics of each play space. However, I conclude that these urban poor children value both play spaces for similar reasons. First of all, both outdoor places fulfill the need for space to play, especially for physical play. Geographically, urban poor children tend to look for larger play space that allow them to move freely, in addition to preferring places with natural elements, such as trees, which produce a cool breeze and protect them from direct sunlight. Secondly, both places also provide opportunities to socialise with other children, since the existence of peers is one of driving factors for children to play outside their homes.

Furthermore, outdoor play spaces also stimulate children's creativity. This can be seen from the way in which the children created their own play activities with their own rules. They also employed given equipment for alternative purposes or managed to create tools from used or broken material around them. This shows that, through play, children explore and engage with various outdoor spaces and give those spaces new meanings, based on their imaginations and ways of thinking.

Above all, children are able to decide and choose their own types of outdoor play and play spaces, based on their values and experiences, due to their agency. As social actors, children also experience relationships and interactions with other people, which contribute to their choices.

How poor children's outdoor play in Jakarta is affected by generational relations can be further explained as follows. First of all, their outdoor play time is affected by certain factors: parents working hour, school hour, and religious-based customs (e.g. Muslim prayer time). Secondly, in the RPTRAs, how generational relations shape urban poor children's outdoor play can clearly be seen from how adults design the equipment that should be provided in RPTRAs, how adults arrange scheduled activities, how adults divide RPTRA spaces between children and adults' interests, how adults set the rules for RPTRA utilisation, and how older groups of children dominate particular spaces in the RPTRAs. In the non-designated play spaces, children are also prohibited from playing in particular locations. The importance of generational relations factor can also be seen from the fact that children prefer to play in places where adult involvement is at a minimum.

Moreover, various types of relations also shape poor children's outdoor play in Jakarta. I found that class, gender, and religious-based relations among the children or between these children and adults affected their outdoor play. It is also important to note that religious-based relations also contribute to the increase of discrimination and bullying that these children face in outdoor play spaces in Jakarta. In particular, religious-based hate, mostly transferred by adults, limits the social interaction in these outdoor play space.

Integrating Children's Voices into Jakarta's Developmental Policies

The research findings also speak to policy concerns, in that the research has revealed contradiction in the design of the RPTRAs. Whereas the Child-Friendly Cities framework stipulates the importance of children's participation in matters affecting them, children were not involved in the design or management of the RPTRAs, even though they are targeted as the primary users of these areas. In addition, the research has underscored the value of outdoor play by paying particular attention to how children themselves, living in poor neighbourhoods, value outdoor play and the spaces in which this happens. Appreciating children as competent informants of their own lives has produced a wealth of information about children's outdoor play and how they use and value outdoor play spaces, shaped by several of the factors above. Such an understanding, as well as the methodology employed in this study, constitutes a valuable basis for the realisation of more outdoor spaces for children's play in urban contexts such as Jakarta. After all, by taking children's experiences and opinions about outdoor play seriously, amongst other things, a more generationally-just city can be achieved.

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Appendix

Appendix 1 Participant List²⁴

a. RPTRA Intiland Teduh

No	Name (modified)	Sex	Age	Drawing Map	Ranking	Transect Walk	Photograph	Interview
1	Dilla	F	10	V	V	V	V	V
2	Sella	F	10	V	V	V	V	V
3	Riri	F	10	V	V	V	V	V
4	Ani	F	9	V	V	V	V	V
5	Boby	M	11	V	V	V	V	V
6	Fira	F	10	V	V	V	V	V
7	Anjas	M	8	V	V	-	-	V
8	Denny	M	8	V	-	-	-	-
9	Marna	M	11	V	V	V	-	V
10	Adi	M	9	V	V	-	-	V
11	Choliq	M	9	V	V	-	-	V

Other participants:

No	Name	Sex	Age	Methods
12	Andra	M	10	Informal interview and participant observation
13	Nanang	M	10	Unstructured Groups Discussion
14	Putro	M	10	Unstructured Groups Discussion
15	Faizal	M	10	Unstructured Groups Discussion
16	Abby	M	9	Unstructured Groups Discussion
17	Doddy	M	10	Unstructured Groups Discussion
18	Riky	M	10	Unstructured Groups Discussion

b. RPTRA Manunggal²⁵

No	Name	Sex	Age	Drawing Map	Ranking	Transect Walk	Photograph	Interview
1	Tere	F	8	V	V	V	V	V
2	Putri	F	8	V	V	V	V	V
3	Tejo ²⁶	M	8	V	V	V	-	V
4	Rian ²⁷	M	8	V	V	V	-	V
5	Tuti	F	10	V	V	V	V	V

²⁴ Due to confidential purpose, the researcher replaced the name of participants with pseudonyms.

²⁵ During the fieldwork, the seesaw in RPTRA Manunggal was broken, so it might be affected to the answer of the children whose did not talk much about seesaw facility as a play.

²⁶ He prefers to do interview about what play is for him than do photograph at that time.

²⁷ Ibid.

No	Name	Sex	Age	Drawing Map	Ranking	Transect Walk	Photo graph	Interview
6	Mira	F	7	V	V	V	V	V
7	Hanum ²⁸	F	9	V	V	V	V	V
8	Riga ²⁹	M	11	V	V	-	V	V
9	Rey ³⁰	F	11	V	V	-	V	V
10	Fikri ³¹	M	10	V	V	-	V	V
11	Galuh	M	8	V	V	V	V	V
12	Sony ³²	M	8	V	V	-	V	V

²⁸ She has not finished the research process with me because at that time, she had to attend extra subject course. And the next day, she did not come to RPTRA, so I have not met her again until now.

²⁹ He prefers to do interview regarding to his map than do transect walk at that time.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

Appendix 2 Categorisation of Play³³

No	Name of the play activity	Category			Whom it is typically played by (boys/girls/age)	
		The number of people	The play tools	The creator	Sex	Age
1	Swing	Individual	Finished	Adult	Girl/boy	Under-five age, kindergarten, primary school
2	Slide	Individual	Finished / self-creation (cement ramp)	Adult	Girl/Boy	Under-five age, kindergarten, primary school
3	Seesaw	Group	Finished	Adult	Girl/Boy	Under-five age, kindergarten, primary school
4	Bicycling, playing scooter, and roller blade, playing cart	Individual / Group	Finished	Adult	Girl/Boy	Primary school, junior high school
5	Shooting toy gun	Group	Finished (Plastic toy gun or gun from Lego)	Adult	Boy	Primary school
6	Playing football or other ball	Group	Finished	Adult	Boy	Primary school, junior high school
7	Doctor-patient role play, mother-child role play (including dolls), cooking role play	Group	Self-creation (Unused material around them)	Children	Girl	Primary school
8	Climbing the trees or poles, and picking the fruits from the trees	Individual / Group	None	Children	Boy	Primary school
9	Playing Lego, play dough	Individual / Group	Finished (Lego, play dough)	Adult	Girl/Boy	Under-five age, kindergarten, primary school
10	Gardening	Individual	None (Water)	Adult	Girl/Boy	Primary school
11	<i>Taplak meja/ tapak gunung/ dampu</i>	Group	Stone & chalk to draw / permanent drawing	Children	Girl	Primary school, junior high school

³³ Source: Author's Observation (2017)

No	Name of the play activity	Category			Whom it is typically played by (boys/girls/age)	
		The number of people	The play tools	The creator	Sex	Age
12	<i>Tak buaya, tak sandal, tak bola, kena-kenaan</i>	Group	Self-creation (Sandal, ball)	Children	Girl/Boy	Primary school, junior high school
13	<i>Tak benteng</i>	Group	None	Children	Girl/Boy	Primary school, junior high school
14	Running, <i>kejar-kejaran</i>	Group	None	Children	Girl/Boy	Primary school
15	Fishing	Individual / Group	Self-creation (hand-made fishing rod)	Adult	Girl/Boy	Primary school
16	Walking around and sightseeing	Group	None	Children	Girl/Boy	Primary school
17	Playing with cats and seeing fish at the pond	Individual / Group	None	Children	Girl/Boy	Under-five age, kindergarten, primary school
18	Parking attendance role play	Individual / Group	None	Children	Boy	Primary school
19	Sitting back under the trees or in gazebo/hall	Individual / Group	None	Children	Girl/Boy	Primary school, junior high school
20	Hide and seek	Group	None	Adult	Girl/Boy	Primary school
21	Playing card	Group	Finished (Card)	Adult	Boy	Primary school, junior high school
22	Playing firecracker ³⁴	Individual / Group	Finished (Firecracker)	Adult	Boy	Primary school, junior high school
23	Playing toy car	Group	Finished (Toy car)	Adult	Boy	Primary school
24	<i>Playing Bambu Putar</i>	Group	Self-creation (Bamboo)	Children	Boy	Primary school
25	“Kis candy challenge”	Group	Self-creation (Candy)	Children	Girl	Primary school
26	<i>Gajab-gajaban</i>	Group	Self-creation (Abandoned water tank)	Children	Girl/Boy	Primary school
27	<i>Motor-motoran</i>	Group	Self-creation (Parked motorcycle)	Children	Girl	Primary school

³⁴ This activity is often conducted by the children during Ramadhan, the holy month when Moslems fasting during the daylight hours (from dawn to sunset)

No	Name of the play activity	Category			Whom it is typically played by (boys/girls/age)	
		The number of people	The play tools	The creator	Sex	Age
28	<i>Halang rintang</i>	Group	Self-creation (Used rubber wheel and chair)	Children	Girl/Boy	Primary school
29	<i>Congklak</i>	Group	Finished (seeds and board)	Adult	Girl	Primary school
30	Rope jumping	Group	Self-creation (Rubber rope)	Adult	Girl	Primary school, junior high school
31	Playing music	Group	Self-creation (Broken antenna)	Children	Boy	Primary school

Appendix 3 Play Activities (Games) Description³⁵

No	Name of the activity	Description
1	<i>Taplak meja/ tapak gunung/ dampu</i>	Hopscotch - played by several players. One by one, the players jump on the drawing square, with only one foot for single squares and two feet for double squares. Each player has a <i>gaco</i> (a flat stone), which should be thrown onto one square and then the player jumps onto that square. It is a group game.
2	<i>Kejar-kejaran</i>	It is played by running to chase the other players and is a group game.
3	<i>Tak buaya</i>	It is similar to <i>kejar-kejaran</i> , but the rule is that the player who is in charge can only chase the other players whose feet are on the ground, but if they climb on something (e.g. a tree, bench, chair, table, gazebo or slide), the player in charge cannot catch them.
4	<i>Tak benteng</i>	The players are divided into two groups. Each group has a "fortress" (which could be a tree, pole, pillar, or wall). They should compete with each other in groups to attack and occupy the opponent's fortress by touching it and saying, " <i>Benteng</i> ". They are also able to catch opponent group members when they do not touch their own fortress.
5	" <i>Kis</i> candy challenge"	This game was created by a group of girls in RPTRA Intiland Teduh. Actually, <i>Kis</i> is a brand name for a sweet. On the back cover of the sweet, there is a word quote (each cover has different words and it can be in English or Bahasa). Each player should take one sweet in the pack randomly and then read the quote from the back cover. After that, the challenge is that the player has to say that quote to someone randomly near to her. For example, the quote is "do your best", so the player should tell those words to someone near her.
6	<i>Tak sandal*</i> (*slippers/ flip flops)	Traditional game played with a minimum of three children and using four sandals: three sandals are arranged together into a building and one sandal is thrown at the pack until they fall down. The player should throw the sandal towards the other three. If it wrecks all three sandals, the next player must build them up again while the other players hide in secret places as soon as possible. After build the three sandals, the player in charge should find the other players who are hiding one-by-one.
7	<i>Kena-kenaan</i>	The rule is that the in-charge player brings a sandal and tries to throw the sandal to another player until the sandal touches the body part of another player. They can run to avoid the sandal.
8	<i>Tak bola</i>	The same with <i>kena-kenaan</i> , but using a ball.
9	Mother-child role play	Girls act as a family in doing daily activities at home: cooking, taking care of the children, taking the children to school on a motorcycle, sleeping, etc.
10	<i>Rumah-rumahan</i>	Similar with mother-child role play, where girls act as a family doing the daily activities at home: cooking, taking care of children, riding the children to school with motorcycle, sleeping, etc.

³⁵ Source: Author's Observation (2017)

No	Name of the activity	Description
11	<i>Gajah-gajahan</i>	There is a big water tank next to the subsidised high-rise housing. Sometimes, children (especially boys) climb it and act like they are riding an elephant.
12	<i>Motor-motoran</i>	Pretending to ride the motorcycle which parked at the high-rise housing's garage
13	<i>Bamboo putar</i>	The rule is that one player becomes the bamboo holder and rotates the bamboo 360 degree, while other players stand around it and try to avoid the bamboo by jumping. If someone is touched by the bamboo, then she/he must be the next bamboo holder.
14	Skipping rope	The rope is made from many rubber bands looped together into a long rope. One child takes turns jumping over the rope while two others hold the rope at both ends.
15	<i>Halang rintang</i>	Similar to steeplechase (i.e. jumping over particular obstacles until the finish line).
16	<i>Congklak</i>	Played by two players, and often played by girls. Each player takes their turn to circulate the seeds into each hole in the board. They play one by one, based on their turn, until the seeds on his/her board's side are empty. The player who get rid of their seeds earlier is the winner.
17	<i>Marawis</i>	This is a band with percussion as the main instrument, usually played by the boys. The music is a combination of Middle Eastern and Betawi art, which has a strong Islamic element.