



THE EMERGENCE OF YOUTH VIOLENCE IN INDONESIA: A SOCIO-HISTORICAL ANALYSIS

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Abstract

This qualitative exploratory study investigates the socio-historical context which impacts on the emergence of youth violence in an urban area, Jakarta, Indonesia. Research findings reveal how social and historical contexts impact youth's propensity to conduct in youth violence. These social and historical contexts span from the local to the hybrid context; from the Indonesian traditional practices to the global trends of the youth's social practices. This study illuminates the understanding that youth violence, particularly occurs in the urban area, is complex in nature and the study of youth violence should be placed in wider context. The result study It is widely known that this due to family-based tradition, that is, if one of the family has ever studied at this school, the other family members will follow studying at the same school as their ancestor did. This indicates that in fact parents and students are aware of what happens within the school including various practices of school culture.

Keywords: Emergence, Youth Violence, Socio-Historical Analysis.

Abstrak

Studi eksplorasi kualitatif ini menyelidiki konteks sosio-historis yang berdampak pada munculnya kekerasan remaja di daerah perkotaan, Jakarta, Indonesia. Temuan penelitian mengungkapkan bagaimana sosial dan kecenderungan konteks sejarah dampak muda untuk melakukan kekerasan remaja. Ini konteks sosial dan historis span dari lokal ke konteks *hybrid*; dari praktek-praktek tradisional Indonesia dengan tren global praktek-praktek sosial pemuda'. Studi ini menerangi pemahaman bahwa kekerasan pemuda, terutama terjadi di daerah perkotaan, adalah kompleks di alam dan studi kekerasan remaja harus ditempatkan dalam konteks yang lebih luas. Hasil penelitian ini secara luas diketahui bahwa ini karena tradisi berbasis keluarga, yaitu, jika salah satu keluarga yang pernah belajar di sekolah ini, anggota keluarga yang lain akan mengikuti belajar di sekolah yang sama seperti nenek moyang mereka lakukan. Hal ini menunjukkan bahwa sebenarnya orang tua dan siswa menyadari apa yang terjadi di dalam sekolah termasuk berbagai praktik budaya sekolah.

Kata Kunci: Darurat, Tawuran Pelajar, Analisis Sosio-Historis.

Background

Youth violence has concerned researchers in many countries for years and recently the research on this global phenomenon remains a potentially lucrative topic to research particularly in other parts of the world such as in South East Asia and

Indonesia¹. This is due to predominant youth studies that have been conducted in the US and the UK and thus undoubtedly many theories have emerged in those countries. These are examples of prominent theories used by scholars; subculture theory concerns itself with youth delinquency is a 'challenge' of

¹Parker, L.N., *Adolescents in Contemporary Indonesia* (Oxon: Routledge, 2013), p. 20.



the working class society towards the middle class² social bonding theory sees youth violence through the lens of their relationship with other social structures³ and social disorganisation theory says that delinquency is easily spread out in slum areas due to the lack of social organization.

Although research on youth delinquency is well-established, the research on school violence in Indonesia is still just beginning to be understood. Several studies have been conducted on youth violence in several cities in Indonesia⁴. His research has shown that religion is quite obviously the motive underlying youth and school fighting in Solo, Yogyakarta and Nusa Tenggara Barat. However, this phenomenon is not the case in other cities. In the school fighting in Jakarta, for example, the religious issue is not apparent. Instead, the school gangs' competition, the school culture and other social factors seem dominant⁵. In relation to youth violence, interestingly, identified that student fighting commonly occurs only when they are at high school up to entering university. This might be related to the song 'masa-masa indah di sekolah' or the happiest moment is at high school⁶ meaning people think it should be filled with something 'meaningful'.

² Cohen, A.K., *Delinquent Boys: The Culture of the Gang* (USA, The Free Press, A Corporation, 1964), p. 32

³ Hirschi, T.S., Hellfire and Delinquency. In: South, N. (ed.) *The International Library of Criminology, Criminal & Penology: Youth Crime, Deviance and Delinquency* (Hant, England: Ashgate Publishing Company, 1967), h. 42.

⁴ Nilan, P., "Contemporary Masculinities and Young Men in Indonesia", *Indonesia and the Malay World*, 37, 2009, p. 327-344.

⁵<http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2012/10/04/pride-not-rivalry-triggers-student-brawls.html>

⁶ Kadir, H.A., "School Gangs of Yogyakarta: Mass Fighting Strategies and Masculine Charisma in the City of Students", *The Asia Pacific Journal of Anthropology*, 13, 2012, 352-365.

Several studies on school violence have been carried out in urban areas. However, similar studies conducted in Jakarta are very limited as I am only able to identify a study conducted by Arnaldi & Husna-Dewi⁷ which captures the school fighting from psychological perspective. This is ironic since most of the school violence reported in the media occurs in Jakarta. Based on the data of National Commission on Child Protection, 82 students died during 2012 because of school fighting and this happened mostly in Metropolitan city⁸. This phenomenon is reasonable since Jakarta is a metropolitan city where its inhabitants come from diverse social economic stratification and cultures. Friction among people easily escalates into violence. The following sections will discuss how social and cultural factors contribute to school violence in Metropolitan city, Jakarta.

Being 'Jagoan or Jawara' and its Relationship to Violence

The concept of "jagoan" among youth in Java or in Indonesia is generally used to represent the traditional value of masculinity. "jagoan or jago" in Wilson⁹ is associated with being 'champion of the people' and specifically refers to 'the notion of honour, territoriality and violence'. The author, however, has recognised that there has been a shift in the definition of the term "jagoan". Initially it referred to the champion of a martial arts competition, but when the Dutch colonised Indonesia it was used to help keep

⁷ Arnaldi, M. & Dewi, S. Y. Effect of Depression, Self-Regulation Control and Characteristics of ADHD as the Cause of School Brawl in Jakarta, Indonesia
<http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2012/09/24/student-brawl-kills-one-s-jakarta.html>.

⁹ Wilson, I., *The Biggest Cock: Territoriality, Invulnerability and Honour amongst Jakarta's Gangster*. In: Michele, F. A. L., Lyons (ed.) *Men and Masculinities in Southeast Asia*. (Oxon: Routledge, 2012), h. 32



and rule the country and in the post-colonial era it is primarily associated with the monopoly of “lahan” or area which commonly covers public spaces (e.g. bus terminal, neighbourhood, market or parking lots). The author, then, suggests that being ‘jagoan’ means he has the authority to control and protect the people within the boundaries and from these activities he would get ‘illegal fees’ from the people within his authority. To establish the label “jagoan”, traditionally one should conduct behave violently and in a macho manner to achieve what is called “punya nama” or having a name¹⁰.

The concept of ‘jagoan or jawara’ and violence is closely linked to masculinity. Hearn argues that being masculine is about ‘how men act, think, believe and appear’¹¹. Nilan found that masculinity among youth in Central Java differs across different economic backgrounds. The youth from middle class families tend to show their masculinity through their wealth, whilst the lower class families choose to use physical power or fighting to gain a status of “jagoan”¹². Archer, however, has recognised that the relationship between socioeconomic status and masculinity among black youth is less obvious but ongoing violence through gang involvement is a principal consideration in masculinity¹³. In a wider context, McKay argues that masculinity is heavily dependent on location, work and

social and cultural factors¹⁴. They provide an illustration of how sea-men in the Philippines present their masculine identity in many different ways; being sea explorers (when they are away from home), endurance, self-sacrifice (when telling their story of being seafarers,) being a responsible father for their children and a responsible partner for their wife (earning money to support and fulfil family material needs). The concept of masculinity, therefore, varies from one context to another, but all tend to agree that masculinity for youth is about being strong, undergoing hardship, and experiencing violence. Based on the narrators’ stories in her study, Bucholtz argues that instead of bringing race in when young people are involved in conflict, they bring together their ideology of masculinity as well¹⁵.

Performing “jagoan” through violence could also be linked to students fighting in Jakarta. Public discourse of masculinity among the youth represented through oral history, media, and cultural values shape the students’ perception of being actively engaged in violence¹⁶. Nilan et al. argue that students who get involved in fighting and gang activities generally aim to achieve “jagoan and punya nama”. Having a name is important for them to be able to control others or just simply for asking for a cigarette or money, or they have another motivation for proving their masculinity¹⁷. It argues that masculinity is about getting a name, authority areas, honour,

¹⁰ Berg, T., “Talking Backwards, Looking Forwards- The French-Language Game Verlan - Lefkowitz, N.”, *Language in Society*, 21, 1992, p. 503-508.

¹¹ Hearn, J. A. P., “Studying in Europe”. In: Hearn, J. P., K and Members of Crome (ed.) *European Perspectives on Men and Masculinities: National and Transnational Approaches* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), p. 7

¹² Nilan, P., “Young Men and Peer Fighting in Solo, Indonesia”, *Men and Masculinities*, 14, 2011, p. 470-490.

¹³ Archer, L., *Race, Masculinity and Schooling: Muslim Boys and Education* (England, Open University Press, 2003), p. 43.

¹⁴ McKay, S. A. L.-P. I., D, E. “Filipino Seafarers and the Situational Performance of Manhood”. In: Michele, F. A. L., Lyons (ed.) *Men and Masculinities in Southeast Asia* (Oxon: Routledge, 2012), p. 23

¹⁵ Bucholtz, M., ‘It’s Different for Guys’: Gendered Narratives of Racial Conflict among White California Youth”, *Discourse & Society*, 22, 2011, p. 385-402.

¹⁶ Kadir, H. A., “School Gangs of Yogyakarta: Mass Fighting Strategies and Masculine Charisma in the City of Students.....”, p. 352-365

¹⁷ Nilan, P., “Young Men and Peer Fighting in Solo, Indonesia”..., p.471.



face, and money. Similarly, Wilson shows that micro factors such as having fun and gaining a name in an oral conflict story contribute to mass fighting in Yogyakarta. In this sense, violence is commonly juxtaposed with fear, respect, and gaining a name¹⁸.

The Influence of Gangs on School Brawls.

Research has recognised that the practice of *ronda/siskamling* or security systems based local communities in the Dutch colony era could be linked to the emergence of contemporary gangs in Indonesia. In that era, *Siskamling* was used to protect Dutch property and to legitimise the Dutch government. However, in the post-colonial era, it shifted to accommodate the needs of individuals, businesses, and the individual communities. Initially, it was a volunteering neighbourhood to guard their surroundings from burglary, theft or other criminals, but later it transformed to be more business-oriented¹⁹. In this sense, there seems to be an inextricable connection between the emergence of gangs and the increasing need of security in the past few decades. The high rate of unemployment and of uneducated people in the country a couple of decades empirically contributed to the emergence of violence and the role of the gangs in this condition whether as security for a particular area or being a backing of violence is obvious. In addition, Kadir in his research in Yogyakarta highlights that macro factors (local and global political conditions) along with micro factors (identity recognition, friendships, excitement, solidarity) are the

main influences on the emergence of the youth gangs²⁰. Moreover, it is indicated that youth gangs are part of school violence. For example, identified more than 22 school gangs in Yogyakarta and the existence of the gangs in school fighting is quite obvious. The fighting commonly occurred between the gangs from Islamic schools and Christian schools.

Although youth gangs have been studied in the Western world for many years, the concept of gangs in Indonesia, however, is quite different from that of the term in the West. Whilst the term gang in Indonesian is represented through violent school brawls and generally may not be associated with any illegal activities (e.g. such drug abuse, burglary), the Western concept of gangs relates to crime and is closely linked to the idea of the Mafia²¹. In addition, youth gangs in an Indonesian context refer to a school's name or the name of each generation and the primary activity of this kind of gang is about getting an oral story for the school name. They believe that fighting is an instant and a challenging way to achieve it. That is why each school commonly has a gang's name or possibly can have more than one²². If each school has a gang's name, it is presumed that there are hundreds of school gangs names in Jakarta as there are hundreds of high schools and vocational schools there.

The question arises about the existence of the gangs and the continuing practice of gangs at schools. Bloch note that being a member of a gang means having a strong sense of solidarity and giving them a new

¹⁸Wilson, I., "The Biggest Cock: Territoriality, Invulnerability and Honour amongst Jakarta's Gangster". In: Michele, F. A. L., Lyons (ed.) *Men and Masculinities in Southeast Asia* (Oxon: Routledge, 2012), p. 23

¹⁹ Kristiansen, S., "Violent Youth Groups in Indonesia: the Cases of Yogyakarta and Nusa Tenggara Barat", *Sojourn: Journal of Social Issues in Southeast Asia*, 2003, p. 110-138.

²⁰ Kadir, H. A., "School Gangs of Yogyakarta: Mass Fighting Strategies and Masculine Charisma in the City of Students.....", p. 352-365

²¹ Furlong, A., *Youth Studies: An Introduction* (Oxon, Routledge, 2013), h. 74

²²<http://papafariz.blogspot.co.uk/2007/06/nama-nama-angkatan-di-smu-70-bulungan.html>



experience²³. Cotterell has tried to see the connection between being a member of a particular group and its psychological aspect²⁴. It is shown that group membership will benefit them by giving “enjoyment, the sense of loyalty and availability, confidence and self-validation”. Feeling safe, building courage and earning money are also students’ motivations to join gangs. These findings are relevant to the students fighting phenomenon in Jakarta. Based on Arnaldi & Yusna-Dewi, solidarity of being a particular group identity is a major reason students get involved in school brawls compared to individual characteristics. This is because if one of the group members act out of the norm, they will be excluded²⁵. Emler provides an example in their interviews. They asked, “What would happen if there was a fight going on and you refused to take part? Participants said, “They don’t bother-just call you a coward and that is it, finished”). This is due to ‘values and culture’²⁶ of the gangs that every member should follow.

In relation to gangs, research also suggests that when one commits such a ‘crime’ without his companions, his ‘legitimacy’ with regard to that crime cannot be accepted by his peers. In other words, it is about ‘reputation’ which covers courage, loyalty and reliability²⁷. Therefore, it is quite common for young people to conduct their crimes in the company of others. The legitimacy from peers is a central reason why joining a group or gang is

definitely important for the youth. Violent behaviour legitimised by others would improve the name of the member as well as the name of the gang. There seems to be an inextricable connection between an individual and the group when behaving violently. On one hand, individuals can get the approval from other members of the gang about his masculinity, on the other hand, the gang will obtain pride from the member’s.

In addition, the role of media in getting approval and raising a gang’s name is inevitable. By broadcasting news of school fighting, it will help legitimate the existence of a particular gang and this could possibly build a student’s understanding that to instantly achieve a gang’s name is to be exposed on the media. Often students who get involved in and injured in school fighting post their pictures on social media aiming to deliver the message that they exist. In this way, they hope that everyone will recognise them and that finally they will become a public story told among their peers. Being a public story means they have successfully obtained a name for themselves and their gang. Quantitative research has been conducted to discover the effects of the media on school violence and the results show that there has been a positive relationship between exposing the violence in the media and the change in the behaviour of the youth. This might closely relate to cultural hybridity which commonly been carried out through the media exposure to possibly shape the youth’s understanding of their world. The following section will discuss how cultural hybridity could affect youth gangs and student violence.

Youth Gang and the Influence of Cultural Hybridity

Popular culture being spread through the internet or other electronic devices is believed to contribute to the youth violence. Various forms of popular culture such as

²³ Thrasher, F., M., *The Gang: A Study of 1,313 Gangs in Chicago* (Chicago, Illinois: University of Chicago Press, 2000), p. 53.

²⁴ Cotterell, J., *Social Networks in Youth and Adolescence* (Hove: Routledge, 2007), p. 103.

²⁵ Arnaldi, M. & Dewi, S. Y., “Effect of Depression, Self-Regulation Control and Characteristics.....”, p. 43.

²⁶ Emler, N. R., Stephen, *Adolescent and Delinquency: The Collective Management of Reputation* (Oxford, Blackwell Publishers Ltd, 1995), p. 23.

²⁷ Emler, N. R., Stephen, *Adolescent and Delinquency: The Collective Management of Reputation.....*, p. 182.

films, songs and styles which are seen by the youth presumably affect the way young people behave. Nilan provides an example of how the Indonesian youth is more interested in and familiar with Western movies and songs compared to the local culture. She then identifies that Western culture has influenced the youth through the Western movies they watch, the outfits they wear and the music they listen to. The consequences of this acceptance is that the global image of 'hyper-masculinity'-tough, hard, and heroic-represented through popular culture seems also widely accepted by the youth as their ideology. As a result of accepting these global images, young people often seek their own way of trying on their masculinity. School brawls, individual fighting and consuming alcoholic drinks are often used to prove their masculinity. One study has indicated that violence is the chosen and ideal way to perform masculini, whilst, Nilan also points out that media could be regarded as a representation of the contemporary Indonesian youth masculinity. Having a strong physique and aggressive behaviour are some aspects of the global media's depiction of masculinity²⁸.

The role of media in imposing the global ideology on the youth as potential consumers through various programmes on TV (sinetron/shop opera, public discourses) is quite apparent. Specifically in relation to masculinity, Nilan listed common and favourite programmes on TV which help shape global images of hyper-masculinity among the youth (Cinta Anak SMU, Putih Abu-Abu etc.)²⁹. Myrntinen affirms that the media has significantly influenced the way

youth perform their masculinity³⁰. The role models and icons of martial arts actors such as Rambo and Jean-Claude van Damme are represented as a model of masculinity which could be linked to the youth violence in East Timor and this is possibly happening in other areas in Indonesia. This result is consistent with which found that there is positive relationship between playing violent video games and young people's delinquent behaviour.

Along with the Western role model, the names of school gangs are found to be adopted from Western terms. The names of school gangs in Yogyakarta for example can often be a reflection of the Western names³¹. This also happens in Jakarta where Western names are used by most schools (e.g. Texas 46/ SMA 46, Gurasix/ SMA 6, Kavallery/ SMA 70, M2R (Moonraker-James Bond film name)³². Although the names of the school gangs are adopted from Western terms, its meaning is inseparable from the local one such as 'sporadis', a gang's name from the word "seventy pasukan radikal dan sadis" or seventy squad radical and sadistic. There seems to be assimilation process of adopting the Western terminology. It can be said, therefore, that Western cultural hybridity has been adopted by Indonesian youth whether in terms of gang names, their idol or their favourite films or television programmes.

Although many researchers have agreed that the role of media and cultural hybridity stick on shaping youth committing to violent, it is a fact that the school brawls have

²⁸ Nilan, P., "Contemporary Masculinities and Young Men in Indonesia", *Indonesia and the Malay World*, 37, 2009, p. 327-344.

²⁹ Nilan, P., "Contemporary Masculinities and Young Men in Indonesia.....", p. 330.

³⁰ Myrntinen, H., Violence, "Masculinities and Patriarchy in Post-Conflict Timor-Leste". In: Lyons., M. F. A. L. (ed.) *Men and Masculinities in Southeast Asia* (Oxon: Routledge, 2012), p. 21.

³¹ <http://beritajogja.co.id/2013/09/03/nama-nama-geng-sekolah-di-jogja/>

³² <http://dunia-baruku88.blogspot.co.uk/2013/03/nama-geng-di-indonesia-yang-paling.html>



occurred for a couple of decades³³ where the media has not been so vast as today. It has been suggested that other factors such as the culture of “nongkrong”, social economic status of the students, school tradition and the language used as a symbol and identity of a particular group could also play important role in urban school fighting in Indonesia.

The Culture of ‘Nongkrong’ among the Youth in Indonesia

The culture of ‘nongkrong’ is quite popular among the youth in Indonesia. It is quite easy to find people doing “nongkrong” particularly in food or coffee stalls. With regard to students, the culture of “nongkrong” has become habitual among students, particularly when playing truant or when they finish their school hours. Miller points out that hanging out or “nongkrong” is part of a particular class culture that is about “standing of extended period of time often with peer mates, and doing nothing and shooting the breeze”. The favourite place to do “nongkrong” could be at bus stops, malls, food stalls or shop yards depending upon the tradition of the group. For those who come from middle class families malls or cafes are preferred; those who do not have much money would choose shop yards or bus stops. The different places to “nongkrong” could be linked to the ways students behave since it is reported that the school or gang fighting generally starts by mocking each other in public spaces such as bus stops when the students “nongkrong” or get together. When they get together, they often shout or yell at other school students passing across in front of them³⁴.

³³<http://en.tempo.co/read/news/2013/11/27/080532890/Schools-Are-Not-Prisons>

³⁴ Miller, W. B., “Lower Class Culture as a Generating Milieu of Gang Delinquency”. In: South, N. (ed.) *The International Library of Criminology, Criminal Justice & Penology: Youth Crime, Deviance and Delinquency*

What makes the tradition of “nongkrong” a reason for school fighting? Besides having confidence from being part of the group to challenge others, it has been suggested that part of the culture of “nongkrong” is declaring that a particular place belongs to them. Someone who wants to use the place should get permission from the authorised people—the people who commonly do “nongkrong” in the place is the authorised people. This is the same as the school brawls phenomenon in Jakarta where students feel that a particular place such as bus terminal is their authority. They will be there doing “nongkrong” all the time, particularly during school hours. As they have many peers with them they tend to agitate other students into confrontation. If there is no confrontation they do nothing. The question arises: why they should get together in a particular place to do nothing? In relation to school fighting, the place for “nongkrong” is also a base camp to discuss strategy for fighting other schools or planning which schools are being targeted for the next fight.

It is also recognised that the culture of ‘nongkrong’ commonly invites other groups to dispute. Interestingly, these disputes are often not related to very serious matters: just looking at each other could lead to fighting³⁵. Besides, it is generally known that getting together and doing “nongkrong” could help them have sense of togetherness and by this way the process of socialisation of a particular value occurs. Thrasher argues that ‘play group’ is an embryo to form gangs based on their same interests, age, and spontaneous and tied with their belonging. The concept “nongkrong” could be associated with Thrasher’s work about the emerging gangs and

(England: Darmouth Publishing Company Limited, 1958), p. 56.

³⁵<http://www.tempo.co/read/news/2012/10/21/064436902/Saling-Ejek-dan-Dendam-Pemicu-Tawuran-Pelajar>



other deviant activities which are commonly enacted from the play group or in an Indonesian context “nongkrong bareng” or gathering together in particular places³⁶.

What makes “nongkrong” could generate conflict? When the students get together and the number of students is growing, they tend to have the power to fight others. It is often reported that fighting and violence start from mocking and staring at each other in a group. And the group of “nongkrong” usually mocking other groups³⁷. It is quite uncommon that a single person is involved in fighting and violence; there are normally groups of people³⁸. School fighting often occurs between groups and is not unusual one to one pattern. And the role of “nongkrong” which generally involves a number of people could easily generate conflict.

The traditional practice of ‘siskamling’ could also be linked to the culture of “nongkrong” and the pattern of school fighting. As previously mentioned, “siskamling” is a way of protecting the properties and territory from the intruders. The students should be aware that they have a responsibility to protect their school from the intruders. Being aware that their school should be protected, they keep guarding their authority land by getting together in particular places showing their existence, similar to those who protect their houses by placing security guards around the house. The concept of having territory could also reflect the pattern of school conflict in Jakarta. It is generally agreed by the students that when fighting occurs and when one of the opponents

withdraws and crosses their own border territory, other opponents would not run after them because crossing back into their own territory means surrender. The border area of authority, therefore, is quite crucial for students in school fighting. Its provide an example of school conflict in Solo where claiming of a territory is closely related to the issues of pride and loyalties which commonly end up in conflict³⁹.

The Eelationship between Socio Economic Status and the Segregation of School Type to School Violence

Subculture theory from seems relevant with regard to the school brawls phenomenon in urban areas. Based on the subculture theory, the discrepancy between the lower class children and middle class children is a primary factor in youth violence. It is consistently found that delinquents are often lower class males⁴⁰. This is what Cohen has pointed out about the characteristic of lower class society which commonly practice ‘short-run hedonism’ and this life style is associated with delinquency. To Bloch & Niederhoffer, however, the delinquency is not merely about the class crash. They point out that the gap between the rich and the affluent is fading due to the increasing opportunities for the poor to get better education and eventually get better jobs in the modern era. Concerning the youth violence in Indonesian context⁴¹, Nilan et al. have argued that students studying at technical high schools (mostly coming from lower class families) in Solo get involved in school fighting more often than students of senior high school who primarily come from middle

³⁶ Miller, W. B., Lower Class Culture as a Generating Milieu of Gang Delinquency....., p. 57

³⁷<http://www.tribunnews.com/metropolitan/2014/05/20/berawal-saling-ejek-satu-pelajar-tewas-bersimbah-darah>

³⁸<http://hariini.com/berita-2010-aksi-tawuran-pelajar-kembali-terjadi-di-warung-jambu.html>

³⁹ Nilan, P., “Young Men and Peer Fighting in Solo, Indonesia...”, p. 54

⁴⁰ Cohen, A. K., *Delinquent Boys: The Culture of the Gang* (USA, The Free Press, A Corporation, 1964), p. 84.

⁴¹ Bloch, H., A. & Niederhoffer, A., *The Gang: A Study in Adolescent Behavior* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1958), p. 32

class families⁴². Research conducted by Akiba also showed that among 37 countries, the countries which have lower GDP tend to have higher rates of violence. This study illustrates that socio economic status highly contributes to violence⁴³. The lower the student's socio-economic status, the more violence they experience. Although this research could be relevant to the youth violence in the cities in Indonesia, the phenomenon of school violence in Jakarta, however, seems intriguing as the schools which are involved in violence are not only located in suburban areas where a large proportion of students come from lower class families but the schools in the city as well (e.g. SMA 70, SMA 46, SMA 6) where the students come from middle class families.

The 'unusual' youth problem which occurs in Jakarta might be due to the existing public discourse among state high school students to hate vocational high school students or vice versa and this puts students in situations of school violence between the two types of school⁴⁴. The public discourse of hating vocational schools, for example, could be found on this blog⁴⁵. The name of one of the school gangs also represents their hatred of vocational schools, e.g. TEXAS 46-“texas empat enam! tentara extreme anti stm!” means “Texas (a gang's name at SMA 46) anti STM/Technical schools”. The ideology of hatred of Technical schools has been perpetuated for many years as it can also be

found on this blog⁴⁶. There is no clear reason why senior high school students should oppose their counterparts from vocational schools. Unlike youth conflict at school in California which was predominantly about race, the youth conflict in Jakarta is arguably about the different economic statuses and the segregation of school types⁴⁷.

In addition, the huge number of students in the two school types is believed to generate competition among the students in the city. Based on the data of Education department in Jakarta (Disdik) there are 116 state high schools and 381 private high schools with a total of around 177,000 students in 2009. There are also 62 state vocational schools and 512 private vocational schools with a total of nearly 200.000 students. There were 377.000 students in the city altogether. The huge number of students in Jakarta possibly easily leads to friction among them. Akiba et al. (2002) in their survey of 37 countries revealed that there is a positive correlation between countries which have a higher number of young people and higher figures for youth victimisation⁴⁸.

As has previously been illustrated, there has been segregation in terms of socioeconomic status between the two types of school. In Eckert it is associated with the terms jock and burnout. The jock is from a middle class family who upon graduation goes to college, whilst the burnout is from a working class family and aims to get a job after finishing school. The term jock and burnout perfectly portray the two school types in

⁴² Nilan, P., “Young Men and Peer Fighting in Solo, Indonesia...”, P. 54

⁴³ Akiba, M., Letendre, G. K., Baker, D. P. & Goesling, B., “Student Victimization: National and School System Effects on School Violence in 37 Nations”, *American Educational Research Journal*, 39, 2002, p. 829-853.

⁴⁴ (<http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2010/09/02/a-history-violence-ensnares-city-students.html>)

⁴⁵ (<http://papafariz.blogspot.co.uk/2007/06/nama-nama-angkatan-di-smu-70-bulungan.html>)

⁴⁶ <http://reinhardjambi.wordpress.com/2009/02/23/zaman-begajulan/>

⁴⁷ Bucholtz, M., “It's Different for Guys: Gendered Narratives of Racial Conflict among White California Youth”, *Discourse & Society*, 22, 2011, p. 385-402.

⁴⁸ Akiba, M., Letendre, G. K., Baker, D. P. & Goesling, B., “Student Victimization: National and School System Effects on School Violence in 37 Nations...”, p. 32



Indonesia, senior high school and technical high school. Whilst Eckert sees the two different categories based on the language use, in this study the segregation of the school types is about rivalry to compete, including competition to get a school and gang's name through fighting. Vocational schools which are dominated by male students tend to have greater power to control every fight than its counterpart, senior high school. As they primarily come from lower class families, fighting with other type of school will give them an opportunity to seek an existence. Whilst technical school students want to control other students from senior high schools to show their existence, students from senior high schools, on the other hand, are needed to protect and defend their areas as the concept of "siskamling". Moreover, being passive (defending strategy) is not always the best for them; actively attacking other school students is also chosen. This is what one of the Wilson's informants said about living in an urban area: "That's life in Jakarta, if you don't step on someone you will get stepped on". In other word, school fighting is about a mutual understanding and is engaged by two parties. In order not to be oppressed, one should act first⁴⁹.

Instead of discrepancy over socioeconomic status, however, the school culture is also believed to play a central role in shaping students' perspectives about violence and activities within the school. It is reported that the schools which have been involved in fighting historically have a long tradition in fighting. The following paragraph discusses the role of school culture in generating conflict.

⁴⁹ Wilson, I., "The Biggest Cock: Territoriality, Invulnerability and Honour amongst Jakarta's Gangster...", p. 32

Violence is School Culture.

For many people, fighting is seen as a school culture⁵⁰ which should be passed down from generation to generation through particular communication strategies (e.g. coercing, physical threat, and 'reward and sacrifice' concepts). This is in line with educators' statement that school violence has become a long history in the Indonesian education system⁵¹. This notion is quite possible since school brawls have occurred for many years and interestingly not all schools are getting involved in school conflict. The question then arises: why do some schools always get involved in school brawls whilst others do not? Why do parents still send their children to those schools and why are new students willing to study there?

When discussing school fighting in Jakarta, tracing back the merging of two state schools (SMA 7 and SMA 11) in 1982 could be used as a point of entry to understand the school phenomenon. According to reports, the main reason for merging these two schools was due to the failure of efforts of the government to cope with school fighting between the two schools and the solution was seen as an effective way to terminate school conflict. The solution of merging the schools, however, was probably not an effective way to reduce the number of school fights as having a huge number of students within the school caused another problems. Having more than 4000 students was not an easy task, particularly monitoring the mobility of the students, including the mobility to have fighting among the students within the school and fighting with other schools⁵². On the one

⁵⁰<http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2013/10/acid-attacks-intensify-indonesia-gang-fights-2013102410334020721.html>

⁵¹<http://www.thejakartaglobe.com/news/indonesian-students-deaths-long-history-violence>

⁵² <http://www.sman70.jkt.sch.id/index.php/features/sejarah>

hand, having a huge number of students from the two merger schools means there would be open and close interaction among them, on the other hand, the school had many enemies from other schools around the city. It became an oral story that schools which could defeat SMA 70 would be an emerging power in the city and would be respected and feared by other schools. This made schools try to attack this school to gain a name or to seek popularity.

Being aware of being a threat to other schools and being a main target of schools' attack, the students of SMA 1001 anticipated and protected themselves by internal consolidation, that is, training the juniors to have a strong mental attitude and build a strong feeling of solidarity. Indoctrination, seniority and other school practices which involve physical threat are being used to achieve the goal, being strong physically and mentally to defend their authority and to build self-endurance. This is an underground movement which is difficult to identify by either the school members or the parents as the practice of such physical assault is commonly conducted out of school areas and hours. During the indoctrination process, the seniors introduce the juniors which school/s is the enemy and what kind of weapons are used in the school fighting⁵³. The practices of this school culture are believed perpetuated until recent times.

Conclusion

Interestingly, although the school is notoriously known as a problem school, many parents still send their children to this school and students are still willing to study there. It is widely known that this due to family-based tradition, that is, if one of the family has ever studied at this school, the other family

members will follow studying at the same school as their ancestor did. This indicates that in fact parents and students are aware of what happens within the school including various practices of school culture. Moreover, the parents understand that undergoing physical threat is necessary for their children to build strong physical endurance. The students are also aware how they will be treated by their seniors emotionally and physically during their study. It indicates that there has been a collective awareness of school culture. Therefore, the practices of such a physical threat and school fighting is difficult to stop.

The practice of school culture conducted within the school is like a military system which involves physical threat and indoctrination. This can be identified from the name of school gangs which are often related to military names such as Batalyon, Resiment, Aggressor etc⁵⁴ and the strict system of seniority where juniors have to respect seniors in various ways such as facing down when they engaged in face to face interaction or undergoing physical hardship when the juniors go wrong. This condition possibly leads students to get involved in school culture including school fighting as there seems to be enforcement in those practices.

It can be said that environmental factor heavily contributes to students getting involved in school violence. This notion can also be used as an argument to answer the question why some schools often get involved in school violence whilst others do not. Its argue that one of the causes of violence in schools is due to environmental factors⁵⁵. In addition, the language and communication practices within the school environment are another important factor which play a role in perpetuating students fighting. The strategic

⁵³<http://www.suarapembaca.net/report/reader/203527/usul-penggabungan-dari-wali-murid-sma-6-jakarta>

⁵⁴ (<http://papafariz.blogspot.co.uk/2007/06/nama-nama-angkatan-di-smu-70-bulungan.html>)



reason why students use their own language is merely about disguising their illegal practices that people out of their groups would not be able to recognise.

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