An Analysis of the Organizational Structures of New Types of Children's Associations in Relation to Changing Views of Children's Capacities as Citizens

Bijan Kimiagar

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AN ANALYSIS OF THE ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES OF NEW TYPES OF CHILDREN’S ASSOCIATIONS IN RELATION TO CHANGING VIEWS OF CHILDREN’S CAPACITIES AS CITIZENS

by

BIJAN KIMIAGAR

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Psychology in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York

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(See Appendix A)
This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Psychology to satisfy the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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Abstract

AN ANALYSIS OF THE ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES OF NEW TYPES OF CHILDREN’S ASSOCIATIONS IN RELATION TO CHANGING VIEWS OF CHILDREN’S CAPACITIES AS CITIZENS

by

BIJAN KIMIAGAR

Adviser: Professor Roger Hart

The goal of this study is to learn how new types of children’s associations around the world are organizing themselves and how their organizational structures reflect contemporary understandings of children’s capacities as citizens. The purpose is to identify different types and qualities of participatory children’s associations and how each affords opportunities for children to exercise their right to freedom of association, develop capacities for self-governance in groups, and promote the principles of inclusion (non-discrimination) and equity (fairness). To this end, I document and analyze diagrams of organizational structures that members of different children’s associations created during the Article 15 Project capacity-building workshops around the world, which were coordinated in collaboration with child-centered community development agencies. I supplement this analysis with data from my own observations of how participants created their diagrams, as well as participants’ video-recorded explanations of their diagrams, which I collected in my role as a workshop facilitator. One outcome of this research is a typology of the organizational structures of new types of children’s associations that can inform future research on the potential for children’s associations to support children’s capacities to participate in the governance of issues affecting their lives. Another outcome of this research is a list of strategies different children’s associations use to become more inclusive and equitable in regard to age, gender, and other
social demographics. This list of strategies may be of interest to current members of children’s associations and adults who support them. The findings also respond to the need for scholarship in childhood studies to develop theoretical frameworks that transform conceptual dichotomies in the study of children, such as childhood as a state of being versus becoming, into spectrums that attend to the complexities and interplay of such oppositions.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Finally, I am grateful for my partner, Leigh Shebanie McCallen. Your love, wit, and intellect made graduate school a more joyous, humorous, and thoughtful experience.
DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to all the participants in the Article 15 Project workshops.

Your contributions made this research possible. Thank you.
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Overview of the Research

The goal of this dissertation research is to learn how new types of children’s associations around the world are organizing themselves and how their organizational structures reflect new understandings of children’s capacities as citizens. The purpose is to identify how different types and qualities of participatory children’s associations afford opportunities for children to exercise their right to freedom of association, develop capacities for self-governance in groups, and promote the principles of inclusion (non-discrimination) and equity (fairness). In order to achieve this goal, I documented and analyzed organizational structure diagrams that members of different children’s associations created during the Article 15 Project capacity-building workshops coordinated in collaboration with child-centered community development agencies. I supplemented my analysis of the diagrams with data from my own observations of how participants created their diagrams, as well as video recordings of participants’ explanations of their diagrams. One outcome of this research is a typology of the organizational structures of new types of children’s associations that might inform future research on children’s associations. Another outcome is a list of strategies that different children’s associations have used to become more inclusive and equitable. This list of strategies may be of interest to current members of children’s associations and adults who support them.

1 Below, I define the terms children’s association and children’s membership group. I use the term children to describe all persons up to 18 years of age, which mirrors the definition of children in the United Nation Convention of the Rights of the Child.

2 These data come from the Article 15 Project database. In Chapter 4, I provide details about the Article 15 Project, a research and development collaboration established in 2011 between Save the Children, World Vision International, UNICEF, Plan International, Childwatch International and coordinated by the Children’s Environments Research Group. It focuses on Article 15 of the Convention on the Rights of Child—children’s right to freedom association and peaceful assembly.
The State of Research on Children’s Associations

There is a need for research on children’s associations in order to better understand how they affect the fulfilment of children’s rights. While scholars, child-centered community development agencies, and local governments recognize the value of children’s associations (Cox, 2009; Protacio-de Castro et al., 2007; Rajbhandary, Hart, & Khatiwada, 1999; Theis & O’Kane, 2005), there has been remarkably little research on how these groups function. It has been argued children’s associations are valuable settings for children to come together to organize their own activities and, in the process, exercise and develop their competencies and capacities for participating in the democratic governance of their communities (Chawla & Heft, 2002; Hart, 2014; Hart et al., 1997; Kimiagar & Hart, In press). Such groups may also serve as potentially valuable settings for addressing both local and global issues of social and environmental justice (Hart, Fisher, & Kimiagar, 2014).

If these settings help children form new kinds of relationships with one another as citizens, they offer a fuller understanding of how democratic society might be reproduced.

To date, a systematic comparison of the organizational structures of a wide range of children’s associations has not been undertaken, though examples of relevant research exist. Roger Hart and colleagues (2003) examined the organizational structures of child rights clubs throughout Nepal. This work guided development of the data collection methods in the current research. Also working with Nepali child rights clubs, Joachim Theis and Claire O’Kane (2005) provided insights into the organizational structures by attending to how the clubs networked with one another through their relationships with child-

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3 A summary and recommendations from this study are available online (see Rajbhandary, Hart, & Khatiwada, 1999; cergnyc.org/archives/2919). A full report of this research was published by Save the Children Norway in 2002 and is currently out of print. Hart and colleagues (2002) also produced a film based on this research, Mirrors of Ourselves, which is also available on the Children’s Environments Research Group website, cergnyc.org/archives/2193.
centered community development agencies. In another study about activist youth in North and South America, Jessica Taft (2010a) spoke with 75 young women about their experiences organizing social change movements. Her study, in part, examined participants’ attitudes about different organizational models for deliberative democratic processes, as well as related concepts of leadership and internal power dynamics of groups. The accounts provide useful insights into the young women’s thoughts about the organizational roles and structures of groups, such as preferences for horizontal versus vertical organizational structures, which I refer to in this study as collaborative and hierarchical structures, respectively.

There is a rich literature on models of children’s participation in projects and community decision-making that provides an arena for the current discussion of the organizational structures of children’s associations. In fact, Karsten (2012) compiled three dozen models of children and youth participation in different activities. Karsten’s collection spanned over four decades of scholarship and even included models on children and youth’s participation via the internet (e.g., Arnstein, 1969; Davies, Bhullar, & Dowty, 2011; Francis & Lorenzo, 2002; Gaventa, 2006; Hart, 1992; Shier, 2001). Despite this wealth of scholarship, there remains no critical comparison of the organizational structures and governance processes of a diverse range of participatory children’s associations. This is surprising given the emergence and proliferation of different types of children’s associations throughout the last century (see Macleod, 1987) and, in particular, the growing number of new types of children’s rights associations in many countries around the world that are the focus of this study (see UNICEF et al., 2012).

The lack of research in this area is significant because the different types of children’s associations suggest they may employ a range of organizational structures—that is, how members of children’s associations make group decisions, elect members to
specific roles, maintain membership, and negotiate power dynamics within the group.

Previous research has examined particular settings within the spectrum of types of children’s associations, including studies on youth councils (Matthews, 2001; Taft & Gordon, 2013), street-connected children and working children’s unions (Liebel, 2012c; O’Kane, 2003; Stephenson, 2001; Taft, 2014; White, 2002), scouting movements (Jordan, 2012; Lewin, 1947; Macleod, 1987; Mills, 2014; Morris, 1970), and youth development organizations (Sabo, 1999). This dissertation aimed to (1) examine the organizational structures of a range of types children’s associations in order to describe the landscape of how children organize in different settings, and (2) create a terminology and theoretical framework that might serve as the foundation for future empirical research on this topic.

Beyond literature on children’s participation in projects and community decision-making (e.g., Hart, 1997), there are overlapping areas of scholarship that informed development of the typology of the organizational structures of children’s associations. One area addresses how popular views of children’s capacities to enact their citizenship have changed over time (e.g., Macleod, 1987; Pearse & Stiefel, 1979; Walker, 1970).

Another compares and evaluates citizenship education programs (e.g., Crick, 2005; Davies, 2006; Hicks & Holden, 2007; McDonough & Feinberg, 2005). Yet another operationalizes children’s citizenship through daily patterns of civic engagement (e.g., James, 2011; Torney-Purta & Amadeo, 2011; Youniss, Barber, & Billen, 2013). There is also literature on children’s rights (e.g., Bartlett, Hart, Satterthwaite, de la Barra, & Missair, 1999; Covell & Howe, 2001; Ennew, 2003; Hart, 2014; Howe & Covell, 2005; Pearse & Stiefel, 1979; Peterson-Badali & Ruck, 2008), as well as the role of child and youth organizations in the positive transformation of social and environmental injustices (e.g., Hung, 2004, 2010). In recent years, research in these areas have started to converge (Earls, 2011).
A parallel area of scholarship focuses on children’s evolving capacities for self-governance. This literature considers at least four points of inquiry: (a) how children organize themselves in terms of gender, age, race and class (e.g., Rivlin & Wolfe, 1985; Thorne, 1993); (b) how children develop friendships and peer culture (e.g., Corsaro, 2003, 1985, 1992, 1993); (c) how children cooperate and compete among peers in academic settings (e.g., Harwood, 1995; Hertz-Lazarovits & Miller, 1992); and (d) how group-level differences influence the social dynamics of children’s groups (e.g., Lewin, Lippitt, & White, 1939; Lewin & Lippitt, 1938; Sherif, Harvey, White, Hood, & Sherif, 1961). I review some of these literatures in Chapters 2 and 3 to better understand the potential for varying children’s associations to support members’ capacities for self-governance in groups. It may be that differing qualities and degrees of support for children to govern themselves reflect differing perspectives of children’s capacities as citizens.

What are Children’s Associations?

There are innumerable settings where children come together to manage their own activities in various degrees of spontaneity, adult involvement, and self-management. In this research, I analyzed the organizational structures of children’s associations, which are a subset of settings along the spectrum of children’s groups (see Figure 1.1). I define a children’s association as a collective of people who are generally younger than 18 years of age and engage in regular, cooperative group work, often in partnership with adults, and governed by a set of organizational structure components, strategies, and decision-making

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4 For the purpose of this dissertation, self-governance and self-management, as well as self-organization, are used interchangeably. However, while very similar, these terms are not identical and each of them terms may be more or less appropriate when describing the purpose of a group’s autonomous behaviors, such as when a group interfaces with other organizations (self-governance), when describing the daily patterns of communication and decision-making (self-management), or in relation to collective actions (self-organization).
processes. This definition includes group members who are teenagers and are sometimes referred to as youth (United Nations Development Programme, 2014, p. 74).

In this dissertation, I use the terms *children’s association* and *children’s membership group* interchangeably. They are synonymous. I also use the term *children’s membership organization* for very large children’s associations with hundreds of individual members, as well as collaborations among multiple children’s associations across geographies and scales of governance, including community-based, municipal, national, regional, global, and even online networks of children’s membership groups.

Children’s associations, children’s membership groups, and children’s membership organizations are umbrella terms for a range of groups, including: child societies, child rights clubs, children’s movements, and city and school councils run by and for children. Some scholars use other terms to emphasize a group’s function or membership, such as children’s autonomous organizations (Johnson, 2009) or working children’s unions (Liebel, 2003). *Children’s clubs* is also a common term in some parts of the world to describe a children’s association that engages in a range of activities and issues relevant to children’s lives, including improving the environments of schools or communities, preventing abuse against children, and organizing artistic, academic, or sporting events (Theis & O’Kane, 2005). Many of these clubs are supported by local or international child-centered community development agencies, including all of the children’s rights clubs included in this study. It is possible these adult-led organizations helped spread the use of these terms.\(^5\)

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\(^5\) I make this claim based on my experiences working with members of children’s associations and reading the gray literature that international child-centered development agencies produce about the children’s associations they support.
There are, of course, many ways children organize themselves and in partnership with adults. It is important to acknowledge the diversity of organizational structures even within specific types of children’s membership groups because every group has its own perspectives on how to organize. For example, Jessica Taft and Hava Gordon (2013) found that some activist youth in the United States were critical of youth councils because such groups promoted exclusionary forms of young people’s participation in decision-making. The youth in their study felt many youth councils were hierarchical and reified existing power imbalances, including adults’ control over young people and catering only to elite youth with greater political power. Other examples from research on street-connected children display the diversity of organizational structures within group types. Svetlana Stephenson (2001) described how street-connected children in Moscow, Russia, created intimate ‘families’ who banded together for protection, while Henk van Beers (1996) reported an example of how street-connected children in Manila, the Philippines, organized a system to warn other child and adult street vendors when police officers would conduct
raids to confiscate goods. This last example of children and adults cooperating is a form of self-organization, but it is unclear if this system had stable patterns of shared decision-making. Examples of such spontaneous organization inform the current investigation, but I focused my analysis on groups with relatively stable patterns of decision-making. In any case, the variety of ways young people organize themselves seems rich.

The Role of Adults in Children’s Associations

Children’s associations often include adult supporters or partnerships with adults and adult-managed organizations, including all of the children’s associations that participated in this study. Although Figure 1.1 diagrammatically excludes child-managed groups that operate without adult involvement in a collaborative and sustained manner from the category of children’s associations, there are surely examples of children’s groups fitting my definition of children’s associations that operate autonomously from adult influence. Figure 1.1 is an entry point into a discussion about the diverse types of children’s groups and associations rather than a standalone tool for discreet categorization of children’s groups. As an entry point, it makes an implicit argument that all children’s associations involve adults. Based on my review of the literature and my experience working with groups through the Article 15 Project, children’s associations that are autonomously managed without any adult influence are less common. There may be a number of possible reasons for this.

There are few opportunities for children to come together without any adult influence. Some children’s associations have formed organically through finding one another and meeting in public places like parks, such as young domestic workers (Balanon et al., 2003, p. 73). Invariably, adults ‘discover’ these groups and some offer support. Anecdotes from participants in the Article 15 Project workshops cite adults who provided a
meeting room, play equipment, or even materials and food for the children’s regular meetings. These supportive adults may not have much or any influence initially in the decisions of the group, but a more inclusive view of the organizational structures of children’s associations would suggest these adults do have an important role in the functioning of the group.

My choice to highlight the role of adults in children’s associations stems from my view that children’s self-governance in groups occurs within a larger societal context inevitably dominated by adults controlling the physical and social spaces in children’s lives. This is also true for children’s peer groups in which adults control the time and place where children can develop friendships with one another. However, the majority of children’s associations I am interested in studying often address a public discourse on social, environmental, and economic issues that affect both adults and children. With this perspective in mind, the role of adults is significant when differentiating children’s associations from children’s peer groups and friendship groups because partnerships between children and adults are not just inevitable, they are a necessary component to building a public discourse and movement. Further, adults who maintain relationships with a group of children over time may function as a form of institutional memory as children age out of the group, and they may also help group members become more self-organized and sustainable.

The Need to Focus This Research on Children Rather Than Youth

In line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC, United Nations General Assembly, 1989), I use the term children to highlight that fact that the majority of members in many of these associations are younger than 18 years of age. I also use the term children intentionally to bolster discussion of younger children’s capacities for
democratic self-governance, which is largely ignored in the literature on young people’s civic engagement and in policies because of a tendency, especially in United States, to perceive only youth as having capacities to organize themselves or participate in deliberative processes. For example, a recent policy change in New York City reduced the minimum age for participation in community boards from 18 to 16 years-of-age (New York City Council Committee on Governmental Operations, 2014). Some researchers have argued, appropriately, that 16 and 17 year-olds have the capacities to participate in local and national elections (Bhatti & Hansen, 2012; Hart & Atkins, 2011). There are also scholars who argue children much younger than 16 years-of-age also have the right to some form of enfranchisement (Olsson, 2008) or at least political representation (Wall, 2012). There remains a need for inquiry on younger children’s evolving capacities as citizens and participation in deliberative democratic processes.

As I argue above, scholarship on young people’s civic engagement internationally and in the United States tends to focus more on youth civic engagement (see Sherrod, Torney-Purta, & Flanagan, 2010) and typically does not include young children’s civic engagement. This largely ignores millions of children younger than the age of majority who come together with other children and adults to address both personal and civic issues. This dissertation aims to demystify children’s associations and their potential to make meaningful contributions to civic life. In order to accomplish this aim, I highlight the various roles and organizational process in which even young children participate. I hope to share these and other findings with children’s associations, as well as the adults and organizations that support them, in order to provide these groups a sounding board for their critical reflections on their organizational practices.
An Overview of This Dissertation

Following a review of relevant literature in Chapters 2 and 3, I document the history of the Article 15 Project and its activities in Chapter 4. Then, in Chapter 5 (Research Questions and Methodology), I provide a detailed description of the analytical framework I developed to examine data from the Article 15 Project. I share the preliminary typology of organizational structures of children’s associations in Chapter 6 (Findings). In Chapter 7 (Discussion), I discuss the implications these findings might have in terms of existing theoretical debates in childhood studies, as well as the practical considerations for children’s self-governance in their own associations.
CHAPTER II

PERSPECTIVES ON CHILDREN'S CITIZENSHIP

Changing Perspectives on Children's Citizenship

There has been a dramatic shift in perspectives on children’s capacities as citizens over the last century. The framework of children’s rights, which gained popularity in the late 20th century, has ushered a view that children are full citizens from birth. This is a shift from the perspective common in both the early and late 20th century that children must be educated in and practice becoming citizens (see James, 2011). The ratification of United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child by all state parties of the United Nations General Assembly, except the United States, also implies this shift. Also, specific articles of the Convention, such as Article 15—children’s right to freedom of association and peaceful assembly—deepened the discussion on children’s capacities to participate in decision-making and governance of their own groups (Ennew, 1995; Hart, 2014; Liebel, 2012; O’Kane, 2003; Taylor & Smith, 2009). It is useful, then, to trace views on children’s capacities as citizens throughout the last 100 years alongside the emergence of different children’s associations during the same time period.

Children’s Membership Groups in the Early 20th Century

Children’s membership groups that formed in the early 20th century, such as the Young Men’s Christian Associations (YMCAs) and the Boys Scouts of America (BSA) and elsewhere, were typically ‘character-building’ programs geared toward middle class children and promoted social reproduction of middle-class values (Macleod, 1987). These organizations have had long histories and, therefore, practices of individual chapters have

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varied widely. Literature on the Boy Scouts offers examples of how competing views of children’s citizenship influenced the organizational structure and programming of children’s membership organizations. Ernest Thompson Seton, the BSA’s first Chief Scout, advocated promotion of “out-of-door life and woodcraft, the preservation of wildlife and landscape, and the good fellowship among its members” (as cited in Morris, 1970). These intentions differed from those of Sir Robert Baden-Powell, another founder of scouting. Scholars have argued that Baden-Powell’s focus was either on patriotic citizenship or preparing boys for military service (Morris, 1970; Springhall, 1987). These differences, either between the two men or between interpretations of Baden-Powell’s intentions, illustrate the type of debates on views of children as citizens during the early 20th century in the United States and Europe, and especially on how children should be ‘good’ citizens.

H.W. Koch (2000) offers an example of the difficulties defining ‘good’ citizenship in childhood. Koch documented the Hitlerjugend (Hitler Youth) movement and its origin from the complex political ecology in Europe after the First World War. Alongside political and economic restructuring, the social construction of ‘youth’ as a demographic category played an important role in the Hitler Youth movement. Koch noted that while there have been youth movements in the past, the Hitler Youth movement was particularly significant and troubling because of how it grew from the notion of Volk—patriotism that romanticized German culture and history. Young people disaffected by the diminished economic opportunities in their conquered country formed associations to assert their citizenship and became fierce promoters of Volk. The Hitler Youth may have been seen as ‘good’ citizens to some Germans, but definitely not to all persons both in and outside of Germany. Robert

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7 The goal of this dissertation is to survey dominant perspectives on children’s citizenship among a diverse sample of children’s organizations. It is unlikely and unnecessary to capture the full range of perspectives, since a significant historical literature exists for each organization.
Coles (1964) cited similar movements in Italy and France during the late 19th century in which young people “were forming rebellious vanguard of spreading nationalism.” (p. 323) These movements should not be placed in the same category at the Hitler Youth, but their origins share common conditions across different cultural-historical contexts. Both Koch and Coles related the emergence of these movements to the development of ‘childhood’ and ‘youth’ as new concepts in human development and the idea that children and youth are a new class of citizenry.

At the beginning of the 20th century, other industrialized countries such as the United Kingdom and the United States of America confronted the question of what to do about the problem of idle youth. Stanley Hall’s promotions of the concept of adolescence was part of broader changes in childrearing practices, economic planning and concerns, and youth schooling and employment (Macleod, 1987; Morris, 1970). Hall (1916) conceptualized adolescence in stages similar civilizations moving from primitive to modern. This conceptualization is flawed (Morris, 1970), and it is not useful to the current discussion on views of childhood citizenship. However, the broader concept of adolescence remains a permanent fixture in scholarship on human development and in other fields.

A similar discourse exists today about what do to about idle youth. The issues of the youth population bulge and youth unemployment are core agenda items for the United Nations and national governments around the world (Mendoza, Komarecki, & Murthy, 2013; UNICEF, 2012a). The discourse on youth unemployment focuses on persons from an older age range not of central concern in the present investigation, but scholars have addressed related topics that are of central concern to unpacking perspectives of children’s citizenship, including, *inter alia*: (a) marginalization of youth to the physical and social peripheries of society (Camino & Zeldin, 2002; Zako, 2009), (b) surveillance of and discriminatory policing tactics toward young people (Ruck, Harris, Fine, & Freudenberg,
2008; Stoudt, Fine, & Fox, 2011), and (c) the need for new opportunities for young people’s civic engagement (Camino & Zeldin, 2002; Gall, 2014; Hayward, 2012a; Youniss et al., 2013). Collectively, this literature identifies a tension in perspectives of young people’s citizenship, namely, whether people are full citizens from birth or they must be educated, either by systems of schooling or criminal justice, in the behaviors of ‘good’ citizenship.

The Children’s Rights Movement: Promoting Citizenship that Begins at Birth

In order to understand how different groups of children and adults have dealt with the balance of decision-making power in their groups and how it relates to perspectives on children’s citizenship, it is necessary to examine a range of different types of children’s membership groups formed before and after significant milestones in the evolution of thinking on children’s capacities as citizens across the past 100 years. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989; CRC) is likely the most significant milestone.

The children’s rights framework that emerged in the early 20th century and took stronger hold by the 1980s supports the view that children are full citizens from birth and entitled to a greater number of rights promoted and protected under the CRC. Drafters of the CRC expanded on two non-binding declarations: the Geneva Declaration of Child Rights (League of Nations, 1924) and the Universal Declaration of the Rights of the Child (United Nations, 1959). The Moscow Declaration (1918) is an even earlier precursor document that outlined children’s rights, but has received little attention, perhaps because of the socio-political context in which it was written (Liebel, 2012b, 2016). Regardless, it is a meaningful contribution to current debates of children’s rights and to this dissertation research because it states that children have the same right as adults to form associations.

The current version of the CRC leaves many questions about its implementation in specific contexts unanswered. This seems appropriate to some degree. As a universal
treaty, it would be too cumbersome, if not impossible, to prescribe procedures for all local contexts. The gap is necessary to make the treaty legally applicable to many countries, but it must be fulfilled with developmentally appropriate approaches and detailed monitoring and evaluation strategies in each context (Daiute, 2008; Hodgkin & Newell, 1998; Lansdown, 2005). One approach to fulfilling children’s rights has been the creation or support of children’s rights clubs. Some of these clubs have had rich histories in some parts of the world, especially in Majority World countries (e.g., Chigunta, 2005; UNICEF, 2012b).

**Working and Street-connected Children’s Unions**

Prior to and in the wake of the CRC, new types of children’s associations began to emerge around the world. During the 1970s and 1980s, a progressive movement of organized working children started to address concerns about the welfare of children connected to the streets (Chacaltana, 2000; Liebel, 2003). Working children’s associations or working children’s unions, as they are named in some places in the world, were a new setting where children could come together as a group to collectively address the exploitative conditions they faced even from people who were supposed to protect them, such as police (Balagopalan, 2012). The working and street-connected children’s movements that have existed in Africa, Latin America and South Asia have promoted the human rights of children even in the absence of the CRC. Groups of street-connected children and working children’s unions were answers to social and environmental needs unmet by local governments and authorities, and promoted the perspective that children are citizens and have the right to participate as full members of society, including knowing and enacting their rights (Hart, 2014, 1992, 1997; Liebel, 2003; O’Kane, 2003; White, 2002). These types of self-managed children’s groups have operated with the support of adults,
with rare exception; and they operated both in the absence and existence of government-run social welfare programs.

**Other Progressive Movements Promoting Children’s Self-governance**

The *protagonista* (protagonist) movement (Cussiánovich & Márquez, 2002; Cussiánovich Villarán & Martínez Muñoz, 2014) and *Escuela Nueva* (New School) movement (Forero-Pineda & Escobar-Rodríguez, 2006; Hart, 1997) in South America, and the proliferation of school and neighborhood children and youth councils in Europe and elsewhere (Agud, 2014; Baginsky & Hannam, 1999; O’Connor, 2013; l’Anson, 2013; Matthews, 2001; Novella, Agud, Llena, & Trilla, 2013; Trilla & Novella, 2011) offer additional contexts to document and understand changes in the opportunities children have to act as citizens. There are also well known examples of ‘democratic’ schooling, sometimes called *alternative schools*, which provide additional settings to examine changing views of children’s capacities to manage themselves. Some notable examples of democratic schools are the Summerhill School (Neill, 1960), the Tokyo Free School movement, and the Brooklyn Free School, which modeled itself on Summerhill. It is difficult to fully address in this dissertation the democratic school movement and other settings where children come together to organize themselves. Some of these settings are not children’s membership groups by my definition; however, they offer much in terms of the breadth of understanding how children manage themselves in partnership with adults. Most notably, they offer evidence of settings where children have more opportunities for self-determination than in more mainstream educational settings or political processes. Democratic schools and child and youth councils lean toward the perspective that children are citizens today and need not wait until they reach the age of majority in order to have their opinions heard and considered in matters that affect their lives.
The children’s membership groups included in the review above are a fraction of the possible examples that could illustrate changing views of children’s capacities as citizens across the last century. I focused on specific groups, such as the Boy Scouts and working children’s movements, because of the availability of scholarship on these settings. A more in-depth historical review would likely generate additional examples that would be relevant to the important and growing field of childhood studies. In fact, scholars situated within this interdisciplinary field may likely have contributed additional examples that could be included in a future literature review on this topic.

**Theoretical Discussions on Children’s Capacities as Citizens**

Scholarship on children’s citizenship is growing with useful theoretical frameworks and concepts about childhood citizenship (e.g., Alderson, 2001; Bacon & Frankel, 2014; Cockburn, 2012; James, 2011; Lister, 2006; Milne, 2013; Wall, 2012). Milne (2013) compiled what is perhaps the most inclusive recent text on the topic, which builds on scholarship that he and colleagues have produced over the last decade (e.g., Invernizzi & Milne, 2005; Invernizzi & Williams, 2007). At the core of the debate on children’s citizenship are legal questions about how to define citizenship during childhood, especially since citizenship guarantees certain rights, entitlements, and responsibilities that young children may not yet have the capacities to enjoy or fulfill. There are also examples of scholarship that provide theoretical frameworks focused on child-centered definitions of citizenship. Below, I review a number of these frameworks and conclude this chapter on perspectives of children’s citizenship with the framework I find most useful—that children are simultaneously citizens in the present and becoming citizens (see James, 2011).

**Educating children to become ‘good’ citizens.** The stated purpose of some of the children’s associations reviewed earlier, such as the Boys Scouts, was to educate young
people as good citizens (Mills, 2013). Education for good citizenship is complex because citizenship is multi-faceted and different curricula promote conflicting perspectives of what good citizenship looks like in children’s lives (Davies, 2006; Deuchar & Bhopal, 2013; Devine, 2002a). Citizenship education in schools may take the form of civics education, but also as a hidden curriculum of social control that is reinforced in multiple aspects of school life, including disciplinary practices (Giroux & Penna, 1979). Some authors have argued that citizenship education should be liberating and that educating children as good citizens means educating young people to be critical thinkers who will stand up to different social, environmental and economic injustices (Berman, 1997; Hayward, 2012b). Bernard Crick (2005) argued, “Good citizens will obey the law, but will seek to change it by legal means if they think it bad, or even if they think it could be better” (p. 6, italics in original). The act of transforming laws and social norms broadens the concept of citizenship from the notion of a ‘subject’ of a state—a person who merely obeys the rule of law. This definition works well with other scholars’ frameworks for young people’s participation in different levels of governance as either systems maintaining or systems transforming participation (Pearse & Stiefel, 1979). However, the limitation of transformation ‘by legal means’ does not account for the complexities and nuances of what social transformation looks like in specific cultural and historical contexts. In general, children have relatively few if any provisions in legal systems to make meaningful change.

**Children’s self-governance.** Regardless of the existence or absence of government-run social welfare programs, there are examples of groups of children and adults who solve acute and chronic social, economic, and environmental problems without support from governments (Hart, Fisher, & Kimiagar, 2014). This notion of self-governance is found in different areas of literature, in particular Colin Ward’s theory of spontaneous order, which he described as the following:
Given a common need, a collection of people will, by trial and error, by improvisation and experiment, evolve order out of a situation—this order being more durable and more closely related to their needs than any kind of externally imposed authority could provide. (Ward, 1973, p. 39)

This is a theory of citizenship rooted in an anarchist perspective. The children’s associations in many Majority World countries operating within a children’s rights framework are examples of the theory of spontaneous order put into practice. It is within the children’s associations that children identify, discuss, evaluate and address their needs, such as improving living conditions, reducing instances of physical, emotional or sexual abuse, or increasing access to educational or economic opportunities.\(^8\)

Ward’s concept of an “externally imposed authority” is worth unpacking further, especially in relation to the framework of children’s rights that I discuss above. In a children’s rights framework, the primary locus of authority is the family and, specifically, a child’s parents, biological or otherwise. For example, parents are often in control of whether or not their children are allowed to attend children’s association meetings and activities.\(^9\) Governments also play an integral role as an authority that guarantees entitlements, including children’s freedom of assembly and right to form groups. For Ward, the imposed authority might take many forms, whether it be a school master or local government officials or agencies. This concept of authority is important here because it points to how an individual or organization’s support for children to self-organize may change based on the perspective of children’s citizenship espoused. For example, teachers

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\(^8\) Throughout my fieldwork with children’s associations, I have learned that child rights clubs address a wide range of needs, include the need to play games and sports, access to computers and the Internet, educational opportunities, and even having a voice on issues that affect them in their community, either through having a direct voice or via representatives.

\(^9\) This is a topic that arose regularly during my discussions with members of children’s associations.
sponsoring a school’s environmental children’s club may promote a perspective that
children in the club must be educated to become ‘good’ citizens and may stress children’s
involvement in resolving environmental problems that teachers predetermine are important
to resolve. Whereas adult supporters of an environmental children’s club with stronger ties
to the view that children are already full citizens may allow and even insist that children
identify the environmental issues the children themselves believe are most pressing. This
difference in the locus of authority is critical to determining the democratic potentials of
children’s participation in decisions that affect their lives (Hart, 1992, 1997).

I would also describe this imposed authority more generally as power, and power
manifests itself in many different ways. Manfred Libel (2012c) provided the example of a
working children’s union in Bangladesh which had matured to the point to that the child
members demanded from their adult supporters that they also have control of the finances
of the group. These types of situations remain prominent in debates about how children
and adults collaboratively manage children’s membership groups (e.g., Bhima Sangha and
the Makkala Panchayats, 2003; Karkara, 2002; O’Kane, 2003; Pal, 2008; Save the Children,
2006). These situations suggest that the child members of these groups had developed
capacities for self-governance.

**Citizenship as political representation.** John Wall (2011) presents a theoretical
framework that summarizes changing views of children’s citizenship within discussion
about the political representation of children that I find relevant to the current research.
Specifically, Wall traced the idea of citizenship in childhood across three models: (1)
citizenship as agency, (2) citizenship as interdependence, and (3) citizenship as difference.
The model of children’s *citizenship as agency* suggests that children are “just as capable of
actively participating in political life as are adults” (Wall, 2012, p. 90). Wall argued that this
perspective is made “visible” in the participation articles of the CRC, such as Article 15, as
well as children who participate in decision-making processes of mainly adult-led organizations. Since there are potential differences in the qualities of children and adults’ participation in the governance of adult-led organizations, children’s citizenship is also defined in relationship to adult citizenship. Wall called this model *citizenship as interdependence* and highlighted that both children and adults are part of a dynamic process of defining citizenship in relation to one another. However, as I discussed above, children and adults have differential power in groups. Therefore, it may be that citizenship cannot be defined relationally among different generations because it will likely maintain the power of adults. In the third model, *citizenship as difference*, the issue of unequal access to power is key and must be redressed in ways that specifically account for power inequities. I explain more below.

The difference between *citizenship as agency* and *citizenship as difference* may be analogous to the difference between the concepts of equality and equity. Whereas the concept of equality in political representation suggests that everyone should receive the same level of representation, the concept of equity suggests that children should receive even more support because they have been marginalized from political processes historically. The same analogy cannot be used to explain the relationship between citizenship as interdependence and *citizenship as difference*. While the model of *citizenship as interdependence* accounts for both children and adults learning how to be citizens, this process for children is not congruent with the process for adults because adults will always have more experience to draw from. Any of these three models that Wall described may be used to theorize children’s citizenship. It is the practical application of the theoretical framework in a specific context that may illustrate the benefits and drawbacks of each.

**Citizenship in a life-world.** There is another component of the debate on childhood citizenship that addresses the practical implications of children’s citizenship, namely,
whether or not childhood citizenship is distinct from adult citizenship, and whether children have distinct views about citizenship. Marc Jans (2004) has argued for a binary perspective on children’s citizenship which includes (1) a systems perspective that children citizenship is part of a well-functioning society, and (2) a life-world perspective that children participate in learning active citizenship through education on specific social and environmental challenges that connect with children’s interests and capacities. For Jans, the life-world perspective is more ‘meaningful’ for linking citizenship and childhood. I disagree because the systems and life-world perspectives need not be mutually exclusive. I see children’s citizenship as both integral to forming a well-functioning society and promoted through learning processes that relate to children’s lives in meaningful ways. Leaving this debate aside for the moment, Jans did touch on a separate dichotomy that is of central concern to this dissertation research: Are children becoming citizens or are children full citizens? Describing the systems perspective Jans wrote, “Some well-meant initiatives like child councils, often become training grounds for children, who, due to their lack of political rights, cannot fully participate.” (Jans, 2004, p. 31) In favor of the life-world perspective, Jan argued, “Children, for example, are strikingly sensitive about global social themes like the environmental and peace […]. This sensibility of children is mainly considered as a solid base for future citizenship and only rarely as a base of actual citizenship.” (Jans, 2004, p. 31) There is tension between what children can do today and what they will do in the future in both the system and life-world perspectives. This debate on children’s current and future capacities is central to understanding how the organizational structures of children’s membership groups. My personal opinion is similar Allison James’s (2011): it is necessary to view children as both being and becoming citizens.

**Being and becoming citizens.** Allison James (2011) and Torney-Purta and Amadeo (2011) have written about the concepts of lived citizenship and emergent citizenship,
respectively. James built on the work of Ruth Lister (2007) and argued for a view of children’s capacities as citizens that allows for understanding how children’s agency is facilitated and prevented in particular contexts, cultures, and spheres of life. James used examples from her research on children’s hospitals in which adolescents had opportunities to be recognized as full citizens, such as signing terms of agreement contracts for using computer rooms designated for patients. The act of signing a contract was a way young people were able to participate as equal members of society. However, this equality is diminished when the language in contracts assumed young people would be deviant. Perhaps deviance in the face of an injustice is a component of being and becoming a citizen.

This process-oriented view of childhood citizenship is the most useful theoretical perspective I have found that can be applied to the current investigation. It allows for a spectrum of views of citizenship whereby citizenship is both a status and a practice. In this way, children are at once citizens and becoming citizens, but may also be viewed as one or the other. I call this a spectrum of views on childhood citizenship. A spectrum of views is useful to the current investigation for at least two reasons. First, there is a need to move theory building about children and childhood away from oppositional dualisms and toward a more inclusive representation of children’s lives that address its complexities (Prout, 2011). The being and becoming dichotomy is one of these problematic dualisms, and transforming the dualism into a spectrum helps with theorizing the variety of conflicting views of childhood citizenship among the interplay of the dichotomous categories. Second, much like the spectrum of children’s groups that I presented in Chapter 1, the spectrum of views of whether children are being and/or becoming citizens creates the possibility to represent a diverse range of examples of how children’s associations organize themselves. Promoting children’s self-management reflects the view that children are citizens, while
diminishing children’s self-management in favor of adult oversight implies that children must develop their capacities as citizens. Adults are typically involved in children’s membership groups and have some decision-making power, so even groups with high levels of self-management by children may likely reflect views of children’s capacities as citizens fall somewhere in the middle of the spectrum, rather than neatly into one category of being or becoming citizens.
CHAPTER III
RESEARCHING CHILDREN’S SELF-GOVERNANCE IN GROUPS

The Need for Research on Children’s Associations

There are innumerable examples of children groups, but there exists no terminology common across disciplines to describe the variety of settings in which children come together to manage their own activities. While researchers and practitioners have developed multiple models of children’s participation in general (see Karsten, 2012) and in specific types of settings, such as consultations with youth in community-based organizations (e.g., Sheth et al., 2012), youth councils (e.g., Matthews, 1996), and street children’s groups (e.g., White, 2002), no research has focused on surveying the diverse landscape of children’s associations. Developing a typology of the organizational structures of children’s associations is a starting point for future research on whether the quality of young people’s participation in specific types of associations has any influence on improving outcomes for individual members, the association as a whole, or even the community where the children’s association is located.

Researching Children’s Capacities for Self-governance

To date, there is limited scholarship specifically examining the organizational structures of children’s membership groups and children’s capacities for self-governance. Rajbhandary, Hart and Khatiwada (2002) examined the democratic functioning of approximately 300 children’s rights clubs in Nepal supported by Save the Children Norway and Save the Children US.\(^\text{10}\) They reported that the majority of these clubs mirror the organizational structures of adult organizations in their communities. Since this study in

\(^{10}\) Four Nepali child clubs participated the Article 15 Project in 2011, and at least two of these clubs were also part of the earlier study by Hart, Rajbhandary, and Khatiwada (2002).
Nepal, a strategic review of the children’s rights clubs in the country found that the number of clubs has grown to over 13,000 (UNICEF et al., 2012). Unfortunately, this more recent review did not examine the internal governance structures of the clubs in depth, but it provided useful data on how the clubs related to a larger social network and structure of organizations in the community, such as village development committees and school management committees.

A separate literature on children’s self-management examined conditions that improve or diminish groups capacities for self-governance in educational settings (e.g., Harwood, 1995; Hertz-Lazarovits & Miller, 1992; VeneKlasen, Miller, Budlender, & Clark, 2007). Research on children’s play and informal management of peer groups are also informative (e.g., Powell, 2007), including sociological microethnographies of children’s peer culture (Corsaro, 1985; Thorne, 1993). For example, Barrie Thorne (1993) examined how children’s organize themselves during play, typically according to gender first, and either age or ethnicity second. She argued that children organized themselves in this way in part because adults instigated and perpetuated these divisions. In out-of-school contexts where there is less adult involvement, children’s groups were more diverse in terms of both age and gender, at least prior to adolescence. In another microethnographic study, William Corsaro (1985) examined how three and four-year old children formed, maintained, and terminated friendships through play in different settings at a nursery school, such as the sandbox, playhouse, and the climbing bars. Certain settings, such as a playhouse, afforded elaborate reenactments and modifications of normative adult roles, relationships, and

11 There is also literature on corporate organizational development that will not be included in the literature review because it does not focus on children, nor does it offer theory relevant to children’s citizenship.

12 Microethnography is a form of ethnography that attends to the qualities of a local and situated ecology of individuals, and analyses their face-to-face interactions and conversations (see Garcez, 1997).
activities. That is, children used the roles, relationships, and activities they learn from adult cultures as a framework for managing their interactions, but with new routines, values and concerns specific to children’s groups and peer culture. Corsaro (1992a, 1993, 2012) called this *interpretive reproduction*, which is a useful concept to discuss why the organizational structures of children’s membership groups may be similar to adults’ membership groups.

Similarities among the organizational structures of child and adult associations raises a number of questions. Do members of children’s associations choose to mirror the structures of adult associations? Do adults tell children that they must, for instance, elect a *chairperson* in order to have a well-functioning meeting? Do children see the organizational structure and decision-making practices in their group as preparing them for future roles in an adult association? Or do young people choose to use similar structure a way to hide socially transformative practices underneath a façade of promoting traditional values?

There are examples of interpretive reproductions in the organizational structures of some children’s associations discussed in Chapter 2. For example, Boy Scout troops have organized themselves into patrols, each with a patrol leader. At higher ranks, some scouts take on roles with specific responsibilities, such as quartermaster or historian. Ranks, roles, and the overall troop organization are based on the structure of the armed forces common in many countries. Springhall (1987) argued that in the early years of scouting these roles may just have been impositions of a military structure because of a nation’s need for soldiers. Future research on the Boy Scouts should consider if military roles and structures satisfy the same enduring need, new needs, or if the roles are no longer needed.

My interest in children’s interpretive reproductions of organizational structures is to understand whether or not and how children interpret and reproduce adult roles and relationships that reflect new visions of children as citizens. My interest in this topic is also to lay a ground work for future research on the organizational structures of children’s
associations that aims to determine if certain organizational structures are unique to the peer culture of a particular group. In this way, I believe, as Corsaro (1985) and other scholars do, that it is necessary to understand two levels of ‘culture’ that children inhabit—culture in adulthood and culture in childhood (Oswell, 2013). In terms of this dissertation, my goal is to develop a preliminary framework for analyzing self-governance in children’s membership groups so that future research might focus on whether or not and how the organizational structures and strategies of children’s associations are shaped by similar structures and strategies in adult associations.

**Early Psychological Research on the Dynamics of Children’s Membership Groups**

Contemporary studies on organizational behaviors and structures have focused on corporate organizations that have little in common with children’s membership groups. Interestingly, Kurt Lewin and colleagues’ experimental studies examined power structures in children’s clubs led by adults (see Lewin et al., 1939; Lippitt & White, 1943), and their pioneering group dynamic studies have remained relevant in contemporary understandings of organizational development (Swanson, 2001; Weick & Quinn, 1999). Lewin and colleagues looked at how children’s membership groups were influenced by three styles of adult group management: (a) *democratic*, shared decision-making among children and adults; (b) *laissez faire*, individual decision-making among children with minimal adult influence; and (c) *autocratic*, adult facilitator made all decisions. The researchers measured multiple variables of children’s behavior toward one another and toward the adult leader, including: friendly behavior, aggressive behavior, and type of play, such as cooperative, disorganized, or loafing. Their findings, briefly, were that friendly behaviors were greatest in democratic groups and least in autocratic groups. Aggressive behaviors were more common in groups with aggressive autocratic leadership. Children in autocratic groups
worked cooperatively only when the adult leader was present. Children in democratic groups worked cooperatively regardless of when the adult leader was present. Cooperative work was lowest and loafing highest in laissez faire groups. This study is relevant to the current dissertation because it provides a rational that the organizational structures and decision-making patterns within a children’s associations influence the quality of relationships between members and their participation in group decision-making.

Children’s Social Inclusion and Exclusion in Groups

How and why children choose to include or exclude other children in their group is a component of how children govern themselves in groups. Researchers have examined this issue in terms of how children develop, maintain, and end friendships (e.g., Asher & Gottman, 1981; Rubin, Bukowski, & Laursen, 2011; Tropp, O'Brien, & Migacheva, 2014). Other investigators have examined inclusion and exclusion in terms of children’s attitudes toward children who may be different from themselves. This literature focuses on children’s moral inclusion and exclusion based on various social demographics including ethnicity and gender (e.g., Abrams, 2011; Killen, Rutland, & Ruck, 2011), disability status (e.g., Huckstadt & Shutts, 2014; Pearson, Wong, & Pierini, 2002), religious practices (e.g., Verkuyten & Thijs, 2001), sexual orientation (e.g., Heinze & Horn, 2014; Horn, 2003), and citizenship status (e.g., Ruck & Tenenbaum, 2014). An exhaustive review of this literature is outside the scope of the current study because the current focus is on implicit patterns of inclusion and exclusion in the organizational structures of children’s associations, not children’s attitudes. There have been studies that addressed tactics children use to include or exclude other children, such as work by Adler and Adler (1995). These investigators did not look at the organizational structure of children’s associations, but they have looked at the strategies children use to maintain power within their peer groups.
Adler and Adler (1995) developed a typology of techniques preadolescents (9 to 12 years of age) use to include or exclude members of their friendship circles. Specifically, they looked at cliques, which “have a hierarchical structure, being dominated by leaders, and are exclusive, so that not all individuals who desire membership are accepted.” (Adler & Adler, 1995, p. 145) Using an ethnographic approach, the researcher examined children’s cliques in 12 schools over the course of seven years. They found four inclusion techniques and four exclusion techniques that maintained the strong boundaries of group membership and hierarchies within children’s cliques. For example, realignment of friendships was one inclusion technique children used to shift or maintain the social hierarchy in a clique. Children who used this technique manipulated the social structure of a clique, which was based on popularity. According to the authors, cliques had leaders. Therefore, if the leaders of clique shifted their closeness to someone who was less popular, the status of less popular person would rise.

Stigmatization was an exclusionary technique that the authors found children using to maintain power dynamics in preadolescent cliques. This technique involved degrading behaviors, including ignoring the victim, active verbal ridicule, or even physical humiliation. The researchers noted that this type of conflict could lead to physical fights, more often between boys than girls, who were more likely to have used verbal humiliation. In any case, this tactic served to maintain a hierarchy within a clique or, ultimately, expel a member of a group after a severe conflict.

Children’s associations are distinct from cliques because domination by leaders and exclusivity do not seem to be their defining elements. However, it is possible for children’s associations to have hierarchic and exclusionary tendencies. For this reason, Adler and Adler’s study partially addressed the need for a typology of power dynamics in children’s groups, but because this typology focuses on the maintenance of hierarchies and
boundaries of a group, it is still necessary to develop a typology of how children’s associations using more collaborative and egalitarian techniques to include or exclude members.

**Children's Self-governance in Schools**

School councils have become more popular for addressing children’s right to voice their opinions about their schools and, in some cases, have modest decision-making power in school administration. Research on children’s self-governance in schools have highlighted the dissatisfaction of students, teachers and school administrators as they grapple with attending to children’s rights and capacities to govern themselves, and adults’ desires and institutionalized responsibilities to manage a school (see Allan & I’Anson, 2004; Baginsky & Hannam, 1999; Devine, 2002b).

In a study by Rivlin and Wolfe (1985) on a New York City school, the authors reported on how teachers believed a major role of schooling was to teach children to get along with one another and even to “make individuals good citizens” (p. 189). Rivlin and Wolfe note that even though teachers held this view, some teacher initiated group work as a form of social control. Children were sometimes required to work in specific ways and allowed little opportunities for children to design their own group work process. The authors also described a case when students self-organized a meeting with teachers and staff to raise concerns about a school-based program called the Futures Project. The Future Project was time periods during each week when children could work on a variety of self-managed activities, including art projects and clubs. The students raised concerns on how teachers increasingly viewed the Futures Project as ‘enrichment’ time and assigned additional schoolwork during time allocated for children’s self-managed activities. Teachers and students saw their respective views at odds with one another and, ultimately, were unable
to resolve this issue and called on the principal to mediate. Although the teachers disagreed with the students’ demands to reduce the amount of school work, they were impressed that the children spoke with one another about their concerns and organized themselves in such a way to address the issue.

Rivlin and Wolfe also noted that the physical environment of schools also played a role in social control. Teachers arranged desks and chairs in their classrooms in ways that either promoted group work, such as facing desks inward and toward one another, or in ways that impeded group work, such as placing desks in rows facing the same direction. The arrangement of physical space is an interesting point of inquiry for future research on self-governance in children’s membership groups.

**Working and Street-connected Children’s Unions**

Working and street-connected children’s associations have much to offer an understanding how young people organize themselves and the perspective of children as citizens. It is with this perspective that Manfred Liebel (2003) argued that working children are more than the *subject of rights*. Rather, they are *social subjects*, a concept that “stresses the ability of the individuals and of the organizations created and maintained by the children to play an independent role in life and society, based on the individual’s own judgment and capacity to act” (Liebel, 2003, p. 268). This perspective of working and street-connected children helped shape, in part, the origins of some working children’s associations and the manner in which they structure and govern themselves. For example, in Latin America, children and adults worked together to form working children’s unions that were autonomous from adult labor unions. In this way, working children could create and follow their own agenda that addresses and resolves issues of importance to them (Chacaltana, 2000; Taft, 2014). Additionally, I believe the self-determined nature and


structure of these organizations is also what makes it possible for building trust among members. There is small but strong and growing body of evidence about how working and street-connected children have provided mutual support and protection to one another for basic survival, but also with ongoing social and emotional support. (e.g., Beazley, 2003; Ennew, 1994; Mizen & Ofosu-Kusi, 2013; O’Kane, 2003; Stephenson, 2001; Swift, 1997).

Svetlana Stephenson’s (2001) study of street children and youth in Moscow revealed how young people organised themselves into groups for protection, companionship, and economic benefits. Some of the groups in her study engaged in legitimate activities, such as collaborating to sell goods in markets. Other groups operated as ‘gangs’ and engaged in criminal activities, such as prostitution and theft. Stephenson acknowledges the risks young people faced in gangs, but also that young people sought social relationships that offer protection because they are critical for survival without more appropriate means. Again, other researchers reported similar finding from studies with street children in Ghana, Indonesia, and other parts of the world (Beazley, 2003; Ennew, 1994; Mizen & Ofosu-Kusi, 2013).

Anthony Swift (2001), who documented the movement of working children in Brazil, also reported the advantages to children and youth feeling that they are part of a movement:

> In itself, membership of a movement provides elements of protection, access to information and opportunities for personal development that are generally unavailable to unorganised child workers or, for that matter, children in conventional schools. (Swift, 2001, para. 12)

In other writings, Swift referred to the specific benefit of being part of an organised collective of young people and adults, such as the support from adults to buffer against
harassment from police and other local authorities (Swift, 1997). Henk van Beers (1996) also found this type of collaboration between children and adults in the Philippines.

**Young People’s Participation in the Governance of Programs that Serve Them**

**A typology of youth participation in adult-led organizations.** In the Youth Participation Pilot Survey, a study of how 15 adult-led organisations involve young people in decision-making, Breitbart and colleagues (1995) identified basic and formal structures of organizational governance. Out of the 15 organisations, the organizational structures of two thirds of the groups fit the “‘traditional’ structure” model, which included a board that may or may not involve children, an executive director, programs committees, and an optional child advisory board. The authors noted while the existence of formal governing structures for young people’s involvement are important, they appear to be less important than “other mechanisms for encouraging youth participation in decision-making” (p. 3). For example, “the degree and quality of young people’s participation depends to a large extent on the democratic training provided for them and for adults” (p. 3).

The authors also found youth organisations that encouraged the participation of young people in decision-making in their organization also strengthened young people’s decision-making capacities in other settings, such as their school. Also, as young people continued their involvement in decision-making in their organisations, they became “adept at identifying genuine vs. tokenistic participation within, as well as outside of, the organisation.” These findings, and others from the Youth Participation Pilot Survey, support the rational for this dissertation research and specifically for the need to examine both the overall formal organizational structure of children’s associations and the qualities of specific informal decision-making practices. For this reason, the analytical framework I developed to examine the organizational structures of children’s associations accounts for these two
levels of organizational governance. I use the terms organizational components and organizational strategies to describe the building blocks that make up a group’s overall organizational structure. Organizational components and organizational strategies are equally important in shaping the opportunities for members to have to participate in group decision-making. In this study, an understanding of the formal organizational components and strategies is privileged above an understanding of the informal decision-making practices. This is due to the limitations of the data collection methodology, which does not include significant ethnographic observation of groups’ decision-making practices.

Figure 3.1 A “traditional” structure identified in the Youth Participation Pilot Survey

A typology of young people’s participation in program evaluation. Sabo (1999) shared a typology of five patterns young people’s participation in the evaluation of youth
programs that serve them, each with varying degrees of youth participation and empowerment. The first pattern was assessment of individuals in a group—a model similar to traditional testing in schools. The second pattern had two forms: (a) members of a group monitored themselves, but were unable to change the overall structure of the group; and (b) group members monitored and evaluated themselves specifically to improve the program. Sabo grouped these two patterns together because each focused on improving the group as a whole rather than individuals. In the third pattern, groups who already had an internal assessment process hired an external evaluator to train group members in evaluation methods. The fourth pattern was similar to the previous in that an external individual evaluated the group, but there was no existing internal assessment process. The fifth and last pattern involved an external evaluator for groups that did not have an existing process of assessment, and also had little say in changing their group structure.

Sabo’s typology is relevant to the current research because it provides a theoretical framework to consider in when engaging young people in analyzing their own membership groups. Specifically, the organizational diagram created by representatives from the children’s membership groups in this current study were collected as part of training workshop to improve the self-governance of children’s membership groups. Some of these groups may have had an existing internal assessment process, while others did not. Therefore, the training and data collection workshops fit Sabo’s third and fourth types of patterns of youth participation in evaluation. Since Sabo’s typology focuses on group evaluation, there remains a need for a typology of the organizational structures—that is, how children make group decisions, elect leaders, maintain membership, and negotiate power dynamics within their group.
Organizational Research on Adult Associations

Researchers from the field of organizational studies have created typologies and coding systems for corporate organizational structures. These offer little to an understanding of children’s associations, which seem to function differently than adult corporate structures. In fact, in a review of the organizational studies literature, Kavanagh (2013) argued that the study of children’s organizations is a gap in organizational studies research. Moreover, it is difficult to relate studies of adult organizations to the context of children’s associations. For example, organizational citizenship behavior describes employees of a company as good citizens when they promote the best interests of the company (Organ, 1988). While the behaviors of employees of a company or members of a children’s association are critical to the sustainability and efficacy of either group, norms of reciprocity in each type of group are not identical. Members of a children’s association do not necessarily depend on their group for their livelihood in the same way an employee depends on the company for their paycheck. Moreover, members’ participation in children’s associations is voluntary, whether in terms of participation in the group at-large or in terms of specific group activity. Also, in line with the need for the study of childhood to elucidate children’s own peer cultures, it is problematic to apply organizational theories and concepts developed as part of research on adult’s associations to understand children’s associations without including an inductive approach to studying children’s associations.

Another example of relevant research on organizational structures is Henry Mintzberg’s (1979) typology of organizational structures, which included the entrepreneurial organization; the machine organization (bureaucracy); the professional organization; the divisional (diversified) organization; and the innovative organization (adhocracy). This work focused exclusively on adult organizations and especially those that produced goods or provided services, which are not useful comparisons to children’s associations. However,
there are aspects of Mintzberg’s work that mirrored my thinking on children’s associations, such as the need to think about the organizational components within the larger organizational structure. When combined, different organizational structure components create different organizational structure configurations. Naming these configurations provides a language for describing the complexities of how an organization functions. Unfortunately, none of Mintzberg’s organizational structure components or the types listed above appropriately described the organizational structures observed in the Article 15 Project dataset.

Yet another seemingly relevant coding scheme is Hare’s RGIM model (Hare, 2003; Hare, Blumberg, Davies, & Kent, 1994). In this research, Hare used the acronym RGIM to refer to four types of organizations or components of organizations. He categorized organizations or components of organizations as ‘R’ if they were “resource dependent”, such as boat or airplane crews who are dependent on their vehicles. Groups categorized ‘G’ were management specific and produced goods. These organizations included businesses, manufacturing organizations, and health and education providers. ‘I’ organizations were governed by sets of rules, such as sports teams. Finally, ‘M’ organizations coalesce around ideas, such as scientific research teams who worked on generating new knowledge or technologies. This typology might be applied to children’s associations. For example, children’s rights groups might be considered ‘M’ organizations because they coalesce around the principles of children’s rights. Working children’s unions might be either an ‘I’ organization if the members work together to produce specific types of goods or services, or they might be ‘I’ organizations because they operate within a set of organizational rules and practices. Similar to the problems of using Mintzberg’s typology of adult organizations, it seems contrived, to categorize children’s associations using Hare’s typology of adult organizations since the children’s associations functioned in qualitatively
different ways and for different purposes. For these reasons, I did not find the RGIM typology a useful framework for analyzing the organizational structures of children’s organizations.

What is interesting about Hare’s scholarship, though, is that he started researching children’s groups. Specifically, he examined the variables of group size and leadership style in groups of Boy Scouts in his own dissertation research (Hare, 1951). Also he was aware of the research by Lewin, Lippit and White’s research that I find particularly relevant to the current study (see Lewin & Lippitt, 1938; Lewin, Lippitt, & White, 1947). In one paper, Hare wrote:

> Others before me had used the communication network as a variable, comparing 4- and 5-person groups arranged to communicate in “circles” or “wheels” or other forms of networks. Many were interested in leadership, with classic research comparing “authoritarian” and “democratic” leaders with 9-year-old children as their followers. However, when I read the results of these experiments, I noticed that large groups, wheel networks, and groups with authoritarian leaders all had high productivity with low morale, compared with small groups, circle networks, and groups with democratic leaders, which had lower productivity but higher morale. So, it became apparent that these three variables were not independent and that a more basic set of concepts was needed to account for the similarities in the effects. (Hare, 2003, p. 126)

Hare argued for studying the interaction of a group’s size and organizational structure. Based on my analysis of the organizational structures of children’s association for this dissertation research, I agree that a more basic set of concepts is needed to understand
the functioning of an organizational structure overall. However, Hare defines small groups as 3 to 5 people and large groups as 8 to 12 people (Hare, 2003, p. 134), which is mainly based on experimental research that examines the effect of group size on social loafing or group cohesion. For me, these topics of group size is interesting, but the focus on settings with less than 12 people does not mirror the reality of most children’s associations which have many more members. Research on group size is interesting but not sufficient to develop a theoretical and analytical framework of how children’s associations organize and manage themselves. Since no such frameworks exists, I had to develop my own.

**Summary and Some Concluding Thoughts**

Research on the organizational structure of children’s associations provides evidence of how children practice and enact their citizenship during childhood without predicting children’s capacities to act as citizens as adults. I make this claim in support of William Corsaro’s (1985, 2012) argument that there is academic merit in research that aims to understand children’s lives without making assertions for how children are or are not developing adult capacities. The youth civic engagement literature made some progress in understanding how young people enact their citizenship rights and responsibilities by focusing scholarship on volunteerism, political development, and civic identity (see Sherrod & Flanagan, 1998; Sherrod, Torney-Purta, & Flanagan, 2010), but unfortunately this literature falls short of recognizing young children as full citizens and how discourse of young children’s evolving capacities as citizens has changed over time. It is likely that children’s membership groups reflect perspectives of children’s citizenship germane to particular cultural-historical moments in time. A macro-level historical analysis of different children’s membership groups would be one approach to understanding how views of children’s citizenship have changed. A micro-level analysis of the internal functioning of
contemporary children’s membership organizations would provide complementary data on how group management strategies reflect contemporary perspectives of children’s citizenship. It also would provide a means of responding to debates about the roles of children’s membership groups in civil society.
CHAPTER IV

THE ARTICLE 15 PROJECT

My Evolving Role in the Article 15 Project

This dissertation research grew out of questions and interests I developed as a team member and co-director of the Article 15 Project. I joined the project development team in April 2011 to coordinate field research with children’s associations in Latin America and South Asia. After the first year as a member of the team, my role evolved to include co-directing new fieldwork with new and existing partners. In 2014, I proposed to use the data generated during the Article 15 Project as part of my dissertation research. As a result, I was involved in two levels of research. The first level was as a workshop facilitator where my responsibilities included helping children and adults in workshops critically analyze the data they generated about their group’s organizational structure and decision-making processes. The second level was as an investigator where I engaged in a comparative and theoretically-driven analysis of a range of different groups.

This chapter follows my journey with the Article 15 Project and is divided into three sections describing the project evolution, as well as how the project informed the aims and research questions addressed in the current investigation. In the first section, I detail the early history and purpose of the Article 15 Project. In the second, I describe the pilot workshops and participants. In the third section, I highlight some of the participatory and highly visual methods and data generated during these workshops, as well as how they evolved across each workshop setting.

The History and Purpose of the Article 15 Project

The Article 15 Project is a global partnership supporting children’s rights and capacities to organize themselves, in partnership with adults, in order to address issues in
their everyday lives. The project was named after the fifteenth article of the CRC, which supports children’s freedom of peaceful assembly and freedom to form associations. The founding partners of the project included the Children’s Environments Research Group (CERG) as the coordinating partner, as well as members from World Vision International, Save the Children Norway, and UNICEF. CERG initiated the project and invited collaboration from these agencies in order to build on its earlier work in Nepal with Save the Children Norway and Save the Children USA (see Rajbhandary et al., 2002) The Overbook Foundation provided funding for a preparatory desk review. As core partners, World Vision and Save the Children supported the development of the Article 15 Resource Kit, including connecting CERG researchers with children’s membership groups through regional workshops and field visits with groups in Latin America, South Asia, and West Africa during 2011 and 2012. In the spring of 2013, members of Plan Egypt joined this effort and supported CERG to work with children’s membership groups in Egypt. I conducted additional workshops on my own as part of an international conference in 2014 and consultative work with World Vision in 2015 and 2016.

The purpose of the Article 15 Project is threefold: (a) promote awareness on Article 15 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child—children’s right to association and peaceful assembly; (b) support participatory processes that strengthen child-adult partnerships with mutual understanding, trust and respect; and (c) develop tools for establishing, managing, and sustaining child-managed groups. Although this project continues to evolve, the bulk of the project and tool development took place from the fall of 2010 through the spring of 2012 across four phases: (1) a desk review, (2) initial development of a kit of tools, (3) piloting and revising the kit of tools in collaboration with children and adults during participatory workshops, and (4) ongoing refinement and development of new tools. I describe each of these phases below.
The Article 15 Project Desk Review (September 2010 to March 2011)

During an initial phase of the Article 15 Project, members of CERG conducted a desk review to inform the development of a resource kit that addressed different topics relevant to children’s associations (Sabo-Flores et al., 2011, p. 3-4). The key questions in this desk review included:

- What are the quality elements of child-led groups and a child-managed process?\(^\text{13}\)
- Where do they exist?
- What tools and resources currently exist to support child-led groups, and where are there gaps?
- Where are the knowledge gaps in the existing literature on child-led groups?
- What is the potential value and impact of child-led groups?
- What are some of the most promising practices within child-led groups?

The desk review produced multiple findings regarding the current state of children’s associations around the world and enabled CERG team members to build on the findings of the earlier Nepal child club study. One outcome of the Article 15 Project was the identification of a preliminary framework for analyzing 11 elements of child-managed groups, including: (a) group formation; (b) membership; (c) agenda setting; (d) group management; (e) group decision-making structures; (f) sustainability; (g) financial resource management; (h) accountability; (i) adult roles and responsibilities; (j) reflection, monitoring

\(^{13}\) The terms *child-led* and *child-managed* suggest that children have more control than adults in the governance of a children’s group. I use the term child-managed as part of defining the spectrum of children’s groups (see Figure 1.1), however I avoid using both terms in my typology of organizational structures of children’s associations. Child-led and child-managed describe only some of the of the sub-spectrum of children’s associations, and a more precise terminology is needed for differentiating children’s associations from other settings along the spectrum of children’s groups.
and evaluation; and (k) group efficacy. Other findings from the desk review highlighted the participatory and democratic potentials of child-managed groups, and justified further research in this area and the development of tools. These conclusions, and other findings from the review, served as an entry point and guidance for the development of resources that would support child-managed groups through improving the quality of their organizations’ decision-making structures, financial resource management, and the sustainability.

**Developing an Initial Kit of Tools (April 2011 to August 2011)**

The desk review served as a provisional guide for the topics that would be addressed in the development and piloting of new self-assessment of organizational practices. The project team also reviewed existing tools, such as those developed during earlier research with child clubs in Nepal (Hart & Rajbhandary, 2003) and the Spider Tool (Feinstein and O’Kane, 2005), in order to improve upon them or address gaps in the available methods. Throughout the summer of 2011, I collaborated with other members of CERG, as well as with members of World Vision and Save the Children Norway, to design a four-day workshop to pilot a preliminary set of tools.

The Article 15 Project tools aimed to address the ongoing need for methods that support young people’s self-governance of their groups, especially methods that allowed children and adults to discuss the power dynamics within their groups, such as whether or not there were differences in decision-making power based on the age or gender of members. Some published resources on this topic were readily available (e.g., Karkara, 2002), and CERG members’ suggested other activities they have seen adult facilitators use with child clubs to hold discussions with members of children’s groups about power dynamics based on gender or age, as well as other types of differences, such as level of
ability, socio-economic class/caste, or school going status. Based on my familiarity with these published and unpublished materials, I argue for grouping these activities into at least three types of methods for children to discuss power dynamics in their groups: (a) value reinforcement methods, (b) brainstorming methods, and (c) data generation and analysis methods. I define each below.

**Methods for reinforcing positive group values.** Value reinforcement methods highlight and strengthen norms or values that are fundamental to equitable power dynamics in group process, such as interpersonal trust and effective communication. The purpose of these activities is for participants to experience abstract values through emotional and embodied practices. For example, the trust fall or paper chain building exercises are two team building activities that are typical of team building workshops. The trust fall involves members of a group standing upright and falling backward, at which point, their group members catch them with arms outstretched (Karkara, 2002, p. 66; White & Choudhury, 2009). The paper chain game involves a competition between small groups in creating long chains using strips of paper and tape (Karkara, 2002, p. 64). This activity requires a facilitator to observe the working methods of a group and handicap the most industrious members, such as by blindfolding them or disallowing verbal communication. The remaining group members must then develop strategies to make up for this loss.

**Methods for analyzing existing knowledge of power dynamics.** Brainstorming methods use a stepwise analytical framework to rearrange, often visually, existing knowledge about power dynamics. Typically, the purpose of the analytical framework is to provide more sophisticated understandings of known issues. One example of such an activity is the power ball, which asks groups to discuss different types of power and identify individuals or other groups who possess those types of power. Participants write
the names of those groups on small pieces of paper. Then, they draw a line drawn across a sheet of flipchart paper. This line represents the children’s association, and the area above or below the line represents a continuum of more or less power, respectively. Finally, participants arrange the small piece of papers with the names of external individuals or groups relative to the line to show who has either more, less, or equal power.

**Methods for generating and analyzing new data about power dynamics.** Data generation and analysis methods involve collecting new data on the realities of a group’s power dynamics. Similar to brainstorming methods, groups employ a stepwise process and pre-existing analytical framework when using data generation and analysis methods. However, the analysis in this more open-ended than brainstorming methods because it is dependent on data that do not yet exist and must be collected. Data generated from such methods are most beneficial to the groups using them; however, they may also benefit external groups, such as community development organizations or researchers who support children’s member groups and organizations. Many of the tools in the Article 15 Resource Kit are data generation and analysis methods, including the organizational diagram method, which I describe in more detail later in this chapter.

**Identifying potential workshop participants.** During the development of the provisional kit of tools, the core project partners recruited workshop participants for two regional workshops to take place in South America and South Asia in the fall of 2011. In the spring of 2011, World Vision staff had solicited expressions of interest from their country offices globally. Fourteen country offices responded, and children and adults connected to nine of these country offices participated in the subsequent workshops. At the same time, Save the Children Norway was hosting a series of trainings for children and adults on the topic of peacebuilding, including one in Bogota, Colombia, and another in Kathmandu,
Nepal. CERG worked collaboratively with both World Vision and Save the Children Norway to design the workshops that allowed participation of the greatest number of children and adults within the means of the available time and funds. CERG researchers, myself included, prepared informational materials about the workshop and research, including child-friendly materials on the purpose and scope of the workshop, the research goals, and additional information related to ethical procedures for obtaining informed consent. CERG researchers translated all workshop materials into Spanish for the first workshop in Bogota, and Save the Children and World Vision staff translated materials for non-English speakers for the workshop in Kathmandu.

**Piloting and Revising the Kit of Tools (September 2011 to Present)**

In order to allow participants an opportunity to adapt the workshop to their needs, CERG designed the workshop activities to be modular, meaning that the majority of activities did not require completion of another activities in a specific order. Modularity was a critical component of the workshop design because one of the purposes of the research was to identify what elements of child-managed groups were of utmost importance to the participants. Therefore, the first day of the workshop included a brainstorming session where participants identified all of the issues young people face in organizing themselves and in partnership with adults. The participants then chose the activities they would complete during the following days based on their priorities.

**Workshop participants.** Children and adults participated in the Article 15 Project in either regional workshops, field visits, or in few cases, both workshops and visits. Five regional workshops and eleven field visits took place across eight countries from the fall of 2011 to the summer of 2014. Participants in the regional workshops were children or adults from different countries in the region who were elected or selected to represent their
children’s association and who would share what they learned and contributed at the workshop when they returned home. In this way, all the regional workshops aimed to support a train-the-trainer model of learning in which the workshop participants learned how to complete the activities so they might facilitate the activity with the remaining members of their children’s membership group. These participants were solicited using informational materials created by CERG researchers and distributed by World Vision, Save the Children, and Plan Egypt. In the case of the international workshop in Switzerland, the workshop session was included in the conference program and participants registered for the workshop.

Table 4.1 Workshop Location, Date, Type and Groups represented

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Type of Workshop</th>
<th>Groups Represented</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bogota, Colombia</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Regional workshop</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sindulpachowk, Nepal</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Group visit</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kathmandu, Nepal</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Group visit</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kathmandu, Nepal</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Regional workshop</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bolgatanga, Ghana</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Group visits</td>
<td>2(^a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mattru, Sierra Leone</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Group visit</td>
<td>1(^a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bumpe, Sierra Leone</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Group visit</td>
<td>1(^a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cairo, Egypt</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Group visits and city-wide workshop</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caux, Switzerland</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>International workshop</td>
<td>4(^b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cusco, Peru</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td>Local workshop</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amasaman, Ghana</td>
<td>2016</td>
<td>Group visit</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diakho, Senegal</td>
<td>2016</td>
<td>Group visit</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>40</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a\) Organizational diagrams completed prior to workshop with help of local facilitators

\(^b\) Additional groups participated in this workshop, but they were not children’s associations according to the definition used in this study (e.g., a group of schools); therefore, they are not included in the total groups represented.

**Developing the organizational diagram tool.** The Article 15 organizational diagram was a modification and improvement on a tool used in CERG’s research with child clubs in Nepal (see Hart & Rajbandary, 2003). The tool offers a visual and tactile means for
children’s memberships groups to analyze patterns of communication, decision-making, and age and gender equity within their group. In this activity, members diagramed their group structure using three types of materials: (a) silhouette figures printed on white or colored paper to represent the age and gender of members, (b) color-coded symbols using round half-inch diameter self-adhesive stickers in assorted colors to represent various demographic categories or group roles, and (c) markers or pencils, also in assorted colors, to represent communication pathways and types of relationships between individual members or subgroups. Figures 4.1 and 4.2 are two examples of organizational diagrams from the regional workshops in Colombia and Nepal, respectively.
Figure 4.1 A child and youth-led radio program in Guatemala
Figure 4.2 A municipal child and youth council in the Philippines
**Age and Gender Symbols.** CERG researchers designed symbols to represent age cohort and gender of each group member. In the first version of this method developed in 2011, we suggested three categories for age cohorts—children, youth, and adults—with no specified age ranges in order to allow groups to define their own age ranges. CERG developed six silhouettes figures to represent the different age cohort and gender combinations (Figure 4.3) and printed each on white paper.

![Silhouette figures](image)

Figure 4.3 Silhouette figures used during the workshop in Bogota, Colombia

However, while piloting this activity during the first workshop in Bogota, Colombia, some participants felt a fourth age cohort category for adolescents was necessary in order to differentiate the transition from child to youth. Therefore, some groups in this workshop used the silhouettes to represent four age cohorts with the following age ranges: under 13 years of age, 13 to 17 years of age, 18 to 25 years of age, and over 25 years of age. The CERG research team valued this adaptation and, in preparation for the following workshop in Nepal two months later, we created two new silhouette figures for the adolescent age cohort and printed the four age cohorts on paper in four colors (Figure 4.4).
This color coding system improved the ease with which participants could visually analyze age-related data on the organizational diagrams. This color coded system became the standard practice in subsequent workshops and, although workshop participants were encouraged to develop and use their own age ranges associated with each silhouette figure, most groups made only minor modifications to the age limits listed above. For example, during the workshop in Switzerland, one participant used half of the youth girl and half of the youth boy silhouette figures to create one silhouette to represent a transgender youth in their group.

Demographic Symbols. Participants used self-adhesive round colored stickers to represent demographic categories specific in each group, such as members’ ethnicity, social class/caste, and ability. Participants also used these stickers to represent specific positions in their group’s structure. For example, younger participants from a working children’s association in Kathmandu, Nepal, chose to represent an adult facilitator, children from the Dalit caste, and children with disabilities using blue, yellow, and green stickers, respectively (Figure 4.5, top). Older participants from the same working children’s association used the stickers differently in a separate organizational diagram they created.
They represented their group president, executive committee members, and children from the Dalit caste using red, yellow and blue stickers, respectively (Figure 4.5, bottom).

Figure 4.5 Two organizational diagrams of a working children’s union in Nepal
**Relationship Symbols.** The organizational diagram tool also involves participants drawing lines with arrows to represent relationships between members of a group, such as channels of communication and coordination. There are no restrictions placed on the number or types of relationships a group may represent. They only request workshop facilitators made was for participants to include a legend on the diagram in order to interpret the different colored lines and symbols.

**Additional activities in the Article 15 Project.** The organizational diagram is one of many activities used during workshops. Other activities included methods to understand group dynamics, such as dramas that focused on defining good groups and bad groups. From these dramas the workshop participants and facilitators learned a number of qualities for being a good group, such as members of a group listen to one another and support one another with their problems. These additional activities helped me further understand the issues that are salient to members of children’s associations, and I used these experiences to supplement my analysis and discussion of data from the organizational diagrams.

**Epistemological considerations for developing power analysis methods.** The activities in the Article 15 Project encouraged participants to generate and analyze data themselves. The decision to favor this method for examining intragroup power dynamics addressed two important epistemological considerations. The first is the ever present problem in the social sciences of external observers interpreting the meaning of social actions of another individual or group (Geertz, 1973; Habermas, 1984). It was, therefore, important that the methods supported a group’s own meaning-making. The second consideration is the potential for practices that strengthens the capacities of each individual member of a group, and the group as a whole, to truly own and benefit from a process of critical self-reflection. The methods strove to promote what Paulo Freire (1979) called conscientização—gaining greater capacity to understand, resist and overcome
oppression in all its forms. By collaborating with a children’s membership groups in discussions about their group’s organizational structure and governance, workshop facilitators intervened in a group’s decision-making processes. At times, these interventions generated a dissonance between the group members’ perceptions of power dynamics in their groups. These dissonances were either between members with differing views, or between members’ perceptions before and after the activity.

Through the organizational diagram activity, participants gained a new epistemology for investigating power dynamics in their group. During one field visit in Nepal, the group’s perceptions of the distribution of decision-making among members of different age cohorts were quite different based on the organizational diagrams they created, as well as data from another activities, the decision-making chart, which I describe below. For some members, their lack of awareness of the disparity in decision-making power was even visible by the look of surprise on their face. This surprise was so apparent that one of my workshop co-facilitators coined a phrase, “the gong effect”, to refer to the moment group members collectively discover the power imbalances in their group. These moments of clarity, although invisible, were somehow viscerally tangible in the room, much like the resonating vibrations of a gong.

The decision-making chart. Another tool in the Article 15 Resource Kit, the decision-making chart, generates data about power dynamics within children’s associations that are complementary to the data generated during the organizational diagram activity. The decision-making chart activity invites participants to list the specific decisions that take place in the group and which members participate in each decision. The activity promotes examination of which decisions are more or less inclusive of all the members.
members of a group, and which age and gender groups have more or less decision-making power across the various group decisions. Since the format of the Article 15 Project workshops varied, only 14 out of the 29 groups included in this study completed a decision-making chart. I excluded a systematic analysis of decision-making charts in this dissertation because the organizational diagrams provided sufficient material to develop a preliminary understanding and typology of the organizational structures of children’s associations. The 14 decision-making charts are a potentially rich dataset for future analyses and would likely provide additional insights to how children manage power dynamics among themselves and in partnership with adults.

**Continuing to Build the Article 15 Project Dataset.** New groups continued to participate in workshops on the tools in the Article 15 Resource Kit after the initial pilot workshops in Colombia and Nepal. Recent workshops confirmed the utility and ease of use for many of the tools, especially the organizational diagram tool. While the design of this tool has not changed dramatically in recent years, participants in the workshops have continued to innovate on the method in interesting ways. For example, one group from Peru that participated in a workshop in August 2015 combined methods from another Article 15 tool, the decision-making chart, with the organizational diagram tool. In the decision-making chart, colored stickers represented different degrees of influence in a particular group decision. The group incorporated this tactic into their organizational diagram to show explicitly the level of influence each member had in group decision-making. It was a clever adaptation, and ideally, this and other innovations should be included in new versions of the Article 15 Resource Kit.
CHAPTER V
RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, I outline the specific research questions that I developed during my involvement in the Article 15 Project, which are the focus of the analysis in the current dissertation research. I also detail the research design and methodology I used to answer these research questions.

Research Questions

Below is a summary of the research questions that I developed based on my experience co-directing the Article 15 Project. These questions guided my initial analyses of the organizational diagrams created by members or representatives of different children’s associations:

A. What are the commonalities and differences in the organizational structures and roles among a sample of children’s membership groups?

B. Are there identifiable patterns of inclusion or exclusion in terms of group membership across age, gender, or other demographics, such as ability, social class or caste, or school-going status?

C. Are there identifiable patterns of inclusion or exclusion in terms of group decision-making across age, gender, or other demographics, such as ability, social class or caste, or school-going status?

D. Is the organizational structure related to patterns of inclusion or exclusion?

E. Where might the children’s membership groups in this study fall on the spectrum of perspectives on children being and becoming citizens?
A Secondary Analysis of Visual Data

My approach to analyzing data from the Article 15 Project grew from my experience collaborating with workshop participants as they created their organizational diagrams. Therefore, in this chapter, I document the methodological approach I developed through my dual role as workshop facilitator and investigator looking at these data to answer new research questions.

I implemented a secondary analysis of visual data from the Article 15 Project dataset. Below, I provide an overview of the data I analyzed, as well as brief sketches of both secondary analysis and visual analysis. Later in this chapter, I detail the specific phases and methods I employed in my secondary analysis of visual data from the Article 15 Project: (1) informed code generation; (2) exploratory coding; (3) computer-assisted qualitative data analysis; and (4) confirmatory analysis.

Data from the Article 15 Project analyzed in this study. The data I analyzed came from different workshops conducted over a period of three years. The primary visual data that I analyzed were photographs of organizational diagrams from 29 children’s associations out of the 40 that participated in field visits or workshops. There are eleven fewer children’s associations included in my analysis for four reasons. Organizational diagram data from four children’s associations were incomplete and insufficient for analysis without collecting additional data. Representatives from two different children’s associations chose to diagram a network they were both part of instead of their two individual children’s associations. The remaining six diagrams were created after the initial development of the preliminary typology and will be part a future confirmatory analysis phase.

The 29 groups represented a range of countries and group types in my conceptualization of the spectrum of children’s associations (Table 5.1). Five of these 29
groups had two or more diagrams. For two of these children’s associations, participants were divided into two subgroups in order to compare the perspectives of older and young members of the association. In three groups, the multiple diagrams represented different levels of their children’s membership organization, such as a local children’s association that connects to a subnational children’s council. I found the majority of information that I needed to conduct my analysis in the photographs of the organizational diagrams. However, if the data on the diagrams were unclear or incomplete, I reviewed videos from the workshops where participants explained their organizational diagrams. Approximately forty hours of video were recorded across the different workshop settings. Explanations of the organizational diagrams comprised only a fraction of these recordings, and in most cases, the explanations are approximately five minutes long. Unfortunately, video recorded explanations were not available for eight children’s associations, about 28% of the groups in the sample (Table 5.2). My experience from facilitating the workshops and field notes on some of the groups added to my understanding of specific organizational diagrams.

This sample of children’s associations does not aim to be representative of the diversity of contemporary children’s associations. Although a range of types of children’s associations are included, all of these groups have relationships to an adult-led organization, which is how they were recruited to participate in the Article 15 Project workshops. There are more ways to categorize these groups beyond their purpose and connection to adult-managed organizations, such as groups that were initiated by children themselves or groups created by adults for children. A larger dataset of children’s associations would likely capture a more representative sample, but based on my experiences working with children’s associations around the world, the sample captures enough of the new types of children’s associations that exist for the purposes of developing a preliminary typology of organizational structures.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ID</th>
<th>Group Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Group Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Nadie Como Yo</td>
<td>Honduras</td>
<td>Child rights club</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Red de Comunicadores Infantiles</td>
<td>Honduras</td>
<td>Child rights club</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Grupo de Ninos y Adolescentes Communicadores</td>
<td>Ecuador</td>
<td>Child development association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Soñadores</td>
<td>Guatemala</td>
<td>Issue-based club; Children’s radio program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>RedNaJava</td>
<td>Guatemala</td>
<td>Issue-based club; Computer science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Red Adolescentes y Jóvenes Managua</td>
<td>Nicaragua</td>
<td>Child &amp; youth development association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Movimiento National de Adolescentes y Jóvenes</td>
<td>Nicaragua</td>
<td>Coordinators of a national child/youth network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Gestores de Paz</td>
<td>Colombia</td>
<td>Issue-based association; Peace-building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Corporación Son Batá</td>
<td>Peru</td>
<td>Issue-based association; Public health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>My Fantasy</td>
<td>Peru</td>
<td>Working children’s association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Afadiph ONNATS</td>
<td>Peru</td>
<td>School council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>My Fantasy</td>
<td>Peru</td>
<td>Child &amp; youth development association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Municipio Escolar 27 de Mayo</td>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>Working children’s association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Kundala Adhikar Bal Club</td>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>Child rights club</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Shanti Shiksha Bal Club</td>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>Working children’s association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Hat Ma Hat Bal Club</td>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>Child rights club</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Hatemalo Bal Club</td>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>Child rights club</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Young Birds</td>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>Child rights club</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Value of Friendship Child Society</td>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>Child rights club</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>IUSECO</td>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>Municipal youth council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>EKTA</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>Child rights club/Subnational council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Moforay Child Rights Club</td>
<td>Sierra Leone</td>
<td>Child rights club</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Bumpe Kids Club</td>
<td>Sierra Leone</td>
<td>Child rights club</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Rewad</td>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>Working children’s/Youth development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Meshaat Keram</td>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>Child &amp; youth development Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Abu Mosalem</td>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>Child &amp; youth development association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Youth of the Future</td>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>Child &amp; youth development association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Qosqo Maki</td>
<td>Peru</td>
<td>Working children’s association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Funky Dragon</td>
<td>UK</td>
<td>National youth council</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5.2 Data available on children’s associations included in this study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ID</th>
<th>Group Name</th>
<th>No. of diagrams</th>
<th>Video explanation available</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Nadie Como Yo</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Red de Communicadores Infantiles</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Grupo de Ninos y Adolescentes Communicadores</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Soñadores</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>RedNaJava</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Movimiento National de Adolescentes y Jóvenes</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Gestores de Paz</td>
<td>4&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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</tr>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Corporación Son Batá</td>
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<td>Promotores de Salud</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>Afadiph ONNATS</td>
<td>3&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>My Fantasy</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
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<td>Yes</td>
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<td>Hatemalo Bal Club</td>
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<td>Young Birds</td>
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<tr>
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<td>2&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Moforay Child Rights Club</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Bumpe Kids Club</td>
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<td>No</td>
</tr>
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<td>24</td>
<td>Rewad</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Meshaat Keram</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Abu Mosalem</td>
<td>2&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Youth of the Future</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Qosqo Maki</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Funky Dragon</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup> Diagrams represent different levels of the organizational structure
<sup>b</sup> Diagrams represent perspectives of different members of the same group
What is a secondary analysis of qualitative data? Secondary analysis is a practice common in both quantitative and qualitative paradigms within social science research, and it is an increasingly valuable approach when researchers would like to reduce the burden on study participants or produce high quality research without the need for additional resources. Janet Heaton (2008) identified three modes of secondary analysis, as well as different types of secondary analysis. The first mode is formal data sharing, which involves accessing data via public or institutional archives that other researchers collected and deposited. The second mode is informal data sharing, which is more diverse than the former mode because it involves a wider scope of relationships between the individuals who collect the data and the individuals who analyze the data. In informal data sharing, according to Heaton:

Primary researchers may hand over their data to others, with the former having no part in the actual secondary analysis; or, primary researcher may share their data with other who were not involved in the primary research, and lead or be part of the secondary analysis team; or two or more primary researchers may get together to pool their own datasets that they collected separately, and work with other independent researchers in carrying out secondary analysis. (Heaton, 2008, p. 35)

The main difference between informal and formal data sharing is informal data sharing involves direct communication between individuals and does not necessarily use an established databank. The third mode of secondary analysis involves self-collected data. Here, researchers revisit data they collected previously in order to answer new questions that the primary research did not focus on. This mode may also include informal data sharing, whereby researchers pool together data from two or more previous studies.
This dissertation research is an example of Heaton’s second and third modes of secondary analysis. It involved informal data sharing because the children and adults who participated in the Article 15 Project workshops were the primary researchers who critically analyzed the organizational diagrams they created. Then, they shared these data by allowing me to photograph their organizational diagrams. They kept the originals, but had no role in my later analyses.

This dissertation research also involved self-collected data because it includes observational data that I collected as workshop facilitator. As I note in the previous chapter, the focus of this project was to develop participatory and highly visual methods for children’s membership groups to reflect critically on their organizational structure and decision-making practices. However, the secondary analysis in this dissertation focuses on analyzing data from a range of groups in order to develop an understanding of the landscape of organizational structures and decision-making practices different children’s associations employ, and to relate these strategies to theoretical and practical debates about childhood.

While the goals of the Article 15 Project and this dissertation were complementary, specific research questions about childhood and citizenship were not part of the original Article 15 Project research questions. This was a limitation because the existing data were not fully appropriate to answer all of the new questions that arose after data collection. However, the data in the Article 15 Project were always intended to allow for analyzing patterns of power across many children’s membership groups.

**Types of secondary analysis.** In addition to the three modes of secondary analysis that focus on sharing data, Heaton (2004, 2008) argued that there are at least five types of secondary analysis: (a) supplementary analysis; (b) supra analysis; (c) re-analysis; (d) amplified analysis; and (e) assorted analysis. For brevity and clarity, I present Heaton’s
(2004) distillations of these types of secondary analysis in Table 5.3, rather than review them in detail.

Table 5.3 Heaton’s Five Types of Secondary Analysis of Qualitative Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Supra analysis</td>
<td>Transcends the focus of the primary study from which the data were derived, examining new empirical, theoretical or methodological questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Supplementary analysis</td>
<td>Is a more in-depth investigation of an emergent issue or aspect of the data which was not considered or fully addressed in the primary study.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Re-analysis</td>
<td>Involves re-analyzing data to verify and corroborate primary analysis of qualitative data sets.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Amplified analysis</td>
<td>Combines data from two or more primary studies for the purposes of comparison or in order to enlarge a sample.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Assorted analysis</td>
<td>Combines secondary analysis of research data with primary research and/or analysis of naturalistic qualitative data.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Adapted from Heaton (2004, p. 38)

The secondary analysis I conducted for this dissertation research was both a supra and supplementary analysis according to Heaton’s typology. My analysis is supplementary because I reconsidered issues of age and gender power dynamics that were central to the development of the Article 15 Project resources, but I supplemented this with a systematic analysis across the range of groups in the dataset, rather than on a within-group basis. My analysis was also a supra analysis because of the additional consideration of how views of children’s capacities as citizens are reflected in specific organizational structures and decision-making practices. While the Article 15 Project developed out of the recognition of children’s rights—namely the right to peaceful assembly and right to form associations—the purpose of the project was not to investigate how this related to views of childhood citizenship. Instead, CERG researchers, myself included, designed the tools to enable the
groups to examine the patterns of power within each group’s organizational structure and its impact on the quality of the relationships among children, and between children and adults in the group. We did not have an analytical or theoretical framework for systematic comparative examination of organizational structures in the Article 15 Project. This was not the goal during the development phase of the initiative. However, CERG team members did imagine a subsequent stage would involve systematic analysis and theory building.

**Visual Analysis**

Visual analysis is an umbrella term for analyses of data that are visual rather than textual, such as paintings, photographs, videos, maps, drawings, print media, or other types of material culture. There are a growing number of specific methods within a visual approach—such as quantitative visual content analysis (Bell, 2001). There are also multiple methodological approaches within the paradigm of visual analysis or what Luttrell (2010) has called a *mode of visual research and analysis*, such as collaborative video ethnography (Luttrell, Restler, & Fontaine, 2012) and participatory video production (Guberium & Harper, 2013). Handbooks edited by Downing and Tenny (2008), Margolis and Pauwels (2011), and van Leeuwen and Jewitt (2004) also highlight the diversity of approaches within visual research and analysis. The discussions in these handbooks and other sources do not directly address the type of visual analysis I conducted. The organizational diagrams are diagrammatic visual data, and I photographed each in order for the participants to keep the original diagrams to refer to and share with their groups. So while I had the opportunity to see how participants created their diagrams during the data collection workshops, I also had a very different experience of analyzing the photographs of the diagrams at a later point in time and with the benefit of a wider range of data representing the Article 15 Project dataset.
Researchers using visual data have analyzed visual using coding systems that can be refined and replicated. Phillip Bell (2001) suggested a coding system for images using variables and values. Variables are distinct dimensions in which images differ, while values are the elements of each variable that may be grouped logically (Bell, 2001). Variables in a coding system are to be “logically or conceptually independent of every other distinguished in a particular research project” (Bell, 2001, p.16). Bell also noted that the values within each variable should also be “mutually exclusive and exhaustive” (p. 16, italics in original).

**Ways of seeing and my roles as data collector and analyst.** My analysis of the organizational diagrams occurred across my two distinct roles: my initial role as a facilitator in Article 15 Project workshops, and my subsequent role as an analyst attempting to develop a deeper understanding of children’s associations. I believe these two contexts created more than one way of seeing these diagrams, which is in line with John Berger’s (1972) argument that the context in which an image is viewed and the viewer’s subjectivity is critical to how one interprets the meaning of an image. Berger used Walter Benjamin’s (1936) critical analysis of how mechanical modes of reproduction have altered the value and meaning of art, and in particular European oil paintings from the 18th and 19th centuries. I am struck by the parallels between Berger’s visual analysis of paintings and my visual analysis of the diagrams produced during the Article 15 Project. For example, there is the fundamental issue of experiencing a reproduction of an image. During the workshops, I worked with participants and provided guidance for how to use and adapt the organizational diagram. Understanding the different organizational structures and decision-making patters was definitely part of my experience facilitating the workshop, but it was a secondary goal to determining if the workshop participants found the activity useful and how they adapted the methodology for their particular situation. Since the participants kept
their organizational diagrams, the photographs I took of the diagrams were critical for in-depth analysis at a later point in time.

Photographs of the organizational diagrams were mechanical reproductions of the materials created by the workshop participants. Like the European paintings that Berger examines, the images of organizational diagrams were silent and still. Each told a story, but my understanding of them was influenced by the context in which I studied them, which was on a computer screen and with the benefit of photographs of many organizational diagrams. In this way, like the paintings of Berger’s interest, the meaning of the organizational diagrams was construed. I could make multiple, even contradictory, arguments using the same visual data had I not had the benefit of being in the room when the workshop participants explained why they created the diagrams in the way they did. I wonder what my understanding the data might have been had I not participated in any or even some of the workshops. I raise this issue not to wring out all value from the findings I present in the next chapter. Instead, I ask the same as what John Berger asked of his viewers during the televised BBC program Ways of Seeing, “I hope that you consider what I have arranged, but be skeptical of it.” The goal of developing my analytical framework was to create an entry point into relatively unknown territory of the organizational structures of children’s associations.

**Developing My Own Analytical Framework**

Categorizing the organizational structures and decision-making processes in a children’s association is difficult because of (a) the subjectivity of the analyst, (b) the possible incompleteness of the de facto organizational structures because they are represented in two-dimensional space, and (c) the lack of appropriate terms for describing the range of possibilities in children’s associations.
In this research, the process of developing variables and values occurred across four phases of analysis: (1) informed code generation, (2) exploratory coding, (3) computer assisted analysis, and (4) confirmatory analysis. The reflexive nature of this phased approach afforded multiple opportunities to critique and refine a code list and structure for describing the organizational structure depicted in each diagram.

**Informed code generation (Phase 1).** The first phase, informed code generation, took place during the Article 15 Project workshops and while I wrote the proposal for this dissertation research. During the workshops, the shape of the overall organizational structure seemed to be an important variable, and there seemed to be at least three values: (a) hierarchical, which looks like a vertical branching structure with leaders placed at the top or center of the diagram; (b) collaborative, which depicts relative parity in how members communicate and participate in activities; and (c) hybrid, which utilizes components of both hierarchical and collaborative structures (Children’s Environment’s Research Group, 2011, p. 7). I also developed some rudimentary code values during this phase for the variable of organizational roles. For example, the term *leader* was a common role in the majority of groups, although at least one group preferred the term ‘mentor’ to denote a more horizontal power relationship. Since a large part of the development of the organizational diagram tool focused on issues of inclusion and equity among groups members from different gender, age and other demographic groups, these also became variables with distinct values (Table 5.4).
Table 5.4 Preliminary List of Variables and Values for Visual Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>No. of values</th>
<th>Values</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organizational structure shape</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Hierarchical (top-down); Hierarchical (bottom-up); Funnel; Rectangular; Concentric; Horizontal; Single full circle; Half-moon; Modular-committees; Modular-age; Module-gender; Metaphorical-mechanistic; Metaphorical-organic; Metaphorical-geographic; Amorphous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age &amp; gender group</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Number of young girls (12 years of age and younger); Number of young boys (12 years of age and younger); Number of adolescent girls (13 to 17 years of age); Number of adolescent boys (13 to 17 years of age); Number of young women (18 to 25 years of age); Number of young men (18 to 25 years old); Number of adult women (26 years of age and older); Number of adult men (26 years of age and older)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Type</td>
<td>Various</td>
<td>(See Table 5.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational roles</td>
<td>Various</td>
<td>(See Tables 5.6 and 5.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spectrum of views on</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Children are viewed as citizens; Children are viewed as becoming citizens; Unclear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>childhood citizenship</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While I wrote the proposal for this dissertation research, I developed a more nuanced set of values to differentiate codes for the variables of organizational share and organizational roles. I created over a dozen codes to further define organizational shapes that branched from the three code families of hierarchical, collaborative, and hybrid structures. Fourteen of these values fit within the definition of one of the original three values: hierarchical, collaborative or hybrid. The remaining value, amorphous, was a value family on its own. The four main values (Level 1 codes) could be further divided in seven values (Level 2 codes), which could also be further divided into the 11 values (Level 3 codes; see Figure 5.1).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level 1 Codes</th>
<th>Level 2 Codes</th>
<th>Level 3 Codes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. Hierarchical | 1.1 Pyramidal | 1.1.1 Hierarchical (top-down), Increasingly smaller numbers of leaders toward top; Upper levels bestow power at lower levels  
1.1.2 Hierarchical (bottom-up), Increasingly smaller numbers of leaders toward top; Lower levels empower upper levels  
1.1.3 Funnel, Increasingly smaller numbers of leaders toward top; Balanced communication up and down pyramid, but members speak through spokespersons |
|               | 1.2 Rectangular, Equal numbers of leaders and members |
|               | 1.3 Concentric, Increasingly smaller numbers of leaders toward center axis |
|               | 2.1 Horizontal, All members equal  
2.2 Circular | 2.2.1 Single Full Circle, All members equal  
2.2.2 Half-moon, All members equal |
| 2. Collaborative | 3.1 Modular | 3.1.1 Committees, Division based on activities  
3.1.2 Age groups, Division based on age  
3.1.3 Gender groups, Division based on gender |
|               | 3.2 Metaphorical | 3.2.1 Mechanistic, Mimics mechanical process or object (e.g., club president is the captain of an airplane)  
3.2.2 Organic, Mimics natural/biological process, object, or organism (e.g., spider web)  
3.2.3 Geographic, Mimics local, regional, national, or international locations and political borders |
| 3. Hybrid | 4. Amorphous, Without a clearly defined shape |

Figure 5.1 Value families for the variable “organizational structure shape”

Another milestone during this phase was identifying group type as a variable of interest (Table. 5.5). Group type related to the purpose of the group, which is related to the group’s mission and membership base. For example, most children’s associations who participated in the Article 15 Project workshops described themselves as child rights groups. Some groups self-described as child and youth development groups, and others had very specific missions based on the activities they engaged in, such as producing a radio program, or their membership, such as a working children’s union.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group type</th>
<th>Working definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child/Youth Development</td>
<td>Activities support members’ physical, mental, and social skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nationalistic/Political</td>
<td>Linked to local or national politics and/or ideologies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scouting</td>
<td>Supporting character development and outdoor skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Council</td>
<td>Elected or appointed decision-making body in a school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child/Youth Council</td>
<td>Elected or appointed decision-making body in a community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working Children’s Unions</td>
<td>Collectives of working children or street-connected children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play/Leisure</td>
<td>Activities focus on sporting, recreation, and/or the arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue-based</td>
<td>Formed for a single or set of environmental/social issue(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Rights Club</td>
<td>Activities focuses on supporting/promoting children's rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO Service Delivery</td>
<td>Primarily a means to provide children programmed services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Types to be determined and not specified above</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 5.6 Organizational roles for child and youth members generated during informed coding phase

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Working definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>Most powerful leadership position in a group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice President</td>
<td>Second most powerful leadership position in a group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretary</td>
<td>Member responsible for managing group records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>Member responsible for managing group finances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promoter</td>
<td>Member responsible for managing membership and news</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activities Captain</td>
<td>Member responsible for sports and recreation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Committee Chair</td>
<td>Head of subgroup with specific responsibilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant</td>
<td>Involved in both group activities and governance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader</td>
<td>Participant with special decision-making powers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Committee Member</td>
<td>Leader in leadership subgroup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Members</td>
<td>Non-leader in non-leader subgroup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Recipient</td>
<td>Participates in order to receive or participate in a service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow</td>
<td>Member apprenticing in a specific role in the group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advisor</td>
<td>Individual providing long-term support and guidance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitator</td>
<td>Head animator and coordinator of group activities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 5.7 Organizational roles adult members generated during informed coding phase

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Working definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advisor</td>
<td>Individual providing long-term support and guidance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patron</td>
<td>Individual funder also acting as an advisor; may be religious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitator</td>
<td>Head animator and coordinator of group activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer</td>
<td>Supports facilitator in group animation and coordination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO Representative</td>
<td>Staff member of a non-governmental organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street worker</td>
<td>Social worker in a particular neighborhood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultant</td>
<td>Person invited for short-term support and guidance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Instructor at a local school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordinator</td>
<td>Program coordinator at a local community organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director</td>
<td>Administrator at a local community organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent</td>
<td>Mother, father or guardian of club member who provides support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funder</td>
<td>Individual/group providing financial support</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Exploratory coding (Phase 2).** The second phase of analysis, exploratory coding, took place mainly during the autumn of 2014. I examine all the organizational diagrams and piloted the list of values for each variable I identified in Phase One (see Table 5.4). I recorded my analyses of the organizational diagrams of each group in a spreadsheet.

An important milestone during the exploratory coding phase was testing the utility of increasing the number of values for the variable *organizational shape* from three to 15 values. For some organizational diagrams, I found it difficult to justify why the organizational shape should be one value over another, and there were some organizational structures that could have more than one value. For this reason, and because there were many expected shapes that did not manifest, I reverted back to the three model system of (a) hierarchical, (c) collaborative, and (c) hybrid (see Figures 5.2 and 5.3). However, I also started to start to generate codes about the important components that made up each organizational structure, rather than the morphology of the overall diagram of each group.

During the exploratory coding phase, I also generated a list of *in vivo* codes for organizational roles based on information on the organizational diagrams or in video recordings or my field notes. I added these to my original list of organizational roles that I developed during the informed code generation phase. The result of *in vivo* coding of organizational roles was a list of over 50 unique codes for organizational roles. Based on these roles, I was able to examine the distribution of elected or appointed roles amongst the gender and age groups within each children’s association. I created ratios of these distributions in my spreadsheet for exploratory coding, but looking for patterns became challenging because there were so many variables and values to consider at one time. In order to harness the complexity of the data and further analyze these data, it was necessary to begin using a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software that would...
allow for more powerful quantitative analytic tools, such as calculating co-occurrences, as well as tools that allow to generate and manipulate qualitative data visualizations.

Figure 5.2 Twenty-three groups categorized by the 15 values for organizational structure shape

Figure 5.3 Twenty-three groups categorized by the four value families for organizational structure
Translating diagrams from languages other than English. Out of the 29 organizational diagrams, 14 contained participants’ handwritten annotations in Spanish, ten in English, four in Arabic, and one in Hindi. I translated and coded the organizational diagram in Spanish myself since Spanish is my heritage language, and I requested support from two colleagues to translate annotations written in Arabic and Hindi. While the Hindi-to-English translations did not present any issues, the four diagrams in Arabic required further discussion between me and my colleague about some terms with awkward translations into English.

There were five phrases that required discussions with the translator to resolve awkward phrases. For example, one of the organizational diagrams from the four Egyptian groups in the study used phrase that translated into English as “financial check committee”, while two other groups from Egypt used a more common Arabic phrase for “treasurer”. While the terms are different, they do not seem to reflect significantly different roles in the organization, so I decided to treat them as synonymous phrases. There were four additional terms that required similar discussion with the translator. One of these terms presented a similar issue as detailed above where the group used a term that could be translated either as “chief executive office” or “manager”. I chose to use “chief executive officer” because this was the most direct translation. Another term was an acronym, “C.B.R.”, that I clarified based on my field notes. This is an acronym for “community-based rehabilitation”, a program for children with disabilities coordinated by the agency that sponsored the children’s association. The two remaining discrepancies were terms that required a discussion between me and my colleague. In one group, participants labeled part of their diagram the “sales and marketing committee”, but there were no additional data points to clarify if the role of this committee was for fundraising or
publicity and outreach. In a different group, there was a “social committee”, but there were no additional data points to clarify whether the committee organized social activities for the members of the group or for outreach purposes.

None of the instances of awkward translations presented significant challenges to my analysis. I was able to resolve each one after communicating with my colleagues who helped me translate; however, these examples do serve as a caution for future research that aims to move beyond a preliminary examination of the internal organizational structure of children’s associations. Future research on this topic would benefit from a more ethnographic approach that seeks to understand the origins of the naming conventions of different roles or subgroups. Investigating how children’s associations partner with other organizations may also shed light on how individuals or groups external to the children’s associations potentially influence the naming conventions.

Computer-assisted Qualitative Data Analysis (Phase 3). Computer-assisted qualitative data analysis (CAQDA) is the practice of using computer software to augment the toolkit of qualitative approaches to data analysis. There are dozens of CAQDA software available, such as ATLAS.ti, Nvivo, Leximancer, DEDOOS, and TAMS Analyzer. While some software automatically computes some statistics, such as co-occurrences, most analyses are not automated. An investigator must code the data and manipulate how coded data are organized in order to make conclusions that relate to an empirical or theoretical objective. Each CAQDA package handles textual data, such as Rich Text Format (RTF) or Portable Document Format (PDF). Fewer CAQDA software packages handle visual data, such as Joint Photographic Experts Group (JPEG) or Moving Pictures Experts Group (MPEG). I chose to use ATLAS.ti for my analysis for three reasons: (a) it handled visual data; (b) it is the CAQDA packages most of my colleagues used and who served as a resource for
critiquing and suggesting improvements to my analysis; and (c) it was available via my university’s remote computing software.

Using the code organization functions in ATLAS.ti, I organized values into code families based on the list of variables I developed (see Table 5.4). The reason I transcribed my coding process from Phases One and Two into ATLAS.ti was that once these data were entered into the ATLAS.ti environment, I could use the software to more easily compute and reorganize how data was displayed. This allowed me to quickly produce frequencies for specific codes that directly answered some of my research questions. For example, I generated frequencies for the number of members in each club, as well as for the age and gender of each member. This allowed me to generate gender and age range ratios to examine a group’s membership demographics. I could also quickly identify all the children’s associations that utilized a specific type of organizing strategy. I also used the frequencies to identify similarities and differences between the rates at which members of specific age and gender groups took on elected or appointed roles.

The ATLAS.ti user interface. All of my codes were documented in the margin of the ATLAS.ti interface, which is much like the margin of a written document where an investigator might make short-hand notes (Figure 5.4). Quotes in an image are created by selecting two coordinate on the image, which created a rectangle around a selected area. These frequencies could be computed without ATLAS.ti, but in addition to faster computation of frequencies, the software also allowed for identifying co-occurrences among two or more codes, as well as using network views to manipulate the relationships among codes and cases in order to gain a different or deeper level of understanding of the data.
Organization of codes into network views. Network views are a graphical, two-dimensional representation of nodes and the links between nodes. In ATLAS.ti, nodes may be multiple type of information, such as the primary documents included in the analysis or even specific parts of the document that have been coded. In ATLAS.ti, these coded data points are called quotes. Figure 5.5 is a screenshot of a network view from my analysis of
the organizational roles I coded across the organizational diagrams in Article 15 Project dataset.

![Diagram of organizational roles](image)

**Figure 5.5** A network view of organizational roles identified in the dataset

Essentially, a network view is a map of the relationships between data points. The nodes may be organized and reorganized, which allowed for an iterative process of identifying patterns in the data and refining understandings of the data in order to more clearly answer a research question. I used network views to help answer some of my specific research questions, such as examining the relationship between organizational components and whether some components improved or diminished opportunities for members to take on specific organizational roles. Network views were also useful for consolidating codes and rethinking how I might have organized codes into code families.
Incorporation of textual data with the visual data. Another useful tool of ATLAS.ti was the ability to include textual data alongside visual data. In this study, textual data included field notes and memos that I would write during my analysis in order to keep a record of my thoughts and how they changed over time. This process of creating memos became increasingly important as my analysis developed because keeping track of all my curiosities about the data was a cumbersome task. Using ATLAS.ti helped spur my curiosity to examine the data in different ways, and it also helped me build and hone the theoretical framework for understanding the organizational structures of children’s associations.

A brief note about ATLAS.ti. The creators of the first version of ATLAS.ti developed the software from 1989 to 1992 and released it for public use in 1993. This first version handled only textual data, and the user interface was largely shaped by grounded theory approach to qualitative data analysis. For this reason, the process of using ATLAS.ti to analyze visual data is also shaped by a grounded theory approach. Ground theory is a “general methodology for developing theory that is grounded in data systematically gather and analyzed” (Strauss & Corbin, 1994, p. 273, italics in original). Multiple methods are part of the ground theory approach, including multiple stages of coding and memo writing that become more focused as the process advances (for a detailed review, see Charmaz, 2006). The ATLAS.ti environment facilitates the generation of a rigid code structures produce conceptual categories useful for comparisons, as well as memo writing that may be organized in relationship to codes.

New features are added to the software as sufficient need arises among the community of ATLAS.ti users. The ability for ATLAS.ti to handle graphical images was added in 2005 with the release of ATLAS.ti 5. Analyzing visual data has improved in subsequent versions, including the version I used, ATLAS.ti 7. As with analyzing textual
data, an investigator analyzing visual data remains in full control of the analytical process. In this way, the software is a digital version of a field notebook. It has many powerful analytical tools to help visualize, compute, and reorganize data, but it only makes records of what the investigator notices.

**Confirmatory Analysis (Phase 4).** The fourth and final phase of analysis involved confirming the preliminary typology developed in previous phases as new organizational diagram data become available from new workshops with children’s associations. This phase is nascent and on-going. At the time of writing, there are six organizational diagrams that I have examined using the preliminary typology. The typology accounts for nearly all of the organizational roles, organizational structure components and strategies identified during Phase 3, except for one. I describe this one exception in Chapter 6 (Findings).

**Revised Research Questions**

In the next chapter, I report the results from my secondary analyses of visual data from the Article 15 Project. Before doing so, it is important share my revised research questions since my thinking about how to analyze the data in this study evolved during the process of developing an analytical framework. Revising my initial questions also seems appropriate since little guidance for analyzing the organizational structures of a range of new types of children’s associations existed in the literature. Additionally, as I came to understand the available data, I realized they were insufficient for fully answering all of my initial questions. Below are my revised research questions which take into account the evolution of my analytical framework and what I could answer with confidence. These revised research questions include:
A. What are the organizational roles in this sample of children’s associations?

B. Are there patterns of age or gender inclusion or exclusion in organizational roles?

C. What organizational strategies do children’s associations in this sample employ?

D. What specific organizational strategies do these children’s associations use to promote inclusion and equity among members of their group in decision-making processes?

E. If a children’s associations uses multiple organizational strategies, how does each organizational strategy contribute to the overall organizational structure?

Together, these questions address the overarching goal of this dissertation—to examine how new types of children’s associations around the world are organizing themselves, and how their organizational structures reflect new understandings of children’s capacities as citizens. Through the process of developing my analytical framework, it became clear that there was inadequate data to directly respond to the question of how the organizational structures reflect new understandings of children’s capacities as citizens. Instead, I limited my analysis of the data to the organizational roles, components, and strategies; and in Chapter 7 (Discussion) and Chapter 8 (Reflections and Future Directions), I reflect on the implications of the findings from this analysis for understanding different perspectives of children’s capacities as citizens.
Building a Preliminary Typology

In this section I provide a preliminary typology of the organizational roles and structures of children’s membership groups included in this study. By claiming a typology, I risk omission and conflation of concepts and organizational structure types. Therefore, it is important to emphasize that these findings are preliminary and meant to invite constructive critique on how to expand and refine a language and theoretical frameworks that describe the many ways children organize themselves in their associations. I believe that even this preliminary attempt is valuable because so far there is no typology of organizational structures, and there has been an absence of research on children in organizational studies (Kavanagh, 2013). Nevertheless, my typology of organizational structures utilizes three important concepts in organizational theory: roles, relationships, and groups within an organization (Hare, 2003). However, I use the term *organizational structure components* in lieu of *groups* to describe subgroups and other parts of the overall structure.

I also use the term *organizational structure components* because of my theoretical approach to the data. I agree with other childhood studies scholars who argue for moving from using strict dichotomies toward theorizing complexities and overlaps between dualisms (Prout, 2011). Categorizations of human experience are problematic. Categorizations, such as different cultures, typically have as much variation within each category as there exists between categories (Wainryb, 2006). I see children’s membership groups in a similar light, where members of a children’s group may espouse different visions of organizing their group. Deconstructing the organizational structure of a group into organizational structure components allows for a more nuanced analysis of power
dynamics. For this reason, I emphasize the components of organizational structures in addition to each group’s organizational structure as a whole. In this way, it is possible to investigate how the same organizational components may blend differently in different groups to create distinct organizational structures. This two-level analysis also allows for identifying conflicting and synergizing views of how children’s capacities as citizens are represented within part or the whole of an organizational structure.

**Organizational roles.** *In vivo* coding of organizational diagrams revealed at least 87 terms for organizational roles. Some terms appeared to be variations of organizational roles that functioned similarly in different groups, such as “staff member” and “office staff”. I merged similar terms for clearly similar roles. I did not merge other sets of terms, such as “president” and “chairperson”, because despite *prima facie* similarities, discriminating between each term might service later phases of analysis. In this case, the distinction between the responsibilities between a president and chairperson remained ambiguous. After merging codes similar roles, such as “staff member” and “office staff”, there were approximately 50 terms for distinct organizational roles across the dataset of 29 organizational diagrams.

I organized these 50 roles into three main types: elected or appointed roles, membership roles, and organizational support roles. I further categorized elected or appointed roles (Table 6.1), as well as organizational support roles (Table 6.2), into subtypes. Interestingly, there were only five membership type roles. Practically every organizational diagram focused on identifying elected or appointed roles with specific position titles in their organizational diagrams (Table 6.3). Some diagrams represented members with seemingly important functions, according to directional lines symbolizing relationships, but these figures did not have a specific title for their organizational function. Some discussions during workshops addressed the important contributions of members
who were not formally recognized on the organizational diagrams. For example, none of the
organizational diagrams identified group members who were trusted confidants or who
arrive early to set up a meeting space. However, participants included these tasks as part
of what makes a good group. As noted in the previous chapter, the organizational diagram
is a static image of a group’s organizational structure. I suspect that with repeated use and
facilitation, groups would come to identify untitled organizational roles in their diagrams, as
intended in the design of the organizational diagram methodology.

Table 6.1 Elected and appointed role types and frequencies in dataset

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>In Vivo Codes (Number of groups)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Executive roles</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President/Chairperson (17)</td>
<td>Assistant Treasurer (1)**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice President (10)</td>
<td>Business Manager (1)**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretary (9)</td>
<td>Assistant Business Manager (1)**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice/Assistant Secretary (3)</td>
<td>Director (1)***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasurer (7)</td>
<td>Manager (1)***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Relations/Publicity Officer (4)</td>
<td>Artistic Coordinator (1)***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At-large Board Member (4)</td>
<td>Executive Director (1)****</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ombudsperson (1)*</td>
<td>Chief Executive Officer (1)†</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economy Board Member (1)*</td>
<td>Development Manager (1)†</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiscal Board Member (1)*</td>
<td>Games Captain (1)‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization Board Member (1)*</td>
<td>Assistant Games Captain (1)‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Representative roles</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighborhood/Local Representative (2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subnational Representative (5)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Representative (3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subgroup roles</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subgroup President/Leader (7)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. *Only in Afadiph ONNATs; **Only in IUSECO; ***Only in Corporación Son Batá; ****Only in Abu Mosalem; †Only in Funky Dragon; ‡Only in Moforay Child Rights Club
Table 6.2 Organizational support roles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>In Vivo Codes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advisory</td>
<td>Youth Mentor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gender and Afro Culture Equity Advisor*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Peace and Conviviality Advisor*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-dimensional</td>
<td>Office Staff Member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Educator**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Volunteers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Facilitator/Trainer/Mobilizer***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Doctor****</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Consultant†</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>INGO Staff member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial</td>
<td>Government Sponsor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>INGO Sponsor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Administrator**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Accountant‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Corporate Sponsor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Only in Corporación Son Batá; **Only in Qosqo Maki; ***Terms found in different groups, but roles seem identical based on observational data; ****Only in Promotores de Salud; †Only in Soñadores; ‡Only in RedNaJava

Table 6.3 Membership roles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>In Vivo Codes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General</td>
<td>General member (unspecified)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>General assembly member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Status Specific</td>
<td>Semillero*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Beneficiary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cluster role</td>
<td>Subgroup member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Children working in the bakery or carpentry shop**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Only in Gestores de Paz; **Only in Qosqo Maki

**Elected and appointed roles.** The majority of organizational roles that I identified across the dataset were what I call *elected and appointed roles*, and the majority of these roles functioned in an *executive* capacity—that is, they were responsible for managing the group, in general, and for completing specific organizational responsibilities. They were also common positions in what some children’s associations called *executive committees*. *Presidents and chairpersons* were the most common *executive roles*. I identified 17 organizational diagrams with either of these two roles. Five groups had *executive roles* not
found in any other group, such as an ombudsperson. And with the exception of a games
captain and assistant games captain in one group, all of the executive roles had titles that
are the same as senior management positions in business corporations.

Table 6.4 details executive role descriptions that I excerpted and adapted from a
document describing the functions of roles in the Shishu Panchayat, a children’s assembly
in India (The Peace Gong, 2013). Representatives from Shishu Panchayat did not
participate in this study, but I excerpt their summary of roles here because the descriptions
of functions for each executive role are clear and similar to roles in the groups who
participated in this study.

Table 6.4 Edited descriptions for executive roles in the Shishu Panchayat

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Functions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>Coordinate meetings and activities of Shishu Panchayat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice-President</td>
<td>Coordinate meetings and activities of Shishu Panchayats in the absence of the President</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretary</td>
<td>Writes minutes of all meetings of Shishu Panchayats; Responsible of all the liaising work with various stakeholders like teachers/ other officials etc.; Ensures that all the decisions taken by the Panchayat are implemented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media Secretary</td>
<td>Ensures that the Shishu Panchayat wall paper which is generally brought out every month comes in time; S/he coordinates with Secretary to assign responsibilities to members to write on specific issues/ develop illustrations for the wall papers; S/he develops action plan for wide publicity of the wall papers and invites people to read them. S/he gets feedback from the readers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Secretary</td>
<td>Coordinates cultural activities of Shishu Panchayats from time to time.; Coordinates with other stakeholders for conducting cultural programs regularly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>Responsible for the functioning of the Shishu Panchayat Bank; S/he ensures that all members contribute every month; S/he keeps an account of the expenditures incurred.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I identified *representative roles* using information on the organizational diagrams that implicitly and explicitly indicated coordination with other organizations at local, subnational, and national levels. No group identified international representatives, but it is possible that some groups elected or appointed one or more members to represent their group at international events, such as conferences.

Two groups with local representatives connected to governance structures within their communities, *panchayats* and *barangays*—in India and the Philippines, respectively.\(^\text{15}\) EKTA is a child parliament in India. IUSECO is a council of barangay representatives in the Philippines. Although these were local governance structures and deal with local issues, they were mandated and supported by either subnational or national policies in each country, and they connected to policy-making bodies at multiple geographic scales. This provided these children’s membership groups a link to multiple levels of policy and decision-making.

In a third group, *Gestores de Paz* (Colombia), representatives from multiple neighborhood groups formed a *mesa local*—a decision-making and coordinating group that operates at the level of the municipality. Figure 6.1 includes photographs of this multi-level organizational diagram. In Figure 6.2, I recreated these photographs to depict the information in the photographs with greater clarity and with additional data from my discussion with the workshop participants from this group.

The members in this group were representatives who are chosen from adolescent and youth who facilitated programming for younger children in the different neighborhood groups. The *mesa local* was the first linkage between the neighborhood-level to a larger network of groups within their multi-level organization that operates at the neighborhood,\(^\text{15}\)

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\(^{15}\) See Protacio-de Castro et al. (2007) for a more details the connections between children’s associations and local government in the Philippines.
municipal, and national levels. In between the mesa local and the neighborhood-level
groups for children was a group for ‘mentores’—the leaders of the neighborhood-level
groups for young children. These groups are places where mentores may get support from
one another in the day-to-day running of their neighborhood groups. This is helpful for the
adolescent leaders who are capable of running a small group discussions and mentoring
younger children, but who also benefit from opportunities to improve their capacities in this
role. In this way, the representatives also perform an organizational support role. The
representatives in the mesa local, therefore, liaise between their neighborhood children’s
groups, their group of neighborhood mentors, and a group of national-level representatives
who, similarly, are elected from the mesa local in their municipality.
Figure 6.1 Edited photographs of four organizational diagrams for *Gestores de Paz*, Colombia
Figure 6.2 Recreated and organizational diagrams for Gestores de Paz, Colombia
A number of groups identified subnational, national, and national representatives. The role of subnational representatives varied depending on nature of their membership group and geographic scale of their region. Some groups working in a particular town or city, such as Promotores de Salud (Peru), had one person whose role involved coordination with representatives from other organizations within a specific part of the country. Other membership groups that were part of programs implemented throughout an entire country, such as Gestores de Paz (Colombia), had many subnational representatives from, each representing a mesa local, the local decision-making body.

National representatives were part of three organizations in the dataset: Movimiento de Niños, Niñas, Adolecentes y Jóvenes de Nicaragua (Nicaragua), Gestores de Paz (Colombia), Funky Dragon (UK). The representatives in these groups were part of a national committee that deliberated issues relevant to young people across their nation.

Participants in the workshops were eager to discuss the various local, subnational, and national networks with which their group collaborates. However, some organizational diagrams did not include data on these representational roles. This discrepancy between workshop discussions and the organizational diagrams suggests there may be more local, subnational, and national representatives in these groups than participants identified on the organizational diagrams. This has two important implications for the current study. First, it is difficult determine if these representative roles are common among children’s associations. Second, it is difficult to determine whether one person typically undertakes this role, presumably the president of a group, or if the opportunity to represent the group rotates regularly among group members. It seems both strategies are likely and depend on each specific group.

Subgroup leaders are third type of elected or appointed role. In some groups, subgroup leaders play a dual role as both executive committee member as well as the
leader of a thematic subgroup, such as a sports cluster or technology committee. However, in other groups, subgroup leaders are not part of the executive committee and are an intermediary layer of leadership. I elaborate on these and more aspects of subgroup leaders later in this chapter, but it is important to make this initial distinction here to justify why subgroup leaders are their own type of role.

**Membership roles.** My analysis suggests there are only five types of membership roles identified in the organizational diagrams, but these roles apply to the majority of members in 24 out of the 29 groups in this study. The remaining five children’s membership groups are entirely made up of members in elected or appointed roles and organizational support roles. The terms general member and subgroup member relate to specific organizational structure components—executive committees and subgroups, respectively. Groups with executive committees used the term general member to describe group members who do not sit on the executive committee. In groups with subgroups, the term subgroup member described a member in a specific subgroup. One group, Gestores de Paz (Colombia), used the term semillero to describe young children in their local children’s group. *Semillero* is the Spanish word for seedling. In the Gestores de Paz, *semilleros* were the young children being trained by mentores (adolescent mentors) to become *gestores de paz*—peacekeepers.

The fifth type of membership role was a beneficiary. According to discussions with workshop participants, beneficiaries do not necessarily participate in the children’s membership group on a regular basis and, therefore, do not participate regularly in group decisions. Instead, they may attend events or receive services organized by the children’s membership group. The term beneficiary is found only in one organizational diagram, but the diagrams for other groups suggest that there may be individuals filling a similar membership role.
**Organizational support roles.** Organizational support roles are positions that are not central to a group’s decision-making (though some are), but that are essential to the day-to-day functioning and sustainability of a group. Adults almost exclusively fill organizational support roles, though in some groups older youth provide organizational support as facilitators and volunteers.

There were at least three subtypes of organizational support roles: advisory, multidimensional and financial (Table 6.2). Individuals in an advisory organizational support role provide guidance to all group members or, in some cases, mentor specific groups members who have elected or appointed roles. Multi-dimensional organizational support roles provide advice, but they may also facilitate training sessions, purchase materials, and secure meeting space for the group. Individuals providing financial organizational support are directly fundraising or liaising with sponsors.

Discussions with participants suggested that individuals who fulfill an advisory role, or multi-dimensional role, had more involvement in the day-to-day function of a group than individuals providing financial services. I would need more detailed information than is currently available from organizational diagrams and participant observations to fully and accurately understand these roles. There is also the related issue of how these roles are influenced by the relationships with local or international child-centered community development agencies. My personal observations suggest that adults most often fulfill the role of being a liaison between a children’s group and a local organization or international agency, or even liaise on behalf of multiple children’s group. These individuals are typically not considered members of the group even though they work closely and consistently with the children and youth.
Interestingly, the silhouette figures representing individuals in organizational support roles were often on the perimeter of the organizational diagram, either in the corners, at the top, or at the bottom. To me, this suggests that these individuals were not members of the group, but workshop participants believed these individuals made important contributions to the group’s milieu. Workshop participants from the following groups placed silhouette figures on the periphery of the organizational structure and representing individuals with organizational support roles: Youth of the Future (Egypt), Afadiph ONNATs (Peru), Moforay Child Rights Club (Sierra Leone), Bumpe Kids Club (Sierra Leone), and Qosqo Maki (Peru). However, there are diagrams with organizational support roles in the center of the diagram as well, such as Hatemalo Bal Club’s organizational diagram. Future research on this topic would benefit from discussions about whether participants’ placement of specific figures onto the diagram is intentional and, if so, what meaning it conveys. More importantly than the placement of adults within an organization diagram, the organizational diagram activity must be facilitated in such a way to examine the de facto roles of adults who support the club, rather than only the stated roles. It may be the case that adults, who are highly supportive of children organizing themselves, downplay the importance of their supportive roles or the degree of influence they have over the children’s decision-making. Related to this, it may be that adults overstate the degree of self-governance and ownership children experience in their association. These dynamics will likely only be revealed after prolonged ethnographic observations.

**An additional role discovered in confirmatory analysis.** Review of organizational diagrams created during the confirmatory analysis phase revealed one additional type of role, an “alpha group” member. According to the creator of this diagram, the members of the alpha group are general members, but they have proven themselves to go beyond what the group expect a general member to be in terms of the time they dedicate to group
activities as well as the manner they conduct themselves in the group. Because of these positive contributions to the group, they are elected to an elite membership status. It is unclear if election to this status brings added benefits or, perhaps, complications for these members or other members in the children’s association. In my questioning of this membership role, the participant assured me that this role was to stimulate other members to become more involved, rather than create a division between elite and non-elite members.

Organizational Structure Components

My analysis suggests that there are at least nine main organizational components of the internal organizational structures of children’s associational. I detail each below.

**General membership body.** In some groups with *executive committees or boards*, a *general member* was an individual who did not hold a specific *executive role*. However, groups also used the term more broadly as a catchall phrase to describe all members of a children’s membership group. This included members who participate in a group’s activities regularly, as well as those who attend less often. This idea of degrees of involvement is part of some child and youth organizing models because of the perspective that acknowledges the natural ebb and flood of membership.

**General assembly of members.** Some groups specifically identified a general assembly in their organizational structure. This organizational structure component was distinct from a general membership body because it suggests regular meetings and the relatively equal decision-making power among general assembly members. For example, in *Qosqo Maki*, a working children’s association, the general assembly meets once per week, but additional meetings may be called as needed. In this case, all people participating in the general assembly receive an equal vote, regardless of their age or the length of time
they have been involved in the group. Adults also participate in the general assembly of this organization with equal vote.

**General assembly of representatives.** A general assembly of representatives is a type of general assembly of members but, because its members are representatives, the structure and function is distinct. These assemblies comprised of members who were elected or appointed to advocate on behalf of other children and/or youth. These types of groups are often called ‘councils’ in English. The general assemblies of representatives in three different groups contained pairs of representatives from the different geographic regions they represent. In all of these three groups, one girl and one boy are part of each pair—an institutionalized gender equity strategy. In the Article 15 dataset, each of the following children’s membership organizations depicted general assemblies of representatives: IUSECO, a municipal child and youth council in the Philippines; Funky Dragon, a national child and youth council in the UK; and Gestores de Paz, a multi-level children’s membership organization in Colombia.

**Subgroups, committees, and clusters.** *Subgroup* is an umbrella term for the multiple and diverse types of committees and clusters of members within a children’s membership group. A *committee* is a type of subgroup with regular members who have specific organizational roles. For example, all members of an executive committee may have specific *executive roles*. Conversely, most members of a *cluster* do not have a specific role, and it appears the boundary for membership in clusters is more porous in some groups, meaning members may volunteer to join or leave the cluster as the wish, and be involved in more than one cluster.

There were just over 20 types of committees and clusters coded in the dataset for this study and, based on their purpose, each may be categorized into one or more of the following types of subgroups: organizational management, organizational programming,
and organizational support. Table 6.5 lists codes for these subgroup types in detail.

Organizational management committees and clusters were titled according to the tasks or roles of its members, such as the executive committee or finance committee.

Organizational programming subgroups are responsible for ongoing activities and specific events within a particular theme, such as “environment” or “health”. Some workshop participants described how some clusters would put on specific activities during a holiday day or festival, such as International Children’s Day.\(^\text{16}\)

Table 6.5 Typology of subgroups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>In Vivo Codes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organizational</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td>Executive committee (17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Board of directors (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Technology/Media committee (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Finance committee (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Management committee/team (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Documentation committee (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Marketing and creativity committee (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Organizational committee (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Communications committee (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organizational</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programming</td>
<td>Culture/Theater/Music subgroup (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Health subgroup/ministry (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sports subgroup (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Education subgroup/ministry (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Environment subgroup (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social Committee (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Activities (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aflatoon subgroup (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Drawing subgroup (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tutoring subgroup (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Working children subgroup (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organizational</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support</td>
<td>Advisory committee (9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Facilitator group (7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Administrative (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Training and skill building (1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Executive committees.* Executive committees are a specialized subgroup of members who are responsible for managing the group, in general, and hold specific decision-making authority when completing specific tasks. Executive committees were part of 17 out of the 29 organizational diagrams, making it the most common organizational

\(^{16}\) Children’s Day is celebrated in many countries around the world on different dates, and multiple groups participating in this study mentioned their activities on this day.
structure component. In most cases, groups used the term, executive committee, but the terms executive board, management committee and board of directors were also common.

All executive committees had at least three members, though five to seven members were most common. The largest number of members of an executive committee was about 12 members. Specific organizational roles were relatively consistent across the executive committees of different groups. A president or chairperson was always the primary executive committee member. Secretaries and treasurers, as well as “assistant” positions for these roles, were also common executive committee members, as described above in the section on organizational roles. Executive committee members were typically identified with stickers or placed in a circle, signifying equal power. In most of these cases, the president or chairperson was placed at the top of the circle.

Technically, an executive committee is subordinate to the desires of a larger group, but the organizational diagrams and observations during workshops suggested that this varies by group. During a workshop with the Shanti Shiksha Bal Club (Nepal), executive committee members created a separate organizational diagram from the general members with whom they later compared and discussed the similarities and differences. One of the main differences was the placement of these two organizational structure components, the executive committee and general membership body, on the organizational diagram. Whereas the general members placed the executive committee within a large circle of general members, the executive committee created a diagram with the executive committee members in a circle and above two lines of general members, effectively creating a semi-pyramidal structure.

In a third example, the Municipio Escolar 27 de Mayo, the entire organizational diagram depicts nine individual members who make up the school council. The organizational diagram did not explicitly label this structure an executive committee, but
based on observational data from the workshop, the group essentially operated similar to an executive committee whereby the general members were all the students attending the school. The number of students is likely very large, which may be one reason the participant who created this diagram did not depict every member of the school. However, this points to one of the potential problem of an executive committee to represents such a large constituency without additional mechanisms to facilitate communication and coordination between the members of the executive committee and individual students. Even with some intermediary organizational structure components between the executive committee and general members, there may be potential problems with reciprocity in communication patterns.

A fourth example, *Meshaat Keram*, a child and youth development and advocacy group in Egypt, had a small executive committee with additional organizational management and organizational programming committees. Interestingly, some of the executive committee members of the group claimed that they included all members of the group in all decisions. However, there were dozens of children in this group. So even if this group is particularly effective at including members in decisions, it is unlikely that all individuals will be included in every decision. It may be true that for most decisions, members of a small executive committee could poll the opinions from members of the group, but there was likely a need for reciprocity where general members may also identify the need to make specific decisions and then invite the executive committee members to participate. Although the organizational diagrams for *Meshaat Keram* (Egypt) made use of bidirectional arrows to show this pull and push of information, only further research using ethnographic methods would likely yield data that would be most appropriate for measuring power dynamics in this group.
**Main Leaders.** Ten organizational diagrams identified one person who is clearly the main leader of the group. The silhouette figure that represented them was always placed either at the exact center or near the top of the organizational diagram. They typically had more responsibilities than other members of the group, as well as distinct relationships with group members. This was indicated by the different colored lines and arrows indicating different relationships between group members. In some groups, the main leader was the only main leader of the group. Some main leaders were also executive committee members, such as the president of the group. However, organizational diagrams with main leaders imply that these members have additional responsibilities above their responsibilities as an executive committee member. In these situations, the main leader may be a representative for the group in another association, or they may be the main point of contact for the relationships the group has with external groups, such as adult community groups or community development agencies. In the Article 15 dataset, organizational diagrams for the following groups depicted main leaders Soñadores (Guatemala), Abu Mosalem (Egypt), Youth of the Future (Egypt), Nadie Como Yo (Honduras), Red de Comunicadores Infantiles (Honduras), Promotores de Salud (Peru), My Fantasy (Peru), Afadiph ONNATs (Peru), RAyJM (Nicaragua), and Son Batá (Colombia).

**Board of directors.** Members of a board of directors of an organization are legally accountable to the bylaws of an organization and to other organizations. This organizational structure component is distinct from executive committees in children’s membership groups because individuals sitting on an executive committee do not have legally binding responsibilities. Two groups in this study represented board of directors, but the relationships between this board and the members of the children’s group are unclear. In the two groups, Red Adolescents y Jóvenes de Managua (RAyJM; Nicaragua) and Corporación Son Batá (Colombia), there were no figures representing individuals on this
board. It is likely that only adults sit on this board, which suggests little, if any, dialog between the board of directors and the children’s membership group. Unfortunately, there is no additional data about these two groups from which to glean a deeper understanding of how the board of directors does or does not influence the organizational structure and functioning of the children’s membership groups.

Another group, Funky Dragon, a national child and youth council in the United Kingdom, had a management committee made up of four youth over 18 years of age, two adolescents 16 and 17 years of age, two adolescents younger than 16 years of age, and four adults who presumably are meaningfully older than the youth members. The management committee functioned, legally, as a board of directors, and group members shared that they are the first organization in their country to have persons younger than 18 years of age as full board members after the legal minimum age was reduced to 16. The management committee members who are younger than 16 years old offer their opinions, but they are unable to vote on decisions.

**Peer advisory committees.** Kundala Adhikar (Nepal), utilized an advisory committee made up of former executive committee members who advise the current executive committee members. This is the only organizations that included this type of organizational structure component in their organizational diagram; however, other groups, such as Shanti Shiksha Bal Club (Nepal), also mentioned during workshops that they received advice from former group members who have aged out. This type of relationship between current and former members appears to be beneficial for maintaining the institutional memory of a group, but this organizational support is distinct from having an advisory group of peers who are still involved in the day-to-day functioning. In this group, it was typical for children younger than 12 to hold an executive committee position, so the advisory committee also had relatively young members. Advisory committees are not
common despite their clear benefits to building a groups capacity, and such committees with young members seems to be even more rare. This example has greater implications than a particular group’s effort to provide current leaders with peer support. A peer advisory committee is a strategy most groups can to adopt, but the benefits of having an advisory committee alongside an executive committee are not entirely clear. For example, it is possible that mentors would influence or even coopt the decision-making power of their mentee(s). This is mostly likely to happen in subtle ways that would not necessarily be represented on an organizational diagram. However, there are examples of how mentors influence mentees, not between peers, but between children and adults (Liebel, 2012a; Reddy & Ratna, 2002; Taft, 2014).

**Youth advisory committees.** Mentorship is critical for any group, but especially groups of children where members age out annually. Maintaining the institutional memory of the group is important for a group’s identity, but it is perhaps more important for day-to-day functioning. Nearly all the groups in this study had members from three of the four age cohorts: adolescents, youth, and adults. As an intermediary group, youth play a particularly important role for maintaining institutional memory. They may have useful experience from participating in the group as an adolescent and a child, and also have additional experience from working more closely with adults or even other organizations if they had a representative role. In this way, youth can be important advisors to adolescents and younger children in a group.

Some groups also mentioned maintaining connections to youth advisors who aged out of the group through a *youth advisory committee*. However, no group identified this committee on their organizational diagram. To me, this suggests the committees do not have an integrated role in the day-to-day function and instead are sought out during specific occasions.
One membership group, IUSECO (the Philippines), institutionalized the relationship with youth in such a way that they could clearly identify this relationship on their organizational diagram. This membership group is a municipal level representative body with delegations from different neighborhoods within their city. Each neighborhood delegation is a pair of adolescent representatives, one girl and one boy, who are partnered with one youth advisor. This strategy may strengthen the capacities of any one adolescent neighborhood representative because they have both a peer and older mentor to rely on for discussing how best to represent their neighborhood.

**Adult facilitators and advisor clusters.** The diagrams of multiple groups depicted adult facilitators or advisers as part of the groups’ organizational structure, as in Hatemalo Bal Club (Nepal). Typically, there were one or two adults. However, in some organizational diagrams, such as for Funky Dragon (UK) and Qosqo Maki (Peru), the participants represented some adult facilitators or advisors in their own activity cluster where they meet separately from the regular meeting for the children’s association. While these meetings occur without children, they appear to be a valuable place for adults to discuss issues that are important to them as individuals and as a group of adults. In this way, they support one another in building each other’s capacities to be a better facilitator. This organizational structure component deserves further research in the future because there is little data about this component in the existing data and it seems to offer a promising area of research on how adults support children’s associations.

**Similar subgroups types among groups within a country or region.** Aside from executive committees and facilitator subgroups that are part of many children’s associations, there are remarkable similarities among the subgroup types for different children’s associations within the same country. Further study is needed to fully understand these patterns, but these preliminary data suggest that some similarities may be due to the
influence of an international child-centered community development agency that supports multiple children’s associations in a country or region, as well as shared cultural factors. For example, the organizational diagrams of two groups from Sri Lanka each had five subgroups, and four of the five themes for each subgroup were the same. These two groups are supported by the same international agency. The organizational diagrams of the four Egyptian groups also depicted similar subgroup themes. These four groups are also supported by the same agency.

What is most interesting about the Egyptian child and youth development organizations is that their activity subgroup topics were not common in the organizational structures of other groups in the study. For example, two of the Egyptian groups had a committee or cluster focused on technology, such as computers and media, or marketing and creativity. One of the Egyptian groups, Rewad, was particularly interesting because it is the only group in the dataset with a specific training and skill-building group, as well as a group specifically for children and adolescents with disabilities. Two of the Egyptian groups had separate clusters for sports and social activities, but Abu Mosalem (Egypt) combined these two subgroup themes.

**External organizational support clusters.** External organizational support cluster is an umbrella term I use to capture the many types of individuals and groups of individuals who provide organizational support to a children’s membership group but do not participate in the day-to-day functioning of the group, nor did they appear to have much decision-making power. Typically, these clusters were placed on the periphery of the organizational diagrams, which suggested less involvement. Some examples of this are corporate sponsors, government officials, INGO office staff and CBO staff. In the Article 15 dataset, My Fantasy (Peru), Youth of the Future (Egypt), and Promotores de Salud (Peru) each had external organizational support clusters.
While this typology focuses on the internal organizational structure components of children’s associations, future research on the organizational structure components found externally in networks of organizations would be valuable. Examining the organizational structures of networks of children’s associations is beyond the available data, except in a few cases in which groups happened to diagram how their local group positions itself in relationship to other similar groups.

A Preliminary Typology of Organizational Structures Found in This Study

In this section, I describe the combinations of organizational structures identified in this study. I focus the typology on the internal organizational structure of each membership group and not incorporate the relationships groups have with other organizations. While a typology that includes linkages to external organizations may be possible to do with some of the membership groups in this study, many participants did not include these types of relationships because of instruction to focus on the internal organizational structure in their diagrams.

Part of my analysis involved looking at the shapes of the organizational structures drawn by the children to see what it might say about the relationships between members in a group. But it became clear that the quality of the relationships between members was more important than the overall shape. For example, there were two groups with collaborative structures that had different shapes, one a large circle with nearly all members involved in all decisions, and the second, a small coordinating committee of five members with all members in horizontal line with arrows symbolizing coordination and communication pointing in reciprocal direction amongst the members. Aside from these variations, there appear to be about 11 distinct organizational structures for children’s associations in this study sample. I organize the 11 structures based on the purpose,
geographic scale, and specific combinations of organizational structure components, which I identified and described in detail above.
Figure 6.3 Typical organizational structure of children’s rights clubs

**Organizational components of a typical child rights club.** The organizational structure in Figure 6.3 includes an executive committee, general membership assembly, and a small facilitator or advisory cluster. The adult facilitators may also be placed horizontally to the executive committee members, or even below the general members. Different groups chose different ways to represent involvement of adult facilitators.

**Groups representing this organizational structure:**

- **Shanti Shiksha Bal Club** (Nepal)
- **Hatemalo Bal Club** (Nepal)
- **Bumpe Kids Club** (Sierra Leone)
- **Moforay Child Rights Club** (Sierra Leone)
- **Kundala Adhikar** (Nepal)
- **Haat Ma Haat Bal Club** (Nepal)
- **Soñadores** (Guatemala)
- **RedNaJav** (Guatemala)
Organizational components of an activity-based club. The organizational structure in Figure 6.4 includes an executive committee, activity or program clusters and a small cluster of facilitators or advisers.

Groups representing this organizational structure:

Young Birds (Sri Lanka)  Value of Friendship (Sri Lanka)
Corporación Son Batá (Colombia)  Red Adolescents y Jóvenes de Managua (Nicaragua)
Figure 6.5 Typical organizational structure of Egyptian child/youth development/advocacy group

Organizational components of a child/youth development and advocacy group.

The organizational structure in Figure 6.5 includes an executive committee, committee clusters, and general members who may be beneficiaries and not regular members.

Groups representing this organizational structure:

Rewad (Egypt)  Meshaat Keram (Egypt)
Abu Mosalem (Egypt)  Youth of the Future (Egypt)
Figure 6.6 Typical organizational structure of a simple children’s association

Organizational components of a simple children’s association. The organizational structure in Figure 6.6 includes an adult advisor, main leader and general.

Groups representing this organizational structure:

Nadie Como Yo (Honduras)  Red de Comunicadores Infantiles (Honduras)

My Fantasy (Peru) Jóvenes
Organizational components of a communitarian association. The organizational structure in Figure 6.7 includes only a general assembly. This is the national level structure, but the local level structure organizes in a similar way.

Groups representing this organizational structure:

Grupo de NNA Comunicadores (Ecuador)
Organizational structure in Figure 6.8 includes a general membership assembly, activity clusters and organizational support.

Groups representing this organizational structure:

Qosqo Maki (Peru)
Organizational components of a school council. The organizational structure in Figure 6.9 includes an adult advisor and an executive committee.

Groups representing this organizational structure:

*Municipio Escolar 27 de Mayo* (Peru)
Organizational components of a municipal children's council. The organizational structure in Figure 6.10 includes adult advisors, and executive committee, and a general assembly of representatives.

Groups representing this organizational structure:

**IUSECO** (Philippines)
Figure 6.11 Organizational structure of a national child and youth council

**Organizational components of a national child and youth council.** The organizational structure in Figure 6.11 includes a board of directors, general assembly of representatives, and clusters for activities and organizational support.

**Links to data on individual groups**

*Funky Dragon (UK)*
Organizational components of a multi-level children’s association. The organizational structure in Figure 6.12 includes national, subnational and local generable assemblies of representatives, as well as local level general membership assemblies.

Links to data on individual groups

Afadiph ONNATs (Peru)  EKTA (India)
Promotores de Salud (Peru)  Gestores de Paz (Colombia)
Organizational components of a national coordination team. The organizational structure in Figure 6.13 includes only an executive committee. The one group in the study with this structure referred to this group as a national coordination team and did not show the local groups they coordinate with because, as per the instructions in the workshop, they diagramed the children’s association they work with most regularly if they work with more than one group.

Links to data on individual groups

*Movimiento de Niños/as, Adolescentes, y Jóvenes* (Nicaragua)
Additional organizational structures not found in this study. The number of possible configurations for organizational structures is much greater than the number of children’s associations included in the study sample, so it is not surprising that there are additional configurations structures that are not represented in the current data. Future research with additional children’s associations may produce organizational structures component combinations not represented in the current sample. However, it is also likely that some combinations are not practical and therefore do not exist. For example, it may be unlikely that a children’s association organizes itself into activity clusters without an additional organizational component or individual that serves a coordinating role among the different clusters. Groups with redundant organizational structure components might not exist at all, such as a group with two executive committees. However, similar types of redundancies do exist. For example, Corporación Son Batá (Colombia) is a group with both a board of directors and members in elected or appointed executive roles that form a sort of executive committee. This structure is somewhat redundant, yet it is clear from the organizational diagram that the roles of individuals in each organizational structure component is distinct.

There is also the possibility that some organizational diagrams require further explanation than is currently available in the data to definitively understand if the diagram is actually complete. For example, Figure 6.7 depicts the organizational structure for a local communitarian organization, which only has a generally assembly with both children and adults participating equally. This organizational structure raises the question of whether children and adults are actually coming together on equal terms. For example, it may be that there is, in fact, one or more adult facilitators who coordinate the group, but that once the group is in a general assembly, the principle of equity among difference age cohorts is
the most salient organizing principle. Therefore, the workshop participants from this group depict their group members in a single circle.

**Inclusion Promoting Strategies**

In this section, I report the strategies for creating inclusive groups that I identified in the organizational diagrams. This is an important theme because non-discrimination is a basic right stated by all of the children’s groups in this study, as well as a basic principle of children’s rights defined in Article 2 of the CRC. Again, I make no claim for this being an exhaustive list of the strategies children’s groups use. It is simply a much-needed starting point for operationalizing the concept of inclusion in the management of children’s groups. The organizational diagram method afforded the children’s groups with a simple means of representing age and gender patterns of both membership and decision-making in their organization. Furthermore, as I described in Chapter Four about the Article 15 Project, workshop participants were encouraged to diagram how their group includes individuals from marginalized groups, such as out-of-school children.

**Gender and age demographics.** The organizational diagram method operates as a basic census of group members. Therefore, it is possible to describe the demographics of a single group, and to describe the demographics of multiple groups in broad terms. Table 6.6 lists descriptive statistics for the age group and gender distribution of 29 children’s membership groups based on 832 quotations in ATLAS.ti 7. Each quotation provided data on one member in an organization.
Table 6.6 Age range and gender demographics of 29 groups in this study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Overall</th>
<th>Children (6 to 11 years)</th>
<th>Adolescents (12 to 17 years)</th>
<th>Youth (18 to 25 years)</th>
<th>Adults (26 years and up)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N (%)</td>
<td>832</td>
<td>154 (18.5)</td>
<td>315 (37.9)</td>
<td>229 (27.4)</td>
<td>134 (16.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Girls/Women</td>
<td>49.0</td>
<td>51.3</td>
<td>51.1</td>
<td>39.7</td>
<td>57.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Boys/Men</td>
<td>50.9</td>
<td>48.7</td>
<td>48.9</td>
<td>59.8</td>
<td>42.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%Transgender</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. There descriptive statistics are based on 832 quotations for individuals identified across 29 organizational diagrams.

**Generational inclusivity across the sample.** Generational inclusivity is a term I use to describe the degree to which a group includes individuals from different age cohorts: children (12 years and below), adolescents (13 to 17 years), youth (18 to 25 year) or adults (26 years and above).

When looking across all the groups in this study, adolescents made up the largest portion of members in children membership groups at 37.9%, followed by youth (27.4%), then children (18.5%), then adults (16.1%). That said, the term *children’s membership groups* may be misleading because these groups had nearly as many youth and adults as they do children and adolescents.

While it appears that there were more adolescent and youth members than children members in these groups this is, at least in part, a reflection of a potential problem in the data collection method. The number of children younger than 12 years of age represented in the organizational diagrams was likely suppressed because workshop participants from large groups were unable to identify age and gender demographics of all group members with high degrees of accuracy. Instead, they typically created diagrams about a smaller subset of members who had specific organizational roles. This will have inevitably
decreased the number of children represented because we know from the more complete analysis of the organizational structures of smaller organizations that children are less likely than adolescents, youth, or adults to hold specific organizational roles. Also, some groups used symbols to indicate that one silhouette figure representing many members, but I do not know how many members. I address these points in more detail, below, in the section on inclusivity within a group’s decision-making practices.

**Generational inclusivity within each children’s association.** The organizational structures of nearly all the children’s membership groups in this study included members from each of the four age cohorts. However, there are three groups primarily made up of representatives that were exclusively adolescents and youth. These groups represented younger children and work with adults, but they chose not to display these individuals on their diagram. One group, *MNAJ* (Nicaragua), was a national coordinating committee with only five members, and the workshop participant representing this group said that the organizational diagram instructions were to diagram the internal organizational structure of group they work with most often. This also seems to be the reason for the exclusion of children in the diagrams of *IUSECO* (the Philippines) and *Municipio Escolar 27 de Mayo* (Peru).

**Gender inclusivity across groups.** Gender inclusivity is the degree to which a group includes members of different genders. All groups in this study, except for one, used dichotomous gender categories (girls and boys, women and men) for individuals identifying as cisgender. In the one group with three gender categories, they represented the group member who identified as a transgender youth using one-half of each silhouette figures for a male youth and female youth. It is important to note that the data collection methodology did limit discussions about gender inclusivity beyond dichotomous gender categories. Future research with this methodology can and should investigate this issue further.
because gender inclusivity beyond traditional dichotomous categories of gender is relevant to all groups, not only those working specific on issues relevant to gender non-conforming individuals.

**Gender inclusivity within groups.** Given the history of some children’s associations separating children by gender on only one gender, such as the Boys Scouts and Girls Scouts, the children’s membership groups of this study are remarkably inclusive of both boys and girls. Most have near equal members of boys and girls, and six groups with less balanced gender ratios are relatively small—about five to 25 members—and tended to include more girls than boys (Figure 6.14). This topic deserves further ethnographic investigation.

Figure 6.14 Approximate gender ratios (Girls/Boys) for 28 groups

**Including children from marginalized social groups.** During workshops, facilitators asked the participants to indicate on their diagrams any members who might have disadvantages. Facilitators, including myself, used the examples of children with disabilities and children who are unable to attend school. Using small, round, stickers of
different colors, participants indicated which members have disadvantages. As a result, groups could use this information to analyze the degree to which their membership is inclusive of marginalized children, and the degree to which their groups includes these individuals in specific elected or appointed roles. Three groups identified members with disabilities, and three groups identified children who are not in school. In addition to children with disabilities and children who are unable to attend school, three separate groups identified three other demographics of marginalized children relevant to their situation: children who work on the street, children who live in an urban slum, and Dalit children who are part of the lowest social caste in Nepal and India.

About five organizational diagrams identified children from marginalized social demographic groups. This seems relatively low even for a small sample. There may be multiple explanations for this finding. One may be that workshop facilitators, including myself, did not provide equal encouragement to all participants to represent members from socially marginalized groups on their diagram. Another explanation may be that the participants did understand that they could represent this, but they did not complete their organizational diagram with all the possible data points within the allotted time of the workshop. In both situations, more time might have provided additional opportunity for discussion about whether or not marginalized children have sufficient opportunities to participate in the children’s association. Regardless, there are multiple barriers for marginalized children to participate in a children’s association, such as children who do not have time to participate in club meetings because they must complete domestic chores or paid labor in order to supplement their family’s income. Some group members were unaware of this potential issue. Therefore, an important follow up activity for groups to engage in after creating an organizational diagram is to go through a guided reflection about how inclusive their club is currently, and how it might become more inclusive. Each
group may also want to consider if all members of the group, regardless of their social status, have enough opportunities to participate in group decisions. Since not all marginalized statuses are visible, it is important to have explicit conversations about this topic. For example, in two separate workshops, I was surprised to learn that at least one group member had physical disabilities. Both members had physical disabilities that hindered their mobility, but they had become so proficient at concealing their disability that their participation in the workshop activities appeared unhindered. In one of these groups, the president of the group is a young man with a physical disability. The group members took pride in this fact because they knew that this was not common in other child and youth organizations to elect a leader with physical disabilities.

During a different discussion with a group in Nepal, I learned that the president was from the Brahman caste, which is the highest social caste. In this group, as in others, members were aware of the social privilege of their main leaders, and some groups openly admitted that their choice of leaders was influenced by larger social structures. In this Nepali group specifically, they knew that other adult organizations would be more likely to support their children’s group if the leader was a young man from a high caste. However, they also openly admitted that they include Dalit children—members of the lowest social caste—and even have leaders who are Dalit. In this way, the group is both reproducing and dismantling discriminatory social and cultural norms. The fact that members of this group in particular are conscious of the degree of social privilege of their members and how this influences their choice in leadership suggests a tension between transforming and maintaining discriminatory social norms. There are practices within the organization that promoted gender and caste equality, and yet other components maintain the discriminatory advantages for members of the higher castes. When looking at the whole organizational structure, the tension between these contradictory organizational components is held in
balance via the awareness of the group’s members of the disparities in power among members of the group. This is an example of how a group was critical of its imbalance power dynamics yet maintain cohesion. A children’s membership group that is not aware of such tensions, or actively dismissed them, would likely dissolve because of such an internal power struggles. Otherwise, it might also continue as an autocratic group.

**Membership boundaries.** Nearly all groups in this study have open membership boundaries, meaning any young person is allowed to join without discrimination. Most groups, however, focused on children in a particular community or village, and while members of the group may not have actively refuse to accept some children, they may not actively recruit the most marginalized either. Other groups, however, focused on a specific demographic of children, such as working children’s unions. These groups formed to address the specific needs of working children, and all of their membership are children, adolescents and youth who work.

Information about membership boundaries were not typically represented by the children on the organizational diagrams, but participants in the workshop did have the freedom to do so if it was a salient aspect of their associations. Mainly, I gathered understanding about membership boundaries during discussions with some workshop participants about their group practices in relation to the diagram. Therefore, there was uneven data available about membership boundaries in the organizational diagrams or my observational data. Future research on this topic would benefit from further use of other activities in the Article 15 Resource Kit, such as the Inclusion Circle, that focus on discussing strategies to become more inclusive of all children in the community where the children’s association was situated.\(^\text{17}\)

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\(^{17}\) Please see Module 5 of the Article 15 Resource Kit, crc15.org/kit
Advocacy groups. A few groups focused on advocacy in their community, meaning they organized events or projects to serve community members who are not regular members of the group. The clearest examples of this type of group were from Egypt. For example, Rewad (Egypt) was a group that supports working children in Cairo. In their organizational diagram, they noted a subgroup of youth members specifically supporting around 400 working children through educational programming. Another group in Egypt, Meshaat Keram (Egypt), had a similarly sized subgroup of children that they indicate is part of their general membership. A third group, Corporación Son Batá (Colombia), is connected to a school and also indicate the children in this setting with a number next to the silhouette figure for the corresponding gender and age range of these children. In none of these cases does it appear the children have a clear role in organizational decision-making, and video recordings about their explanation for this are not available on this issue (see Figure 6.15). The reasons for why some groups chose to note the number of members in an age and gender cohort may be various. In some cases, it was simply to save space on the diagram. In comparison to other groups that do create explicit ways for all children to participate in a group’s decision-making, these groups focused more on helping others via services and participatory activities, rather than including them directly in a group’s decision-making and structure. While I do not believe that these groups see the members that are unrepresented on the diagram as having lesser capacities as citizens, the fact that they are omitted suggests that there may be fewer opportunities for all members of the children’s to enact or develop their capacities as citizens.
The creator of this organizational diagram wrote numbers next to the silhouette figures to indicate how many members of the specific gender and age cohort were part of this organizational structure component.
Equity Promoting Strategies

Age and gender parity in elected or appointed roles. The majority of elected and appointed roles are filled by adolescents (Figure 6.16). This seems appropriate since adolescents are the largest age cohort represented across the children’s associations.

![Figure 6.16 Gender and age cohort distribution for executive members of 23 groups](image)

Among the 29 groups in this study, about 17 included a president or chairperson, and an additional six groups had a clearly identified main leader. Of these 23 leaders, 11 were girls or young women and 12 were boys or young men (see Figure 6.17). This is not surprising based on the data in this study because, as described above, membership in these groups across gender is relatively equal among girls and boys. However, the gender balance is surprising given the discrimination girls and women face in society when seeking these types of roles.

When looking across age groups, there are comparable numbers of main leaders who are adolescents or youth. Eleven out of 23 groups identified an adolescent as their
main leader, 12 groups identified a youth as their main leader. There are no children who
were the main leaders of a group. However, when looking at the interaction of gender and
age, main leaders who were youth were more often boys, while main leaders who were
adolescents were more often girls. This finding deserves further investigation in future
research, but here I provide some possible explanations.

![Figure 6.17 Gender and age distribution for the presidents and chairpersons of 23 groups](image)

One possible explanation for this interaction may be that there are greater numbers
of older boys than older girls in the pool of possible members to elect or appoint as their
main leader. Generally speaking, there are more male youth (60%) compared to female
youth (40%) across the children’s associations in this study sample (see Table 6.6).
However, the majority of children’s associations in this study have a membership with a
relatively balanced gender ratio. Interestingly, only two out of the four groups with more
girls elected or appointed a girl as their main leader.
More than the gender ratio, the average age of members of the group seems to explain why adolescent girls and youth boys are more often elected or appointed as the main leaders. While a couple organizational diagrams included the age of some or all group members, I did not collected information on individual group members, so the average age for each group cannot be calculated. However, a general sense of the age range of each children’s association is represented in each organizational diagram. In the seven children’s associations with adolescent girls as the main leader, the membership tends to be younger in six of the groups. In groups with youth boys as the main leader, the average age of members seems to vary more, but tends to be older. Building on these data, it is possible to speculate why main leaders are unevenly distributed across age and gender demographics.

Cognitive and physical changes associated with puberty may provide some explanation for the of age and gender demographics of a main leader in a children’s association. Girls experience puberty earlier than boys and have a developmental edge during early adolescence, especially in terms of their height (e.g., Tanner, 1971) and also in cognitive maturity (e.g., Lenroot & Giedd, 2010). In children’s associations with a younger average age, there may be more opportunity for the adolescent girls to be perceived by their peers and adults as more mature and competent to take on a significant leadership role. Later in adolescence, girls’ physical maturity may be downplayed because of social and cultural views that suppress female sexuality (Thorne, 1993).

Other gender based restrictions may be relevant here. Although girls’ spatial freedom varies across geographies, they may experience the same spatial freedom as boys; however, older adolescent girls may experience more domestic responsibilities than older adolescent boys and, thus, less free time (see Katz & Monk, 1993). Lack of free time
may prevent older adolescent girls and young women from participating children’s associations.

Another explanation for the greater number of youth boys than youth girls as main leaders is that the members of these children’s associations are aware of the discrimination that women and girls face in society, including baseless perceptions that girls are less capable civic leaders. In two children’s associations, one from Nepal and another from Egypt, I learned that while the members of the group desire to give opportunities to both boys and girls, they also want their group to be taken seriously by adults, such as members of a village development committee. In order for these children’s associations to be more effective at liaising with adult associations, they believe they must send an older boy as their representative because the members of adult associations—who may be mostly if not exclusively men—are more likely to listen to the representative if they are older boy.

This point of tension must be included in future research with children’s associations. Children’s associations have the potential to transform systemic gender discrimination, but this is unlikely if they unknowingly reproduce social norms that maintain oppressive gender dynamics. Even if members of a children’s associations are aware of discriminatory gender dynamics and secretly subvert them, the potential to transform the norm may be less likely without making the injustice explicit.

Children’s associations without a critical understanding of discriminatory gender dynamics may promote a damaging view that girls and young women have less capacities as citizens. It is possible that groups with more explicit strategies to address gender-based discrimination will face more challenges because they are fundamentally shifting the status quo, but perhaps explicit gender parity strategies are needed in order to promote the view that girls have the same capacities as citizens and must experience the same opportunities
as boys to express their capacities. Below I describe the explicit gender parity strategies found in some of the organizational diagrams in this study.

**Explicit gender parity strategies.** Some groups had explicit strategies to improve gender equity in their groups. The most common strategy was paring one girl and one boy for a given task or responsibility. This was often the strategy for representative roles that may require some travel, and this was the case in three groups with representative organizational components, including *IUSECO* (the Philippines), *Funky Dragon* (UK), and *Gestores de Paz* (Colombia).

A related strategy to promote gender parity was to rotate specific roles or responsibilities between members of different genders. For example, one year a girl might travel to conferences or events to represent the group, and another year the representative would be a boy. While rotating these opportunities for children in elected or appointed roles was not explicitly part of any organizational diagram, the strategy may be more common than what the organizational diagram data suggested. This may have been due, in part, to the difficulty expressing this information diagrammatically. Using the organizational diagram multiple times, however, would provide an opportunity to monitor this issue over time and determine if the group implicitly promotes gender parity.

**Limiting the size of the group.** It appears most groups have 35 members or less (Figure 6.18). Some groups cite specific reasons for their group size. The *Moforay Child Rights Club* (Sierra Leone), for example, limits their group membership size to around 25 members. If others would like to join their club, they will allow them to do so until there are enough children to form a new club. During the workshop, members of the groups explained that they do this because they want to create enough opportunities for everyone to participate, and they feel that 25 members is the maximum number of members to accomplish this goal. Groups with more than 35 members typically divide members into
organizational programming subgroups. This is likely because subgroups provided members greater opportunity to directly contribute to decision-making and make the task of managing a large group less onerous.

The two large representative councils, Funky Dragon (UK) and IUSECO (the Philippines), organized themselves into subgroups based on their geographic regional location and meet as a general assembly once a year. Organizing over 100 members for a single meeting is an impressive feat. There is likely a great deal of coordination in preparation for the council meetings that occurs but was not identified on the organizational diagrams.

![Figure 6.18 Approximate number of members per group for 28 groups](image)

Aside from the two large representative councils from the Unite Kingdom and the Philippines, there were a few groups with large membership bodies. Corporación Son Batá (Colombia), from Colombia, and all of the Egyptian children’s membership groups had about 100 members or more represented on the organizational diagrams. All of these
groups used activity cluster subgroups, but further research with these and other large
groups might be useful for learning how these groups manage such large numbers of
young people in equitable ways.

**Maintaining and caring for existing membership.** Caring for the existing
membership is an important component of groups that limit the size of their group. For
example, in the *Moforay Child Rights Club* (Sierra Leone), if any member of their group did
not attend multiple meetings in a row, it is the public relations officer’s responsibility to
coordinate with the president of their group and organize for the entire club to visit the
absent member’s home. In some cases, the individual had been ill. In other cases, their
parents are preventing them from attending because they believe it is interfering with
responsibilities at home or at school. In any case, the members of the group did their best
to offer help. In situations where parents were preventing their child from attending
meetings, group members share stories about the benefits of participating in the club in
order to convince the parents to allow their child to attend. *Kundala Adhikar Bal Club*
(Nepal) also described a similar situation and how they also had to convince parents of the
merits of participating in their club. Adults facilitators for these groups are often involved in
these discussion, but this is a quite remarkable strategy for child members who build the
mutual aid that ensures the longevity and cohesion of a membership group.

**Responsibility sharing.** Responsibility sharing and redundancy describes a group
management strategy whereby two or more individuals are equally accountable for a
particular role and responsibility. For example, multiple groups had assistant positions for
some or all of their executive roles, such as vice president or assistant treasurer. Groups
with examples of responsibility sharing include *IUSECO* (Philippines), *Moforay Child Rights
Club* (Sierra Leone), and *Bumpe Kids Club* (Sierra Leone).
In this last group, *Bumpe Kids Club* from Sierra Leone, the group also described members in executive roles, most of who are 18 years old, undertake the responsibility to train one of the younger members of the group in their role. In this way, the younger group members learn how to fulfill the responsibilities for different roles and are more prepared for the responsibilities of a specific role if they were to be elected for the position.

**Layered leadership versus reinforced leadership.** Layered leadership is a term I created based on the data to describe the practice of decentering decision-making responsibilities to specific individuals in a group. In some ways, this looks like a traditional pyramidal structure with a concentration of decision-making power moving up the hierarchy. However, it appears that for the *Young Birds* (Sri Lanka) and *Value of Friendship* (Sri Lanka) groups, an additional layer of leadership allows for a decentering of power from the executive committee members to other members of the group. Both of these membership groups organize their membership body into subgroups, and each subgroup has a subgroup president. This creates smaller settings whereby there may be greater possibility for more members to assume even a minor level of decision-making responsibility.

Conversely, reinforced leadership is a term I use to describe when one or more individuals in a group fill more than one leadership role. For example, a person is both the president of a group and the lead coordinator for a subgroup within the larger organizational structure, such as a sports subgroup. This dual role reinforces an individual’s decision-making power in the group. Of course, the manner in which these leaders enact this decision-making power might be more or less inclusive of others. Groups with examples of layered leadership include, *Abu Mosalem* (Egypt), *Youth of the Future* (Egypt) and *RAyJM* (Nicaragua).
CHAPTER VII
DISCUSSION

The proposed typology of organizational structures of new kinds of children’s associations presented in the previous chapter is useful to members and supporters of children’s associations through providing a language to capture dynamics of decision-making power, inclusion, and equity among group members. Naming these dynamics affords members of children’s associations a way to improve inclusion and equity in their group’s decision-making strategies by identifying how well their current organizational structure reflects their ideal organization structure.

The typology is also relevant to current scholarship in childhood studies, addressed in this chapter in light of two debates within the field: (a) hierarchies and boundaries of children’s agency and societal structures in children’s lives (James & Prout, 1995); and (b) interpretive reproduction of adult culture in children’s peer cultures (Corsaro, 1992). I relate my analysis to each of these areas of scholarship as a way to further develop the typology of how children organize themselves in partnership with adults. Additionally, integrating these areas of scholarship broadens the applicability of each theoretical framework, moving research with children’s associations toward the center of scholarship addressing important settings in children’s lives.

Hierarchies and Boundaries in Children’s Associations

James and Prout (1995) argued the study of childhood requires theoretical frameworks accounting for social structures that shape children’s lives, as well as children’s agency in navigating these structures. Theories guiding the study of childhood must be “sufficiently abstract to have a wide application but at the same time readily translatable into the particularities of a given social milieu.” (James & Prout, 1995, p. 81).
The authors offered Mary Douglas’s (1973, 1992) “grid and group” theory as an example of being sufficiently abstract and easily translatable. The grid and group approach utilizes a Cartesian plane to plot sociality in terms of the degree to which a group defines social roles (grid) and how strongly people bond with one another (group). James and Prout translated Douglas’s language to two dimensions of social experience that relate to social structure and children’s agency: hierarchy (grid) and boundary (group). Each dimension represents a continuum of experience, where hierarchies range from weak to strong and boundaries range from closed to open. These two continuums intersect to create combinations of both types of hierarchy and boundary (see Figure 7.1). James and Prout used this framework as an ethnographic tool for organizing observational data about children’s lives to embrace complexity while simultaneously allowing for simple comparisons. How might this theoretical framework be useful to understand and compare the organizational structures of children’s associations?

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Figure 7.1 Hierarchy and boundary combinations (James & Prout, 1995, p. 83)

Based on my analysis, I argue varying combinations of organizational structure components produce different degrees of hierarchy and boundary. Figure 7.2 locates the
different types of organizational structures found in this study within the hierarchy and boundary combinations organizational structure components.

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Figure 7.2 Hierarchy and boundary combinations for the types of groups in this study

In line with James and Prout, I use the dimensions of hierarchy and boundary as relative rather than absolute terms when applying each to the organizational structures of children’s associations. For example, the general assembly of Qosqo Maki, a working children’s association in Peru, has a closed boundary because only members of the dormitory participate, and members of the dormitory must be 17 years of age or younger (Figure 7.3). However, within this specific demographic group, there are no other exclusionary criteria for who can stay in the dormitory. Any street-connected child in need of a temporary place to stay may access the dormitory and is welcomed to participate in
The general assembly of Qosqo Maki has a weak hierarchy because all members have equal power in decisions-making, even between children and the adults who support them. The general assembly operates by consensus, and members do not vote because voting segments the group, which undermines their democratic process.

An example of a group with a closed boundary and strong hierarchy is *Municipio Escolar 27 de Mayo*, a school-based council in Peru. The boundary is closed relative to other settings in children’s lives because only students in the particular school can be elected to the council. The hierarchy is relatively strong because even though the members of the council are representatives, the school membership is not shown. Instead, the organization diagram shows only the eight members of the council and the one faculty advisor. The diagram also shows how all members of the council share equal

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18 I am aware that criteria for defining street-connected children are problematic (see Glauser, 1990); therefore, I rely on my experiences working with this particular association to guide my interpretation of the boundary for general assembly setting.
communication and coordination, but data from the workshops suggest the president of this committee has somewhat more power relative to the other members of the committee.

An example of a group with a strong hierarchy, but more open boundary, is *IUESCO*, a municipal children's council in the Philippines. Like the school council in Peru mentioned above, this municipal council has an executive committee. However, in this case, there are also neighborhood representatives who are included in the diagram and are placed below the executive committee. This signifies a relatively strong hierarchy because executive committee members have specific decision-making powers and responsibilities relative to the neighborhood representatives. The boundary for the group is relatively open because, theoretically, any young person in the city can participate in the neighborhood groups and be elected to the municipal council. Finally, an example of a children’s association with an open boundary and weak hierarchy is the local chapters of *Gestores de Paz*, a multi-level children’s association in Colombia. In the local setting, any child or adolescent in the community may join, and all members of the group participate in decision-making equally.

**Fractal people, fractal groups.** I find the hierarchy and boundary framework useful because it allows for comparisons between the different organizational structures of children’s associations while accounting for the complexities of each setting. James and Prout deepen the complexity of the framework by introducing the concept of ‘fractal person’ (James & Prout, 1995, p. 86) to capture how a person is part of multiple social settings operating at different scales, layers, and moments in time. A person or group is never static within a single hierarchy and boundary combination. The concept of the fractal person improves Douglas’s (1973) original use of the grid and group approach, and I find it a particularly useful conceptual tool for looking at children’s organizations existing at
multiple scales and describing how organizational structures may change over time. This is particularly salient to children’s associations operating at local, subnational, and national levels. For example, a child representative for a group occupying roles at multiple levels may encounter different hierarchy and boundary combinations according to the different settings in which they represent the group. *Gestores de Paz*, a multi-level children’s organization in Colombia, operates at the neighborhood, municipal, subnational, and national levels. The subnational and national levels are groups of representatives from the municipal and subnational level, respectively. Some of the municipal level representatives serve at both the subnational and national level. The organizational diagram for each of these levels suggests the hierarchy is weak, in that all members of the group have equal decision-making power. However, as a person moves from the neighborhood toward the national scale, the boundary of each group setting becomes more closed simply because there are fewer seats to fill, and the pool from which representatives are chosen shrinks. The role also changes, since the person has a greater scope of responsibility for representation. Ideally, future research on these types of multi-level organizational structures would investigate the question of whether the increase in representational scope indeed alters the nature of a person’s organizational role.

Extending James and Prout’s (1995) concept of the fractal person, I further examine the concept of ‘fractal group’ to capture how subgroups within children’s associations represent different configurations of hierarchy and boundary. For example, the general assembly of Qosqo Maki, the working children association in Peru, is part of a larger civil society organization. This organization focuses on providing temporary lodging, recreation, and education opportunities for children connected to the street; however, the organization also hosts open hours every evening when children from the surrounding neighborhood can visit the organization’s library to read or complete homework, participate in games, or
generally socialize with other children and adults. The adult educators relate to the children from the neighborhood in a similar way to the children in the dormitory in that they see their role as a collaborator, not as an organizer for programmed activities. Additionally, the adults have a space where they discuss recent events in the organization, and young people are not present. When viewing the organizational structure of Qosqo Maki with this wider angle, it is possible to see a fractal group. The organization overall has a weak hierarchy, but there are both open and closed boundaries.

Similar application of the fractal group concept might be made with other groups in this study. For example, any group with an executive committee is likely to have a relatively strong hierarchy, but as the group evolves and membership ebbs and flows, there may be reconfigurations of the group’s organizational structure. The single executive committee may evolve into multiple subgroups, creating a greater number of opportunities for young people to participate in decision-making about specific projects. It is possible for any group to have any combination of both hierarchy and boundary. These different settings offer a valuable opportunity for members of an association to encounter different ways of organizing themselves based on different needs of the subgroup. The different groups afford comparisons between different ways of organizing, and the variety may even encourage groups to experiment with new ways of structuring their decision-making. Future research on children’s associations with multiple subgroups should consider whether or not the variety of settings encourages critical self-reflection on decision-making strategies.

**Integrating hierarchy and boundary with concepts of equity and inclusion.**

Hierarchy and boundary relate to equity and inclusion, which are two concepts I use as a critical lens to analyze the organizational structures of children’s associations. Here, equity
operates in a similar manner as hierarchy to describe the degree of power an individual has relative to peers. Inclusion is analogous to boundary, the degree to which one’s social position plays a role in creating or preventing opportunities for participation in a children’s association. As discussed in the previous chapter, children’s associations explicitly or implicitly promote or diminish equity and inclusion when they use specific organizational structure components. For example, *IUESCO*, the municipal council in the Philippines, explicitly promotes gender equity by requiring neighborhood representatives to always include one girl and one boy. In another example, *Moforay Child Rights Club* (Sierra Leone) implicitly promotes inclusion when they visit members of the association who have been absent at group meetings in to ensure their wellbeing and provide help, if needed.

The number of equity or inclusion promoting strategies, and their regularity of implementation, can be used to create scores visualized on a scatterplot to situate children’s associations along continuums of equity and inclusion. In Figure 7.4, I have created a hypothetical plot along these continuums for different types of children’s associations based on my interpretation of the organizational diagrams from the Article 15 Project dataset. Sustained ethnographic research with children’s associations would likely reveal more of these strategies. The scatterplot does not visualize actual composite scores based on the existing data, but rather is meant to stimulate discussion and ideas for further research by incorporating equity and inclusion as part of the hierarchy and boundary approach.

This is a novel contribution to, and expansion of, James and Prout’s theoretical framework. In using the dimensions of equity and inclusion, I argue for analyses that explicitly explore and promote issues of justice in children’s lives. I believe dimensions of hierarchy and boundary can be useful for this as well, but an explicit investigation might
provide more pointed analysis about disparities among children within and between social, economic and environmental settings.

Figure 7.4 Hypothetical hierarchy and boundary plot for the typology of groups in this study

**Interpretive Reproduction in Children’s Associations**

The second theoretical framework I find particularly relevant to analyzing the organizational structures of children’s associations is William Corsaro’s concept of *interpretive reproduction* (Corsaro, 1992, 1993, 2012). Interpretive reproduction occurs when:

Children creatively appropriate information from the adult world to produce their own unique peer cultures. Such appropriation is creative in that it extends or elaborates peer culture (transforms information from the adult world to meet the concerns of the peer world) and simultaneously contributes to the reproduction of the adult culture. (Corsaro, 1992b, p. 168)
The clearest example of interpretive reproduction in the current research is the naming of specific organizational roles and organizational structure components by members of children’s associations. The executive roles of president, secretary, treasurer, and other elected or appointed roles are interpreted reproductions of adult organizational roles in governance structures, such as corporate businesses, state and local governments, and not-for-profit organizations. In practically all cases, the children in these roles were, indeed, aware of roles’ significance in adult organizations. In some cases, the children who served in these roles did so knowing what they learn from the experience will help them when interacting with adults as a representative of their children’s association, or in the future when they might occupy a similar role in an association for adults.

However, the ways in which children fulfill the responsibilities for their roles in children’s association is distinct from counterparts in adult associations. For example, I mention in the previous chapter the president of the Moforay Child Rights Club (Sierra Leone) acted as a liaison between child members of the club and the youth and adult facilitators who supported them. More importantly, she also provided needed moral support to some members when they raised uncomfortable issues. In this way, the young president acted as a mediator and counselor in addition to being a decision-maker.

Members of a children’s association extend adult cultures when they creatively reinterpret aspects of adult associations (Corsaro, 1992b, p. 169). Through participating in children’s associations, children learn, practice and create new ways of socialization, including participatory decision-making practices. It is possible that when adults experience the creative interpretations of organizational roles in children’s associations, they also reinterpret the possibilities for similar roles in their own adult associations.
Corsaro also suggests the possibility that children’s creative interpretations of adult culture maintain and reproduce adult cultures. This means social norms and power dynamics that are harmful might also be interpreted and reproduced in children’s peer culture. Children are not innocent from discriminating against other children based on age, gender, sexual orientation, ability, school-going status or any number of social demographics. The organizational roles and structures identified in the Article 15 Project dataset suggest some groups may maintain and reproduce discriminatory power dynamics. Because it relies on the members of the children’s association to use a critical lens to generate and analyze the data in their organizational diagrams, the organizational diagram method does not, necessarily, correct discriminatory organizational practices. However, a facilitator who is sensitive to discriminatory power dynamics would likely guide a group toward types of analysis that include considerations for how a group might become more inclusive and equitable.

The concept of interpretive reproduction is further useful to theorizing the organizational structures of children’s associations by highlighting the collective process children engage in to creatively co-construct and re-construct the meanings of their social interactions based on individual and shared experiences. This is related to the processes of collective participation, protagonistism, and self-governance described in chapter three and elsewhere (Kimiagar & Hart, In press). These concepts converge in considering how children come together with each other and adults to exchange experiences, ideas, feelings, and actions:

Culture is not in the heads of individuals. It is produced and reproduced through public negotiations. In these negotiations, social actors link shared knowledge of various symbolic models with specific situations to generate meanings while simultaneously using the same shared knowledge as a
Sharing knowledge is important for promoting inclusive and equitable children’s associations. Children’s associations are a place to share knowledge, engage in social analysis, and produce collective responses to social, economic and environmental injustices. As I mention above in the discussion of the hierarchy and boundary, analyses of inclusion and equity in children’s lives should be explicit if these topics are to be adequately addressed. In related research on children’s organizations for girls, Jessica Taft (2004) argues:

Too often, girls’ programs aim to psychologize and individualize the experience of girls, deemphasizing social forces and collective action [...] A more radical, sociological and feminist approach would call for social analysis and collective response to the many forces that shape girls’ lives.

(p. 77)

Interpretive reproduction answers the scholarly directive to theorize the complexities of childhoods in such a way that dualities are represented as continua rather than strict dichotomies (Prout, 2011). In this way, the concept of interpretive reproduction aims to highlight the relationships between children’s peer culture and adult culture. Rather than a trajectory of development from peer culture to adult culture, peer cultures are actively engaged in creative reinterpretations of adult cultures. I believe important aspects of both adult and peer cultures are notions of citizenship, which include rights, responsibilities, and a sense of belonging. I see children’s associations as places where children can creatively interpret their citizenship as something they might enact in their present lives as full citizens.
Ideas to Share with Children’s Associations and Their Adult Supporters

**Determine an ideal group size.** Evidence in this study suggests most local groups are around 30 members. Groups with more than 30 members often utilize activity clusters in order to manage the large number of children more effectively. Those with many members, but without a cluster structure, may risk losing opportunities to meaningfully involve members. Based on examples from groups with explicit strategies of care for their membership, such as the Moforay Child Rights Clubs (Sierra Leone), it seems important for groups to identify a rough estimate of the number of members they believe they can sustain while maintaining equal opportunities for all members to meaningfully participate in the association’s decisions. It does not seem appropriate to suggest an ideal group size, but it does seem reasonable to suggest group size should be an explicit discussion undertaken by group members of children’s associations during one or more meetings.

**Develop multiple levels of decision-making through subgroups.** Related to group size, this study suggests associations with subgroups, such as activity clusters, afford multiple levels of decision-making opportunities for a greater number of members. This strategy is common in the children’s rights clubs in this study. Creating subgroups is both an inclusion and equity-promoting strategy because groups with many subgroups provide more contexts for children, especially younger children, to have to elevate their opinions and have them be heard simply because there are fewer competing voices.

**Delegate responsibilities to members in non-executive roles.** In addition to creating subgroups, another strategy to decenter the locus of control is delegating specific responsibilities to members in non-elected or appointed executive roles. Although there may be a person in the association for which a task falls under their explicit responsibility,
delegating the task to another person decreases dependency on the smaller number of members in elected or appointed roles while also increasing the institutional memory for completing specific tasks. For example, *Kundala Adhikar Bal Club* (Nepal) supported younger members to shadow older members to ensure knowledge of the daily functioning of the group was passed on to the younger generation. Older members would show younger members how to take attendance during meetings in their group’s diary, which is one of the ways the group keeps track of membership.

**Create explicit strategies for gender and age inclusion and equity.** Some groups in this study, such as *IUSECO* (the Philippines), had explicit strategies for improving age and gender inclusion and equity. The organizational diagrams for other groups, such as *My Fantasy* (Peru), showed relative parity among members of different ages and genders, even though the diagram and supplementary data did not explicitly identify groups norms to promote age and gender parity. It seems there is greater potential for addressing imbalances of power among age and gender groups if there is an explicitly stated norm, and even more so if this norm is reflected in the organizational structure components of a group. Evidence from *Shanti Shiksha Bal Club* (Nepal) suggested that while there may be an implicit group norm promoting gender inclusion and equity, larger societal gender norms that diminish gender equity create obstacles for groups to enact complete gender equity within their group.

**Reflect on the representativeness of group members.** It is unlikely a group can easily include all children in their community. However, a group can be cognizant of this need, why it is important, and how far they are from being representative. My experience speaking with members of *Meshaat Keram* (Egypt) suggested ways group members can continuously question their association’s representativeness. *Meshaat Keram* hung large sheets of colorful construction paper on the walls of their meeting space showing how
many children were in the community and how many they had reached out to, and it documented these numbers longitudinally for a period of about five years. These data are reminders of the need to reach out to the most marginalized children in a community, especially at times when the group is setting goals for recruiting members. However, such posters are passive, and without explicit conversations about inclusion and equity, the information contained within them is less useful. Engaging in active reflection about representativeness might also be a way for new members to learn about the values of the group, such as inclusion of all children. The Article 15 Project, as well as earlier research with children’s associations in Nepal, included activities designed to make explicit issues related to inclusion (see crc15.org; Hart & Rajbhandary, 2003).

**Set attainable organizational goals.** Going through a process of critical self-reflection can be emotionally taxing, and perhaps even disheartening, for a group if they discover they are far from type of group they would like to be. For example, in two groups I visited, *Shanti Shiksha Bal Club* (Nepal) and *Abu Mosalem* (Egypt), executive members appeared distraught when they realized their group was less inclusive of younger members’ opinions than they once thought. Their distress quickly turned to a desire to take action to correct the power imbalances they identified in their group. It is important to capitalize on these moments and set attainable goals for correcting an undesirable condition. With regular monitoring using tools such as the organizational diagram, groups can document their progress in achieving organizational goals, such as ensuring elected members are representative of the club members’ demographic subgroups, or that the club members are representative of the children in their community.

**Cultivate relationships with parents and caregivers of group members.** Only a few groups depicted parents and caregivers as part of their association’s organizational structure. On the other hand, multiple groups I visited said that a barrier to their
participation was parents’ granting of permission to attend group meetings. It seems some parents were skeptical of the benefits of participation, or they disliked the fact that participation in a children’s association interfered with household chores. Some parents even accused their children of lying about attending meetings so that they could get out of doing chores and instead play sports or visit with friends. Rajbhandary, Hart and Khatiwada (2002) made similar observations, finding that children consciously maintained parent’s perceptions of the clubs when they planned club activities. Even though children controlled their club’s activities, they knew parents were not likely to allow them to attend club meetings if they only engaged in games. These observations point to the need for children’s membership groups to cultivate relationships with parents and care givers of group members. These relationships may lead to better attendance rates and a more sustainable membership.

**Critique the influence of supportive agencies and organizations.** Additional data and analyses are needed to determine if adults supporting children’s associations, such as staff from international child-centered community development agencies, influence the organizational structures of children’s associations they collaborate with. Some agencies provide specific instruction to facilitators of children’s associations on how to organize the group (e.g., Cox, 2009). This may be helpful as a children’s membership group is just getting started, but this degree of control may be also limit the group’s ability to adapt their organizational structure according to their evolving needs and, possibly, growing membership. Members of children’s associations and their adult supports should be critical of the influence of supportive agencies in making prescriptive recommendations about the organizational structures of a group without equal invitation for modification of the structure by the group members.
CHAPTER VII
REFLECTIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Reflections

One of the research questions of the current study focused on how the organizational structures of children’s associations that have emerged in the latter part of the 20th century relate to changing views of childhood citizenship. I locate the different organizational structure components analyzed along a spectrum of views of children being and/or becoming citizens. For example, the majority of the children’s associations in the study utilized an executive committee, and the head of these committees was typically a president or chairperson. Using these data, I argue children’s associations promote the view that children are citizens in the present by building capacity for children to come together and organize themselves in ways that reflect contemporary modes of citizenship and democratic deliberation in larger society.

Children in executive roles take their responsibilities seriously, and they also expect to be taken seriously by adults and their peers. However, these organizational roles may, simultaneously, promote the view that children are not yet citizens and must be educated to become good future citizens. For example, although some groups had members younger than 12 years of age, none of the organizational diagrams analyzed identified any of these younger children in executive roles. Instead, my observations of group members’ discussions highlight that children in this age range are too young or inexperienced to be a group’s president. I interpret these comments as both thoughtful and also ageist. Children want to give opportunities to young members, but they also want their association to function effectively, and they do not trust young children in this position. This explanation makes sense, of course. The question then becomes whether the group has adequate
strategies for listening to younger children and meaningfully involving them in group
decision-making. Some groups include such strategies, but many do not.

I am well aware of the principles of promoting children’s right to freedom of
peaceful assembly and associations within the context of each child’s evolving capacities.
However, I am also aware that, like adults, older children have the capacities of diminishing
the opportunities for younger children to express themselves in matters that affect them.
So while the president of a children’s association is typically elected or appointed to
coalesce the views of all children in the group in decision-making, they may also make
decisions that are not inclusive or equitable of every member.

Each organizational structure component or role does not correspond neatly with
one point on the spectrum of views of childhood citizenship. Instead, by deconstructing the
decision-making processes an association into these different organizational structure
components and roles, it is possible to see the complexity of views and how a group
promotes multiple views of children’s capacities as citizens. In this way, the purpose and
utility of deconstructing the organizational structure is not simply to name things, but rather
to spur discussion about the inclusiveness and equity of decision-making processes. These
discussions among children in a group, along with their adult supporters, are likely to be
the most interesting and useful data for group members to understand and improve how
they govern themselves. The same discussions would also be useful to researchers, like
me, who are interested in understanding and promoting more inclusive and equitable
settings in children’s lives where all children can thrive.

Limitations of this study. I am critical of how my analysis distilled data into
categories, and yet I believe this is necessary at this stage to develop a vocabulary and
understanding of the complexity of different organizational structures and decision-making
practices of children’s groups. There is a need for more research in this area, and I hope this work is useful in charting future directions for research.

The most limiting factor of this study is the need for more ethnographic data on the children’s associations that participated in the Article 15 Project workshops. The workshops, in part, focused on co-developing the methods with children and adults. This goal competed with the parallel goal of understanding how members of each association organized themselves. Moreover, I spent relatively little time in the field with groups and with participants in workshops—between one to four days. Although our time together was productive and rewarding, it was insufficient for developing the level of rapport with the children and adults in such a way to allow corroboration between the data they generated in their organizational diagrams and my own observations of an association’s daily practices. This opportunity would not only be beneficial for continuing to develop a typology of organizational structures of new types of children’s associations, it would also likely be beneficial to the groups because my questions would likely spark ideas group members would include in their own critical analysis of the internal functioning of their groups.

Related to the absence of ethnographic data, I was unable to fully situate the organizational structure of each association within the multiple social, political, cultural, and historical contexts they inhabit. Understanding each group’s origin story would undoubtedly reveal more information about citizenship capacities the group promotes. Such an undertaking would also surely answer some of my lingering questions about why groups chose certain organizational roles and not others. Additional information on other groups the children’s associations in this study have relationships with would also contribute to understanding the organizational structures of these groups in context. There have been studies that contextualize the organizational strategies used in children’s
associations in terms of both socio-cultural context and individual members’ identities (e.g., Taft, 2010).

Another limitation of this study is the lack of data on children’s perceptions of childhood citizenship and whether or not the children’s association they belong to reflects a particular view of childhood citizenship. Questions about children’s perspectives of childhood citizenship were not the focus of the first phases of the Article 15 Project, but the data from this project, and my analyses, serve as springboard for future research on this topic by showing how the organizational structures of children’s organizations implicitly reflect views of childhood citizenship.

Finally, all of the groups in this study had some connection to a local or international child-centered community development agency. The data in this study say nothing about the organizational structures of children’s associations that may have no or little support from adults. Instead, the organizational structures of children’s associations in this study may be the types that are most compatible with some level of adult control. Finding groups that operate autonomously and who receive no or little support from adults will likely remain a challenge in future research. However, it is necessary to seek out these groups in order to develop a fuller understanding of the different modes of children’s self-governance in groups.

**Future Directions**

There are a number of future directions to take the current research. I sketch a few of my ideas below as a way to conclude this chapter and the dissertation as a whole.

**Longitudinal and ethnographic research with children’s associations.** This dissertation research offers a preliminary framework for theorizing and analyzing the organizational structures of children associations. Additional longitudinal and ethnographic
data is needed to more fully understand how the organizational structures change over time and whether or not these changes are driven by the child members themselves, or other factors, such as influence from adult and agencies that collaborate with children’s associations. Future longitudinal and ethnographic research on children’s associations could examine the potential of these groups to develop children’s capacities for civic engagement, understanding of democratic principles, and conceptualizations of their group’s role in civic life. Another focus of future work is to examine the potential for children’s associations to be protective of its members in terms of promoting children’s understanding and exercise of their rights, preventing child trafficking, and preventing different forms of abuse and violence against children, including physical and sexual abuse.

Long-term research might also look at the potential of children’s associations to promote healthy and meaningful relationships among children and between children and adults. In fact, in some of the Article 15 workshops conducted in West Africa, I learned that children’s associations were the setting in which children believed they were listened to by adults the most, over and above other settings in their lives where they encounter adults, such as home, school, or place of religious worship.

**Analyzing decision-making charts and other data from the Article 15 Project.**

The Article 15 Project workshops produced more data than could be systematically analyzed during this study. The organizational diagrams were a critical first step, as they were the most common activity used during the workshops with child and adult members of children’s associations in different countries. Additional data, such as the decision-making charts, are a natural next phase for analysis because they supplement the information on the organizational diagrams. Collecting and analyzing new data with other tools, such as the Adult Facilitator Body Map (see Module 2, crc15.org/kit), would also be worthwhile to answer questions about how members of children’s associations believe
adults should interact with them as supporters. The use of this tool would surely evoke conversations about how adults support or diminish opportunities for children to enact and develop their capacities as citizens.

**Developing more resources for adult facilitators of children’s associations.** In addition to the written resources available on how adults might support children’s associations, I have found the films *Mirrors of Ourselves* (Hart, 2002) and *We are Citizens* (Maharjan, 2001) particularly useful. There is a need for more resources in multiple mediums for both children and adults to learn and contribute knowledge about innovative ways children are organizing themselves in partnership with adults. The idea of a simple and visual handbook has repeatedly come up during conversations with colleagues at the Children’s Environments Research Group. Rather than a definitive and prescriptive text, such a resource might encourage readers to discuss and experiment with the ideas presented in the book by offering many examples of how children’s associations organize themselves. Given the fact that the audience for this resource is not necessarily academic, it would need to be written without jargon and translated into multiple languages. I have started to develop some of the content for such a resources in this dissertation, but it remains too academic. What is needed is a resource explicitly written for adult facilitators of children’s associations could better attend to this specific audience. Ideally, this resource would address the topic of how adults might learn how to release control of areas of organizational governance that seemed to be most contentious, such as group finances.

**Addressing topics in organizational studies.** Research on how children organize themselves is markedly absent from the organizational studies literature (Kavanagh, 2013). The currently research addresses this dearth in a modest way, but there are many more questions about how children organize themselves in different settings, including settings other than children’s associations. What is important for future research to bear in mind is
avoiding comparisons between children’s organizations and adults’ associations. In line with the view that children have distinct peer cultures, the study of children’s associations and organizations should round out the organizational studies literature with the primary goal of understanding children’s own organizations, not just how participation in these organizations might influence individuals when they are older and join adult-led organizations.

**The influences of the internet, social media, and digital networks.** Children’s access to the internet, social media, and digital network is becoming an important topic in the study of childhood. The present research did not examine whether access to the internet and related technologies have any bearing on the organizational structures of children’s associations. Social media was not prominent in any of the organizational structure diagrams I examined; however, my conversations with participants in the workshop suggest that some children’s associations, especially groups in Latin America, are actively networking with other children’s associations in their region. These groups cite the Facebook as their preferred mode of communication, and often they use Facebook pages rather than standalone websites to promote their group’s vision and activities.

**Promoting participatory research and methods with children.** Some of the methods developed during the Article 15 Project, which built on previous participatory research efforts with children (Hart et al., 2001; Rajbhandary et al., 2002), are unique and versatile. Workshop participants who have engaged in this process of critical self-inquiry have lauded the tools and the project’s approach. The organizational diagram has been piloted with dozens of groups and is continually adapted with each use. It may be helpful to continue to document these adaptations and how they improve upon the version of the tool I have presented here. For example, the process of using the tools could include explicit interrogation of the reasons why participants created specific geometric shapes to
represent patterns of communication, or why adult supporters of a group are in the center of a diagram rather than off to the side. This might mean piloting a standard list of questions that facilitators ask workshop participants to consider when explaining their organizational diagram, or at least a checklist to ensure a systematic process for explaining the activity and processing the group discussions once participants have completed a version of their organizational diagram.

**Continuing to interrogate gender equity issues.** Pricilla Alderson (2001) asks for considering lessons from feminism and recognizing the time and efforts needed to make equal human rights between women and men. She argues the progress of children’s rights will be equally difficult. I agree with this caution and add a complementary one. Judith Ennew cautions that aligning women’s rights with children’s rights does a disservice to feminist achievements, and reifies the responsibilities of caring for children as feminine work (Ennew, 2011). Rather, women’s rights and children’s rights must receive separate and special consideration in order to overcome the particular societal challenges to ensuring each group’s rights—a view explicated in the Rio Declaration on sustainable development, which argues for explicit consideration be given to women, children and indigenous peoples (United Nations Dept. of Public Information, 1992). I believe the power analyses invited by the organizational diagrams and related tools from the Article 15 Project may be useful to future research seeking to interrogate issues of gender equity in children’s associations.
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