

Conference Paper

Transformation of Violence Culture into Productive Culture by Empowering Urban Youth on Creative Economy: A Reflection from the Johar Baru Case, Jakarta

Ida Ruwaida

Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Universitas Indonesia

Abstract

Youth and violence seems as an 'embedded' phenomena in urban context, particularly at slum areas. Macionist stated that 39% of arrests for violent crime are youth (15-24 years old) and mostly are the poor. This stigmatisation is conditioning a violence culture among youth. Thus, it is necessary to transform their violence culture into productive culture by recognising their potential competencies. Based on the case of Johar Baru, Jakarta, where the youth empowerment program has been established since 2012 through Sekolah Komunitas Johar Baru (SKJB), it has been shown that social recognition encourages youths to be more confident, even eager to be involved in the community sphere. It is not fundamentally easy to influence those youths with positive values and pro-social behaviour. The SKJB program on creative economy has stimulated marginal youth groups to be enthusiastic and interested in transforming themselves, individually as well as collectively.

Keywords: social transformation, violence culture, creative economy, youth empowerment

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1. Introduction

Poverty in urban areas is often identified with the urban slums. Therefore, attempts to alleviate urban poverty are often directed towards slum areas. Various studies have shown a correlation between poverty and violence, including Goodhand (2001). (Jonathan Goodhand (May 2001), "Violent Conflict, Poverty, and Chronic Poverty". The paper is supported by the Chronic Poverty Research Centre (CPRC) in collaboration with INTRAC) There are three propositions submitted, namely: *first*, conflict causes poverty. *Second*, poverty causes conflict. *Third*, competition for resources leads to conflict. Based on the propositions, vertical and horizontal conflicts tend to use violence. The impacts,

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either directly or indirectly, vary depending on age, ethnicity, gender, and location. What is fundamental is that poverty may make sustain the conflict if the root of the problem is not insurmountable. These conditions will decrease the quality of urban life, especially in the slum areas, which in turn negatively affect the quality of life in Jakarta as a whole. In this context, then, how should social conflicts be handled, especially if the perpetrators are marginalised youths? Conflict resolution efforts will be faced with the complexity of the city and the non-homogeneous characteristics of urban youth, and their marginal, even stigmatised position, as experienced by the youths in Johar Baru, Jakarta.

This paper elaborates on conflict resolution in Johar Baru, Central Jakarta, which is an area well known for its mass fighting. (Indopers, 06 Juli 2011, 20 Kasus Tawuran Terjadi di Ibu Kota, Submitted by Heintje Mandagie, <http://indopers.com/node/361>, downloaded 10 November 2011 at 16.00) Using Goodhand's (2001) assumption on the correlation between violence and poverty, it seems that the assumption is also reflected in Johar Baru. The Johar Baru District is known as a slum area, where the people are poor and density is high. Johar Baru is the most densely populated district in Jakarta, probably even in Asia, with as many as 48,890 people per square km. (Census results, Central Bureau of Statistics 2010) The conflict in Johar Baru is substantially more horizontal, involving groups of youths/teenagers. Brawls or communal conflicts could also occur between RT or RW, or subdistricts, even across regions. Efforts to create social harmony in the Johar Baru community have community made, facilitated by various parties. However, since 2012, the Johar Baru Community School (SKJB) has been developed, as part of the process of building social harmony in this area. (The Johar Baru Community School is the aspirations of youths of Johar Baru, which confirms the desire/need to learn about life. In this context, SKJB is a place for groups of youths who hang out in Johar Baru to learn together about "life skills". SKJB was initiated and facilitated by Sociology lecturers of UI, in cooperation with various parties) Various programs have been developed by SKJB in order to build individual and organizational capacity, one of which is economic empowerment for youths.

2. Anatomy of the Johar Baru Conflict and Its Management

Brawls or mass fights between residents in Johar Baru are a major problem for the city government and of course the citizens themselves, considering the conflicts are becoming a part of the lives of residents for years, with no clear solution, and even with a high frequency and intensity. This problem is actually disturbing and detrimental

to the citizens, even causing social trauma, but they seem to be powerless. Based on research findings, one of the effects of the image of Johar Baru as a place of brawls is the difficulty for the citizens to access employment opportunities. This stigmatization also conditions several residents to move away. Those who remain are worried that the children are exposed to a culture of violence.

The brawls, which mostly involve groups of youths, (Based on the GIS (Geographical Information System) conducted by the research team from the Department of Sociology of UI, there are at least 56 youth groups who hang out in three subdistricts: Johar Baru, Kampung Rawa and Tanah Tinggi) usually do not have explainable reasons. Sociologically, Wirutomo et al. (2012) showed that the clashes in Johar Baru have complex and overlapping causes, i.e. overcrowding, poverty, school dropout, unemployment, consumption of alcohol and drugs, scarcity of social facilities and infrastructure, poor environmental governance, unfit housing conditions etc. Economically, most citizens find it quite difficult to get access to change the conditions of life, associated with low levels of education, vulnerability of livelihoods, and the socio-cultural environment as a contributing factor. Among the youths, even in the centre of the country's capital, it turns out that education levels are low. The school dropouts and unemployed do not have an arena to express themselves, let alone explore their potentials and needs. This condition also underlies their vulnerability, making them easily triggered into brawls. That is, the brawl is considered as a form of "expression of protest" of urban youths to their critical living environment, which erodes their social durability.

Various efforts to address (prevent) conflict have been made, starting from intervention at the individual level, through personality mentoring, socialization on drugs and their effects, as well as counselling on the issue of brawling. At the organizational (group) level, the FAKTA (Forum Against Violence and Brawling) has been founded. Efforts to involve the community in resolving the conflict also include women, although these have not been optimal. Messages such as "take care of the family" or "avoid brawling" are often inserted in community activities, such as Koran recitations, by the mosquito monitors (mostly women), the PKK and other organisations. The males also play a role through the RW groups, Pokdar Kamtibmas groups, which sometimes double in function as the RW forum.

According to the Lurah (subdistrict head) of Johar Baru, efforts to create and build social harmony in Johar Baru need more than just a security policy, but also special programs capable of empowering the youth. Several programs have also been developed, namely: 'community economic development' which aims for the creation of employment opportunities for the citizens, such as workshop equipment, catfish raising, and

free driving license. Beyond that, there are also interventions of some community leaders of Johar Baru to provide employment to youths who usually are involved in brawls, though not in the form of permanent jobs. Thus, the main intervention is to overcome unemployment and to facilitate interaction space between citizens. This social interaction space is intended to reduce social friction that occurs. Intervention through education and the arts are expected by the youth.

"... The free school program from the government is nonsense... as proof, there are many youths who drop out of school due to economic problems". (Nk, 25 years old, Johar Baru)

"Aids such as musical instruments and studio would surely be highly appreciated by the youths of RW 07, because they are all very fond of music, especially reggae", said Jo. "If you ask the hobbies of the youths here, the answer would be music first, and then tuning their motorbikes." (Jo, 29 years, Tanah Tinggi, RW 07).

With regard to capacity-building activities of Johar Baru youths, the survey indicates an interesting finding: about two-fifths of respondents (39%) state that they would not participate in trainings provided, reasoning that the trainings are not in accordance with the skills required by the community. This reflects that the program has not been designed in a participatory manner.

Basically, conflict resolution in Johar Baru involves various parties, including the government, community, police, universities, and even private parties. However, their achievements have not been optimal, either substantively or in the management of activities as well as the organisers. Participation in activities was only due to economic reasons: money and facilities. Moreover, among the people, there is a lack of trust, both among themselves and to outsiders who facilitate the handling of conflicts, including the government. This means that there is no unconditional peace between the groups. It is related to the lack of 'cross-cutting' activities, given conflict-handling activities tending to be limited to one region or group. The tendency shows the absence of effective communication between groups, between community leaders, and between regions. Admittedly there is no synergy or effective cooperation among the various elements. Handling of conflict tends to be partial and oriented towards projects.

As fundamentally the conflict in Johar Baru is rooted in complex socio-cultural issues, it cannot be solved with a "project approach". The effectiveness and impacts of conflict resolution programs depend on the assumptions. Existing programs generally assume

that youths are the source of the problem, causing nuisance, yet they are often “overlooked” from development policies and programs. This assumption contributes to the failure of social harmonization efforts. To that effect, the program needs a “paradigm shift” to be more innovative, encouraging participation, as well as creating synergy between the parties and oriented in sustainability.

3. Conflict Transformation: Violence Culture to Productive Culture

Fundamentally, conflicts or brawls in Johar Baru show degradation in the quality of socio-cultural relationships between groups in the society. This means that there is a need to restore the quality of social and cultural life in a more conceptual and planned manner. Within this context, conflict could be dealt with to build consensus, tranquility, creating positive attitudes, as well as creative, innovative, and even productive efforts. According to Fisher et al. (2001: 7), conflict handling can be done through five approaches, namely: (1) ‘conflict prevention’ (preventing conflicts from reoccurring); (2) conflict settlement/peacemaking (an end to violent behaviour through a peace agreement); (3) conflict management (limiting and avoiding violence by encouraging positive behavioural change for the parties involved); and (4) conflict resolution (tackling the causes of the conflict and seeking to build new relationships and that can last for a long time between conflicting groups), and (5) conflict transformation, namely efforts to tackle wider sources of social and political conflict and trying to change the negative forces from conflict or dispute into positive political and social forces.

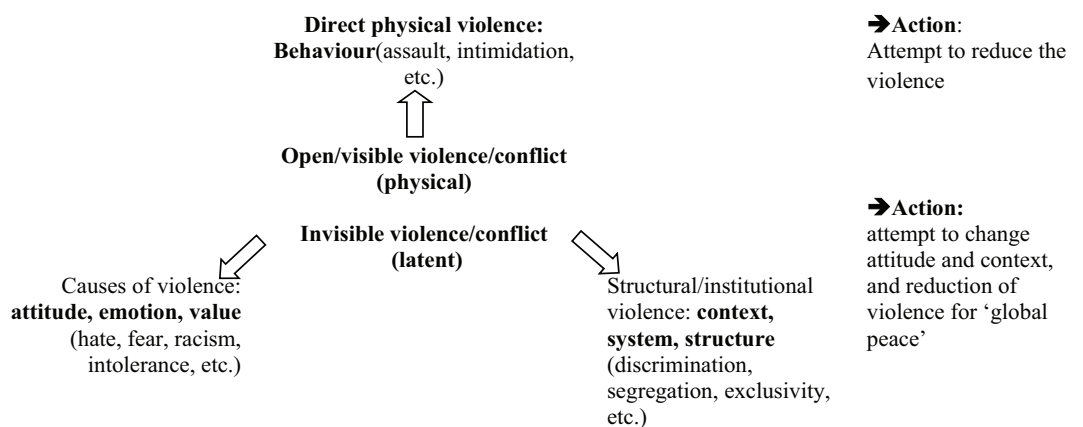
TABLE 1: Types of Conflict and Approaches in Handling Conflict.

Approach in Handling Conflict	Type of Conflict		
	Latent Conflict	Surface Conflict	Open Conflict
Conflict Prevention	✓		
Conflict Settlement		✓	✓
Conflict Management	✓	✓	
Conflict Resolution			✓
Conflict Transformation	✓	✓	✓

Referring to the above table, Fisher et al. classify conflict into latent conflict, surface conflict, and open conflict. Approaches to conflict resolution cannot be separated from the typology of conflict and the root causes. Based on the approaches, the conflict

transformation strategy is the most thorough and comprehensive, which also requires the longest and most wide-ranging commitment of the parties. This is unlike conflict resolution, which is more focused on the search for a 'deal' (resolution) among the various openly conflicting groups who have different goals/objectives. The conflict transformation approach is more oriented towards the long-term, preparing a strategic foundation in the primary and secondary levels to establish future relationships and shape public institutions (Fisher, 2001: 8).

Referring to Fisher et al., in the context of Johar Baru, efforts that have been done are limited to prevention, management or settlement, in which these three approaches have not been able to resolve the conflict. This is because the Johar Baru conflict is chronic and has deep socio-cultural roots. Therefore, it is necessary that efforts are made to handle the roots of the problem, by changing negative resources into positive resources, and dissolve the relationship patterns between groups towards more intensive and productive ones. Therefore, Johar Baru requires transformation of conflict. It is expected that no individual or group is more powerful or dominant compared to the other party. In other words, the pattern of social relations needs to be improved, both between individuals and between groups or between regions. To that end, the youth need to appreciate (internalise) norms and values of social harmony. Fisher (2001: 9-10) confirms that violence/conflict is not just behaviour, but concerns context and attitude, as shown in the chart below:



Fundamentally, social transformation is the essence of social development. In this regard, Wirutomo (2013) reveals the presence of three aspects/dimensions that must be considered, namely structural, cultural, and processual (social processes). Thus, the effort to build (transform) awareness and establish the identity of the youth in the Johar Baru community needs intervention in the following three aspects: structural (policy and institutional), cultural (value-norm), and social processes (patterns of interaction and social relations). Thus, conflict transformation is expected to be able to build a

harmonious society based on the principles/values of equality, fairness, cooperation, harmony, caring, and non-discrimination on a specific group (inclusivity).

Structural and cultural transformation rest on the actual conditions that the youths do not obtain adequate recognition both by the society and authorities (government). This structure has conditioned them to identify with negative power sources (violence, drugs, fraud, brawls, etc.). Moreover, since childhood they have been exposed to, even familiar with, the culture of violence, injustice and anomie. In the structural aspect, there is a need to improve the bargaining position of youths in relation to their environment by building capacity to obtain social recognition. Strengthening or empowerment of the capacity of individuals is a priority, while at the same time strengthening their collective capacity (organizational consciousness). In an effort to build equal relationship patterns, conflict transformation also reflects empowerment. This is because according to Kabeer (2005), empowerment is a power arena, which requires the ability (the power within) to implement concrete action (power struggle) to access, utilise, control, and be responsible for resources to the expected changes. Ideally, empowerment is conducted at four levels, namely: individuals, groups, organisations and communities. Kabeer offers the transformation process (institutional), which requires movement or struggle in many arenas of power, namely: from the individual to the collective, from private negotiations to public action, from the informal to the formal realm. Correspondingly, cultural transformation is a pre-requisite, i.e., the socialisation and internalisation of the values of 'anti-violence', which is manifested in the behaviour and patterns of relations of everyday relationships (social processes).

4. Models of Empowerment and Productive Culture

According to Whitmore (1998), empowerment is a reflective process of the empowered group to be able to determine its fate/condition (self-determination). Young (1993: 158) confirms that women (or youths) become empowered through a process of reflection and collective decision-making. The parameter is to build positive self-image and confidence, develop the ability to think critically, build a cohesive group, be actively involved in the decision-making process, and implement concrete action. Collective action is an inherent part of the empowerment process. In concrete, collective action needs to go through the following steps: (1) building curiosity/responsiveness, (2) identifying various real conditions, (3) growing awareness and concern over the situation and existing conditions, (4) conducting internal consolidation as well as consolidation with other parties, (5) awakening the collective identity, which also

reflects the strength or empowerment as both individuals and interest groups. This stage reflects that at least the collective consciousness cannot be separated from the development of personal awareness.

Based on these assumptions, empowerment begins with building awareness on a personal level, among others: identifying positive self-image as a pillar of confidence. Sociologically, the self-image (self concept) cannot be separated from the social environment of individuals. This means that the perspective (perception) of the environment on the individual/community members will affect their conception about themselves. The perspective of the community (even family) can reflect forms of social recognition, which can be positive (reward) or negative (rejection). If negative recognition is created, one of the causes or consequences is stigmatisation (labelling). This means that negative stigma underlies the development of an attitude of rejection, and vice versa. This condition is also developing in Johar Baru, in which its youths are stigmatised as perpetrators of violence/conflict. The labelling is even done by community leaders, in the RT/RW level and the subdistrict, which ultimately hinders their appreciation of the potential of youths, including their needs/interests. These conditions contribute to the strengthening of the tradition/culture of violence among youths of Johar Baru. The study of Wirutomo et al. (2012) showed that the culture of violence is made possible as a form of expression of frustration over the lack of social recognition. The study also found that the conflict between groups generally do not have a clear motive.

With regard to efforts to build positive public recognition to the youth groups, starting in mid-2012, initial assistance (participatory training) was implemented towards three groups. The activities were carried out for almost 3 months (once per week). Given the strength of group identity –there was no positive attitude towards the other groups, at this stage, the assistance was done on individual groups. The main objectives of the assistance are: (1) building positive attitudes and behaviour of citizens, particularly adolescents/youth, so that they can develop harmonious social relationships and capable of building the environs; (2) developing empowerment of groups of teenagers/youths so that they can act as social agents in transmitting the values of peace or social harmony. Thus, basically the efforts to build personal awareness run simultaneously with efforts to build group awareness.

Once the positive attitude and commitment were awakened, the boundaries between groups started to be broken through trainings of “talent development” in the target groups. Within this context, there were three main trainings offered, namely: music, dance and stencil art. The choice of the type of training was based on their

needs as well as their potentials, namely music as several members of the group were street musicians, dance/theatre to transform the habit of hanging out into a focused activity that also diverted their negative energy into positive energy. Stencil art accommodated youths who enjoy graffiti. Through these three activities, it was expected to fulfil the practical purpose of giving knowledge as well as honing the skills of the youths of Johar Baru. However, the strategic objective at the personal level was to strengthen self-confidence, which in turn could build a positive recognition of the social environment (including the family) based on the productive activities. At the group level, training activities were expected to instill the values of social harmony and erode the culture of conflict.

In an effort to build 'social harmony', the most important element of the stage of 'developing talent/potential' was cross-group and cross-region activities. This means that these activities are "cross-cutting activities", by assigning holding type of training in different subdistricts, so the participants were encouraged to choose the training based on their personal interests, even if the training was done in another location. As examples, the music training was held on Monday evening in Johar Baru village hall. Participants from two other subdistricts (Kampung Rawa and Tanah Tinggi), if interested in music, were encouraged to go to Johar Baru. The dance training was held in Tanah Tinggi, and stencil art in Kampung Rawa.

The distribution of the location of activities was expected to dilute the exclusive 'in-group' attitude of each group, as well as conditioning the youths to be 'inclusive', even able to behave positively so as to build quality social relationships that transcend boundaries between groups and regions. At this point the social harmonisation process is done, and one of the observable outputs is a decline in the frequency of conflict. In other terms, according to Kriesberg (1998), there is a constructive de-escalation of conflict.

5. Conclusion: The Transformation of Johar Baru and Critical Reflection

The stage of "developing talent/potential", referring to Fisher et al.'s conception (2001:9) on conflict transformation, is a part of a short-term strategy, which is focused on practical needs but also becoming the strategic pillar to build medium term and long term commitments. Meanwhile, referring to Wirutomo (2013), the skills training activities reflect the cultural dimension of social processes (interaction patterns and social relations), due to the attempt to internalise norms and values of togetherness,

cooperation, and harmony. It is explicitly stated that the development of culture needs to distinguish the stage of institutionalisation and the stage of social process. Institutionalisation (objectification) is done through formulation of vision, mission, policies, legislation to formal implementation). The stage of social process is one in which the values of social harmony are socialised (implanted), negotiated, discoursed, and internalised. It is hoped that when values are ingrained, they will develop new and positive attitudes and behaviour that become a tradition, even becoming a new habitus.

The efforts of conflict transformation, with the format of "transforming violence culture into productive culture", structurally, are made directly by building the cultural element (system of values, norms, art, urban traditions), and indirectly i.e. through the construction of facilities (economic and physical) that sustain cultural change (youth centres, artistic creativity centres, parks for the development of the public sphere to economic development that is pro-poor, more empowering, more inclusive, etc.). In short, the transformation can be done through a variety of fields, but should essentially instill values that are more emancipatory and inclusive. In the structural context, organizational strengthening (awareness and organizational skills) needs to be built, with emphasis on the principle of social harmony. Intense and participatory mentoring is required. Reflecting on the efforts in Johar Baru, the main note is regarding "money", which is considered as the primary resource to get out of the crush of the structure. This idea should be avoided. (Money is often regarded as the crucial economic capital in empowering the poor/marginalized. In the poor community itself, there is the notion that money could resolve their problems/issues. The middle class is seen as a source of "money". Due to their experience with "artificial" government programs, residents feel that they do not need ideas or companion programs from the outside. Most of them, including the RT/RW, think that the solution is simple: provide economic capital (money), then every issue can be overcome) This means that efforts to make the changes cannot be done instantly, by relying on materials (money) and having a formalistic nature. According to Darmayanti et al. (2012), the lives of youths in need to be studied and understood as a reflection. Thus, there is a need for structural facilities (in order to avoid exclusion). Clearly the problem is not just poverty, but persistent exclusion they experience, generating a form of negotiation in the public space in the form of conflict without a clear motive. The transformation of conflict culture into a productive culture puts the fulfilment of practical needs (training of talent development) more as a 'tool' (instrument). The practical dimension is also evident from the opening of economic opportunities as they hone their skills and creativity. In this context,

the activities in Johar Baru support direct or indirect government policies regarding the creative economy, namely economic activities that come from the creativity of individuals, where their talents and skills are developed and creating value, including economic value (employment creation, income generation, etc.). Through creative economy, the availability of human resources in large quantities can be transformed into creative people who will create significant added value to the natural and cultural resources. Large populations, especially the middle class, whose ranks are rising, are a significant market for creative work market in the country.

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