Understandings of Childhood and Youth and Experiences of Child and Youth Participation in Thailand's Policy and Programme Development

Chanon Komonmarn

PhD

University of York

School for Business and Society

July 2024

Abstract

This thesis investigates children and young people's (CYP) and policymakers' perceptions of childhood, youth and child and youth participation in Thailand, including their experiences of power-sharing in policy decision-making. Specifically, the thesis examines young people's belief in their influence on policy-making, the main challenges they faced and the solutions they overcame. The investigation followed a case study methodology comparing a national and a local case study. The primary data collection relied on semi-structured online interviews with young people and policymakers. Three child-friendly methods and documentation were employed to foster trustworthiness and promote CYP's voices in research.

The findings of the two case studies emphasise that the particularities of Thai culture significantly influenced the conceptualisations and perceptions of childhood, youth and CYP. They also further reveal that these constructions were also partly influenced by the diffusion of the minority world's conceptualisation of childhood. They demonstrate that adults shaped the norms associated with these understandings, reflecting the minority status of CYP and their limited power under adult dominance. The findings relevant to child and youth participation highlight two main themes: young people's desire to freely express their opinions in line with global trends in child and youth participation and the persistence of cultural norms, particularly within the family and community spheres. The findings also indicate that the perceptions of young people in policy and programme development with policymakers changed throughout the stages of participation. Young people encountered various challenges when participating in policy and programme development, stemming from both personal limitations and structural barriers, but they generally sought to address these challenges by themselves. Interestingly, the two case studies examining CYP's belief in their influence on policy decision-making produced significantly different results. In the national case study, young people were sceptical about their influence on policy decisions, whereas young people in the local case study strongly believed in their influence on local policy decision-making. Similarly, power was seen as centralised in the hands of policymakers in the national case study but as distributed in the local case study. Despite these divergent understandings of power, policymakers in both cases sought to share power with CYP. Three power-sharing methods emerged from their accounts, and policymakers' and young people's perceptions of these differed.

This thesis also uncovers the advantages of involving both young people and policymakers in research, providing a nuanced and comprehensive understanding of the relevance of Thailand's cultural context, including generational differences. It also adds to the existing body of research on the construct of childhood and youth as well as child and youth participation in Thai culture, filling a gap in this area.

List of contents

List of tables

List of figures

Acknowledgements

Declaration

I declare that this thesis is a presentation of original work and I am the sole author. This work has not previously been presented for a degree or other qualification at this University or elsewhere. All sources are acknowledged as references.

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

This introductory chapter provides an overview of the aims and structure of the thesis, including the definitions of key terms. From the 1980s to the 1990s, the New Sociology of Childhood (NSC) was introduced to childhood and youth studies and gained increasing public and policy recognition, transforming our perspectives on children and young people (CYP) (James and Prout, 2001; Thomas, 2014; Wright, 2015). Various studies focusing on childhood and youth, including child and youth participation, were developed in these realms (Cavet and Sloper, 2004; Bessell, 2009; Tisdall and Cuevas-Parra, 2021). This encompasses the distribution and implications of policies and practices concerning CYP globally, including Thailand, where the study was conducted. Therefore, the chapter begins by examining the justifications for conducting this research, focusing on the importance of studying childhood, youth and CYP and their right to participate in Thai society. Section 1.3 introduces the thesis's aims, objectives and research questions. Section 1.4 provides an overview of the contents of each chapter of the thesis. The chapter concludes with Section 1.5, which defines some key terms used throughout the thesis.

1.2 Rationales for the study

There have been many distinct conceptualisations of the stage of human growth and experience that we now refer to as childhood in different cultures and historical times (Jones, 2009b). However, childhood is universally recognised as a biologically and psychologically determined early stage of human development (James and James, 2012). In this sense, childhood is mainly characterised by biological and psychological development and represents the beginning of the maturation process to adulthood (James and James, 2012; Woodhead, 2015). Since the early twentieth century, these explanations of childhood have been widely acknowledged and recognised as the dominant paradigm in childhood studies (Mayall, 2013; Woodhead, 2015). Although childhood is a biological reality commonly understood as the initial stage of human life, scholars have proposed the NSC as an alternative understanding of childhood and youth (Quennerstedt and Quennerstedt, 2014). The fundamental principles of the NSC are characterised by the following four notable attributes:

- childhood is understood as a social construct;
- childhood is a variable of social analysis that is connected to other variables based on social and cultural differences, such as class, gender and ethnicity;
- childhood is a phenomenon in relation to which the double hermeneutic of the social sciences is acutely present;

- children have their own rights, independent of adults' perspectives and concerns; they must be seen as active social actors in the construction and determination of their own social lives where they live (James and Prout, 2001).

According to the first component, childhood is a socially constructed phenomenon that has changed over time and varies between and within societies and cultures (James and Prout, 2001; James and James, 2012; Montgomery, 2013a). Therefore, there are different understandings of childhood across various cultures worldwide. This rationale prompted our desire to examine, in this thesis, how childhood is constructed with a particular emphasis on Thailand, a country in the majority world. Furthermore, the research gaps in the domain of childhood and youth studies in Thailand revealed the absence of both the notion of childhood as socially constructed and a framework for comprehending CYP through the NSC lens (Gomaratut et al., 2021). This thesis therefore has the potential to enhance comprehension regarding the construct of childhood in Thailand and make a valuable contribution to global knowledge on this topic.

Another critical component of the NSC is that CYP are social actors with rights and that they can contribute to and participate in society (Smith, 2002; Tisdall and Bell, 2006; Sorin and Galloway, 2006; Kellet, 2009; Lansdown, 2010; Jones, 2011). The implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) in 1989 is a remarkable illustration of the global awareness and acknowledgement of the concept that CYP have the right to express their views, feelings and wishes in all matters affecting them (Committee on the Rights of the Child, 2009; UNICEF, 2010; Checkoway, 2011). Article 12 (1) of the UNCRC frames CYP's right to participate as follows:

> States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child (Convention on the rights of the child, 1989)

As a result of the UNCRC, governments and policymakers worldwide have increasingly acknowledged the significance of promoting the participation of CYP in policy decision-making processes (Gottschalk and Borhan, 2023). Thailand has demonstrated a solid commitment to the UNCRC, and the Thai government has also continuously developed policies related to the welfare and rights of CYP (Rogers and Karunan, 2020). Upon ratifying the UNCRC on 12 February 1992, the Thai government established various laws and national policies to enhance CYP's participation (Department of Children and Youth Affairs, 2019). The National Child and Youth Development Promotion Acts B.E. 2550 (NCYDP Act 2007) and B.E. 2560 (NCYDP Act 2017) are the most significant Thai acts aimed at encouraging child and youth participation. Their purposes are to establish a national commission responsible for promoting the development of CYP and identify the roles and actions of sectors in Thailand that contribute to the participation of CYP at different levels of Thai society (see Chapter 4, Section 4.4). A comprehensive analysis of the literature indicated that the national and local government levels are the primary governing bodies with specific obligations to facilitate the participation of CYP in the development of policies and programmes, as specified by the two acts (UNICEF, 2016; Ungkleang et al., 2019; Department of Children and Youth Affairs, 2019; Chantajam,

2020; UNICEF, 2023). The national government, specifically the National Commission on the Promotion of Child and Youth Development (NCPCYD) and various sub-committees under the NCPCYD (see Chapter 4, Section 4.4.2.1), play a crucial role in the development of child- and youth-related policy and programmes for CYP nationwide (UNICEF, 2016; Ungkleang et al., 2019; UNICEF, 2023). Meanwhile, the Sub-District Administrative Organisation (SAO) or Municipality has directly initiated and implemented local policies, plans, programmes and initiatives concerning CYP in the local government administration (Chantajam, 2020; UNICEF, 2023). Therefore, this thesis examines both the national and local government levels.

To encourage child and youth participation at these two levels, the Thai government established child and youth councils (CYC) and urged representatives from these councils to participate in committees and sub-committees aimed at developing child youth policies and programmes with policymakers at both government levels. Currently, 7,772 Sub-District Child and Youth Councils and one National Child and Youth Council of Thailand (NCYCT) exist (Department of Children and Youth Affairs, 2021). Consequently, this thesis investigates the operationalisation of child and youth participation by the national and local government, with a particular focus on their participation in policy and programme development. However, the viewpoints of Thai adults and children (12–17 years) on child and youth participation and related obstacles have only been investigated partially in Thailand (Kotchabhadi et al., 2009). The study by Kotchabhadi (2009), which examined the perspectives of adults and CYP without focusing on a specific case, was conducted over ten years ago. Various changing factors in Thailand might have transformed Thai individuals' perceptions of the involvement of CYP in the meantime. This includes the implementation of the two NCYDP acts, which are designed to encourage the active participation of CYP in specific national and local governance. Hence, this thesis makes an important contribution as the first comprehensive investigation into child and youth participation at two governmental levels in Thailand. It also aims to fill a significant research gap concerning children's right to participate, which has generally been neglected in previous studies conducted in Thailand (Gomaratut et al., 2021).

1.3 Research aims, objectives and questions

This thesis's overarching aim is to investigate how childhood and youth are constructed, including how child and youth participation is conceptualised in a particular context and time. It utilises the concept of childhood as a social construct to examine how policymakers and CYP perceive childhood and youth in Thai culture. This can reveal how different generations perceive childhood, indicating how it has changed over time. This study can thus provide updated insights into CYP's and policymakers' perceptions of child and youth participation in contemporary Thai society. It also seeks to explore the obstacles that prevent CYP from participating in policy/programme decision-making processes, including how they attempt to overcome these obstacles. This thesis also investigates whether CYP believe that they can influence policy and programme decision-making. Theories and research about meaningful child and youth participation

attempt to determine how adults can share decision-making power with CYP (Hill et al., 2004; Farrow, 2018). Additionally, studies on power and power-sharing demonstrate the advantages of thoroughly exploring the concept of power in order to have a more nuanced understanding of power-sharing and/or empowerment (To, 2006; Gunn, 2008; Saar-Heiman, 2023). Accordingly, this thesis incorporates the concept of power and power-sharing between policymakers and CYP in policy and programme decision-making to investigate the research participants' accounts. The research objectives of this thesis are as follows:

1. To investigate CYP's perceptions of childhood, youth and CYP in Thailand's context, including their participation in Thailand's policy and programme development;
2. To investigate the beliefs of CYP regarding their influence on policy and programme decision-making;
3. To determine the main obstacles CYP face when participating in policy and programme development;
4. To investigate how CYP overcome obstacles in participating in policy and programme development;
5. To investigate the perceptions of CYP's power-sharing experiences in policy and programme decision-making with policymakers;
6. To examine policymakers' perceptions of childhood, youth and CYP in the Thai context;
7. To explore policymakers' perceptions of child and youth participation in the Thai context;
8. To investigate the policy makers' methods for sharing power with CYP in policy and programme decision-making.

These objectives have generated eight research questions:

1) How do CYP perceive childhood/children?
2) How do CYP perceive child and youth participation?
3) What are the main obstacles CYP face, and how do they overcome these obstacles to participate in policy and programme development?
4) Do CYP believe that their views genuinely influence policy decision-making?
5) How do CYP perceive their power-sharing experiences with policymakers in policy and programme decision-making?
6) How do policymakers perceive childhood/children?
7) How do policymakers perceive child and youth participation?
8) How do policymakers seek to share power with CYP in policy and programme decision-making?

I concluded that qualitative research is the most effective method for investigating individuals' perceptions and experiences (Hammarberg, Kirkman and De Lacey, 2016). Because the research involves the perceptions and experiences of CYP and policymakers in concrete policy at a particular time and place, a case study methodology was deemed suitable for the investigation (Gillham, 2000; Simons, 2012; Creswell and Creswell, 2018).

1.4 Structure of the thesis

Chapter 2 of this thesis focuses on the conceptualisation of childhood, youth and the theoretical debate about power in relation to childhood, youth and CYP. First, it presents the dominant contemporary conceptions of childhood, including those of paediatric medicine, developmental theory and socialisation theory. These theories emphasise that childhood is an early stage of human development characterised by physical, emotional, cognitive and social immaturity compared to adulthood. The second section outlines the NSC, which is the core theory underpinning this thesis. Three significant features of the NSC are presented: childhood as a social construct, children as social actors and children as a minority group. Then, the distinction between adolescence, youth and young people is introduced. The last section introduces Foucault's and Bourdieu's concepts of power, along with the theoretical debate on power in childhood and youth studies, highlighting that power can be either centralised or distributed.

Chapter 3 turns to a vital component of the NSC: children are social actors with rights, drawing attention to child and youth participation. It begins by explaining the connection between the notion that children are social actors and the concept of child and youth participation. The second and third sections introduce the advantages as well as challenges and limitations of child and youth participation. The next section outlines challenges in child and youth participation in policy and programme development and how to overcome them. Then, I examine the concept of power and power-sharing as debated in the realm of child and youth participation. Based on the notion that power can be shared, which is at the core of child and youth participation, the last section explains how the concepts of power and power-sharing have been tackled in the practice of policy and programme development.

Chapter 4 combines the concepts of childhood, youth, power and power-sharing explained in the Thai context. The first two sections discuss the dominant and alternative constructions/perceptions of childhood, youth and CYP in Thai culture. Drawing on the notion of social construct, the third section analyses the construction of child and youth participation in Thailand, drawing attention to the influence of the minority world's conception of child and youth participation over the majority world. I then discuss the essential aspects of how CYP in Thailand can participate in national and local policy and programme development as well as their criticisms. Following this, I turn to the notion of power in policy decisions between CYP and adults in Thai culture.

Chapter 5 discusses the methodology employed to investigate the research questions. The chapter begins by outlining how research can involve CYP and how I involved them as social actors and incorporated them into the study. It then explains and justifies the case study methodology used for this research. This chapter further describes research sites, target populations, including policymakers and CYP, and recruitment into the study. The data collection methods entailed online interviews, child-friendly methods and documentation, which are explained in this section. Then, I discuss the data

analysis, specifically thematic analysis. The chapter's final sections address the limitations of the data collection and researcher reflexivity.

Chapter 6 presents the findings and analysis of the two case studies regarding research participants' perceptions and experiences of childhood, youth and CYP in the context of Thai culture. The first half delves into the common perceptions and experiences of childhood and youth, which young participants and policymakers tend to perceive similarly. The second half sheds light on the unique perceptions and experiences of policymakers regarding their own childhood and youth experiences/memories.

Chapter 7 discusses the research questions relevant to research participants' understanding, perceptions and experience of child and youth participation in the two case studies. It begins by introducing how young participants and policymakers comprehend child and youth participation. The chapter then presents their perceptions and experiences in the context of child and youth participation in policy and programme development, demonstrating that young participants' perceptions changed as they gained more experience with participation. The next section points out the significant challenges faced by CYP when participating in policy and programme development and how young participants overcame them. The final section shows that the young participants in the two case studies had different beliefs regarding their influence over policy and programme decisions.

Chapter 8 combines young participants' and policymakers' perceptions of power/power-sharing and experiences in policy and programme decision-making. It begins by showing how they perceived power in policy and programme decision-making, which differed in the two case studies. The next section explores three policymakers' methods for sharing power with CYP in policy/programme decision-making and how young participants experienced these methods.

Chapter 9 concludes the thesis. The chapter summarises three key points of this thesis by concluding on the influence of Thai culture on the construction of childhood, youth, CYP and child and youth participation in the Thai context, including the importance of power in child and youth participation. After summarising the overall research findings, I discuss policy and practice recommendations for promoting meaningful participation in policy and programme development in Thailand. I then outline the study's contributions and acknowledge its limitations, offering areas for potential future research.

1.5 Operational definitions of key terms

Several important concepts relate to investigating childhood, youth and CYP's participation in policy and programme development in Thailand. This section introduces a brief discussion of the six concepts used in this thesis: childhood, youth, CYP, child and youth participation, policy and programme development and the majority and minority world.

1.5.1 Childhood

The main feature of childhood according to the NSC is that it is a social construct, whose conceptualisation and experience are not universal but rather vary across time and cultures (James and Prout, 2001; Jones, 2009b; James and James, 2012; Woodhead, 2015; Wright, 2015). Therefore, understanding childhood through the NSC lens is complex and context dependent, and there is no single or agreed definition of childhood (Lansdown, 2005b; Llewellyn, Agu and Mercer, 2008; Diana, 2020). Throughout this thesis, "childhood" refers to socially constructed childhood. NSC notions and explanations of childhood as a social construct are outlined in Chapter 2, Section 2.3.1.

1.5.2 Youth

The concept of youth is generally defined by specific age brackets or by referring to the UN definition of persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2014; Coles and Wenham, 2016). However, there is ongoing debate about these definitions because they tend to focus overly on psychological or developmental components, which might result in a narrow understanding of youth as a linear progression across the lifespan (Galstyan, 2022). This thesis adopts the sociological perspective that youth is frequently perceived as a social construct in a particular culture, and its comprehension has evolved and changed over time (Kehily, 2007; Jones, 2009a). The concepts and distinctions between youth, adolescence and young people are explained in Chapter 2, Section 2.4.

1.5.3 Children and young people

Although various perspectives exist on how to define a child based on social, economic and cultural considerations, the most widely accepted definition is that of "every human being below the age of 18 years unless, under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier" (Article 1, UNCRC) (Convention on the rights of the child, 1989). In Thailand, the definition of a child's age varies between 0 to 15 years and 0 to 18 years depending on the legal act, such as the Child Protection Act B.E. 2546 (2003) and the Juvenile and Family Court and Procedure Act B.E. 2553 (2010) (Ministry of Digital Economy and Society, 2021). This thesis specifically follows NCYDP Act 2007 because it is the primary law emphasising the promotion of CYP's participation in society (see more details in Chapter 4, Section 4.4.2). According to Article 4 of this act, a child is defined as a person below 18 years of age. Hence, in this thesis, the term "child" refers to an individual under the age of 18.

The definition of "young people" varies across sources, with research conducted in numerous disciplines and international organisations incorporating global criteria that define this age group. Young people are commonly defined as aged between 10 and 25 years, but this age range can go up to 35 years in some contexts (Blum and Nelson-Mmari, 2004; Hopkins, 2010; Bell and Blanchflower, 2011; United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2014; Perovic, 2016; Brady, 2020). In Thailand, the definition of young people varies between 15 and 25 years in different acts (Ministry of Digital Economy and Society, 2021), as mentioned above. While it may be challenging to

categorise young people based on age, this thesis aligns with NCYDP Act 2007, which defines young people as individuals aged between 18 and 25 years.

1.5.4 Child and youth participation

The definition of child and youth participation remains complex and challenging due to lack of clarity, frequent labelling as a vague idea and varying perceptions, constructions and transformations over time (Mason and Bolzan, 2010; Borgne, 2014; Ruiz-Casares et al., 2017; Corney et al., 2020; Skauge, Storhaug and Marthinsen, 2021). However, child and youth participation is commonly understood as a spectrum, ranging from minimal involvement, where CYP are simply informed but not consulted or actively involved in decision-making, to more advanced stages, where they proactively influence and share responsibility or power in decision-making processes (Hart, 1992; Shier, 2001; Alias, Mohamad Nasri and Awang, 2023; Woodman, Roche and McArthur, 2023). This thesis understands child and youth participation as the active involvement of CYP in committee or sub-committee activities related to policy and programme development in the national and local case studies. Thus, their participation should entail a certain degree of influence or effect on the decision-making process, and they may jointly hold decision-making power with policymakers (Hart, 1992; Shier, 2001; Wong and Zimmerman, 2010; Fleming, 2013; Ruiz-Casares et al., 2017; Botchwey et al., 2019; Skauge, Storhaug and Marthinsen, 2021).

1.5.5 Policy and programme development

In policy studies, the terms "policy development", "policy process" and "policy-making process" are sometimes used interchangeably (Friedman, 2001; Hofmänner, 2018; Lane et al., 2020). Although usage may vary, the fundamental notion often refers to the policy cycle progressing from the stages of conception to evaluation (Hoefer, 2021). The most common model used to explain the chronology of policy development is a five-stage policy process model (Jann and Wegrich, 2006; Howlett and Giest, 2013). The five stages of policy development are (1) agenda setting, which involves identifying and acknowledging the problem, (2) policy formulation, which entails developing strategies to address the problem, (3) decision-making, where the solution that maximises potential benefits while minimising costs or risks is chosen, (4) implementation, which involves executing a specific course of action and adopting a programme, and (5) evaluation, or the monitoring of outcomes (Jann and Wegrich, 2006; Howlett and Giest, 2013). By focusing on the implementation of policies, many programmes and projects may be generated to support policy success (Peckham et al., 2022). Therefore, this thesis uses the term "policy and programme development" to explain the stages of the policy process or a particular strategic design, such as a project or programme intended to enhance the effectiveness of policies, in two case studies of local and national governments.

1.5.6 The majority and minority world

This thesis uses the terms "majority world" and "minority world" to refer to what is broadly accepted as the "third world" and "first world" or the "global south" and "global

north" (Tisdall and Punch, 2012). The minority world refers to the countries traditionally considered developed countries in Europe and North America, whereas the majority world refers to the countries where most of the world's population resides, mainly in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

Chapter 2: Conceptualising childhood, youth and power

2.1 Introduction

This chapter summarises the literature regarding the notions of childhood, youth, CYP and power. This chapter presents the dominant conceptions of childhood and children from paediatric medicine, developmental psychology and socialisation perspectives. These concepts often define childhood as an initial phase of life in which children must become physically, psychologically and socially equipped to transition into maturity. Significantly, they evolved into universally accepted notions of childhood that have influenced how childhood is seen globally. The chapter will then turn to the NSC, which places a different emphasis on childhood, youth and CYP. The NSC highlights that childhood is not universal but varies and changes across cultures, time and space (James and Prout, 2001; Kehily, 2009). Following NSC, the fundamental argument of this study is that childhood is constructed socially within a particular context (James and Prout, 2001; James and James, 2012; Montgomery, 2013a). This chapter illustrates how different parts of the world have conceptualised childhood and children and how the perspectives of the minority world have influenced the understanding of childhood and children in the majority world. Then, I introduce the core component of NSC, which is that children are social actors in their own right and their agency should be recognised (James and Prout, 2001; Punch, 2016). While this argument acknowledges children's perspectives and advocates for their rights, the literature presented in the following section reveals that children are still regarded as a minority social group that confronts oppression by adults, a majority social group. The chapter then moves on to a discussion of the distinction between adolescence, youth and young people. Lastly, it presents the notion of power employed in this study, which focuses on the dichotomy of power as centralised or diffused (Bachrach and Baratz, 2002; Avelino, 2021). This dichotomy is further examined in the context of childhood and youth based on three distinct dimensions.

2.2 Dominant conceptions of childhood and children

Since the early twentieth century, paediatric medicine and child psychology, which study the biological characteristics of children, have influenced and dominated the contemporary conception of childhood (Prout, 2005; Neaum, 2019). Later, another prevailing conception, socialisation theory, argued that a child is socially incomplete at

birth and sought to explain how they are socialised to become fully formed adults (Matthews, 2007; Corsaro, 2015).

2.2.1 Paediatric medicine and developmental psychology

The development of paediatric medicine was essential to the rise of the scientific study of children, which aimed to understand childhood disease as a specific branch of medicine. Through the intersection of educational and medical regimes, childhood became the essential target for new preventive medicine practices (Prout, 2005). In the field of paediatric medicine, infants are subjected to a sequence of developmental assessments to ascertain the typicality of their physical development, thereby mitigating any potential harm during childhood (Neaum, 2019). From this medical perspective, children and their development can be controlled, measured, monitored and managed (Neaum, 2019). Alongside paediatrics, developmental psychology was the dominant paradigm for studying childhood and children in academic research and applied sciences such as education, health and social welfare policies and social work practices (Woodhead, 2013; Williams and Rogers, 2016). Developmental psychology often relies on stage-based biological explanations to comprehend children and believes that childhood has universal explanations (Williams and Rogers, 2016). Developmental psychology encompasses various theoretical schools, such as behaviourism, attachment theory, cognitive development and moral development (Neaum, 2019). It generally holds that children are physically smaller and weaker than adults, with perceived physical limitations and emotional immaturity (Wyness, 2019).

Paediatric medicine and developmental theory have produced a framework for understanding the progression of physical, behavioural, cognitive and emotional patterns in children, which has become the standard for normal child development globally (Prout, 2005). Based on these disciplines, childhood is seen as the path to adulthood, which unfolds in stages relating to age, physical development and cognitive ability (Kehily, 2009). However, these theories appear to disregard the influence of social, cultural, historical or political-economic factors on the formation of the concept of childhood (Williams and Rogers, 2016). Although these disciplines have limitations and have faced criticism, they have enabled significant advancements in childhood studies and have had a more profound impact on our perspectives and comprehension of childhood and children than any other discipline (James and James, 2012; Williams and Rogers, 2016). The next section investigates childhood through the lens of socialisation theory, emphasising that children are not only perceived to be physically and emotionally immature but also socially incomplete.

2.2.2 Socialisation theory

Socialisation is commonly defined as the process whereby individuals in a society absorb the current standards, values and beliefs of their society (Cree, 2010). Sociologists frequently utilise socialisation theory to describe the process in which

children, and sometimes adults, acquire the ability to conform to social norms (Jenks, 2001). One of the most influential theorists of socialisation is Parson (1902–1979), who strongly believed that children are born entirely ignorant of social values and that growing up is a process of gradually learning about and internalising social conventions to become full members of society (Gallacher and Kehily, 2013). Parsons's theory distinguishes between two types of socialisation: "primary socialisation" and "secondary socialisation" (Cree, 2010). Primary socialisation takes place in the family during infancy and childhood, while secondary socialisation occurs when children are older and are increasingly influenced by external individuals (e.g. peers) and outside institutions (e.g. school, clubs and the workplace) (Cree, 2010). Parsons also illustrated the prevailing gender roles in the family: the father is the breadwinner, working outside the family unit to earn money, while the mother is concerned with the personal and intimate aspects of social life (Webster and Rashotte, 2009; Leonard, 2016). Parson's idea of gender is rigid, and the family is seen as the factory that produces children's personality characteristics and an understanding of their future roles to prepare them to build their own families in the future (Webster and Rashotte, 2009). From a socialisation viewpoint, childhood is a stage of life when individuals have to acquire both knowledge and skills to prepare for adulthood and become fully functioning members of society (Matthews, 2007; Corsaro, 2015). In other words, socialisation often depicts childhood as the process of becoming responsible citizens (Walkerdine, 2009; Cree, 2010; Wyness, 2019). Even though socialisation theory emerged from sociology, it closely resembles developmental psychology theories (James, Jenks and Prout, 2010). Matthews (2007) further argues that socialisation and developmental psychology push scholars to write about children as if they are the same regardless of social context.

According to these dominant theories, childhood is a biological life stage when children must be socialised and acquire knowledge and skills before reaching adulthood. These theories also suggest that childhood is universal and independent of particular contexts. Within these frameworks, children are perceived as future citizens rather than acknowledged for their current positions as social actors with rights. These concepts seem to contradict the notion examined in the next section that childhood varies across contexts and how this has given rise to an emphasis on children's rights to participate in society.

2.3 Alternative conceptions of childhood, youth and children

In the mid-1980s, growing numbers of sociocultural researchers disagreed with many of the assumptions surrounding developmental psychology and socialisation theories in childhood studies (Prout, 2005; Gallacher and Kehily, 2013). In particular, sociologists argued that childhood is not universal but varies and changes across cultures, time and space (James and Prout, 2001; Kehily, 2009). This led to the creation of the NSC, which holds that childhood is socially constructed and that children should be recognised as

social actors with rights (James and Prout, 2001; James and James, 2012; Montgomery, 2013a). The NSC also increased the recognition of the concept of the sociological child, which includes the tribal child, the social structural child and the minority group child (Morss, 2002). The present study focuses solely on children as a minority group within these categories that challenge existing power relations between adults and children (Jenks, 2015). This will be discussed later in the chapter to demonstrate that childhood is viewed as a marginalised status in adult society. This section aims to demonstrate three fundamental ideas of the NSC relevant to this study: childhood is a social construct, children are social actors, and children are a minority group.

2.3.1 Childhood as a social construct

The notion of childhood as a social construct explores specific sets of ideas, philosophies, attitudes and expectations about childhood at a particular time and in a particular context (James and Prout, 2001; James and James, 2012; Montgomery, 2013a). This approach arose partly as a reaction against mainstream childhood studies, which predominantly view childhood as a universal biological or psychological stage of development (Quennerstedt and Quennerstedt, 2014). Hence, there is no universal child from the perspective of social constructionists, and childhood cannot be understood without understanding the broader contexts (Leonard, 2016; Wyness, 2019; Diana, 2020). In other words, childhood is a variable of social analysis connected to other variables based on social and cultural differences (James and Prout, 2001). The construction of childhood has undergone many transformations in both minority- and majority-world countries throughout history.

In the minority world, childhood has been socially constructed in four essential ways: as miniature adulthood, as evil, as a blank slate and as a time of innocence (Montgomery, 2003; Brockliss and Montgomery, 2013). Reviewing various medieval European paintings, sculptures, poems and other works of art, Ariès (1914–1984) initially found that children were apparently seen as miniaturised adults, particularly in mediaeval European society (Brockliss and Montgomery, 2013). Ariès concluded that there was no idea of childhood in the medieval period and that children were perceived as miniature adults because they had no unique clothing, food, social space or time related to a childhood culture, including no room for sentimentality in parent–child relationships (Clarke, 2004; Gittins, 2009; Brockliss and Montgomery, 2013). However, critics argue that the concept of children as miniature adults is based on artistic representations that do not accurately depict children and childhood (Brockliss and Montgomery, 2013). Despite some criticism, this construction has been widely acknowledged in childhood studies (Montgomery, 2003).

Another prevalent conceptualisation of childhood, influenced by Christian doctrine and originating from theologian Saint Augustine of Hippo (AD 354–430), saw children as evil (Brockliss and Montgomery, 2013). This focused on the earliest stage of life and argued that human beings inherit the original sin of Adam's disobedience at birth. The

famous philosopher Thomas Hobbes (1588–1676) extended humanity's original sin and proposed that childhood was bad by nature and children were evil (Nurhadi, 2015). Later, in the Enlightenment period, John Locke (1632–1704) challenged the idea of humanity's original sin and affirmed that the newborn child was a "tabula rasa" or blank slate (Gill, 2006; Duschinsky, 2013). According to Locke's notion of tabula rasa, children need guidance and training to develop into adults because the "minds of children [are] as easily turned this or that way as water itself" (Tuckness, 2010, p.628). Alongside Locke, the French Romantic philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778) argued that "God makes all things good; man meddles with them, and they become evil" (Rousseau, 1921, p.9). Therefore, according to Rousseau, human beings are born naturally good and innocent (Cladis, 1996; Gittins, 1998).

Concerning the majority world, this thesis focuses on three main views of childhood prevalent in Asian countries: as a time of obedience, economic value, dependency and innocence. First, a major view of childhood is that of a period of obedience. In many Asian countries, individuals are perceived as family members who recognise that their obligation to their family is a duty and responsibility, as influenced by Chinese Confucianism (Yunus, 2005; Xu, Zhang and Hee, 2014). Confucian notions align with ideas on filial piety, ancestral unity, primogeniture and lineage, including various values such as harmony, duty, honour, respect, education and allegiance to the family (Yunus, 2005; Xu, Zhang and Hee, 2014). The influence of Confucianism in Asian countries has had an impact on children's positions; they are frequently encouraged and expected to be obedient and respectful and honour their parents and other elders, particularly in their community (Yunus, 2005; Xu, Zhang and Hee, 2014; Kim et al., 2015; To et al., 2021). These characteristics have affected Asian parenting traditions, emphasising children's reliance on their parents, complete obedience, harsh discipline and corporal punishment to correct behaviour (Yang, 1981; Shek and Sun, 2014; Ribbens McCarthy et al., 2017). Research has found that obedience culture impacts CYP and is a significant obstacle to their participation in decision-making processes, limiting their ability to openly express their viewpoints to adults (Bessell, 2009; Twum-Danso, 2010).

Second, childhood is seen as a useful economic utility. CYP are thus often perceived as economic assets or a source of cheap labour on the farm, at home or in shops, where their work and wages can secure income for their family (Thompson, 2015). It is widely acknowledged that CYP from low-income families may participate in paid employment as a way to contribute economically and fulfil a moral responsibility to the family (Nurhadi, 2015; Morrow and Boyden, 2019). Meanwhile, CYP from higher-income backgrounds typically participate in unpaid work within their families, such as unpaid agricultural activities or caring for siblings and grandparents (Morrow and Boyden, 2019). In addition, the labour roles and responsibilities of CYP within the family are often highly differentiated by gender. In various countries in the majority world, girls are often expected to perform domestic duties such as cooking, cleaning, light farm work and looking after family members, whereas boys are more likely to be involved in

unpaid agricultural activities and paid work (Morrow and Boyden, 2019; Samonova et al., 2021).

Third, childhood is often viewed as a period of innocence and dependence (West, 2007). Since the nineteenth century, the perception of CYP as innocent and in need of care or protection has become a globalised model of childhood (Linde, 2014). This idea has been spread worldwide by international laws and organisations, particularly the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), which emphasises human rights, health, sanitation, education, child development and child care (Linde, 2014; Diana, 2020). Therefore, this concept in Asian countries may partly illustrate how the minority world colonises and culturally dominates the majority world through international rights organisations (Wells, 2009; Cregan and Cuthbert, 2014). In this view, children are vulnerable individuals who should receive protection and compassion from adults or parents (Yunus, 2005). However, there is a paradox between childhood as a time of dependence and innocence and children as active actors in various countries of the majority world. As outlined above, CYP in Asian countries are also perceived as active actors who take on responsibilities and active citizen roles in their families through their work (Malone and Hartung, 2010; Van-Campen and Russell, 2010; Movshovich, 2014). This highlights the conflict between the influence of the minority world's norms of childhood, in which CYP are innocent individuals in need of protection, and the varying perception of CYP as competent individuals in this particular local context (Ansell, 2010; Diana, 2020).

This section offers an alternative understanding of childhood by introducing the idea that childhood is socially constructed in different contexts and times. It illustrates the different significant constructions of childhood in different majority- and minority-world countries. These example constructions demonstrate how childhood has been constructed and reconstructed over time; children have been treated, praised, protected, ignored or even despised depending on the assumptions of the dominant adult culture (Mayall, 2003; Montgomery, 2003; Coster, 2008; Walkerdine, 2009; Dekker et al., 2012). This underscores the critical nature of childhood as an outcome of social construction, in which adults frequently form and shape the understanding of CYP (Jones, 2009b). However, the literature further reveals that the constructions of childhood in the majority world are influenced by social class, cultural background, ethnicity and gender within a specific context (Gemayel and Salema, 2023) and global influences like international law and actors (Wells, 2009). This could contribute to the goal of fostering cross-cultural conversations and learning, using relationships as a lens for driving forward some of the current debates in childhood studies globally (Punch and Tisdall, 2012). Therefore, to fully comprehend childhood as a social construct, one must recognise that it is influenced by both global and local contexts (Wells, 2009). As the theory evolved, certain complexities surrounding childhood emerged from the NSC and enabled a more nuanced analysis of the subject. Although NSC theorists opposed developmental psychology, as outlined in Section 2.2.1, they did not reject the concepts associated with children's biological and psychological development. Currently, the

growing focus on non-mainstream child development theories acknowledges the interconnectedness of various elements in a biopsychosocial ecological system comprising parents, family, school, peers, the community and geopolitical factors that contribute to a child's development (Tatlow-Golden and Montgomery, 2020). Integrating the NSC (childhood as a social construct) and non-mainstream child development, including genuine ecological, contextual and cultural viewpoints, could provide a deeper understanding of CYP (Tatlow-Golden and Montgomery, 2020).

Although there are key differences in the construction of childhood in the majority and minority world, important similarities exist with respect to unequal power relations between children and adults. I extensively examine the power imbalance between CYP and adults in Section 2.5. Notwithstanding, the next section expands on this analysis by critically reviewing another idea of the NSC, whereby children should be seen and respected as active social actors with rights.

2.3.2 Children as social actors

The notion that children are social actors with their own rights (James and Prout, 2001; Punch, 2016) depicts them "as capable rather than incapable, active rather than passive, visible rather than invisible, and powerful rather than vulnerable and needy" (Jones, 2009b, p.29). It also emphasises that CYP might possess expertise in their own experiences and lives, which adults should recognise and value (Moss, 2001). This approach enhances the recognition of CYP as full human beings, possessing rights and agency and calls on adults to appreciate their contributions as essential members of society (James and Prout, 2001; Blaisdell, 2020). As a result, the view of children as social actors has increased societal awareness of children's rights to participate and contribute to society, particularly in decision-making (Jones, 2009b). Many governments around the world have ratified the UNCRC (see Chapter 1, Section 1.2) and established policies to encourage CYP participation. Additionally, academics have developed new models and methods for encouraging CYP participation and allowing them to share power with adults in a variety of fields and disciplines, including health and well-being, urban development, civic engagement and policy development (Hart, 1992; Shier, 2001; Francis and Lorenzo, 2002; Wong and Zimmerman, 2010; Arunkumar et al., 2019; Botchwey et al., 2019). This may transform and affect the general perception of CYP as vulnerable individuals into one of active citizens (Checkoway and Richards-Schuster, 2003; Blaisdell, 2020). CYP's right to participate is explored in more detail in Chapter 3, Section 3.2.

In addition, the notion that children are social actors has affected the expanding empirical studies of children's agency, which demonstrate that children have the capacity to choose and act creatively to complete tasks, including the ability to influence matters in their daily lives (Punch, 2016; Sirkko, Kyrönlampi and Puroila, 2019). Drawing on the traditional approaches to children's agency, it frequently assumes that children attempt to challenge or alter existing structures established by adults

(Raithelhuber, 2016; Gurdal and Sorbring, 2018). However, when children challenge the existing structures, it is often connected to the diverging perspectives of children and adults or the moral judgements made by adults regarding what is positive or negative (Punch, 2016). In other words, when CYP demonstrate agency, they encounter several pressures and challenges, especially adults' moral judgement (Raithelhuber, 2016; Punch, 2016). Children's demonstrations of agency may also lead to conflicts with contextual, structural, moral and political elements given that the predominant moral and political ideology determines acceptable manifestations of agency within a particular cultural context (Sirkko, Kyrönlampi and Puroila, 2019). Consequently, a vital dilemma arises when CYP view their actions as positive but adults impose a negative judgement without considering the children's point of view (Punch, 2016). Hence, it is imperative to comprehend children's agency by considering the viewpoints of both adults and children to prevent any potential confusion or misalignment between these two social groups (Punch, 2016). Otherwise, it may be assumed that children are allowed to be and praised for being agents, but their agency must be of the appropriate kind from the perspective of adults (Bordonaro and Payne, 2012).

Despite some progress in recognising children as social actors and children's agency, children continue to be viewed as dependent, vulnerable and less capable than adults (Woodman, Roche and McArthur, 2023). In social policy discourse, children are often portrayed as hyper-vulnerable people, victims, threats to society or at risk of violence, abuse or harm, which underlines the need for adults to safeguard and protect them (Daniel and Ivatts, 1998; Hanson, 2012; Cockburn and Devine, 2020). This phenomenon may be attributed to the adult-centric nature of the world in which children exist, which marginalises them (Punch, 2003). The next section discusses the minority status of children and how they experience marginalisation and often lack power in adult society.

2.3.3 Children as a minority social group

Minority status is the outcome of individuals being given different and unequal treatment because of their physical or cultural characteristics (Oakley, 1994). Echoing similar concepts in women's studies, children are portrayed as a minority group subject to oppression by adults, a majority social group (Prout, 2011). According to James, Jenks and Prout (2010), understanding children as a minority group helps explain a moral dimension related to conceptions of relative powerlessness or victimisation. The status of minority group typically reflects the inequalities that result from power relations between CYP and adults (Mayall, 2002; Malone and Hartung, 2010). In this power dynamic, adults hold the power and often perceive children as dependents required to obey their directives (Mayall, 2002). This unequal power often makes CYP subordinate to adults' authority and power and pushes them to the margins of the social structure (Corsaro, 2015; Mayall, 2015). This status also recognises that the minority group is exploited and discriminated against because of its limited political power, control and access to resources (James and James, 2012). Similarly to other minority groups such as

women, gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people and ethnic minority groups, CYP are often marginalised in many ways; importantly, their voices are seldom heard, and their views are not sincerely taken into account (Mayall, 2000; Gallacher and Kehily, 2013). In other words, CYP tend to be excluded from full participation in society (West, 2007; Maconochie, 2013). Despite the emergence of the NSC to enhance the participation of CYP in society, particularly in policy decision-making, CYP's influence on these policies is limited due to their minority status (James and James, 2004). There is little evidence that CYP's participation, either as individuals or as a collective, can cause or result in changes in or impacts on policy and law (James and James, 2004). Although CYP are a minority group submissive to the power of adults, Jenks (2015) argues for questioning and challenging the status of minority group instead of reinforcing current power relations between adults and CYP.

This section summarises the approach to childhood as a social construct, offering a framework for analysing and understanding that childhood is shaped by society and culture. In the minority world, there are four fundamental constructions of childhood: miniature adulthood, evil, a blank slate and a time for innocence (Montgomery, 2003; Brockliss and Montgomery, 2013). In contrast, the constructions of childhood in the majority world paint it as a period of obedience, a time of innocence and economic utility. Nevertheless, these constructions emphasise how adults in specific periods, locations and cultures perceive children in connection to social, cultural and political issues (Mayall, 2003; Montgomery, 2003; Dekker et al., 2012). This partly suggests that adults have been permitted to construct childhood as a result of the power imbalance that frequently gives them control over CYP in an adult society. Furthermore, the notion that children are social actors presents a different framework for examining CYP, considering their agency and rights. Although it recognises CYP as active participants in society, they still face numerous pressures from adults (Raithelhuber, 2016; Punch, 2016). This could restrict their agency and reflect their minority status and powerlessness due to power imbalances (Mayall, 2002; Malone and Hartung, 2010).

The NSC underpins this study. The NSC originated in modernist sociology between the 1980s and 1990s (Prout, 2011), and late modernity witnessed an increase in societal complexity and instability, which shed doubt on the NSC's ability to continue explaining childhood adequately (Prout, 2011). For instance, the understanding of childhood is a social construct; the daily lives of contemporary CYP worldwide have been influenced not only by a specific culture in a particular context but also by the parallels that have emerged on the internet, where they spent and continue to spend a significant amount of their time (Swauger, Castro and Harger, 2017). While I recognise that these developments may affect the NSC's ability to explain childhood and youth, it is important to note that they may not follow a linear path, where the NSC is completely replaced by these continuous developments. Instead, they are likely to be more complex and gradual. As society and technology evolve, the NSC and its relevance may change, integrating new methods and insights rather than being completely replaced.

This section highlighted the essential components of the alternative understanding of childhood and CYP in the context of the NSC. When discussing this concept, terms such as "young people", "adolescence" and "youth" often emerged in the literature review. Therefore, it is essential to highlight the distinctions between these terminologies. The next section elucidates the differences between adolescence, youth and young people.

2.4 The distinction between adolescence, youth and young people

The terms "adolescence", "young people" and "youth" are often used interchangeably in international policy agendas (e.g. the Sustainable Development Goals) and organisations (e.g. the United Nations and the World Health Organisation), creating global complexities (Blum and Nelson-Mmari, 2004; Hamilton, Nesi and Choukas-Bradley, 2022; Borojević et al., 2023). Although these concepts are frequently assumed to be understood, it is important to distinguish them and define a clear boundary to enhance our comprehension.

Adolescence is accepted as a sensitive stage of human development characterised by significant changes in the brain and body (Boyden et al., 2019). From this perspective, the word is frequently employed to describe the typical biological, psychological, emotional and sexual development stages that take place throughout puberty and the teenage years (Coles, 2004). Adolescence is stereotypically associated with negative characteristics such as the influence of intense hormonal changes, frequent mood swings, anger and a lack of self-awareness (Kehily, 2007; Ahunovna, 2021). While adolescence has often been described by developmental or psychological disciplines, sociological perspectives tend to define youth as a phase or transition period in the life course between childhood and adulthood (Coles, 2004; James and James, 2012). In this definition, sociologists often associate it with social/institutional transitions, the three most prevalent being school, the labour market and family and housing (Coles, 2004; Coles and Wenham, 2016). Research also suggests that youth is a social construct (Jones, 2009a) and interprets it similarly to childhood. In other words, understanding youth as a social construct implies that what we can know about young people is the product of cultural knowledge that changes over time and across places (Kehily, 2007).

In addition, in academic discussions, the term "youth" is frequently employed in conjunction with "young people" (Coles, 1995, 2004; Kehily, 2007; Coles and Wenham, 2016). The key distinction between these terms lies in the fact that youth is highlighted as a *time* in the life course, whereas young people are the *individuals* at this stage in the life course (Coles and Wenham, 2016). Based on these perspectives, the term "youth" emphasises a more social orientation, a concern with young people as a socially constituted group and an interest in how young people are positioned and defined within society (Kehily, 2007). Youth is typically perceived as an ambivalent demographic by adults (James and James, 2012). Research also often indicates that, like children, young people are seen as a powerless group, which may reinforce their

marginalised status in adult society (Corney et al., 2020). The theoretical debate regarding the dynamics of power and powerlessness in childhood and youth is addressed in greater detail below.

2.5 Theoretical debates on the concepts of power in childhood and youth studies

The idea of power is complex and can be described in several intricate ways (Scott, 2001; Bachrach and Baratz, 2002; Lukes, 2005; Avelino, 2021). However, it is generally understood as a dynamic social relationship between two agents operating at both institutional and individual levels (Scott, 2001; Punch, 2005; Papadopoulos and Roumpakis, 2013). Numerous arguments exist around the concept of power, featuring diverse philosophers and a multitude of perspectives. This section introduces Bourdieu's and Foucault's concepts of power and then examines how these concepts can apply to childhood and youth studies. Then, this section further explores the classical discussion on power theory focused on the dichotomy of power as centralised or diffused (Bachrach and Baratz, 2002; Avelino, 2021).

2.5.1 Foucault's and Bourdieu's concepts of power

Foucault's notion of disciplinary power and Bourdieu's theory of symbolic power are among the most innovative contributions to contemporary social thought, offering profound insights into the increasingly complex and elusive nature of power in modern society (Cronin, 1996). Foucault's intellectual endeavour focuses on analysing the fundamental role of power and power relations, which manifest in various forms and permeate the entire social body (To, 2006). According to Foucault, power is a form of action that exists solely within relationships; in other words, power manifests when exercised (Gallagher, 2008a; Ladkin and Probert, 2021). Therefore, the form of power is 'everywhere'—an ambivalent web of part of societal structures, institutional forms, and relationships—rather than confined to class structures or organisational forms, as was the case with the old form of power (Gallagher, 2008b; Ladkin and Probert, 2021). Foucault views power not as a top-down force but as a network embedded in social life, shaping behaviours, knowledge, and identity while maintaining control through both overt and subtle means (Foucault, 1997). Consequently, he argues that "power is exercised rather than possessed," (Foucault, 1997, p.26) emphasising its dynamic and relational nature. The emergence of this form of power is linked to the mechanisms of control that become internalised and are exercised through disciplines, especially psychology and education (Gadda, 2008). Significantly, according to Foucault (1997), this form of power permeates all levels of society, extending beyond formal institutions to influence everyday interactions and norms. In the field of childhood and youth studies, Foucault is widely recognised by researchers for his theorisation of power as a form of social control (Gallagher, 2008a). Foucault's concept of power offers a valuable

framework for analysing how it operates through mechanisms such as surveillance, normalisation, and the internalisation of societal/cultural norms, shaping and regulating CYP within various institutional and social contexts (Gadda, 2008). Using a Foucauldian framework, at a specific historical moment in childhood studies, certain disciplines, particularly developmental psychology, succeeded in establishing universal child norms (Walkerdine, 2009). Developmental psychology, as an effect of power, has successfully constructed norms about what it means to be a child, what childhood should be like and how parents should interact with their children (Gadda, 2008; Walkerdine, 2009). The daily activities of CYP, including schooling and work, can also be analysed through this viewpoint. For example, childhood in various countries around the world often involves compulsory school attendance, which subjects CYP to a series of interventions aimed at their formation and control (Devine, 2003). The goals of control in schools are reflected in teachers' efforts to ensure that students remain quiet, focused, and prepared to learn, ultimately shaping students into docile individuals with disciplined bodies and obedient minds (Lee, 2001; Read, 2009). In addition, when power operates in daily interactions between individuals and institutions, it often results in a state of oppression by normalising certain behaviours and marginalising individuals or groups who do not conform to established norms (Bindeman, 2017). According to Foucault's concept of oppression, in modern society, oppression is rarely enacted through direct physical violence or force (Galal, 2017; Marfu'ah et al., 2023). Instead, it is something more internalised, where individuals internalise societal norms and expectations, leading them to oppress themselves (Galal, 2017; Marfu'ah et al., 2023). However, Foucault (1978, p.95) emphasises that power is always accompanied by the potential for resistance; wherever power exists, resistance can also emerge. This concept reflects his view that power is not absolute or one-sided; it inherently produces conditions for opposition and challenges from those subjected to it (James, 2018).

Bourdieu explores power through analytically distinct dimensions, with this study focusing on symbolic power and its role in legitimation (Swartz, 2010). Bourdieu's theory of symbolic power refers to the "power of constructing reality" (Bourdieu, 1991, p.166). In other words, symbolic power is the ability to shape individuals' understanding of the world, influencing their perceptions, behaviours, and experiences of social realities (Crossley, 2017). Moreover, Bourdieu defines 'symbolic power' as power constituted of recognition: "name, renown, prestige, honour, glory, authority" (Bourdieu, 1984, p.251). Symbolic power operates within a *field*, in Bourdieu's terms, as a social space, such as education, politics, art, or culture (Hallett, 2007). Within each field, there is a hierarchical structure, with some agents occupying dominant positions of influence and others relegated to subordinate roles, reflecting the distribution of power and resources within that specific context (Gadinger, 2023). Importantly, each *field* is governed by its own "doxa"—a set of formal or informal norms, rules, and beliefs that participants accept as natural (France and Threadgold, 2016; Lewer, 2023). In other words, each *field* operates under a mode of governance shaped by its institutional architecture and the core instituting norms that regulate it (Papadopoulos and

Roumpakis, 2013). These norms are so deeply ingrained that they are perceived as natural and unquestionable, often accepted as absolute "truths," thereby perpetuating existing power structures (France and Threadgold, 2016; Lewer, 2023). In addition, Bourdieu links symbolic power and doxa as mechanisms that generate symbolic violence—a subtle and often invisible form of harm and domination embedded within each social *field* (Whitely, 2010; Creaney and Burns, 2024). Although

Symbolic violence operates through misrecognition, allowing domination to remain unnoticed and unchallenged, thereby enabling the social order to persist and reproduce itself (Creaney and Burns, 2024). This explanation illustrates how the dominant internalise their conditions of domination as normal, inevitable, or natural, misrecognising the true nature of their social inequalities by accepting rather than resisting them (Swartz, 2010). In addition, Bourdieu's concept of symbolic power is closely linked to the role of culture in legitimising and sustaining a particular social order, influencing social hierarchies and shaping individual perceptions (Navarro, 2006). He emphasises that symbolic power operates through cultural tools, such as belief, tradition, language, value and education, which legitimize and perpetuate the dominance of certain groups while subordinating others (Swartz, 1997). Symbolic power can be explored in childhood and youth studies by examining the power dynamics inherent in adult-child relationships, particularly within institutional settings. For example, Creaney and Burns (2024) demonstrate how CYP who are involved in the justice system can engage in decision-making processes within youth justice services. The study emphasises how symbolic violence between CYPs and professionals in juvenile justice services allows professionals to exercise significant control over decision-making processes. The study further argues that symbolic violence manifests when CYP passively accept a subordinate role by avoiding expressing their views during the decision-making process with professionals. This reflects a form of symbolic violence where individuals 'accept' a subordinate position by refraining from sharing their views during the decision-making process (Creaney and Burns, 2024).

Foucault's disciplinary power and Bourdieu's symbolic power theories offer insights into the complexities of power in modern society. Foucault's theory emphasises the relational nature of power, which is exercised through societal structures, institutions, and disciplines like psychology and education. Bourdieu's symbolic power theory focuses on how dominant groups shape perceptions, norms, and social realities, perpetuating social hierarchies through cultural practices and language. Therefore, the concept of symbolic power and violence is valuable for understanding the reproduction of social class inequalities (Connolly and Healy, 2004). Although theories of disciplinary power and symbolic power offer valuable frameworks for understanding power, childhood and youth studies have also investigated this concept through an analysis of the dichotomy of power, providing a nuanced examination of its complex nature.

2.5.2 Concepts of the dichotomy of power: centralised or diffused

The concept of centralised power implies that power is concentrated in the hands of elites or a single group that dominates another social group in society (Bachrach and Baratz, 2002; Avelino, 2021). According to this notion, actors often seek to make others do what they would not do otherwise, and they resist the attempts of others to make them act in ways that contradict their own preferences (Scott, 2001). Therefore, power is a constant sum or zero-sum in which one agent may only gain at the expense of another, meaning that there are winners and losers (Scott, 2001). In other words, power is considered a thing to be divided, not shared, much like a slice of cake: the more power one individual holds, the less power everyone else retains (John, 2003). This viewpoint emphasises that power-sharing within any society always involves winners who gain power by taking it from losers (Scott, 2001). In contrast, the second concept of power paints it as relatively diffused/distributed through the participation of diverse interest groups (Lasswell and Kaplan, 1950; Bachrach and Baratz, 2002; Avelino, 2021). Accordingly, power is distributed throughout society rather than contained in one agent, and it is a variable sum or nonzero sum: all actors may gain from the use of power, which means that no one is a loser (Scott, 2001). Power diffusion is frequently presumed to be positive and lead to more "equal" or "just" power relations (Avelino, 2021). This study adopts this dichotomy of power as either centralised or diffused as it enables a more sophisticated and nuanced understanding of the complexities of power-sharing between CYP and adults. Further analysis of the concepts of power and power-sharing in relation to childhood and youth reveals three dimensions of power. The first and second dimensions reflect the conceptualisation of power as a force between two groups and consolidated within one of them, which includes the capability of one agent to predetermine norms or values to control others. The third dimension echoes the idea that power is diffused and aims to analyse how power is distributed through the involvement of social groups in complex relationships. I detail the specifics of each dimension below.

The first dimension examined in this study is that of power as a force that exists between two groups and is consolidated within one of them, especially the powerful individuals. According to this viewpoint, binary groups in society, particularly adults and CYP, are represented by hierarchical arrangements in which one actor has power over and subordinates another (Hill et al., 2004). The idea that children are a minority group (see section 2.3.3.) reflects the powerlessness and subordinate status of CYP, which exposes them to potential oppression by adults who have power over them (James and James, 2012). Adults often obtain power over CYP through their knowledge and experience, which they exercise by the use of their judgement (Devine, 2003). Adults also tend to utilise this power to regulate and control the bodies and minds of CYP (Punch, 2007a). For example, certain childhood constructions, such as childhood as a blank slate or a time of innocence, emphasise that CYP are powerless, incapable and incomplete. In addition, many professionals, such as teachers and physicians, have the

power to control, restrict and reward CYP's behaviour through their institutional practice (Devine, 2003). These factors may result in CYP experiencing a sense of powerlessness in different areas of their lives, such as their physical world, bodies, activities, appearance, emotions, feelings and moral values (Hester and Moore, 2018). This also illustrates how the power dynamic between adults and CYP can undermine the latter's agency (Ruscoe, Barblett and Barratt-Pugh, 2018). From these viewpoints, CYP are perceived as incapable of decision-making and positioned as needing adult protection, emphasising adults' power over and responsibility for CYP (Sorin and Galloway, 2006; Schoch et al., 2020). Within this paradigm, challenging the balance of power between adults and CYP is difficult (Punch, 2007a). Thus, power-sharing between adults and CYP carries a negative connotation from this perspective and is always an unbalanced relationship that increases children's marginalisation.

The second dimension of power refers to the ability of the powerful to shape the norms and values of the powerless (Farthing, 2012). In other words, power is "the right to define how others should define" or "the ability to get others to accept your definition of reality" (John, 2003, p.48 and 196). Lukes (2005) critically developed an analysis of the complexities of power relationships between social groups, in which dimension of power include preference-shaping. In the context of preference-shaping power, it is often understood as the ability to influence individuals' perceptions, cognitions, and preferences, ensuring their acceptance of their position within the current order by making them perceive no alternative as natural or unalterable (Hay, 2002; Lukes, 2005). This type of power, often the most effective, operates most effectively when it is least visible and rarely challenged (John, 2003; Lukes, 2005). As a result, power is frequently wielded quietly through manipulation, employing a variety of organised inducements to persuade the subordinated to accept their current situation as unavoidable or acceptable and keep them unaware of their oppression (John, 2003; Hill et al., 2004). In the context of this study, adults who hold more power often establish norms and normalised behaviours for CYP to follow without being aware of this process (Devine, 2003). As a result, powerless social groups may not be aware that their behaviour has been influenced and may not have experienced conflict (Gunn, 2008). For example, as described in Section 2.3.1, in various countries in the majority world, girls and boys are expected to perform work for their families differently (Morrow and Boyden, 2019; Samonova et al., 2021). This work division reflects a general norm of gender labour division typical of patriarchal societies, where women are responsible for domestic labour and care work and men are seen as heads of household and breadwinners (Samonova et al., 2021). Another norm generated by adults requires subordinates to obey superiors or those in positions of higher power, which includes the power of parents over their children, the power of older individuals over younger individuals and the power of teachers over pupils (Raven, 2008). These examples confirm that power is the ability to generate norms that shape and become common societal perceptions. Significantly, as proposed in Section 2.5.1, this dimension of power aligns with Bourdieu's symbolic power in which the dominant class can shape norms or values

through symbols, language, and cultural practices within society (Cronin, 1996; Hallett, 2007).

These two dimensions of power centre on one agent's control over another, but it is necessary to consider the notion of power in a broader context. This brings us to the third dimension, which concerns the complicated relationships and negotiations between social groups in society.

The third dimension emphasises that power is relatively diffused/distributed through the participation of diverse interest groups (Lasswell and Kaplan, 1950; Bachrach and Baratz, 2002; Avelino, 2021). Therefore, power always involves a complex mutual relationship between at least two entities (Gallagher, 2008a; Sercombe, 2009). This argument is reinforced by the relationship between CYP and adults, in which adults' power over CYP is not absolute but subjected to challenge (Punch, 2001). As outlined in Section 2.5.1, the third dimension of power aligns with Foucault's view that power is a form of action that exists within relationships (Gallagher, 2008a; Ladkin and Probert, 2021). Power is never absolute; it is always accompanied by the potential for resistance, inherently creating conditions for opposition and challenges from those subjected to it (Foucault, 1978; James, 2018). Moreover, this dimension reveals that power is neither exclusively in the hands of one group that controls another nor fixed entirely and constantly in one entire group (Jobb, 2019). Power is diffused throughout society, and social groups in society simultaneously experience and exert power (Devine, 2000; Jobb, 2019). This viewpoint underlines that power is not something the dominant group "possess" and exercises over the subordinate or a "thing" that can be given to someone but a general term for specific types of actions (Gallagher, 2008a; Sercombe, 2009). Furthermore, power is neither monolithic nor total but rather an entity to resist and challenge, contributing to a more fluid and circulating conception of power in adult–child relationships (Jobb, 2019). As a result, what matters is not the question of who holds power but how power is exercised between adults and CYP (Devine, 2000; Hill et al., 2004).

Accordingly, although the concept of children as a minority group highlights their lower status and lack of power, this perspective entails that CYP may be seen as both lacking and having power simultaneously. Sercombe (2009) further argues that no individual is completely powerless; each person has at least the power to act and can give their power to someone else. Consequently, in their daily lives, humans are exposed to a variety of experiences associated with varying degrees of power and powerlessness (Punch, 2007b). Therefore, it is necessary to acknowledge that CYP can and do hold power and are capable of exercising power over adults through their actions (Gallagher, 2008b; James and James, 2012). In short, both CYP and adults have power, and power is a relationship of negotiation and renegotiation between different people in various contexts (Punch, 2007a). This aligns with the NSC, which regards children as social actors who have the capacity and competence to exercise power and, importantly, the

(often limited) ability to oppose adult power (Brannen, Bhopal and Eptinstall, 2000; Punch, 2005). For instance, in parent–child relationships, children may exercise their power via various strategies such as deception, feigning illness, displaying tantrums, exhibiting excessive charm or refusing to comply with certain tasks as a means to assert power and control over adults (Punch, 2001). In addition, child and youth movements worldwide may be regarded as examples of how CYP negotiate adults' power within a broader context (Gordon, 2007; Rodgers, 2020). Despite this important contribution, we must be careful not to assume that power relations between the two groups are equal or that ideal mutual negotiation is smooth (Punch, 2007a). Due to unequal adult–child power relations, CYP may have to negotiate more than adults to affirm their power and obtain increased control over certain aspects of their lives (Punch, 2007a). Despite unequal power dynamics between adults and CYP, characterised by varying degrees of power imbalance, this dimension of power highlights that no single group has absolute power over another; instead, each group may wield a distinct power that the other group lacks (Avelino, 2021).

This section outlines the complexity of how power operates through these different theoretical perspectives demonstrates the need for a multidimensional understanding of how CYP enact power and are subject to its enforcement. Thus, comprehending how power operates in children's lives requires a broader perspective and more nuanced analysis. This necessitates a more complex understanding of power, defined as a force between two groups and consolidated within one of them, as the established norms outlined by the powerful over the powerless and as relatively distributed through the participation of diverse interest groups. Lastly, as John (2003, p.48) pertinently asserts, "in order to learn about power, children need to be given opportunities to exercise it". This leads us to the next chapter, which seeks to explain child and youth participation related to empowering CYP to exercise their power with adults.

2.6 Conclusion

The analysis of the wider literature on childhood has demonstrated how dominant perspectives on childhood paint it as a biologically defined age group, with a particular focus on the developmental period of infancy and puberty. Paediatric medicine and developmental psychology portray childhood as the preparation phase for adulthood, where children are deemed physically and emotionally immature. Socialisation theory repeats the assumption that childhood is a life stage marked by knowledge acquisition and training, including the appropriate shaping and guiding of CYP as they embark on key transitions to adulthood. This is further illustrated by the distinction between adolescence and youth, in which the concept of adolescence strengthens developmental theory while youth emphasises social construction.

However, this chapter has argued that childhood is neither natural nor universal; in contrast, conceptualisations of childhood must consider the time, space and social and cultural context in which they are embedded (Leonard, 2016; Wyness, 2019; Diana, 2020). Although childhood may differ over time and across locations, it serves as a key determinant of how adults comprehend CYP within a certain historical period. Minority global history exemplifies the changing perceptions of childhood, from miniature adulthood, evil and tabula rasa to a period of innocence. This chapter also highlighted that in the majority world, especially in Asian countries, childhood is viewed as a period of obedience based on Confucianism. Simultaneously, the construction of childhood as an economic utility reflects CYP's potential involvement in work-related activities because paid or unpaid employment is presented as a fact of life or an obligation to the family. Another construction depicts childhood as a period of dependence and innocence, under the influence of minority conceptualisations of children as vulnerable and in need of care. While the NSC offers an alternative perspective on childhood, the dominant theoretical framework remains developmental theory, which has greatly influenced the general understanding of childhood and children (James and James, 2012). The dominant conceptions of childhood continue to be the mainstream approach to childhood studies in various disciplines, such as education, health and social welfare.

Conversely, the NSC argues that children should be seen as social actors who hold rights. This entails that their agency should be acknowledged and that they should be seen as active citizens who can contribute to and participate in the public sphere. Nonetheless, as members of a minority social group in adult society, CYP continue to face inequalities resulting from power differentials with adults (Mayall, 2002; Malone and Hartung, 2010; Prout, 2011). These inequalities relegate them to the periphery of the social structure, where they are dominated by more influential adults (Corsaro, 2015; Mayall, 2015). The chapter concluded with the argument that the power imbalance between CYP and adults is the primary cause of their powerlessness, highlighting the significance of the concepts surrounding power in adult–child relations. This chapter introduced the concepts of Foucault's disciplinary power and Bourdieu's symbolic power. While disciplinary power highlights how societal structures and institutions regulate children's behaviors through mechanisms like normalisation and surveillance, symbolic power emphasises how dominant cultural groups shape perceptions and norms, legitimising certain knowledge and practices that reinforce social hierarchies. Then, this chapter argued for a multidimensional understanding of power as centralised or distributed (Bachrach and Baratz, 2002; Avelino, 2021). Based on this dichotomy, power has been classified into three dimensions: (1) a force that exists between two groups and is consolidated within the dominant one, (2) the ability of the powerful to shape the norms and values of the powerless and (3) distribution through participation between social groups at all levels of society. This analysis enables a more sophisticated and nuanced understanding of the complexity of power and power-sharing between CYP and adults.

The next chapter examines the concepts of child and youth participation, which grew out of the belief that children are social actors with rights. I discuss several themes related to the advantages and disadvantages of child and youth participation, including existing obstacles and how to overcome them. The fundamental concept of power is thus widened to encompass CYP's participation, including meaningful participation based on power-sharing between CYP and adults.

Chapter 3: A framework for understanding child and youth participation

3.1 Introduction

This chapter introduces the literature regarding the concepts of child and youth participation, which emphasises the NSC notion that children are social actors with rights who can contribute to and participate in society (Tisdall and Bell, 2006; Sorin and Galloway, 2006; Kellet, 2009; Lansdown, 2010; Jones, 2011). The chapter examines the connection between the idea of children as social actors and their rights to participate. It also explores the advantages of child and youth participation, focusing on key advantages that often include benefits at the individual and organisational levels. At the individual level, child and youth participation enhances CYP's personal skill development and promotes active citizenship. Simultaneously, at the organisational level, involving CYP in policy and organisation may increase the effectiveness of policies and the prevalence of good governance. The main obstacles to child and youth participation are often related to the disturbance of childhood life and adults' biases towards children's abilities. Then, the critical section of this chapter explores several challenges in child and youth participation in policy and programme development and how recommendations for overcoming them are discussed in the literature. Finally, the chapter expands on the dichotomy of power as centralised or diffused (Bachrach and Baratz, 2002; Avelino, 2021) and investigates how these notions have been debated in the context of child and youth participation. Drawing on the notion that power can be shared between CYP and adults (Punch, 2001; Gallagher, 2008a; Gemayel and Salema, 2023), this chapter discusses power-sharing in practice in specific policies and programme development.

3.2 The connection between the concept of children as social actors and child and youth participation

As explained in Chapter 2, the NSC offers an alternative view that emphasises that CYP can contribute to and participate in decision-making because of their status as social actors with rights (Smith, 2002; Tisdall and Bell, 2006; Sorin and Galloway, 2006; Kellet, 2009; Lansdown, 2010; Jones, 2011). This highlights the position of CYP in society as citizens and affirms their ability to participate fully as members of society (Brady and Graham, 2019). According to this viewpoint, "childhood is a time of meaning-making and active participation in the world" (Sorin and Galloway, 2006, p.19). This view of children as social actors intrigued several scholars, who developed various models of

child and youth participation. These include Hart's ladder of participation (1992), Shier's pathways to participation (2001), Wong's typology of youth participation and empowerment (2010), the revised ladder of participation (Botchwey et al., 2019) and the rope ladder model (Arunkumar et al., 2019). These models delineate the correlation between child and youth participation and concepts such as "freely expressed views", "collaboration", "cooperation", "consultation", "involvement", "engagement", "shared decisions", "listening to children's voice" and "developing youth-led initiatives" (Hart, 1992; Skauge, Storhaug and Marthinsen, 2021; Macauley et al., 2022). These concepts are also related to Article 12 of the UNCRC (see Chapter 1), which highlights the rights of CYP to have their views considered and respected and to be involved in decision-making processes that affect their lives (Committee on the Rights of the Child, 2009; Quennerstedt and Quennerstedt, 2014; McCall-Smith, 2021; Cuevas-Parra, 2022). Although different explanations of child and youth participants exist, a key component of the present study is the belief that CYP should have some influence or impact on decision-making or could share decision-making power with adults (Hart, 1992; Shier, 2001; Wong and Zimmerman, 2010; Fleming, 2013; Botchwey et al., 2019; Skauge, Storhaug and Marthinsen, 2021). Two levels of participation can be distinguished: the individual level and the higher strategic level (Lansdown, 2001; Tisdall, 2008; Brady, 2020; McCall-Smith, 2021). CYP's decisions about their own lives, such as participation in health and care planning or democratic voting, occur at the individual level (Lansdown, 2001; Brady, 2020). In comparison, participation in policy, service and programme development arises at a higher strategic level (Brady, 2020; McCall-Smith, 2021). The notion that children are social actors emphasises their agency and highlights the importance of recognising their right to engage in policy and programme development actively. This perspective aligns with Fraser's concept of "recognition" as a key principle of social justice (Fraser and Honneth, 2005). According to Fraser, recognition involves creating social structures that enable individuals to interact as equals (Fraser, 2010), acknowledging them as social beings and equal partners in society (Ward et al., 2024). This viewpoint emphasises that CYP are equal partners in participation, recognising their ability to engage in social interactions actively and ensuring their voices are heard and valued (Bozalek, 2011). Such "recognition" not only affirms their contributions but also empowers them to engage in collaborative decision-making processes with policymakers, facilitating their meaningful participation in shaping the policies and programmes that affect their lives (Bozalek, 2011; Ward et al., 2024).

The notion that children are social actors with rights has drawn attention to the global development of child and youth participation. This concept also provides many advantages to CYP engaged at different levels, including activities, programmes and policies. The next section analyses the potential advantages of child and youth participation.

3.3 The advantages of child and youth participation

The concept of child and youth participation has grown in popularity, and the last decade has seen a significant increase in activities, research, policies and studies focused on promoting CYP's participation (Thomas, 2007; Wong and Zimmerman, 2010; United Nations, 2018; Botchwey et al., 2019). Along with the growing importance of child and youth participation, its advantages have been extensively discussed. This section investigates these advantages at two different levels: the individual and organisational levels.

First, child and youth participation can enhance specific abilities, such as communication, negotiation, critical thinking, prioritisation and decision-making while also improving self-esteem, self-confidence and self-development (Head, 2011; Kraftl, 2013; Macauley et al., 2022; Alias, Mohamad Nasri and Awang, 2023). This has been highlighted as the main benefit of child and youth participation at the individual level. Research also suggests that CYP who participate mainly at the decision-making level often feel more valued, more self-confident and better able to acquire new skills afterwards (Tasios and Kalyva, 2013; Cummins, Horgan and Martin, 2022). Active participation often empowers CYP, reducing their vulnerability to abuse and enabling them to protect themselves actively instead of simply obeying passively (Lansdown and O'Kane, 2014a). Experiences of participation may also lead to better protection as CYP can become more knowledgeable and confident about what they are facing (Day, 2008; Lansdown and O'Kane, 2014a). At this level, child and youth participation has the potential to promote active citizenship and civic engagement (Corney et al., 2021; Alias, Mohamad Nasri and Awang, 2023; Gottschalk and Borhan, 2023). Research indicates that when CYP demonstrate a desire to participate in the consistent exercise of their citizenship rights, they may effectively equip themselves for active participation in their society (Checkoway and Richards-Schuster, 2003; Inter-Agency Working Group on Children's Participation, 2008). Moreover, participation allows CYP to actively engage in dialogue and discuss important topics with adults, enhancing their ability to encourage civic engagement in democratic societies (Hanson, 2012; Farthing, 2012; Lansdown and O'Kane, 2014b). As a result, CYP who regularly participate in society develop a stronger belief in their ability to effect change and control some elements of their lives (Kirby et al., 2003). They may also feel a greater sense of ownership and may be able to demonstrate their responsibilities towards their families, communities and society (Kraftl, 2013; To et al., 2021).

Second, child and youth participation also offers benefits at the organisational or societal level. Research shows that it enhances the quality and efficacy of services and improves policy outcomes (Gottschalk and Borhan, 2023). The United Nations (2018) indicates that CYP are essential in developing youth-related policies because they can speak from personal experience, having lived as CYP in today's world, which gives them a unique perspective on their situation. As a result, services, programmes and policies that directly affect CYP are more effective and efficient if CYP's perspectives are

incorporated (Inter-Agency Working Group on Children's Participation, 2008; Head, 2011; Kraftl, 2013). In comparison, failing to increase CYP's participation in policy-making may result in policy failure (Lintelo, 2011). Therefore, some scholars argue that CYP's participation at the policy level is a fundamental aspect of successful policy-making (Gunn, 2005). In addition, child and youth participation promotes accountability and good governance. Research suggests that citizens' participation promotes accountability and good governance (Callahan, 2007). Considering that CYP are citizens (Mayall, 2013; Brady and Graham, 2019), their participation may also contribute to improving good governance. Child and youth participation either through direct involvement or through representatives is one of the pillars of the promotion of good governance and is essential in facilitating the process of human development (Couzens, 2012). Hence, the participation of CYP can enhance government transparency and promote effective governance and accountability (Couzens and Mtengeti, 2011; Lansdown and O'Kane, 2014a).

Child and youth participation is a foundational right of CYP worldwide. Even though it offers significant advantages to CYP, institutions and society, it has encountered various obstacles and limitations that impede its effectiveness, which I describe below.

3.4 The challenges and limitations of child and youth participation

The term "child and youth participation" was developed by the UNCRC to promote the CYP's rights to participate in society. This term has been criticised and challenged from both minority- and majority-world perspectives for at least four reasons.

First, research has highlighted the difficulties and effects of child and youth participation in terms of the impact on their personal childhood life, such as CYP being too busy or feeling burdened with more responsibilities (Borden et al., 2005; Collins and Raymond, 2006; Nir and Perry-Hazan, 2016; Macauley et al., 2022). In addition, CYP, and especially their formal representatives (e.g. youth councils), often spend considerable amounts of time away from school or family when they have to participate in policy-making with adults (Bessell, 2009). Furthermore, CYP who participate in organisations or policy-making may experience conflicts between their participation and their enjoyment of childhood and youth experiences (Thomas, 2007).

Second, adultism opposes the participation of CYP. Adultism is a belief system that asserts the superiority of adults over CYP, considering them to be of lesser worth or inferior (Shier, 2012). This includes CYP being subjected to adults' biases or negative attitudes about their capacities (Borgne and Tisdall, 2017). Adultism views adults as sensible, reasonable and capable of making appropriate decisions and CYP as impulsive and incapable of making rational decisions (Corney et al., 2021). Lansdown (2010) concludes that in most countries, neither legal frameworks nor policy and practice give

sufficient consideration to the importance of recognising and respecting the actual capacities of CYP. Adultism is associated with intergenerational hierarchies of power, in which adults have more power to ascribe incompetence to children, which prevents children's expression of social competence (Borgne and Tisdall, 2017).

Third, the conceptualisation of child and youth participation spread by the minority world may diverge from the circumstances of CYP's participation in the majority world (Pupavac, 2001). The main criticism of child and youth participation concerns the influence of white middle-class standards of the minority world on the UNCRC frameworks for children's rights (Malone and Hartung, 2010; Mason and Bolzan, 2010). This critique suggests that the construction of child and youth participation in minority-world nations is primarily motivated by the assumption that the child lacks agency and requires protection (Malone and Hartung, 2010; Mason and Bolzan, 2010; Horgan et al., 2017). Historically, CYP from the minority world may have been seen as morally incompetent, inexperienced and incapable of making reasonable decisions, and their right to make decisions in all matters that affect them has been disregarded (Kellet, 2009). As a result, child and youth participation can be defined in terms of the responsibilities that adults assign to them while considering them incapable of making decisions or contributing to society (Malone and Hartung, 2010). This leads to typical justifications of child and youth participation like encouraging listening to CYP's opinions and allowing them to freely address their views or be involved in activities or decision-making (Malone and Hartung, 2010; Mason and Bolzan, 2010). In contrast, CYP from the majority world have significantly demonstrated their abilities as active citizens who can take on responsibilities and play active roles in the private and public spheres. They participate in household activities or make significant decisions or contributions to their families and communities (Mason and Bolzan, 2010; Nurhadi, 2015; Thompson, 2015), as discussed in Chapter 2, Section 2.3.1. This underscores that the spread of the notion of child and youth participation could represent a new form of colonialism, in which the minority world exercises its power over the majority world to dominate it (Montgomery, 2013b).

Fourth, children's rights result from the success of adult movements. In a victory for the children's rights movement, the UNCRC has encouraged a positive image of CYP. However, CYP's right to participate reflects the success of adult movements that were more concerned with the well-being of CYP than with their own accomplishments. This may be because the children's rights movement differs from other civil rights movements. Generally, concerned individuals establish and lead their own movements, such as women's rights or labour movements (Matsui, 1990; Ishkanian, 2022). Conversely, the children's rights movement was not initiated and managed by children but by groups of adults who dedicated themselves to protecting CYP due to moral obligations (Gadda, 2008). Several models for practice with CYP, such as those proposed by Hart (1992), Shier (2001) and Botchwey et al. (2019), indicate what adults should do to foster CYP's participation (Seebach, 2008; Kosher, 2018) and were initiated by adults aware of CYP's rights to participate.

Despite growing recognition and efforts to promote child and youth participation, this endeavour still faces challenges stemming from the fact that child and youth participation frequently disturbs childhood life. The biases held by adults regarding CYP's capabilities also continue to be a challenge. This limitation applies to the different constructions of child and youth participation in both the majority and minority worlds, and criticism of child and youth participation highlights that it is an achievement of the adult movement, not CYP. The next section investigates specific barriers to CYP's participation in policy and programme development.

3.5 Obstacles to child and youth participation in policy and programme development and how to overcome them

The previous section discussed broad challenges and limitations to child and youth participation. This section specifically focuses on the challenges relevant to CYP's participation in policy and programme development, a core element of this thesis. The evidence indicates that participation is complicated by ideological and practical issues. At the same time, several studies also outline how these obstacles can be tackled in developing different policies and programmes. Below, I introduce each obstacle and report the methods suggested by the literature for overcoming them.

3.5.1 Tensions between protection and participation rights

It is widely believed that adults have a fundamental desire to protect children and that childhood is a stage of dependency (McMellon and Tisdall, 2020). This perception emphasises the significance of safeguarding and protection by adults in the context of social policy and professional social work, which views CYP in part as vulnerable individuals who may be subject to violence or abuse (Hanson, 2012; Cockburn and Devine, 2020; Keddell, 2023). CYP may thus be enmeshed in policy as passive recipients and arguably oppressed by certain policies that mainly focus on at-risk, vulnerable or poor children (Hill et al., 2004). Rather than focusing on participation rights, several social policies and welfare professions in numerous national and international organisations appear to prioritise children's survival and protection rights, presuming that they lack the necessary capacity to participate (Hanson, 2012; Kosher and Ben-Arieh, 2020). This also encompasses the notion that CYP have difficulty expressing their thoughts and ideas due to limited comprehension, inability and/or emotional condition, leading to unacceptable decision-making (Kosher and Ben-Arieh, 2020). Consequently, their perspectives and voices are typically ignored, and their participation activities are undervalued (Hill et al., 2004).

Although there may be a conflict between the rights of CYP to be protected and their rights to participate in policy and programme development, several studies suggest that it is important to acknowledge that all CYP should be treated with equal respect,

regardless of their age, ability or other factors (Committee on the Rights of the Child, 2009; UNICEF, 2010; Checkoway, 2011; Head, 2011). This includes the acknowledgement that CYP have expert knowledge regarding their lives and concerns (Moss, 2001; Shier, 2006). These principles underpin a moral respect for CYP and for their voices to be taken seriously in all matters that affect them (Head, 2011). However, the concept of ability as it relates to education may indicate that the lack of educational opportunities for CYP in various parts of the world contributes to their incompetence. Although in some cases, CYP may lack educational opportunities and the capacity to participate, their knowledge and experience still have value (Shier, 2006). Drawing on these principles, CYP can analyse and identify issues of concern, offer advice to public officials on legislative policies and make innovative suggestions for policy-making processes (Lansdown, 2001; Checkoway, Allison and Montoya, 2005; Fernandez and Shaw, 2013). Significantly, CYP have the ability to participate in and contribute to the development of an organisation as well as some local and national policies (Checkoway, Allison and Montoya, 2005; Thomas, 2007; Guyot, 2011; Shier et al., 2014; OECD, 2017).

Case studies from several areas in the world provide examples of how CYP contribute to the development of national and local policies and programmes. Concerning national governance, research conducted in Israel reveals that young representatives of the National Student and Youth Council (NSCY) exhibit diverse patterns of participation in national policy-making meetings (Perry-Hazan, 2016). For instance, they actively engaged in the committee tasked with examining the possibility of lowering the voting age in Israel from 18 to 17. Additionally, young representatives of the NSCY proposed ideas for adjusting the content of civic studies in the school curriculum to better respond to the needs of Israel's CYP nationwide. Further, a study conducted in Nicaragua found that CYP in various local governments have the ability to exert influence over the local government's plans and allocate municipal budgets (Shier et al., 2014). This included securing policy commitments from mayoral candidates during local elections as a significant number of the initiatives listed in these proposals had been accepted and implemented in practice. These case studies demonstrate CYP's ability to be involved in the complex field of policy and programme development.

Recognising the capacity and competence of CYP to participate in policy-making entails overcoming perceptions of a conflict between these two rights of CYP. However, this could lead to the exclusion of some groups of CYP who may have limited ability to participate due to their underprivileged backgrounds.

3.5.2 Exclusionary practices

Adults can engage in exclusionary practices by giving priority to CYP from high socioeconomic backgrounds to engage in participation activities. Recent studies have confirmed that CYP from lower socioeconomic groups, minority ethnic groups, disadvantaged communities, CYP with disabilities, CYP who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender, CYP with communication difficulties, those in state or hospital care, no

longer attending formal education or from traveller communities face significant barriers when attempting to exercise their right to participate (Cummins, Horgan and Martin, 2022; Yamaguchi et al., 2023). For example, CYP living in rural areas or the periphery encounter various obstacles and find it difficult to attend meetings and engage in activities (Perry-Hazan, 2016). Similarly, children living in poverty frequently lack the resources to participate in various activities with their peers due to their family's financial restrictions (Ridge, 2002). Additionally, research has shown that specific groups of CYP do not adequately participate compared to those in the majority groups (Hill et al., 2004; McMellon and Tisdall, 2020; Toros, 2021). For instance, a study of child and youth participation in Israeli policy meetings revealed that compared to Jewish children (the majority demographic), very few Arab children (the minority demographic) attended meetings even when the meeting's topic was significant to them (Perry-Hazan, 2016).

Research indicates that policymakers can address this challenge by actively promoting the inclusion of CYP from diverse backgrounds in policy processes to foster more meaningful participation (Lansdown and O'Kane, 2014a). This includes ensuring the diversity of young participants in terms of age, background, school, socioeconomic status and living area, among others, when developing policy and programme development (Arunkumar et al., 2019; Head, 2011). To accomplish this, policymakers must create methods that facilitate the active involvement of CYP from diverse backgrounds to promote inclusion. These strategies often include the use of child-friendly language, the implementation of multiple methods to facilitate and support CYP's participation and the training of staff or policymakers working with CYP against exclusionary practices (Crowley, Larkins and Pinto, 2020). The literature suggests that the main advantage of involving CYP from diverse contexts is that it enhances a policy's efficiency and effectiveness as policymakers can hear the perspectives of individuals with direct experience of particular issues (Head, 2011). Another advantage is that CYP from various backgrounds, who frequently face limited participation opportunities, are provided with increased chances to acquire and improve their specific skills (Hart, 2008).

The inaccessibility of participation due to exclusionary practices has been noted as a challenge to CYP's participation in policy and programme development. The next section introduces another challenge at the organisational level, namely, that organisational and procedural complexity may also limit CYP from participating in policy-making.

3.5.3 Organisational and procedural complexity

Organisational obstacles encompass a range of indicators such as output requirements, formality, complexity, non-child-friendly environments, procedures, paperwork, ethos and bureaucracy, which often exclude CYP's participation in project, programme and policy decision-making (Shier, 2001; Cavet and Sloper, 2004; Martin et al., 2015;

Blakeslee and Walker, 2018; Cuevas-Parra, 2022). This can also include the absence of a process for policymakers to provide feedback to CYP (Thomas, 2007; Morentin-encina, Pigem and Núñez, 2022). This lack of feedback from policymakers leaves CYP uncertain or uninformed about the implementation of their ideas (Borgne, 2014; Arunkumar et al., 2019). It also underscores the neglect of CYP's ideas in policy decision-making by the very profession that encourages child and youth participation (Lansdown, 2001). The lack of a feedback mechanism and the professionals' ignorance of the complexity of the participation process may reflect their insufficient training in facilitating the meaningful participation of CYP, especially in policy decision-making (Cavet and Sloper, 2004; Inter-Agency Working Group on Children's Participation, 2008; Lansdown and O'Kane, 2014a; Kosher and Ben-Arieh, 2020).

While a complex organisational structure may impose limitations on CYP's participation, it remains the policymakers' role to address this issue. Research suggests that CYP need clear information about what policymakers expect from their participation and what they hope to achieve throughout the participatory process, from the beginning stage of their participation (Lansdown, 2001; Cavet and Sloper, 2004). Clarity throughout the participation process also covers aims, purposes, objectives, planning, the degree of power-sharing in decision-making, outcomes, limitations and the roles of adults and CYP in policy participation (Lansdown, 2001; Cavet and Sloper, 2004). In addition, flexibility is frequently recognised as a means to overcome obstacles to child and youth participation in policy and programme development. Studies indicate that CYP frequently prefer flexible participation over a complicated fixed system (Arunkumar et al., 2019). They expect their participation to be adapted smoothly depending on several factors, such as their experiences, interests and capabilities (Coates and Howe, 2016; Arunkumar et al., 2019). In other words, participation is a dynamic process, which means that CYP have opportunities to adapt their participation flexibly depending on their willingness and surroundings. For instance, policymakers may consistently intervene to provide suitable assistance and thereafter withdraw when CYP want to take charge of their participation (Shier, 2010; Richards-Schuster and Timmermans, 2017). An informal atmosphere, such as child-friendly meeting places, language and structure, is recommended to increase more meaningful participation in policy-making (Lansdown, 2001; Cavet and Sloper, 2004; To et al., 2021). In addition, sensitive and skilful staff who believe in human potential, sincerely respect CYP's views and treat CYP equally are also suggested to be integral to success in this field (Larson, Walker and Pearce, 2005; Shier, 2010).

This section addressed the organisational and complex processes that obstruct child and youth participation; these barriers point to the issue of tokenism and CYP's limited influence on policy, which I discuss below.

3.5.4 Tokenism and limited influence on policy decision-making

Tokenism refers to situations in which CYP are consulted but their views are not taken seriously by adults and seldom have an effect on policy decisions (Hart, 1992; Tisdall, 2015; Lundy, 2018). This includes their opinions rarely being integrated into how policy decisions are made, implemented and evaluated (Hill et al., 2004; Borgne, 2014). Additionally, research has found that policymakers frequently leave insufficient time to meaningfully incorporate the perspectives and ideas of CYP or consult CYP after a decision has been made (Perry-Hazan, 2016; Lundy, 2018). Tokenism sometimes occurs when policymakers choose a few attractive and photogenic CYP to attend meetings without adequately preparing them for the subject (Dickens, 2016). These representatives inadequately represent the genuine needs of CYP when making decisions, leading to uncertainty about whose ideas these children genuinely represent (Dickens, 2016). Numerous studies indicate that the issue of tokenism in CYP's participation may lead to feelings of dissatisfaction, causing them to perceive themselves as unimportant and/or powerless and refrain from engaging in other activities (Funk et al., 2012; Gal, 2017; Lundy, 2018; To et al., 2021). Despite legislation, regulations, mechanisms and various guiding models promoting children's rights to participate, policy tokenism continues to be a barrier to active and meaningful participation for CYP (Lundy, 2018; Botchwey et al., 2019; McMellon and Tisdall, 2020).

The concept of tokenism in policy is frequently discussed in conjunction with the limited influence of CYP's participation in policy. The literature often indicates that child and youth participation continues to have a minimal influence on policy or organisational decision-making (Kirby and Bryson, 2002; Delgado, Carvalho and Alves, 2023). Several studies have shown that CYP's influence on policy decision-making has been limited or uncertain, even failing to make a significant impact on policy or programme development (Kirby and Bryson, 2002; Checkoway, Allison and Montoya, 2005; Collins et al., 2020; McMellon and Tisdall, 2020; Tisdall and Cuevas-Parra, 2021; Janta et al., 2021). However, there are several reasons why CYP's participation has little influence on policy. For instance, change and influence, particularly at the national policy level, occur slowly due to the bureaucratic nature of organisations, or it is difficult to prioritise and incorporate the perspectives of CYP alongside those of stakeholders in policy decision-making (Horgan, 2017b; McMellon and Tisdall, 2020). While there may be challenges at the national level, the more straightforward nature of implementing change at the local policy level makes it highly effective for CYP to participate in local policy-making, significantly influencing local decision-making (Williams, 2004; Checkoway, Allison and Montoya, 2005; Schuster and Checkoway, 2011; Crowley, 2015; Horgan, 2017b).

Hence, to avoid policy tokenism, policymakers should move beyond just consulting CYP to develop a strong partnership that enables CYP to exert influence over policy and decision-making (Marx et al., 2008; Lintelo, 2011). Several child and youth participation

models emphasise partnership or collaboration between CYP and adults as a fundamental element of meaningful participation (Hart, 1992; Shier, 2001; Francis and Lorenzo, 2002; Wong and Zimmerman, 2010; Shier et al., 2014; Arunkumar et al., 2019). Partnership or collaborative participation enables CYP to share power and responsibility for policy decisions with policymakers and influence the process and outcome of any particular policy or programme development (Lansdown, 2010; To et al., 2021). This type of participation requires policymakers to perform a minimum-involvement role, acting as facilitators who enable CYP to determine their own aims (Lansdown, 2010; OECD, 2017). Policymakers' responsibilities should be limited to providing guidance and assistance, including organisational support, initiating conversation, actively listening to one another, mutually learning, attempting to understand others' viewpoints and building an environment of trust (Lansdown, 2010; Lansdown and O'Kane, 2014a; OECD, 2017; Birch et al., 2017; Toros, 2021; To et al., 2021; Macauley et al., 2022).

Nevertheless, it should not be presumed that partnerships between CYP and policymakers can be simply initiated and progress smoothly throughout the participation process. The encouragement of partnership participation may encounter signs of tension, frustration and disappointment among the adults and CYP involved (Blanchet-Cohen and Rainbow, 2006). Therefore, ongoing negotiation and the efforts of all involved parties are necessary to achieve more meaningful participation (Blanchet-Cohen and Rainbow, 2006). Partnership participation can lead to child-led or child-controlled participation, which avoids policy tokenism by allowing children to identify issues, initiate activities, advocate for themselves and make final decisions (Larson, Walker and Pearce, 2005; Lansdown, 2010; Wong and Zimmerman, 2010; OECD, 2017). Nevertheless, child-controlled participation should be seen as an alternative rather than the ultimate goal. This is because CYP may not seek to achieve the highest level of participation. Instead, they benefit from a voluntary and flexible approach, in which their responsibilities in participation processes can be discussed and negotiated by both CYP and policymakers (Ergler, 2015; Corney et al., 2020). They may want the freedom to choose their level of participation and the ability to adapt their participation depending on their own interests, past experiences and current circumstances (Lansdown, 2010; Moules and O'Brien, 2012; Arunkumar et al., 2019; Barber et al., 2014; Hultgren and Johansson, 2019). An example of this approach is the rope ladder model of child and youth participation (Arunkumar et al., 2019). This model was developed recently based on research and practice concerning the development of healthy community projects for CYP in Canada and London (Arunkumar et al., 2019). Through the efforts of young representatives and adults, it was discovered that child and youth participation requires the support and partnership/collaboration of adults, as well as the sharing of power in decision-making (Arunkumar et al., 2019). The researchers also found that child and youth participation is a flexible and adaptable process in which CYP can modify and discuss their participation to attain their goals as they come across new variables or changes (Arunkumar et al., 2019).

Moreover, the wider literature and evidence on child and youth participation often reinforce that CYP require their own participation spaces, such as a youth council or children's parliament, where they can freely express their opinions, share information, question suppositions, make decisions, agree on activity plans and solve problems (Zeldin, Petrokubi and MacNeil, 2008; Shier, 2010; Zeldin, Christens and Powers, 2012; Shier et al., 2014; Macauley et al., 2022). Research recommends that spaces for expressing CYP's views be expanded to include feedback, evaluation and a follow-up process known as a "space for reflection" (Sinclair, 2004a; Borgne, 2014; Lundy, 2018; Foster et al., 2023). These spaces must be safe and secure, enabling CYP to disclose details about their lives to each other and other relevant individuals (Corney et al., 2020; Macauley et al., 2022; Foster et al., 2023). The space for reflection should include policymakers and CYP and serve as a learning environment for all participants to enhance their mutual understanding and the partnership relationships among them (Shier, 2001; Cavet and Sloper, 2004; Arunkumar et al., 2019). Importantly, this space should clarify how the views of CYP are either disregarded or selected and implemented in policies and programmes (Sinclair, 2004a; Borgne, 2014; Lundy, 2018; Foster et al., 2023). It could thus facilitate the assessment of how CYP's views are integrated into policy and programme decision-making processes, thereby addressing concerns regarding their limited influence on policy decisions.

To summarise, this section discussed the various challenges associated with CYP's participation in policy and programme development. These obstacles arise due to the conflict between CYP's rights to protection and to participation in terms of prioritisation. This includes policymakers potentially implementing exclusionary practices with CYP when promoting CYP participation. Complex organisational systems are frequently criticised for obstructing the involvement of CYP in policy and programme development. They may be associated with CYP's belief that they have been excluded from policy-making and that their influence on decision-making is insignificant. Individual and organisational factors are crucial for overcoming participation obstacles in policy and programme development. At the individual level, the keys to overcoming challenges are policymakers' awareness of CYP's capacity, recognising children's expertise in their own lives and encouraging mutual respect and understanding. At the organisational level, clarifying the purpose of participation, flexibility, providing feedback and evaluation and establishing a child-friendly environment are identified as significant elements. Importantly, these two levels should be driven by the principle of diversity and inclusiveness practice, fostering partnership relationships and collaboration between CYP and policymakers. Although CYP's participation in policy and programme development encounters many obstacles due to policymakers' attitudes and administration, it appears to be highly valued, probably because it demonstrates that CYP can share power with adults (Montgomery, 2016). The next section continues to examine the theoretical debate on power and power-sharing in child and youth participation.

3.6 Theoretical debates on the concepts of power and power-sharing in child and youth participation

As stated in Chapter 2, Section 2.5, the concept of power underpinning this study highlights the binary of power as either centralised or diffused (Bachrach and Baratz, 2002; Avelino, 2021). Facilitating a more sophisticated and nuanced comprehension of the complexities of power dynamics between children and adults, three dimensions of power can be identified in the context of childhood, youth and CYP. This section furthers the investigation into power in connection to these three definitions as they apply to child and youth participation.

According to the first perspective, power is a force that exists between two groups and is consolidated within one of them, specifically powerful individuals. This type of power pertains to those who possess the ability to influence decision-making or whose opinions dominate in the decision-making arena, such as parliament, cabinet, committee and diplomatic negotiation (Hay, 2002). Within the realm of child and youth participation, this viewpoint can be understood as adults exerting their power by exercising control over various aspects of participation, such as the subject matter, the methods employed to gather children's viewpoints and the duration/timeframe of the consultation process (Kellet, 2009). The experiences of many CYP are influenced by adults' control over their participation, especially in situations when the more dominant individuals (adults) seek consultation with the less dominant ones (CYP) (Cairns, 2001; Fleming and Boeck, 2012). Numerous studies emphasise that power imbalances between adults and CYP often undermine children's right to make decisions (Fleming and Boeck, 2012; Kellet, 2009).

The second perspective analyses power as the powerful's capacity to shape the norms and values of the powerless. This view can be expanded to describe child and youth participation, where power is the ability of the powerful to control the agenda (Gunn, 2008). This dimension of power is particularly important when considering the participation of CYP as it relates to the norms, beliefs and ideologies that completely disregard this issue in political processes (Prout and Tisdall, 2006). In other words, this dimension of power underscores the fact that the participation of CYP is seldom a crucial concern for governmental bodies and other organisations and is frequently delegated to lower priority when it contradicts the interests of other stakeholders (Tisdall and Bell, 2006). This dimension leads to the conclusion that "children have no direct voice, not because they have been manoeuvred off the agenda but because few even think it might be a question to ask" (Prout and Tisdall, 2006, p.224). As outlined in Chapter 2, Section 2.5.2, the power preference-shaping dimension is designed to manipulate perceptions and preferences to ensure acceptance of the powerless (Hay, 2002). Therefore, power in this dimension serves to establish norms that govern CYP; however, the latter may remain unaware of its influence and fail to recognise conflict because this type of power operates silently (Lukes, 2005).

The third perspective holds that power can be diffused/distributed through the participation of diverse interest groups (Lasswell and Kaplan, 1950; Bachrach and Baratz, 2002; Avelino, 2021). Accordingly, power is neither monolithic nor total but rather an entity to resist and challenge, contributing to a more fluid and circulating conception of power in adult–child relationships (Jobb, 2019). In the child and youth participation context, power is dynamic, and it is not something that children either possess or do not possess but instead fluid, dynamic, negotiated and contextual (Malone and Hartung, 2010). Because participation is a dynamic process, CYP may have the opportunity to adapt their involvement flexibly depending on their willingness and surrounding contexts (Cahill and Dadvand, 2018). Based on this perspective, adults and CYP should recognise the dynamic nature of child and youth participation to adapt their participation level and roles flexibly, resulting in a more equal power balance in decision-making (Arunkumar et al., 2019). This gives importance to the idea that power can be redistributed and transferred back and forth between adults and CYP as well as shared among them (Hill et al., 2004; Botchwey et al., 2019). The evidence from various discourses and models that encourage meaningful child and youth participation consistently emphasises that power can be shared amongst these groups (Hill et al., 2004; Farrow, 2018; Arunkumar et al., 2019).

Although CYP may encounter situations where adults have power and impose social norms onto them, it is crucial to acknowledge that in the context of child and youth participation, efforts are made to transfer power from adults to CYP. This indicates that the primary focus of child and youth participation is power, which may be shared between adults and CYP. The next section explores the idea of power-sharing in the field of policy and programme decision-making.

3.7 Power-sharing in practice: evidence from policy and programme development

The academic literature acknowledges that power-sharing can exist to various degrees, but the most effective strategy for promoting child and youth participation is for policymakers to genuinely share power and responsibility for decision-making with CYP (Shier, 2001; Francis and Lorenzo, 2002; Hart, 2008; Wong and Zimmerman, 2010). Evidence also suggests that power-sharing with CYP in policy decision-making could enhance their position as equal partners to policymakers (To et al., 2021; Thomson, Peasgood and Robertson, 2022). As a result, the ideas of power-sharing, shared decisions and collaboration/partnership between CYP and policymakers are used simultaneously in the academic literature, policy and practice in this field (Hart, 1992; Shier, 2001; O'Kane, 2003; Botchwey et al., 2019; To et al., 2021; Burns, 2023). This is supported by research indicating that CYP prefer to engage in shared decision-making in policy and collaborative participation with support from policymakers rather than make decisions autonomously (Willow et al., 2004).

Despite widespread acceptance of power-sharing with policymakers in decision-making, evidence that CYP experience meaningful power-sharing in policy-making is limited (Shier et al., 2014). A study conducted by Matthews (2001) exemplifies the notion of power-sharing in policy decision-making in the UK context by conducting a survey of youth councils involved in local policy decision-making. The results indicated that that 44% of the surveyed CYP (63 individuals) believed that youth councils have no power, and over a quarter (27%) felt that they acted as tokens (Matthews, 2001). Furthermore, evidence has shown that CYP continuously feel a lack of power and influence on policy and programme development, resulting in a diminished policy impact (Adu-Gyamfi, 2013). Consequently, a recent study notes that a lack of power-sharing with adults is frequently mentioned as an obstacle to CYP's participation, causing them to experience frustration with adults (Yamaguchi et al., 2023). This may imply that power-sharing in policy decision-making remains a challenge in the context of child and youth participation.

Despite the limits to power-sharing in child and youth participation in policy decision-making, this concept has given rise to various models, methods and techniques for encouraging meaningful child and youth participation. For example, Shier (2001) introduced the Pathways to Participation model of child participation, which describes the mutual power-sharing and responsibilities between adults and CYP. To achieve shared power and responsibility for decision-making, an organisational procedure must be in place that facilitates the participation of CYP in decision-making and ensures that policymakers are prepared to transfer decision-making power to CYP (Shier, 2001). Various recommendations from the literature agree that dialogue with CYP about their desire to have control over agenda-setting and decision-making can be a method for sharing power in policy decision-making (O'Kane, 2003; Williams, 2004; Falconer et al., 2020; Smithson and Jones, 2021). In other words, power-sharing between CYP and adults is frequently founded on an ongoing dialogue in which CYP voice their perspectives and actively engage in decision-making at various levels on all matters impacting them (Borgne, 2014; To et al., 2021). Research has emphasised the benefits of dialogue as an important method for bridging the gap between policymakers and CYP while also cultivating an environment of mutual trust and respect between these two groups (Percy-Smith, 2007; Falconer et al., 2020).

The other power-sharing method is building co-production, which refers to processes in which CYP and policymakers collaborate to manage projects or policies (Burns, 2023). Co-production is a collaborative effort between CYP and adults, who share power and work together to accomplish a particular task, such as conducting research, evaluating a public service or managing a project (Crowley and Moxon, 2017). Similarly, co-creating safe space workshops between policymakers and CYP, focused on their shared interests and building trust within the group, can break down hierarchical power structures, hence facilitating power-sharing (Smithson and Jones, 2021). Although the methods for sharing decision-making power with CYP vary, the key elements often include mutual

respect and a genuine desire to understand CYP's views (Williams, 2004; Chamisa and Shava, 2016) as well as a real transfer of power from adults to CYP, which relies on policymakers' willingness to distribute power (Shier, 2001; Macauley et al., 2022). In this context, the terms "power" and "influence" are interchangeable because influence can incorporate the concept of power, and an element of power is occasionally associated with the former (Willer, Lovaglia and Markovsky, 1997; Raven, 2008). Hence, the present study uses the terms "power" and "influence" interchangeably when discussing the power and power-sharing of CYP in policy and programme decision-making (Bovaird, 2007). For example, policies or activities that are initiated by policymakers can offer CYP the chance to share power in decision-making and significantly influence the activities in which they are engaged alongside policymakers (Lansdown, 2005a).

This section concluded the discussion of power and power-sharing in the previous section, which examined the theoretical debate surrounding power in child and youth participation. Power-sharing is considered a crucial element in promoting meaningful child and youth participation, particularly in the decision-making process of policies and programmes (Alias, Mohamad Nasri and Awang, 2023). Additionally, power-sharing in decision-making fosters an atmosphere of partnership and equality between policymakers and CYP. This section covers several power-sharing methods used in child and youth participation, such as dialogue and co-production. Lastly, power-sharing in decision-making is crucial to child and youth participation, but research suggests that it is a complex problem that has not received sufficient attention (Shier et al., 2014).

3.8 Conclusion

Building on the NSC notion that children are social actors with rights, this chapter has argued that CYP can express their viewpoints about, contribute to and participate in all matters that affect them. This has led to the recognition of CYP participation globally. The typical definition of child and youth participation often encompasses the promotion of actively listening to the perspectives of CYP and allowing them the freedom to express their views and engage in activities or decision-making processes (Malone and Hartung, 2010; Mason and Bolzan, 2010). Nevertheless, the fundamental elements of this study focus on the idea that CYP should be actively involved in policy and programme development, either by exerting influence on decision-making processes or by sharing decision-making power with policymakers.

This chapter then analysed the significant advantages of child and youth participation at the individual level, including self-empowerment, improved skills and the encouragement of active citizenship. However, there are challenges to child and youth participation, which are associated with disturbing their private lives and disempowerment resulting from adults' biases towards them. Child and youth

participation at a broader scale may encourage effective policy, services and good governance. However, this success may be linked to the accomplishments of adults who care about CYP rather than to CYP themselves. Another challenge involves the relevance of the concept of child and youth participation in comprehending the majority world. There are concerns about the possibility that a new form of colonialism is arising whereby the minority world dominates the majority world by utilising this concept (Montgomery, 2013b). Child and youth participation in policy and programme development also encounters several obstacles on both theoretical and practical levels. Tokenism in policy may limit the impact of CYP's participation on policy due to the complexity of bureaucratic organisations and the difficulty in incorporating CYP's views alongside those of stakeholders when making decisions. However, there are alternative ways to address these existing challenges by recognising children's capacity, intentionally respecting their views and voices and providing child-friendly and flexible organisations that fully engage children in the policy and programme development process from beginning – offering clear objectives – to end – through evaluation and follow up.

Finally, the chapter considered notions of power in child and youth participation. I showed that policymakers often have power over CYP and frequently control participation processes or establish values or norms, particularly when participating in policy and programme development. Yet, power is not a fixed concept but a broad term that involves a range of actions occurring in society, and the participation of CYP can be used to share power with policymakers in various ways. The key elements for effectively increasing child and youth participation are policymakers' genuine sharing of power and responsibility for decision-making with CYP and establishing an equal partnership between policymakers and CYP. Some power-sharing methods were identified in this chapter, such as dialogue and co-production. The main components of these methods typically focus on mutual respect and a sincere effort to comprehend the perspectives of CYP (Williams, 2004; Chamisa and Shava, 2016) as well as an authentic transfer of power from adults to CYP.

The next chapter continues to examine childhood and youth conceptions in Thailand, the specific research context of this thesis. Concentrating on the importance of this geographical context, I utilise the critical concept of childhood as a social construct to analyse childhood, youth and CYP, including the notion of child and youth participation. The next chapter also investigates the landscape of child and youth participation in national and local policy, including a discussion of how notions of power are explained in the context of policy decision-making involving both CYP and policymakers in Thailand.

Chapter 4: Exploring childhood, youth and child and youth participation in Thailand

4.1 Introduction

This chapter's central argument is rooted in the notion that childhood is socially and culturally constructed within a particular context (James and Prout, 2001; James and James, 2012; Montgomery, 2013a). The chapter discusses dominant constructions of childhood and youth in Thailand and emphasises how Thai adults have shaped the perceptions of childhood, youth and CYP in this culture. It then presents an alternative perception of CYP in Thailand through the example of recent protests in which CYP have been seen as social actors with rights, illustrating the contemporary phenomenon of CYP protestors resisting adults and maintaining their agency. The second half of the chapter focuses on child and youth participation in the Thai context. I explore the development of child and youth participation in Thailand, highlighting how norms from the minority world have shaped and expanded the understanding of child and young participation in Thai society (Malone and Hartung, 2010; Mason and Bolzan, 2010). Then, I look at the implementation of child and youth participation in policy and programme development in Thailand at the national and local government levels. The final section investigates power dynamics in Thai society, underlining the hierarchical power relations between adults and CYP, in which adults typically possess more power than CYP (Ungkleang et al., 2019; Thammaboosadee, 2021). Specifically, that power dynamics in decision-making tend to reinforce the notion that adults or those in positions of power are the ones who possess the ability to make decisions (Bakalis and Joiner, 2002; Thanasankit and Corbitt, 2002; Buchenrieder et al., 2017).

4.2 The dominant constructions of childhood and youth in Thai culture

Although the concept of childhood as a social construct is seldom explicitly mentioned in Thai research, the analyses presented in the literature helped us identify five main constructions of childhood and youth in Thai culture. Taking a more historical approach, this chapter begins by outlining the dominant constructions of childhood and youth in Thailand as a time for obedience, economic advantages and the beginning stages of repaying the moral debt to parents. Then, I present the more contemporary representations of childhood and youth as a period of investment and vulnerability that have gained increasing traction in Thai society in recent years. This section also illustrates how the conceptualisation of childhood in the minority world, which

emphasises vulnerability and innocence, has influenced childhood and youth construction in Thailand, thereby raising concerns regarding the protection of CYP.

4.2.1 A time of obedience

Chapter 2, Section 2.3.1 explained that childhood in the majority world, particularly in Asian countries, is characterised by obedience due to the significant influence of Chinese Confucianism. In Thailand, an Asian country, childhood and youth are also perceived as a time for obedience. Thai values are partly imbued with Confucianism, whose vital aspects are filial piety, respect for age, seniority and hierarchy, deference, dignity and a dislike of egotism and arrogance, which includes a belief in moderation (Nguyen, 2005). Among these Confucian elements, the notions of hierarchy and seniority seem to have influenced obedient Thai culture considerably. The Buddhist doctrines embedded explicitly in Thai culture have also profoundly shaped the concepts of hierarchy, seniority and obedience in Thai society (Klibthong, 2013; Malikhao, 2017; Iemamnuay, 2019). Numerous Buddhist doctrines, such as the 38 Blessings of Life *(Mangala Sutta 38*), have been applied in Thai society as the fundamental principles for personal growth and success in life (Buddasarn and Ngamchitcharoen, 2019). This doctrine fosters a culture of obedience, notably the expectation that a well-behaved child should be docile, that is, easily admonished, not stubborn and compliant and refrain from arguing with adults (Dhammakaya Foundation, 2005; Tharapak, Dejwaln and Mrukapituk, 2021). The *Mangala Sutta 38* has been the benchmark for Thai "good child" standards since the early nineteenth century (Tharapak, Dejwaln and Mrukapituk, 2021).

The construction of childhood and youth as a time for obedience is complicated by its association with the specific context surrounding Thai feudalism, known as *Thai Sakdina*. To highlight the relevance of Thai feudalism, I draw on Rabibhadana's (1969) analysis of social stratification in Siam[1] as a starting point. During the Ayutthaya and early Bangkok eras (1782–1873), the Thai (Siam) population was split into four legal groups: *chao* (lords), *khunnang* (nobles), *phrai* (commoners) and *that* (slaves) (Rabibhadana, 1969). The first two groups, *chao* and *khunnang*, were classified as superiors who ruled over classes, and the third and fourth categories, *phrai* and *that*, were considered subordinates. This classification delineated discrete strata of individuals and hierarchical positions and differentiated their relationships (Thongsawang, Rehbein and Chantavanich, 2020). Although Thai feudalism has been acknowledged as a historical phenomenon, it remains deeply embedded in Thai society and continues to influence the Thai social structure. Thai feudalism expanded and transformed into a wide variety of interpersonal interactions and classifications, such as high/middle/low society (*sangkhom: soong/klang/tam)*, poor people (*khon chon*) and wealthy people (*khon ruay*) or rural individuals (*ban nok*) and urban individuals (*chao*

---

[1] The country's former name, which was changed to Thailand in 1939 (Sturm, 2006).

krung) (Vorng, 2017). Although this structure has created a variety of levels among individuals, there are at least two distinct strata in Thai culture: superiors *(phu yai),* including monks, higher government officials and adults, and subordinates *(phu noi)*, such as children, young people and servants (Tulananda and Roopnarine, 2001; Vorng, 2017; Bolotta, 2023). Superiors are also commonly known as "masters of others", and their role commands loyalty and respect from their subordinates, who are expected to obey them (Supap, 1999; Thummachote and Yurdagul, 2018; Chinpraphap, 2021). Therefore, Thai people believe that attaining higher government positions means superiority and grants more power, respect and honour, elevating them above ordinary citizens (Supap, 1999; Thummachote and Yurdagul, 2018). Consequently, Thai parents generally encourage their children to pursue a career in government administration rather than a private corporation because attaining a higher social standing is more feasible when working as a government officer (Supap, 1999; Chinpraphap, 2021).

According to this construction, CYP with less power should be respectful, polite, loved, honoured and obedient to people with higher social status by birth, education, knowledge and age (Tulananda and Roopnarine, 2001). Evidence from various traditional Thai proverbs and Thai daily words demonstrate the respect and obedience of children to adults. For example, the proverb "*Phu yai arb nam ron ma kon*" means "adults have observed the world before children; therefore, they should obey them", "*Dern tam phu yai ma mai kad*" translates to "those who follow their elders will not get in trouble", and "*var norn suan ngai*" states that a good child must be docile (Sombat, 2011; Yuenyong and Yuenyong, 2012; Panpothong, 2015). More recently, in 2014, the Thai government introduced a new nationalistic ritual for CYP known as "the 12 core values of Thainess" (*Kaniyom 12 prakarn*) (Ngammuk, 2016). These values require Thai CYP to display "good" manners, which include being obedient and respecting those in higher positions in the social hierarchy (Ngammuk, 2016; Bolotta, 2023). The idea of obedience is widely accepted as a type of relationship in family and society; CYP often keep silent and lack confidence while interacting with adults or older individuals (Knutson et al., 2003). Notably, they frequently avoid expressing opposing opinions or anything that contradicts what their parents, elders or teachers have taught them, including not criticising others' ideas or bringing up opposing viewpoints, especially if the individuals are older than them (Kuwinpant, 2002; Thanasankit and Corbitt, 2002; Nguyen, 2005; Yuenyong and Yuenyong, 2012; Iemamnuay, 2019). As a result, Thai CYP seldom voice disagreement with their elders, and Thai society values quietness and silence as a virtue (Knutson et al., 2003). The teacher–student relationship reflects this as Thai students face various types of oppression at school, including the enforcement of complete respect for teachers, prohibition from arguing with teachers and acceptance and compliance with school regulations (Tharapak, Dejwaln and Mrukapituk, 2021; Thammaboosadee, 2021). These characteristics frequently obstruct their ability to learn and to meaningfully participate both in school and in wider society (Tharapak, Dejwaln and Mrukapituk, 2021).

In the context of Thai culture, obedience comes out as the most essential aspect of childhood and youth. Importantly, this construction seems to highlight the relationship between children and their parents, including how CYP are expected to obey and respond to parents' demands. This underscores the significance of parents in the lives of their children. The next construction of childhood and youth continues to examine how Thai CYP are expected to support their families and provide benefits to their parents.

4.2.2 An economic utility for the family

The notion of childhood as a helpful family economic utility prevalent in Asian cultures (see Chapter 2, Section 2.3.1) has been accepted throughout Thai history. Therefore, it is often customary for CYP in Thai families to perform some type of work, paid or unpaid, to ensure the family's moral and financial well-being (Banpasirichote and Pongsapich, 1992; Mason and Bolzan, 2010; Capaldi, 2015). Unpaid employment in Thai society commonly encompasses farm tasks on family land, caring for older parents and relatives or for younger siblings and assisting with housework (Tulananda and Roopnarine, 2001; O'Dell, Crafter and Montgomery, 2013). In addition, unpaid work can take the form of helping in the community's ceremonies or activities (Baker and Hess, 2001). For example, CYP may work as waiters/waitresses at religious events or help carry various objects during community festivities, which is known as volunteer spirit *(jit-arsa)* (Lueangvilai, Kanchanakunjara and Wongpinpech, 2021). With the increasing industrialisation of the Thai economy,[2] work has expanded to include paid employment in a factory or company. As a result, many young people have left their family homes and migrated to cities, searching for factory work or other types of paid jobs (Davy, 2014; Montgomery, 2015). In addition, the specific environment that sets it apart from other nations in the majority world must be considered. Thailand is well-known as a favoured tourist spot due to its sunny climate, sandy shores and lively nightlife (Sharafuddin, 2015). Consequently, sex workers in Thailand have long been a prominent attraction for sexual tourists worldwide (Farrington, 2016). Although sex work is illegal in Thailand, the estimated number of CYP engaged in the sex business in Thailand varies from 60,000 to 400,000 depending on the data source and calculation methods (BM and BS, 2002; Singh and Hart, 2007; Lau, 2008). In Thailand, sex work may serve as a way of survival for several low-income families residing in rural areas (King, 2008; Montgomery, 2011; Malikhao, 2017). Importantly, sex work can be seen as a kind of labour or duty within a household economy to financially support one's parents or siblings (Singh and Hart, 2007).

This section emphasised the construction of childhood and youth in Thai culture, in which CYP are partly viewed as a valuable economic resource for the family. Thai CYP are expected to perform some type of work to contribute to their families. Further, CYP's work contributions are connected to the idea of partly repaying their moral debt

---

[2] See more details in Section 4.2.5.

to their parents. The next section delves into this view of childhood and youth as the beginning stage of moral debt repayment.

4.2.3 The beginning stage of moral debt repayment to parents

In line with Confucian filial piety (see Section 4.2.1), parents in Thai society are often respected and honoured by their children; it is a kind of Thai common sense that children have to look after their parents when they get older (Morita, 2007). Lord Buddha defined the relationship between children and their parents, stating that parents are both Brahmā (God) and our first teachers (Nayaka Thera, 2014). Hence, parents are highly respected and deserving of acknowledgement for their extended efforts in raising their children (Promchotchai, 2013; Wathreewattanarut, 2023). Consequently, when children reach adulthood, they are often obliged to respond to their parents' needs and bestow favours upon them (Nayaka Thera, 2014). Thai culture emphasises the significant roles of parents, especially mothers, in caring for and nurturing their children from birth to adolescence, which calls for supreme gratitude *(bun khun)* or implies a moral debt to parents (Morita, 2007; Montgomery, 2014). Although moral debts will not be fully repaid, they may be partially repaid in numerous ways, such as by being respectful and helping around the home and farm, looking after parents and (for men) ordaining as monks (Liamputtong et al., 2004; Sinnott, 2014). Regarding this last point, Thai men often begin Buddhist ordination at the age of 20 for various reasons, including to acquiesce to their parents' requests, repay their moral debt to them, demonstrate their filial responsibility and honour their parents (Saisuwan, 2016). In the Thai context, women's ability to repay their debt to their parents may be impeded by their lack of access to ordination. However, the original Buddhist doctrine did not exclude women or girls from participating in Buddhist activities,[3] gender did not prevent spiritual enlightenment, and men and women were considered equal (Phrakhrukositwattananukul, 2020). Despite this equal status, Thai *sakdina* and Thai patriarchal society have led to Thai women being frequently seen as having a lower status than men (Malikhao, 2017), with women and young girls not being allowed to be ordained as monks or novices in Thai culture. However, Lau (2008) argues that women can also show their gratitude by looking after their families and raising money to support their parents by engaging in paid work. For the reasons stated above, childhood and youth in Thai culture might be defined as the beginning stage of the accumulation of a moral debt to parents. This generates the perception that parents

---

[3] Lord Buddha identified two groups of followers, laypeople (*upasaka*: male followers; *upasika*: female followers) and monks (*bhikkhu*: male monks; *bhikkhuni*: female monks), among which men and women occupy equal positions (Magee and Purisuttamo, 2020; Phrakhrukositwattananukul, 2020).

have the right to be moral creditors, whereas children are moral debtors (Montgomery, 2009).

In the three constructions of childhood and youth explained above, CYP are primarily embedded in interpersonal relationships, especially within the family. The next two perceptions explore the concept of childhood and youth in relation to socio-economic and political border factors, including the influence of the concepts of childhood from the minority world.

4.2.4 A period of vulnerability and innocence

Although childhood and youth in Thailand have been socially constructed within Thai culture, they have been affected by the diffusion of universal concepts about children's vulnerability and innocence from the minority world (Linde, 2014), as outlined in Chapter 2, Section 2.3.1. Research suggests that Thai CYP began to be seen as vulnerable and innocent individuals due to the global spread of a childhood model based on medical and developmental theories (Yunus, 2005). This construction has significantly impacted the Thai government's perception of Thai CYP since the 1930s (Promchotchai, 2013). In various areas of Thai society, particularly in social work and public health, there was an increased focus on policies, practices and studies to protect the vulnerability and innocence of CYP (Nimmannorrawong, 2015b). This has affected many modern Thai families, who also perceive children as vulnerable to potential harm (Techacharoenrungrueang and Wanchai, 2017). In contemporary Thai society, the widely accepted proverb *"dek khue pha khao[4]"* employs the metaphor of a child being a white cloth to symbolise the innocence of all children, reflecting the impact of the spread of universal concepts (Thongtong, 2019; Boonhok, 2020). Later, academic studies have examined the vulnerability and innocence of CYP, including street children, children with disabilities, orphans, teenage mothers and children in detention centres, from rural areas or experiencing violence or social issues such as domestic violence and human trafficking (Pink, 2013; Capaldi, 2015; Tuicomepee et al., 2018; Seramethakul, 2019; Sriwichiana, Tonbootb and Pannarunothaib, 2021). These studies show that Thai CYP are frequently portrayed as innocent, dependent and immature, rending them as vulnerable, submissive and powerless (Techacharoenrungrueang and Wanchai, 2017). Additionally, as powerless individuals, CYP are incapable of taking action on their own behalf and are dependent on and controlled by adults (Kaewthep, 2011; Boonhok, 2020).

Reflecting the influence of the minority world's notion of childhood innocence on Thai society, the Thai government partly believes that childhood is a time of vulnerability and innocence. This perception directs adults' and the government's attention to the importance of safeguarding CYP. The next section investigates the idea that CYP are the

---

[4] In Thai, *pha khao* refers to a white cloth that really is extremely pure and symbolises innocence.

nation's future, which calls for the government to invest in CYP, mainly through the sphere of education.

4.2.5 A period of investment in the nation's future

In the twentieth century, or the modern Thai era, many laws, regulations and policies on welfare, health and education were implemented across the country (Promchotchai, 2013; Sirindhorn, 2018). Education played a crucial role in the nation's progress and was the primary domain for the government to allocate resources, foster development and provide support for CYP (Fry and Bi, 2013; Michel, 2015; Sirindhorn, 2018). From the 1960s to the 1990s, Thailand saw significant economic expansion, marked by notable improvements in its infrastructure and increased foreign investment (Wiboonchutikula, 1984; Michel, 2015). This progress resulted in a major increase in both manufacturing and service employment, contributing to the overall development of the nation (Wiboonchutikula, 1984; Michel, 2015). The Thai government responded to economic expansion and national development by increasing investment in education, including primary, secondary and university education (Lertchoosakul, 2012; Kongkirati, 2012; Fry and Bi, 2013; Michel, 2015). This illustrates the government's perspective on childhood and youth as a time of investment, particularly in CYP's education to shape them into the future workforce needed to address economic expansion. This aligns with the literature stating that starting in the 1950s, the Thai government often considered Thai CYP to be the nation's future or future citizens (Nimmannorrawong, 2015b). For instance, the Thai government campaigned for the establishment of the first national Children's Day in 1955 and composed a special song, "*nar tee kong dek*" (a child's duties), which described how children in Thailand should be nurtured and inculcated with good morals and behaviour (Nimmannorrawong, 2015a). This song introduces a list of ten duties, especially devotion to education, upholding Buddhism, keeping with Thai tradition and obeying parents and teachers, which the Thai child must complete before becoming a proper adult citizen (Tharapak, Dejwaln and Mrukapituk, 2021). Additionally, several of Thailand's subsequent Children's Day slogans, which are created annually by the Prime Minister, have reflected the idea that childhood and youth is a period of investment, particularly in education and preparation for the nation's future (Bolotta, 2016; Kongsak, 2019). For example, the slogan was "The future of the nation will be bright. If Thai children are strong, study well and behave well" in 1967, "Children who wish to see a wealthy nation's future must be disciplined and act appropriately from now on" in 1976 and "Be good children, be diligent, be hard learners for the future" in 2016. These slogans reflect the government's belief in offering good education to CYP and underline that CYP are the future of the national workforce (Bolotta, 2016; Kongsak, 2019). The government's perception of childhood and youth as a period of investment in the nation's future has consequences for the fundamental framework of the family. Modern Thai parents often dedicate substantial support and resources to their children's education, anticipating that they

will secure wealthy professions that will contribute to the nation's future and family resources (Chinpraphap, 2021).

To summarise, I identified the five core constructions of childhood and youth in Thailand based on the literature in various academic disciplines. However, there may be additional constructions due to the presence of diverse ethnic groups in Thailand, including the northern and north-eastern communities and the Muslim population in the southern region (Laungaramsri, 2003; Baird, Leepreecha and Yangcheepsutjarit, 2017; Chaikhambung and Tuamsuk, 2017). These groups have distinct cultures and traditions that may influence their perceptions of childhood, youth and CYP (Montgomery, 2009) in ways that differ from these five core constructions. Importantly, research on these ethnic groups typically reveals that they have been systematically marginalised from the dominant culture (Laungaramsri, 2003). Hence, it may be challenging to locate other constructions of childhood and youth in Thailand within existing studies. Notwithstanding, ideas surrounding children as an investment, future citizens, obedient people, vulnerable individuals and debtors all come to mind when thinking of childhood and youth in Thailand. These constructions illustrate the unequal power between adults and CYP (Mayall, 2002; Malone and Hartung, 2010), which enables adults to form and shape an understanding of CYP (Jones, 2009b). However, the importance of CYP displaying agency has challenged these dominant constructions in recent years, most notably due to young protesters in the 1970s and late 2010s. The next section turns to the significance of these events in shaping alternative perceptions of CYP in Thailand.

4.3 Alternative perceptions of CYP in Thai society

This section introduces the challenge of dominant constructions of childhood and youth by alternative concepts and ideas regarding CYP holding agency and opposing resistance to adults. There is a considerable amount of history, but the two essential phenomena related to resistance to adults are the protests in 1973 and 2016–2022, which were predominantly made up of secondary school and university students between the ages of 13 and 22 years (Lertchoosakul, 2021; McCargo, 2021; Bolotta, 2023). These two events are outlined below.

The demonstrations of young people, mainly university students, against the two-decade military dictatorship (1957–1973) in 1973 was a clear phenomenon in which young people could be perceived as social actors holding agency and challenging adults. As mentioned in Section 4.2.5, between the 1960s and 1990s, Thailand experienced substantial economic growth (Wiboonchutikula, 1984; Michel, 2015), which highly impacted the expansion of education at all levels across the country (Kongkirati, 2012; Lertchoosakul, 2012). As a result, young people from different socio-economic backgrounds across the country pursued higher education, significantly increasing

university enrolment (Kongkirati, 2012; Lertchoosakul, 2012). Many young individuals who acquired knowledge and in-depth information about Thai politics through university education developed a negative view of the government (Lertchoosakul, 2012; Kongkirati, 2012; Waiwitlikhit, 2020). This resulted from their exposure to a range of problems afflicting the country, such as the legitimacy crisis of authoritarian governance, corruption, political instability, inadequate execution of initiatives aimed at social advancement and the handling of a financial crisis (Lertchoosakul, 2012; Kongkirati, 2012; Waiwitlikhit, 2020). In October 1973, university student movements decided to protest against political repression and socio-economic frustrations under a nearly two-decade (1957–1973) military government (Zimmerman, 1974; Lertchoosakul, 2021). Four hundred thousand students, mainly from universities and vocational schools, were the key actors in organising and promoting the mass democratic protests that brought down the military dictatorship (Lertchoosakul, 2021). Later, the student movements progressed and gradually became more involved in solving national socio-economic injustice issues, such as minimum wage reform and land reform (Kongkirati, 2012; Baker and Phongpaichit, 2014). These young people's protests in the early 1970s coincided with the emergence of the New Sociology of Childhood (NSC), drawing attention to the increasing recognition that children are social actors who hold agency.

The recent protests against the Thai government in 2016–2022 were the second significant phenomenon demonstrating that CYP are social actors with agency. The main component was the active involvement of secondary school students (aged 13–18 years), including in leadership positions (Lertchoosakul, 2021; Bolotta, 2023). This phenomenon can be traced back to the military coup led by former Thai army leader General Prayuth Chan-Ocha in May 2014. The military government attempted to enforce martial law, summoning activists and academics for "attitude adjustment" (persuading them to shift their oppositional stance towards the military government to a more favourable one) and severely limiting civic and political rights (Bolotta, 2016). Consequently, between 2016 and 2019, various student groups and other activist groups began to emerge throughout Thailand in an attempt to eliminate the military government and restore democracy. Later, they expanded their protest issues to unfair democracy, income inequity and the sensitive topic of reforming the monarchy (Smith, Chanlett-Avery and Dolven, 2020; Lertchoosakul, 2021). Then, CYP and a diverse range of allied non-governmental organisations (NGOs), labour movements and LGBTQI groups developed a network of protest against the government, the Free People Society Movement (FPSM) (Sombatpoonsiri, 2020). Along with the FPSM, other groups of young protestors demanded an end to all forms of student harassment, the repeal of outdated and harmful school rules/regulations and educational reforms including full student participation (Chankaew, 2021). This encompassed opposition to school oppression, notably in teacher–student relationships, and social and political inequities in the educational system (Ayuwat, 2020; Lertchoosakul, 2021; Thanapornsangsuth and Anamwathana, 2022). The secondary school students' protest movement was evidence

of CYP's efforts to challenge superiors, adults, teachers, the government and the monarchy, which is traditionally untouchable. These CYP once again demonstrated the alternative conceptualisation of Thai childhood and youth in that they attempted to challenge adults and used their agency to resist the government.

Although adults perceive CYP through the lens of the dominant construction, these events illustrate the ways in which CYP can demonstrate their resistance to adults' perceptions. Therefore, in Thai society, the perceptions of Thai childhood, youth and CYP have merged, blended and combined both the dominant and alternative perspectives. The next section continues to examine the concept of social construction to determine and better understand how child and youth participation has been constructed and operationalised in Thai society.

4.4 The construction and operationalisation of child and youth participation in Thailand

This section introduces two essential issues of child and youth participation in Thailand. It begins by describing how child and youth participation has been constructed in Thai culture. The second section then describes how CYP's participation in the development of Thailand's policies and programmes in the national and local governments has been operationalised. It also covers criticisms surrounding this issue in Thai policy and programme development at both the local and national levels.

4.4.1 The evolving construction of child and youth participation in Thailand

Child and youth participation cannot be understood in isolation from its social, cultural and political contexts (Percy-Smith and Thomas, 2010). As a result, I should acknowledge how it has been constructed in Thailand. Thailand and some other Southeast Asian countries (e.g. Indonesia and Malaysia) are traditionally identified as collectivist societies, in which people tend to define themselves in terms of their place in the larger collective, such as the family or community (Hofstede, 1986; McAuliffe et al., 2003; Thomas, 2017; Suwinyattichaiporn, Johnson and Fontana, 2019). In other words, collectivist culture is characterised by strong social and individual ties, with people being part of very cohesive groups (Prabhu, 2011). Collectivist culture, which prioritises family responsibility above individual rights, has impacted the construction of child and youth participation in these countries (Mason and Bolzan, 2010). Therefore, the prevailing concept of child and youth participation often involves allowing CYP to join in the activities of adults within their families and the wider community (Alias, Mohamad Nasri and Awang, 2023). In Thailand, the role of CYP often involves the assumptions surrounding them taking care of their family members and assisting with daily tasks to help support their families, such as looking after family members and working as

labourers during the harvest (Kotchabhadi et al., 2009; Mason and Bolzan, 2010). Although the understanding of child and youth participation in Thailand is associated with CYP's contribution to the family or community, Thai society has been colonised by the minority-world concept of child and youth participation. As seen in Chapter 3, the spread of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child's (UNCRC) concept of child and youth participation, which holds that CYP are capable of forming their own views and can express them freely in all matters affecting them, drew global attention, particularly in the majority world (Mason and Bolzan, 2010; Malone and Hartung, 2010; Montgomery, 2013b). Conceptual colonisation by the minority world's conception of child and youth participation contradicts the primary construction of the role of CYP in Thailand, which is firmly grounded in a collectivist culture that mandates their active citizenship through work or family support and, occasionally, community involvement (Mason and Bolzan, 2010). This demonstrates the significant disparity in the constructions and comprehension of child and youth participation between the majority and minority worlds (Percy-Smith and Thomas, 2010). In addition, the concepts of child and youth participation suggest that the establishment of the UNCRC could be viewed as a new form of colonialism, where the minority world imposed its values on the majority world (Montgomery, 2013b), partially replacing traditional understandings of child and youth participation in Thailand, which are closely linked to contributions within the family or community.

However, this analysis may be limited by a dichotomous view of the 'minority/majority' distinction. It is crucial to recognise the coexistence and dynamic interaction between the perspectives of the minority world—often focused on universal frameworks that support CYP's rights to freely express their views in the public realm—and the traditional, culturally specific perspectives that shape how CYP's roles within the family and community are understood and valued. In the majority world, the conception of child and youth participation encourages CYP's involvement primarily in the private sphere. In contrast, the influence of the minority world's conceptual framework can enhance CYP's rights within the public sphere in the majority world. As outlined in Section 3.2, this approach emphasises the importance the "recognition" of CYP as active partners in societal participation alongside adults (Ward et al., 2024). Integrating both minority world frameworks and traditional cultural views from the majority world, it can foster a more inclusive, cross-cultural conversation and comprehensive understanding of child and youth participation (Punch and Tisdall, 2012) within Thai society.

Despite these advantages and disadvantages, this influence has generated research and policy in Thailand that reflects the construction of child and youth participation from the minority world. These often emphasise the rights to access information, freedom of expression, participation in activities and decision-making on matters beyond the family domain and extending into the public sphere (Kotchabhadi et al., 2009). These definitions suggest that the establishment of the UNCRC could be regarded as a new

form of colonialism, whereby the minority world imposed its values on the majority world (Montgomery, 2013b) and partially replaced the latter's earlier understanding. Subsequent legislation, particularly NCYDP Act 2007 and NCYDP Act 2017, broadened and adhered to the minority world–influenced definition that emphasises the rights of CYP, expanding beyond the right to express their views to include the right to engage in the development of policies.

4.4.2 The operationalisation of child and youth participation in Thailand's policies and programme development

This section explains how CYP participate in national and local policy and programme development. As described in Chapter 1, Thailand has adopted two crucial child and youth participation acts, NCYDP Act 2007 and NCYDP Act 2017, to promote CYP's participation in national and local policy, respectively. This section examines these two acts in greater detail.

4.4.2.1 CYP's participation in national policy

The promotion of CYP's right to participate in national policy is a critical component of the NCYDP Act 2007. Notably, Article 33 states that child and youth representatives are responsible for providing opinions about government policies, plans and budget allocations to child and youth development (National Child and Youth Development Promotion Act B.E.2550, 2007). The Thai government established the National Child and Youth Council of Thailand (NCYCT) in June 2009 to fulfil the obligation of youth representation, as outlined in Article 33. The first NCYCT consisted of 26 youth delegates representing the CYP of the entire country. After the first members of the NCYCT concluded their tenures, the subsequent representatives were consistently re-elected until 2021, which is relevant to this study. According to an analysis of the 26 current (2021) NCYCT members, the male-to-female representation ratio is 19 to seven, indicating that the most powerful young leaders are overwhelmingly male. Additionally, the current NCYCT consists of 18 representatives who are presidents of the country's provincial child and youth councils and eight who are part of networks or associations of CYP, such as the Innovative Media Club for CYP, the DragonFly Club (youth volunteer club), the Youth Friend Association and the Thai-Vietnamese (*Yuan*) Ethnicity Youth Club. Nevertheless, this council lacks representatives of younger children, out-of-school adolescents and young people with disabilities, who are frequently marginalised and have limited opportunities for participation (Department of Children and Youth Affairs, 2021).

Another crucial component of this legislation is Article 10, which designates the government as responsible for establishing the National Commission on the Promotion of Child and Youth Development (NCPCYD). The commission is tasked with initiating national policies for CYP, reviewing relevant regulations and laws and implementing policies and regulations to enhance CYP's quality of life. In 2021 (the year of data

collection for this thesis), the commission consisted of 30 members and was chaired by a Deputy Prime Minister selected by the Prime Minister, with the Director of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA) serving as the commission's secretary. The vice-chairs are the Minister of Social Development and Human Security (MSDHS) and the Minister of Education. Their membership includes senior government officials from all ministries in Thailand, experts, representatives of local government associations and youth representatives. The NCPCYD features 15 sub-committees associated with childhood and youth development policy, laws and regulations. Each sub-committee comprises a chairperson, 10 to 20 policymakers, one to five youth representatives and secretariat teams often staffed by government personnel from the DCYA (Department of Children and Youth Affairs, 2019). The 15 sub-committees and the number of youth representatives and policymakers on each committee are detailed in the table below.

Table 1

The NCPCYD sub-committees

Sub-committee name	Number of youth representatives	Number of policymakers
1. Capacity development of persons working on CYP issues	1	31
2. Annual report on children and youth development	2	23
3. Policy and planning for CYP development	2	30
4. Organising national CYP assembly	3	39
5. Protection of CYP from using online media	4	29
6. Prevention and addressing iodine deficiency disorders in CYP	0	32
7. Legal amendment regarding children following the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child	0	31
8. Children's rights	2	48
9. Child abuse prevention	1	50
10. National early childhood promotion and development	0	31
11. Bangkok metropolitan early childhood promotion and development	0	13
12. Provincial early childhood promotion and development	0	13
13. Promotion of Thai traditional music affairs	0	18
14. Promotion of child and youth council affairs	5	15
15. Consideration of the UNCRC reservation withdrawal	0	21
	N = 20	**N = 424**

Source: Adapted from UNICEF (2016) and DCYA (2020)

According to Table 1, eight of the 15 sub-committees have members who are youth representatives. These sub-committees are selected as units of analysis for our national case study, as described in Chapter 5, Section 5.4.1.1.

This section also outlines the criticisms associated with the participation of CYP in national policy. In line with findings at the international level (Shier, 2012; Corney et al., 2021), research in Thailand often indicates that policymakers have unfavourable views of youth representatives in the national committees based on their beliefs about CYP's immaturity, incompetence and lack of experience in policy and programme development (Department of Children and Youth Affairs, 2017; UNICEF, 2023). Young representatives report that policymakers frequently question their abilities and consider them immature individuals lacking the necessary competence to participate (UNICEF, 2016, 2023). Another challenge CYP encounter when participating in national policy is the lack of power to influence policy and programme decision-making. Wonganant et al. (2014) argue that while the commission's duties are vital elements of national CYP development, most of the committee's members are adult policymakers rather than youth representatives. As a result, the limited number of youth representatives lack the ability to persuade, suggest or challenge policymakers on policies; indeed, they might not have the power to change, advocate for or make any decisions (Wonganant et al., 2014). Further, when youth representatives meet with high-ranking authorities in each committee/sub-committee, they experience significant pressure and have limited chances to voice their ideas (Arunittrakhoon, 2020). This may result in tokenistic participation, with CYP's views having little influence on policy and programme decisions (Arunittrakhoon, 2020). Although youth representatives may not have much power or influence in policy decision-making, the evidence suggests that their participation in national policy can have a meaningful impact. According to the NCYCT President's report in 2019, some policies have been established or improved as a result of youth representatives' advocacy at the NCPCYD. For example, these youth representatives played a key role in pushing for the adoption of the Child Support Grant Policy (CSG). The CSG was designed to provide a monthly allowance to parents of children aged 0–3 years; however, thanks to the youth representatives at the NCPCYD, the eligibility age was expanded from 3 to 6 years old (Department of Children and Youth Affairs, 2017). Despite criticism, it can be argued that NCYDP Act 2007 increased CYP's participation at the national level. The next section investigates the second crucial act, NCYDP Act 2017, which aims to encourage child and youth participation in local governance structures.

4.4.2.2 CYP's participation in local policy

The Thai government adopted NCYDP Act 2017 on 11 June 2017. This act mandates municipalities and sub-district administrative organisations (SAO) to encourage the participation of CYP in local government (National Child and Youth Development Promotion Act B.E.2560, 2017). Article 22 stipulates that SAOs and municipalities are responsible for establishing sub-district child and youth councils (SD-CYCs) to promote

child and youth participation in local government affairs. As mentioned in Chapter 1, there are 7,772 SD-CYCs across Thailand (Department of Children and Youth Affairs, 2021). Article 23 outlines the responsibilities and duties of SD-CYCs, which encompass providing recommendations to the local government for improving CYP development and addressing issues in SAOs or municipalities. SD-CYCs were established by several municipalities and SAOs using diverse methods. Typically, each SAO's mayor or chief executive designates a president, two or three vice presidents, one secretary and between 10 and 20 members (Ungkleang et al., 2019). Many local governments appoint an SD-CYC advisory panel or other committees, which generally consist of community leaders, local experts, government officials and school teachers, to improve and support the SD-CYC in promoting the involvement of CYP in local government affairs (Chantajam, 2020).

There are some criticisms related to the participation of CYP in local government policy. The research found that the central government lacks specific legislation to encourage child and youth participation in local governance, and there is a notable shortage of professional youth workers in local government (Kotbungkair et al., 2017). The Technical Promotion and Support Office of the MSDHS (2019) conducted an evaluation of 322 SD-CYCs across Thailand, examining their roles and functions in local government affairs. The evaluation identified several challenges in the local government sector, such as the lack of current and relevant information regarding projects or activities in which CYP have participated and updated SD-CYC membership records. This aligns with another study that found that local child and youth council members did not play a prominent role and had little influence on local government activities and policy decision-making (Songsoontorawat, 2016). In addition, Chantajam (2020) indicates that the selection of SD-CYC members by SAOs or municipalities frequently lacks efficiency and a proper democratic method. For instance, they recruited students from specific schools in SAOs and chose CYP with connections to SAO workers to join SD-CYC as members (Chantajam, 2020). The study also reveals that youth representatives from SD-CYC faced opposition from their parents, who were opposed to their involvement due to concerns that it may disrupt their schooling and prevent them from assisting with domestic or work-related tasks (Chantajam, 2020).

To summarise, this section showed the influence of collective (Thai) culture on the comprehension of child and youth participation in the Thai context, in which individuals tend to prioritise family responsibilities over individual interests or rights. This is reflected in the primary construction of child and youth participation in Thailand, where Thai CYP are often involved in their families' affairs (Kotchabhadi et al., 2009; Mason and Bolzan, 2010). However, the form of colonialism represented by the spread of the minority-world concepts of child and youth participation has impacted Thai society. As a result, child and youth participation has continuously changed and expanded beyond family affairs into involvement in the public sphere. This includes the right for CYP to express their views and engage in the development of policies. Tensions arise in the implementation of this concept and the practical promotion of CYP's

participation in Thai culture. These tensions stem from the hierarchical nature of Thai society, in which adults are frequently regarded as superior and CYP as subordinate (see Section 4.2.1). Contemporary research on child and youth participation in Thai culture indicates that child and youth participation encounters resistance from some adults, particularly when it comes to CYP's rights to express their opinions without restriction. As stated in Section 4.3, several CYP movements in Thailand analyse and criticise sensitive issues in Thai society. This encompasses a critique of the revered monarchy, which commands immense respect from the Thai population (Thanapornsangsuth and Anamwathana, 2022). A significant number of Thai adults who hold the Thai monarchy in high regard oppose the CYP movement and actively utilise the lèse-majesté statute to suppress these movements and incarcerate CYP participants (Thanapornsangsuth and Anamwathana, 2022).

This draws attention to the risks associated with the new form of colonialism when minority-world concepts are implemented in a different context. As a result, understanding the conceptualisation of child and youth participation requires considering the particular context, and cultural sensitivity may be needed. Despite criticisms of child and youth participation in Thailand, the influence of the minority world's concept of child and youth participation on Thai culture is demonstrated by the enactment of two significant acts promoting the inclusion of CYP ideas into policy and programme development at both the national and local levels. However, the participation of CYP at these two levels in Thailand faces several challenges, particularly regarding opportunities for active engagement in the policy-making process (Department of Children and Youth Affairs, 2018). The limitation on active participation in policy decision-making may also illustrate the power imbalance between policymakers and CYP, as I explain below.

4.5 Power dynamics between CYP and adults in Thai policy and decision-making

Based on Chapter 2, Section 2.5, power can be classified into centralised or diffused (Bachrach and Baratz, 2002; Avelino, 2021). The first conceptualisation refers to power being concentrated in the hands of a single group that dominates another social group (Bachrach and Baratz, 2002; Avelino, 2021) or the ability of the powerful to shape the norms and values of the powerless (Farthing, 2012). The second view highlights that power is relatively distributed through the participation of diverse interest groups (Lasswell and Kaplan, 1950; Bachrach and Baratz, 2002; Avelino, 2021). In Asia and Southeast Asia, research on the power relationship between children and adults indicates that adults are typically more powerful than CYP (To et al., 2021; Alias, Mohamad Nasri and Awang, 2023). This applies to Thailand, where adults frequently exert power over CYP or restrict their ability to participate in society (Ungkleang et al.,

2019; Thammaboosadee, 2021). When the notions of power merge with Thai hierarchy (feudalism) (see Section 4.2.1), it becomes increasingly complex and reveals the powerlessness of CYP as well as other individuals holding lower positions. Thai feudalism is based on a hierarchical social structure where individuals are classified into higher and lower ranks, each with varying levels of power (Komin, 1990; Suwinyattichaiporn, Johnson and Fontana, 2019). Thai feudalism further highlights the importance of power to people and society, with those in high positions of power obtaining respect and loyalty from those in lower positions (Jirapornkul and Yolles, 2010). This elucidation underscores the notion of symbolic power, which is derived from the recognition of renown, prestige, honour, glory, and authority (Pellandini-Simányi, 2014). In addition, the examination of the concept of power within the context of Thai feudalism, an inherent cultural aspect, may illustrate how culture fosters power relations and understandings of power in a specific society (Torelli and Shavitt, 2010). Drawing on the notion of Thai feudalism, in Thai culture, the perception and relation of power in which the powerlessness of CYP and the powerful of adults can be considered a cultural element accepted in Thai society (Techacharoenrungrueang and Wanchai, 2017). As a result, it could potentially show the role that culture plays in legitimating power imbalances in the hierarchical relation between adults and CYP.

Furthermore, adults or people in high positions typically have the power to make decisions, especially at the organisational level (Bakalis and Joiner, 2002; Thanasankit and Corbitt, 2002; Buchenrieder et al., 2017). However, it should be acknowledged that in bureaucratic organisations across several countries, decision-making power is primarily held by high-ranking individuals such as politicians and administrators (Basi, 1998; Haruţa and Cobârzan, 2010). In Thai culture, subordinates tend to refrain from participating in decision-making processes and instead defer to their superiors to avoid potential confrontation (Thanasankit, 2002; Buchenrieder et al., 2017). Consequently, when interacting with adults, CYP may experience elevated feelings of shyness, insecurity or the belief that their opinions are unimportant (Alias, Mohamad Nasri and Awang, 2023). Regarding decision-making, adult–child relationships in Thai culture often reflect unequal power; typically, adults hold power because they possess specific knowledge, wisdom or experiences beyond those of CYP (Thanasankit, 2002; Rattanadilok Na Phuket, 2017). Notwithstanding important developments surrounding youth protest movements (Lertchoosakul, 2021; Bolotta, 2023), it can be shown that the power imbalance raises the probability that CYP with less power will depend on adults and obey their demands (Thanasankit, 2002; Rattanadilok Na Phuket, 2017). Importantly, it is difficult for CYP to contest or challenge the judgements of their superiors regarding a decision that they have already made (Rojanapanich and Pimpa, 2011).

Research further reveals that power imbalances exist between adults and CYP in the context of participation, especially in national policy and programme development. As explained in Section 4.4.2.1, there are only three youth representatives on the NCPCYD committee, compared to approximately 27 high-power-level policymakers from various

ministries, which diminishes CYP's capacity to influence policy decision-making (Wonganant et al., 2014; Arunittrakhoon, 2020). This reflects CYP's lower status and the fact that they are either powerless individuals or a minority group subject to adult control. This may echo how the powerful can shape committee norms that apply to the powerless (Farthing, 2012). Therefore, youth representatives of national committees may have encountered exclusionary practices by policymakers, potentially resulting in their exclusion from policy-making and planning with policymakers (UNICEF, 2016). Moreover, as previously mentioned, Thai feudalism places significant emphasis on power, which is accumulated by individuals of higher social standing. The individual who holds the highest position on the committee, such as the Prime Minister, a minister or a deputy minister who chairs the committee, wields the greatest influence and power in decision-making (Arunittrakhoon, 2020). Consequently, the lack of consistency in Thailand's policies is the result of the significant influence and power held by superiors in higher positions, while subordinates in lower positions rely on the decisions made by their superiors, often leading to delays or even preventing continuous operation (Taweephon et al., 2018). In addition, recent research indicates that Thai adults are often unwilling to engage in power-sharing with CYP because they fear that granting more power to CYP could undermine their own established views and decisions (Thanapornsangsuth and Anamwathana, 2022). These challenges pertain to the acceptability of power-sharing between adults and CYP, as it is commonly acknowledged that adults typically hold more power (Ungkleang et al., 2019; Thammaboosadee, 2021; Alias, Mohamad Nasri and Awang, 2023). As a result, efforts must be made to acknowledge and mitigate this power imbalance, reducing adult control over CYP, which can be challenging to accept (Alias, Mohamad Nasri and Awang, 2023).

This section showed that power in Thai policy decision-making is seldom distributed to CYP but rather centralised by (higher-level) policymakers. However, it is crucial to consider that the implementation of two significant acts aimed at promoting child and youth participation in Thailand could affect how power is operationalised in policy and programme development and decision-making processes. This issue was a source of motivation for conducting the thorough and detailed examination presented in this thesis.

4.6 Conclusion

This chapter emphasised the notion that childhood is socially constructed within the particular context of Thailand. Consequently, the constructions of Thai childhood and youth, including perceptions of CYP, have been profoundly influenced by cultural elements deeply embedded in Thai society. The five major constructions of Thai childhood and youth paint it as a time for obedience, a useful economic utility, the beginning stage of the repayment of the moral debt to parents, an investment in the nation's future and a period of innocence and vulnerability. The emphasis on the period of innocence and vulnerability illustrates how the minority-world concept of childhood

has spread to the majority world through a new form of colonialism (Promchotchai, 2013; Linde, 2014; Nimmannorrawong, 2015b). As a result, the majority of constructions of childhood in Thailand integrate contextual cultural elements with the impact of the global context (Wells, 2009). Although the five dominant constructions of childhood and youth in Thailand considerably influence how childhood is seen, an alternative viewpoint is gaining traction, acknowledging CYP in Thailand as active members of society with their own rights. This has coincided with some important developments, most notably the emergence of young protestors in Thailand who have exercised their rights to participate in society. Nevertheless, it is widely recognised that the mainstream representations of Thai childhood and youth align with the five dominant constructions.

Additionally, this chapter discussed the construction of child and youth participation in Thailand, including how CYP obtained the right to participate in Thailand's policy and programme development. Child and youth participation in Thailand is frequently constructed in relation to their engagement in adult activities and appears advantageous for the well-being of their families. Nonetheless, the view of child and youth participation in Thailand is increasingly shaped by the minority world's view of the topic. As a result, the participation of Thai CYP has transformed from taking part in family activities to the rights to access information, freedom of expression, participation in activities and decision-making on public matters (Kotchabhadi et al., 2009). Therefore, due to the influence of this definition, the Thai government adopted two acts in 2007 and 2017 to increase the participation of CYP in policy and programme development at the national and local levels. Despite these governmental efforts, these CYP encountered various barriers, and the situation remains far from meaningful participation, where CYP can share power with policymakers in policy and programme decision-making. Ultimately, this seems to suggest that in Thailand, the power dynamics between CYP and adults involved in policy and programme decision-making continue to be dominated by adults, highlighting the subordinate position and lack of influence of CYP.

However, due to rapid social change in Thailand as mentioned above, it is not clear exactly how adults' current perceptions of children, young people and their participation have evolved, which leaves important gaps in the literature (Gomaratut et al., 2021). This gap requires further investigation; therefore, the next chapter outlines the fieldwork designed to explore the research questions, which address CYP's and policymakers' perceptions of childhood and youth and child and youth participation, including personal experiences of participation and power-sharing in policy and programme development.

Chapter 5: Research methodology

5.1 Introduction

Children's right to participate in decision-making is widely explored in society, and numerous scholars encourage children and young people's (CYP) participation in research (Powell and Smith, 2009). Because this thesis aims to encourage the participation of CYP in research, I designed the methodology to incorporate them into the study by supporting and valuing their views, understanding and experiences. The study examines various issues related to perceptions and experiences of childhood, youth, CYP and child and youth participation in Thailand. This includes how CYP and policymakers experience power-sharing in policy and programme decision-making. More specifically, it addresses the following research questions:

1) How do CYP perceive childhood/children?
2) How do CYP perceive child and youth participation?
3) What are the main obstacles CYP face, and how do they overcome these obstacles to participate in policy and programme development?
4) Do CYP believe that their views genuinely influence policy decision-making?
5) How do CYP perceive their power-sharing experiences with policymakers in policy and programme decision-making?
6) How do policymakers perceive childhood/children?
7) How do policymakers perceive child and youth participation?
8) How do policymakers seek to share power with CYP in policy and programme decision-making?

This chapter consists of seven sections describing how the research involved CYP, the selected methodology, the data collection and analysis, the limitations of the study and researcher reflexivity. First, I explain my views of CYP as a researcher and how they can be involved in research processes. Then, the methodology, recruitment and sampling, data collection and qualitative data analysis are introduced. As detailed in the section addressing the limitations of the data collection, various constraints were encountered as the study was conducted during the worldwide COVID-19 outbreak. Finally, I discuss what inspired me to devote my time to this study and consider researcher reflexivity in greater detail.

5.2 Involving CYP in research

There are four different ways to consider the involvement of CYP in research: as research objects, research subjects, social actors and co-researchers (Christensen and Prout, 2002). When CYP are approached as objects or subjects, their involvement in research is limited because they are seen as cognitively immature and incapable of

dealing with information during the research process (Christensen and Prout, 2002; France, 2012). Drawing on the NSC's argument (Chapter 2, Section 2.3.2) that children are social actors with rights, the third and fourth approaches treat CYP as subjects but also social actors, respecting their experiences and comprehension. Nonetheless, the approach to children as co-researchers seems to be the most significant for promoting children's participation in research. In addition, the literature often urges researchers to involve CYP as much as possible in research processes, especially promoting the treatment of children as co-researchers; however, PhD students usually work within a set of institutional and legal conditions and practical constraints that might obstruct participatory ideals in the research (Davis, 2012). As a result, the third approach, in which CYP are viewed as social actors and incorporated into the study by promoting and respecting their ideas, understanding and experiences, was deemed preferable. This type of involvement of CYP in research acknowledges that they are active social actors and can discuss various topics in the social world, including responding to the study's research questions about their participation in policy and programme development. Although this study aimed to promote CYP's voices in research, other voices, such as those of adults, may express alternative views that expand our understanding of CYP's participation in policy and programme development. Importantly, drawing on mutual respect and collaboration between two groups is the goal of meaningful participation (Wong and Zimmerman, 2010; Arunkumar et al., 2019); consequently, this study also sought to comprehend the policymakers' perceptions of childhood, youth and child and youth participation in the Thai context. Furthermore, collecting data from both CYP and policymakers allowed me to compare different perceptions of these issues.

5.3 Selected methodology

This study's research questions and objectives focus on investigating in depth CYP's and policymakers' perceptions, beliefs and experiences regarding childhood, youth and child and youth participation, including how they experienced power-sharing when participating in policy and programme development. As a result, qualitative research was deemed the most appropriate choice because it is typically used to address research questions about experiences, feelings and meanings from the participants' perspectives (Hammarberg, Kirkman and De Lacey, 2016). This study aims to utilise a case study design to comprehensively investigate the topic from multiple perspectives and reflect the uniqueness of a project, policy, institution, programme or system that can only be fully understood within its contextual framework (Gillham, 2000; Simons, 2012; Creswell and Creswell, 2018). Furthermore, a case study approach based on the constructivist assumption tends to answer "how" and "why" questions and concentrates on contemporary issues that require in-depth investigation (Schwandt and Gates, 2018). Figure 1 illustrates four types of case study–based research designs. Type 1, the holistic single-case design, is exclusively concerned with a single case study, whereas type 2, the embedded single-case design, explores a single case study but through

numerous units of analysis. On the contrary, type 3, the holistic multiple-case design, examines a diverse range of case studies, while type 4, the embedded multiple-case design, investigates various case studies, each comprised of multiple units of analysis.
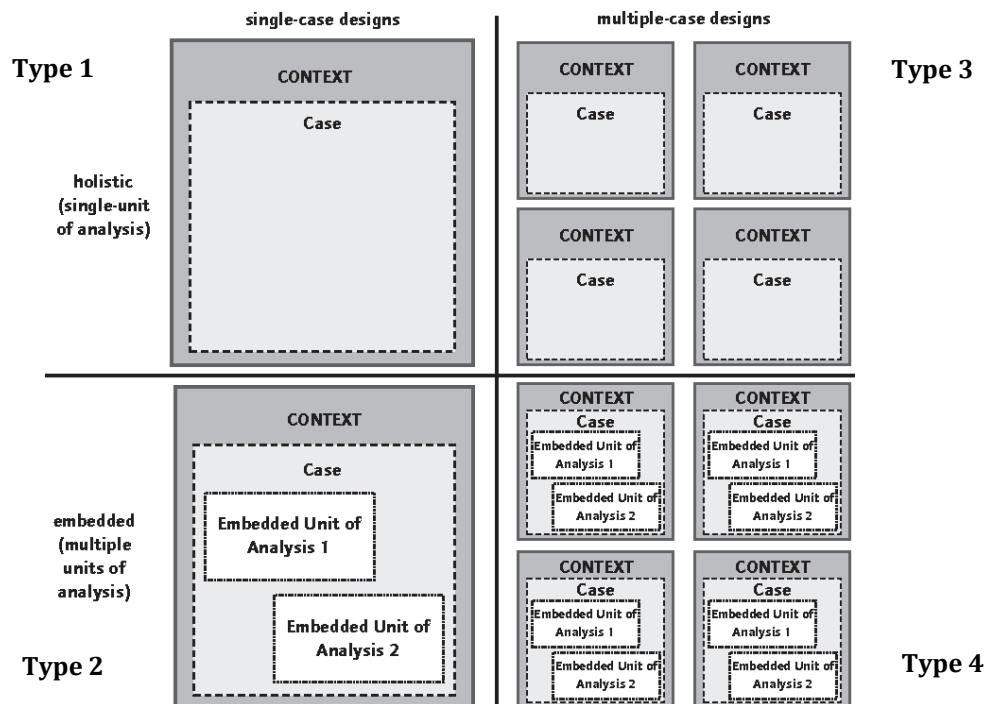
Figure 1: Basic types of designs for case studies (COSMOS Corporation cited in Yin, 2018, p.50)

This study's research questions seek to explain participants' current perceptions, beliefs and experiences in a real-life context, specifically focusing on CYP's participation in policy and programme development. Moreover, they intend to illuminate "how" research participants perceive the notions of childhood and youth as well as child and youth participation and their experience of sharing power in policy and programme decision-making in a specific area. Because evidence indicates that a multiple case study is more reliable and ensures richness and depth in understanding the phenomenon (Lauckner, Paterson and Krupa, 2012; Gustafsson, 2017), I selected the embedded multiple-case design (Type 4), which consists of multiple cases with multiple units of analysis, as the most appropriate research methodology. As outlined in Chapters 1 and 4, Thailand has adopted two crucial child and youth participation acts, NCYDP Act 2007 and NCYDP Act 2017, to promote CYP's participation in national and local policy, respectively. These two government levels are the main actors in the participation of CYP in policy and programme development in Thailand. Therefore, I identified one case at each level: for the first case study, I chose a national policy case, and for the second one, I identified a local policy case. Selecting two case studies allowed me to compare how research participants perceived childhood and youth and how this was perceived to have evolved over time. This involved comparing CYP's belief in their ability to influence policy and programme decision-making, identifying common obstacles in the two case studies and determining which specific issues were unique to each case study.

Importantly, investigating two case studies offered insight into how policymakers in these two contexts encouraged CYP's participation and used different methods to share power in policy and programme development with CYP, including how CYP in each case experienced participation and power-sharing with policymakers.

Although the traditional compositional format suggests that each individual case should be analysed and presented separately (Lauckner, Paterson and Krupa, 2012), I followed Yin's (2018, p.235) argument:

> There may be no separate chapters or sections devoted to the individual case studies. Rather, your entire composition may consist of the cross-case analysis, whether purely descriptive or also covering explanatory topics. In such a composition, each chapter or section would be devoted to a separate cross-case issue, and the information from the individual case studies would be dispersed throughout each chapter or section

Accordingly, I divided the findings into three chapters answering the eight research questions. In each chapter, the findings of the two case studies were combined for analysis. First, I introduce research participants' perceptions of childhood and youth. Second, I explore their perceptions and experiences of child and youth participation as well as obstacles and how they overcame them, including the young participants' belief in their influence over policy and programme decisions. Lastly, I introduce a combination of research participants' perceptions of power and power-sharing in policy decision-making.

The chosen case study methodology was presented in this section; the next section describes the research process in terms of target population, research sites, recruitment and sampling.

5.4 Research sites, target population and recruitment

This section begins by outlining the research sites for the two case studies (national and local). For each case study, target populations were identified. Then, I provide the rationales for the sampling, sample size and recruitment adopted.

5.4.1 Research sites and target population

This research includes a national case study examining different national committees and sub-committees that contribute to improving policies and programmes related to CYP development and enhancing CYP's participation. In addition, for the local case study, I chose a local government in Thailand that has established multiple committees and sub-committees to promote child and youth participation and develop local policies relevant to CYP. The target population is divided into two groups: youth representatives with experience participating in policy and programme development and policymakers

(government officers or other organisation members) with such experience in the two cases.

5.4.1.1 The national case study

As outlined in Chapter 4, the NCPCYD and its 15 sub-committees typically initiate national policy regarding CYP. I carefully investigated each sub-committee and discovered that three sub-committees' objectives relate to supporting national policy regarding CYP, including offering seats for youth representatives. These three sub-committees are the Sub-Committee on the Protection of Children and Youth from Using Online Media (SC-PCYUOM), the Sub-Committee on Policy and Planning for Children and youth Development (SC-PPCYD) and the Sub-Committee on the Promotion of Child and Youth Council Affairs (SC-PCYCA). SC-PCYUOM featured four youth representatives among 29 policymakers, SC-PPCYD had two youth representatives among 30 policymakers, and SC-PCYCA was comprised of 15 policymakers and five youth representatives. Therefore, in the national case study, I selected four units of analysis: the NCPCYD, SC-PCYUOM, SC-PPCYD and SC-PCYCA. These units offered 14 seats for youth representatives, while the total number of policymakers was 101, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Total number of policymakers and youth representatives in the NCPCYD and three sub-committees

Committee/sub-committee	Number of	
	Policymakers	Youth representatives
NCPCYD	27	3
SC-PCYUOM	29	4
SC-PPCYD	30	2
SC-PCYCA	15	5
Total	**101**	**14**

5.4.1.2 The local case study

As outlined in Chapter 1, local governments in Thailand have established 7,772 SD-CYC (Department of Children and Youth Affairs, 2019). I reviewed different municipalities and SAOs across Thailand and found that some local governments have strongly promoted CYP's participation in their policies, whereas others are still in the early stages of fostering more meaningful participation of CYP. Tung Samo SAO, located in Phanom Thuan District, Kanchanaburi Province, is one of the most interesting cases of promotion of CYP's participation in local policy development. Tung Samo SAO was recognised by the For Thai Society Foundation and the Thai Health Promotion Foundation for outstanding achievements in promoting the participation of CYP in local government affairs. These foundations are renowned for their efforts in supporting and rewarding effective local governance in Thailand and encouraging the active participation of CYP.

The tables below introduce the three units of analysis in this case study: Tung Samo SAO administrators, Tung Samo Committee on Child and Youth Development (TS-CCYD) and Tung Samo Child and Youth Council (TS-CYC). The first table lists Tung Samo SAO administrators (15 SAO politicians and four high-level government officers) whose duties relate to local policy-making and SAO management.

Table 3

Tung Samo SAO administrators

SAO politicians		High-level government officers	
Position	**Number**	**Position**	**Number**
Chief Executive	1	Chief Administrator of the SAO	1
Deputy Chief Executive	2	Chief of the Office of the SAO	1
Secretary to the Chief Executive	1	Director of the Finance Division	1
SAO council members	11	Director of the Public Works Division	1

Further, Tung Samo SAO established the TS-CCYD, which aims to initiate, develop, monitor and evaluate policies, programmes and projects related to CYP in Tung Samo SAO, as outlined in Table 4.

Table 4

TS-CCYD members

Background of TS-CCYD members	Number
Representatives of Tung Samo SAO politicians	4
Representatives of government officers across Kanchanaburi Province	9
Representatives of non-government organisations	2
Representatives of business organisations	2
Representatives of CYP	3
Total	**20**

Third, Tung Samo SAO established the TS-CYC, comprising 21 child and youth representatives, as outlined in Table 5. Tung Samo SAO invites the TS-CYC and other social groups, such as the elderly and women, to participate in the Tung Samo SAO general meeting at least twice a year to initiate and revise the annual local policy and plan. This meeting aims to gather suggestions for developing the SAO's policy and administration. Therefore, the child and youth representatives of the TS-CYC are likely to have participated in Tung Samo SAO policies and programme development.

Table 5

TS-CYC members

Position of TS-CYC members	Number
President	1
Deputy President	2
Secretary	1
Members	17
Total	**21**

In conclusion, for the second case study, I selected three units of analysis: the Tung Samo SAO administration team, the TS-CCYD and the TS-CYC. Tung Samo's policymakers are 15 local politicians and four high-level local government officers. Simultaneously, the TS-CCYD offered three seats for child and youth representatives alongside 17 adult representatives and policymakers, and the TS-CYC comprised 21 CYP, as shown in Table 6.

Table 6

Total number of policymakers and youth representatives in Tung Samo SAO

Tung Samo SAO organisation or committee	Policymakers	CYP
TS-Administrators	19	0
TS-CCYD	17	3
TS-CYC	0	21
Total	**36**	**24**

Overall, the target populations of the two case studies amounted to 175 individuals, 137 of which were policymakers and 38 CYP, as shown in Table 7. The national case study comprised 14 youth representatives and 101 policymakers from a national committee and three sub-committees. In the local case study, 24 potential participants were CYP council members and representatives at the TS-CCYD, and 36 were policymakers from the Tung Samo administration team and adult members of the TS-CCYD.

Table 7

Overall target population

Target population	National case study	Local case study	Total
Policymakers	101	36	137
CYP	14	24	38
Total	**115**	**60**	**N = 175**

These populations were considered for recruitment, following the sampling strategy outlined in the next section.

5.4.2 Sampling, sample size and recruitment

This section explains the rationale for the sampling, sample size and recruitment procedures chosen for this study. In the national case study, policymakers and youth representatives who were members of the NCPCYD, SC-PCYUOM, SC-PPCYD or SC-PCYCA between 2018 and 2021 were recruited. Policymakers and child and youth representatives who were Tong Samo SAO administrators or members of the TS-CCYD or TS-CYC between 2018 and 2021 were also recruited for the local case study. In both case studies, gender, age, ethnicity and current position (government or non-government) were considered.

5.4.2.1 Sampling and sample size

Different research methodologists offer different guidelines for sample size. Grounded theory studies suggest 20 to 30 participants, whereas phenomenological studies propose a range of 1 to 325 participants (Marshall et al., 2013; Creswell and Poth, 2017). However, determining the appropriate sample size for case studies poses the greatest challenge in qualitative research (Marshall et al., 2013). Mason (2010) reviewed 560 PhD theses using different research methodologies and found that the sample sizes were 10, 20, 25, 30 and 40, and the median and mean were 28 and 31, respectively. In light of this, the sample size for this study was intended to be 40; however, due to numerous limitations (see Section 5.7), the sample was reduced to 38 participants. Further, Gentles et al. (2015) proposed that sampling in a case study approach should select the participants and data sources that best help us understand the case. For this reason, purposive sampling is appropriate for a case study because it is "an intentional selection of informants based on their ability to elucidate a specific theme, concept, or phenomenon" (Robinson, 2014, p.5243). I used purposive sampling because I wished to select research participants who satisfied specified criteria, namely, participation experiences in policy and programme development and a background in child and youth participation promotion.

5.4.2.2 Recruitment

Evidence of ethical approval from the University of York Social Policy and Social Work Ethics committee (see Appendix C), alongside a formal letter from myself (the researcher) and other relevant documents to the Director of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA) for the national case study and the Chief Executive of the Tung Samo SAO for the local case study to seek endorsement. They responded that I was permitted to acquire information from policymakers and young participants at both research sites (see the confirmation letters in Appendices D and E). The recruitment then began. I recruited 38 research participants from a target population of 175. The recruitment process for each case study is described below.

(1) The national case study

As previously stated, after gaining ethical approval from the University of York Social Policy and Social Work Ethics committee, I approached a gatekeeper at the DCYA who had access to the individuals I wished to contact and requested that they seek

permission from potential interviewees for their email addresses to be passed on to me. As a result, I received the contact details of 14 youth representatives (all over the age of 18). I emailed the information sheet to the email addresses provided by the gatekeeper. I contacted these potential participants directly because they were over 18 and could exercise their right to consider participation in my study. Ten young people responded to my email and agreed to volunteer for this study. I sent them consent forms, and nine of them returned the completed consent form. I gently contacted the tenth individual and advised them they would need to respond to effectively participate in the study. As I did not receive a response, I considered that this individual had withdrawn from the study.

For the recruitment of policymakers, I reviewed the DCYA website and found that all NCPCYD and 15 sub-committee databases are publicly uploaded, and only the basic information of individual committees, names, surnames, and positions is provided in this uploaded file. Consequently, I approached the gatekeeper at the DCYA, who has access to the individuals I wished to contact and requested that they seek permission from potential interviewees for their email addresses to be passed on to me. Although the total number of targeted policymakers was 101, the gatekeeper only provided me with 92 email addresses. I thus emailed invitations and information sheets to these 92 email addresses. Ten policymakers responded to my email, expressing an interest in participating in the study. I emailed the consent form to each of them separately, and nine returned it to me. I responded to each and asked for a mutually suitable interview time. One of the policymakers appeared to be interested but did not respond to my request for the consent form. I emailed this person twice, stipulating that they would be unable to take part without the completed consent form. Given their lack of response, a total of nine policymakers were involved in the national case study.

To summarise, the national case study consisted of nine CYP and nine policymakers from the NCPCYD and three sub-committees.

(2) The local case study

Due to the limited number of participants and the fact that some were under 18 years old, I made sure to safeguard children's rights and address ethical concerns. First, I contacted the Tung Samo SAO gatekeepers, explained my research and requested that they distribute the information sheet to 24 child and youth representatives of the TS-CCYD and TS-CYC members. The gatekeepers then responded that 10 CYP (seven over the age of 18 and three under 18 years old) were interested in participating in the research. The gatekeeper gave me the email addresses of the seven individuals over 18 years old; I emailed consent forms to them directly. They replied with the completed consent forms, and we sought to set a time for the interviews. Regarding the three individuals under 18 years old, I gave the gatekeepers consent forms and parental consent forms to pass on to these three potential participants. Then, the gatekeepers collected all consent and parental consent forms and set a time for the interview with those under 18.

To recruit policymakers, I consulted the Tung Samo SAO practitioner staff of the Division of Community and Social Development to obtain a list of people identified as

policymakers in TS-Administrators and the TS-CCYD. Although 36 policymakers were designated as target policymakers for the local case study, the staff could only obtain 20 email addresses because the remainder did not have email accounts. I emailed information sheets to these 20 policymakers. Ten individuals responded, and I then sent them consent forms and requested a time for the interviews.

In total, I recruited 19 CYP and 19 policymakers. In the CYP sample group, nine participated in the national case study and 10 in the local case study. The most common age ranges were 23–25 years (nine individuals), 17–19 years (seven individuals) and 14–16 years (three individuals). Ten individuals identified as female and three as male. Notably, five participants were gay men, and one preferred not to disclose their sexual orientation. Twelve were undergraduate students from various universities throughout Thailand, three were post-graduate students, and four were secondary school students. Three lived in cities, whereas the remaining 16 lived in rural areas. Regarding their family backgrounds, 18 were Thai – the nationality of most of the population of Thailand – but one was directly descended from a Thai-Vietnamese family. Fifteen individuals lived with their father and mother, two with their father alone, one with their mother solely and one with other relatives. The majority of their carers were labourers (eleven carers), followed by farmers (eight carers) and businesspeople (eight carers); three were government officers, two were company employees, one was a housewife, and only one was unemployed. Significantly, 11 individuals had participated in formal participation in policy and programme development for more than three years. Eight individuals had one to three years of experience. Although the majority had participated in formal participation in policy and programme development for more than four years, 10 served on committees and sub-committees for just 1–2 years and nine individuals did so for 3–5 years.

With respect to policymakers, nine participated in the national case study and 10 in the local case study. Thirteen policymakers were older than 45 years, and only six were younger. There were five males and fourteen females in the group. Their educational backgrounds revealed that 16 individuals held a bachelor's degree or higher, and three held a secondary school degree. Most (14 policymakers) grew up in rural locations, while only five grew up in urban areas. Out of the total, 18 individuals reported being of Thai ethnicity, and one person belonged to a different ethnicity (preferred not to reveal their ethnicity). Eight participants were government officials, eight were NGO staff, freelance experts and social enterprise employees, and three were local politicians. Eleven had 1–10 years of experience in child and youth participation promotion, while eight had more than 10 years of experience. The highest number of years of experience in participation promotion was 53, and the lowest was one. Thirteen individuals had 1–6 years of committee experience, and six people had more than seven years. The characteristics and backgrounds of the participants are summarised in the tables below.

Table 8

Characteristics of CYP across the case studies

Characteristics (Total = 19)	Number of CYP
Case study: ▪ National ▪ Local	 9 10
Age: ▪ 14–16 years ▪ 17–19 years ▪ 20–22 years ▪ 23–25 years	 3 7 0 9
Gender and sexual orientation: ▪ Male ▪ Female ▪ Gay men ▪ Prefer not to say	3 10 5 1
Education: ▪ High school ▪ Undergraduate education (UE) ▪ Postgraduate education (PE)	 4 12 3
Hometown: ▪ City ▪ Rural	 3 16
Ethnicity: ▪ Thai ▪ Other	 18 1
Carers: ▪ Father and mother ▪ Single father ▪ Single mother ▪ Relatives	 15 2 1 1
Carer's occupation: (Total = 34) ▪ Government officer ▪ Farmer ▪ Businessperson ▪ Labourer ▪ Company employee ▪ Unemployed ▪ Housewife	 3 8 8 11 2 1 1

Characteristics (Total = 19)	Number of CYP
Involvement in formal child and youth participation:	
▪ 1–3 years	8
▪ 4–6 years	3
▪ 7–9 years	2
▪ More than 10 years	6
Experience in committee/sub-committee:	
▪ 1–2 years	10
▪ 3–4 years	8
▪ More than 5 years	1

Table 9

Summary of CYP research participants' backgrounds

Pseudonym	Gender and sexual orientation	Age	Education	Hometown	Ethnicity	Carer's occupation ● = Father ☐ = Mother ∇= Relatives	Involvement in formal child and youth participation (years)	Experience in committee/sub-committee (years)
National case study								
Nok	Male	23	UE	Rural	Thai	● Business ☐ Business	12	2
Plawaln	Gay man	23	PE	Rural	Thai-Vietnamese	● Government officer ☐ Labourer	7	2
Loma	Prefer not to say	24	PE	Rural	Thai	● Farmer	8	3
Cha-keaw	Gay man	24	UE	City	Thai	● Labourer ☐ Labourer	10	2
Chompoo	Female	23	UE	Rural	Thai	● Labourer ☐ Labourer	12	2

Pseudonym	Gender and sexual orientation	Age	Education	Hometown	Ethnicity	Carer's occupation ● = Father □ = Mother ∇ = Relatives	Involvement in formal child and youth participation (years)	Experience in committee/sub-committee (years)
Tea	Male	25	PE	Rural	Thai	● Government officer □ Government officer	12	6
Wayupak	Gay man	24	UE	Rural	Thai	● Farmer □ Farmer	10	4
Koko	Gay man	24	UE	City	Thai	● Company employee □ Business	5	4
Soranun	Gay man	25	UE	City	Thai	● Company employee □ Business	10	2
Local case study								
Jinglean	Female	16	High school	Rural	Thai	● Farmer □ Housewife	4	2

Pseudonym	Gender and sexual orientation	Age	Education	Hometown	Ethnicity	Carer's occupation • = Father □ = Mother ∇= Relatives	Involvement in formal child and youth participation (years)	Experience in committee/sub-committee (years)
Ovaltin	Female	16	High school	Rural	Thai	• Farmer □ Farmer	3	3
Miss A	Female	14	High school	Rural	Thai	□ Labourer	3	3
Dee	Male	18	High school	Rural	Thai	• Unemployed	2	2
Ning	Female	19	UE	Rural	Thai	• Labourer □ Labourer	2	2
Zom	Female	19	UE	Rural	Thai	• Farmer □ Business	3	2
Kratai	Female	18	UE	Rural	Thai	∇ Labourer	2	2
Aey	Female	19	UE	Rural	Thai	• Business □ Business	3	3
Dao	Female	18	UE	Rural	Thai	• Farmer	5	3

Pseudonym	Gender and sexual orientation	Age	Education	Hometown	Ethnicity	Carer's occupation • = Father □ = Mother ∇ = Relatives	Involvement in formal child and youth participation (years)	Experience in committee/sub-committee (years)
						□ Labourer		
Penguin	Female	19	UE	Rural	Thai	• Labourer □ Business	3	3

Table 10

Characteristics of policymakers across the case studies

Characteristics (Total = 19)	Number of policymakers
Case study: ▪ National ▪ Local	9 10
Age: ▪ 25–35 years ▪ 36–45 years ▪ 46–55 years ▪ 56–65 years ▪ More than 66 years	3 3 6 4 3
Gender: ▪ Male ▪ Female	5 14
Education: ▪ High school ▪ Undergraduate education (UE) ▪ Postgraduate education (PE)	3 4 12
Hometown: ▪ City ▪ Rural	5 14
Ethnicity: ▪ Thai ▪ Other	18 1
Occupation: ▪ Government officer ▪ Politician ▪ Expert ▪ NGO staff ▪ Social enterprise employee	8 3 2 4 2
Experience in the promotion of CYP's participation: ▪ 1–5 years ▪ 6–10 years ▪ 11–15 years ▪ 16–19 years ▪ More than 20 years	5 6 1 3 4
Experience in committee/sub-committee: ▪ 1–3 years ▪ 4–6 years	4 9

Characteristics (Total = 19)	Number of policymakers
▪ 7–10 years	1
▪ More than 10 years	5

Table 11

Summary of the policymaker research participants' backgrounds

Pseudonym	Gender and sexual orientation	Age	Education	Hometown	Ethnicity	Occupation	Experience in the promotion of CYP's participation (years)	Experience in committee/sub-committee (years)
National case study								
Sor	Male	34	PE	City	Non-Thai	Social enterprise	16	11
Pensri	Female	76	PE	City	Thai	NGO	40	14
Karet	Female	78	PE	City	Thai	Expert	53	14
Lip	Female	66	PE	Rural	Thai	Expert	7	5
Rama	Female	53	PE	Rural	Thai	NGO	24	2
Natdanai	Male	42	PE	Rural	Thai	Government officer	9	8
Kanita	Female	60	PE	City	Thai	Government officer	16	4
Pinhathai	Female	56	PE	Rural	Thai	Government officer	31	12

Pseudonym	Gender and sexual orientation	Age	Education	Hometown	Ethnicity	Occupation	Experience in the promotion of CYP's participation (years)	Experience in committee/sub-committee (years)
Sayum	Male	35	PE	City	Thai	Social enterprise	16	11
Local case study								
Nonthapat	Male	58	UE	Rural	Thai	Politician	5	4
Sadej	Male	60	High school	Rural	Thai	Politician	6	4
Ar-sa	Female	52	High school	Rural	Thai	NGO	4	4
Satri	Female	55	UE	Rural	Thai	NGO	6	3
Waree	Female	47	High school	Rural	Thai	Politician	10	3
Nunthida	Female	42	PE	Rural	Thai	Government officer	10	3
Hathai	Female	37	PE	Rural	Thai	Government officer	1	1
Sukka	Female	47	UE	Rural	Thai	Government officer	2	2

Pseudonym	Gender and sexual orientation	Age	Education	Hometown	Ethnicity	Occupation	Experience in the promotion of CYP's participation (years)	Experience in committee/sub-committee (years)
Anchalee	Female	28	UE	Rural	Thai	Government officer	2	1
Peth	Female	52	PE	Rural	Thai	Government officer	15	4

To summarise, I recruited 19 CYP, including nine for the national case study and 10 for the local case study, as well as 19 policymakers, including nine for the national case study and 10 for the local case study. This section presented the rationale for choosing the research sites and how participants were selected. The next section presents the data collection methods used with these research participants.

5.5 Data Collection

Due to COVID-19-related restrictions, the primary data collection for this study occurred through online semi-structured interviews with the CYP and policymakers. Yin (2018) argues that a significant strength of case study data collection is the ability to incorporate additional sources of information, such as documents, archival records, direct observations, participant observation and physical artefacts. In light of this, I employed additional tools and sources: child-friendly methods and documentation to ensure the credibility and reliability of each case study. This section describes why and how these data collection methods were used in this research project.

5.5.1 Interviews

The rationale for using qualitative interviews was to gather descriptions of the lifeworlds of the interviewees to interpret the described phenomena and gain an understanding of people's complex stories (Anyan, 2013; Flewitt, 2014). Interviews are also commonly employed in case studies, and they can be useful by suggesting explanations (e.g. "how" and "why" research questions) to key events and revealing insights reflecting participants' relativist perspectives (Yin, 2018). Interviews are also one of the most recognised methods of collecting qualitative data with CYP (MacDougall and Darbyshire, 2018). In addition, when interviewing CYP, good interaction, such as building rapport and a sense of humour, humility and trust, is essential to approach sensitive topics (Newton, 2010). As a result, before starting each interview with young participants, I sought to build rapport and assist them in relaxing and becoming more comfortable with the interview. Good interaction was also required with the policymakers, even though they are not a vulnerable group. Before interviewing policymakers, I began building a relationship by introducing myself, briefly presenting the study and asking general questions. All interviews were conducted in the Thai language, which was the primary language of all participants. The interviews were computer mediated, as explained below.

5.5.1.1 Computer-mediated interviews

Social science research has increasingly considered internet-based interviews a data collection strategy that offers several benefits, including budget savings and greater flexibility in terms of time and location (Lobe, Morgan and Hoffman, 2020). Furthermore, the use of online meetings or interviews for research rose significantly during the COVID-19 pandemic (Roberts, Pavlakis and Richards, 2021). Currently, both CYP and policymakers participants felt more familiar and comfortable with online

meetings or interviews. I conducted online interviews with 38 research participants (19 policymakers and 19 CYP) via the Zoom software package, which lasted between 45 and 120 minutes. Although I encouraged all participants to use Zoom for their interviews, two declined. Stating that they lived in remote areas without computer access, they could only use the Line software package installed on their mobile phone. With the participants' consent, I recorded all audio files and transcribed them completely. All transcriptions were translated into English. Additionally, I collected field notes throughout the interviews. All the transcripts were then analysed for thematic analysis, and the notes were used to supplement the data analysis.

All interviews were semi-structured. This is because semi-structured interviews allow researchers to explore the meaning, viewpoints and perceptions of the interviewees to understand their worlds better and gather in-depth accounts of people's experiences (Ellis, 2016; Evans, 2018). Semi-structured interviews rely on an outline of questions prepared in advance by the researcher, but they use open-ended questions rather than closed ones (Fox, 2006; Adhabi and Anozie, 2017). The topic guides for the interviews with CYP and policymakers are shown in Appendix I and J. Moreover, during interviews with young participants, I ensured the non-disclosure of identity and personal information in all research processes, particularly their names and surnames and the names of the committee or sub-committee on which they served. Other identifiable information, such as other names and places, was also removed to protect confidentiality and anonymity. I also asked the CYP to choose pseudonyms to guarantee anonymity. They were delighted and amused by this task. As Morrow (2008) explains, this technique is a useful and often fun way to end the last data collection session. Asking young participants for pseudonyms cannot only be amusing but also signals that they have some power in selecting their preferences.

The computer-mediated interview was the main data collection method for this study. I produced two semi-structured interview topic guides for the two research participant groups. At the same time, I also employed child-friendly methods and documentary analysis alongside interviews. Using different data collection methods, a strategy known as triangulation, aims to increase the findings' credibility and validity (Noble and Heale, 2019). Typically, there are three essential types of triangulation: (1) investigator triangulation, (2) theory triangulation and (3) method triangulation (Denzin, 2015). This research utilised method triangulation by employing three data collection methods. This section introduced the interviews conducted for the main data collection. The next sections present the child-friendly methods and documentation used to verify the data obtained from interview transcripts.

5.5.2 Selected child-friendly methods

The literature indicates that the terms "child-friendly methods" and "young people-friendly methods" are commonly used interchangeably in research involving CYP (Wilkinson et al., 2022). Some scholars argue that these research methods might also benefit adults and should therefore be renamed "research-friendly" or "person-friendly"

(Punch, 2002b; Waite, Boyask and Lawson, 2010; Fraser, Flewitt and Hammersley, 2014). Nevertheless, the term "child-friendly methods" is utilised extensively in research involving CYP worldwide (Groundwater-Smith, Dockett and Bottrell, 2014). Child-friendly methods are rooted in a commitment to express participants' voices and views, creating space for those voices to be heard and utilising effective data collection methods with CYP (Bradbury-Jones and Taylor, 2015; Foster et al., 2023). This includes increasing collaboration between researchers and participants (Pain, 2004; Gallagher, 2008b). Child-friendly methods use interactive and innovative tools when collecting data, which often include puppetry, drawing, role-play, drama, dance, songs, photos, videos, games, worksheets, diaries, storytelling and diagrams (Wilkinson, 2000; Gallagher, 2008b; Groundwater-Smith, Dockett and Bottrell, 2014; Horgan, 2017a). In this study, I applied three child-friendly methods when interviewing young participants: drawings, H-assessments and spider diagrams (Punch, 2002a; Johnston, 2008; Einarsdottir, Dockett and Perry, 2009; Lansdown and O'Kane, 2014b). These methods were also used as a tool during the interviews to elaborate on particular points with young participants. This encompasses individuals' perspectives on their involvement in different stages of participation, the obstacles they have faced and overcome and their perceptions of power and power-sharing with policymakers when making policy decisions. All tools were sent to them via email at least seven days before the interview, and they were allowed to either partly draft or fully draw their ideas in the tool before the interview. This can ensure time-effective management and familiarise them with the tool. All young participants were encouraged to choose their preferred child-friendly methods among drawings, H-assessments and spider diagrams. By the time of the interviews, most participants informed me that they had already organised and completed the tasks. As a result, when the questions related to each child-friendly method arose during the interview, I encouraged them to discuss their chosen tools. The three child-friendly methods are presented in greater detail below.

5.5.2.1 Drawings

Drawing is an innovative tool in qualitative research with CYP that provides richness and complexity of meaning; drawings enable CYP to communicate their ideas and emotions in symbolic ways (Clark and Moss, 2001; Groundwater-Smith, Dockett and Bottrell, 2014). Although they are a powerful tool for research with CYP, drawings alone do not fully enable the child's voice to be heard. Therefore, drawings can be used for further discussion through other tools, especially interviews (Webber, 2020). As Brady and Graham (2019, p.126) suggested, "unless you are specifically trained, the idea is not to interpret the artwork as such, but to use it to generate discussion". In this study, I used the drawings to inspire further discussion with the CYP participants and further analyse their interviews. I developed a drawing method to address the research question entitled "How do CYP perceive child and youth participation?" to examine their changing perceptions of participation over time. I investigated their perceptions using the drawing template below. During interviews, young participants were encouraged to characterise the meaning of their drawings and explain their perspectives on their participation.

Me when I am working with policymakers in policy and programme development	
First time	**Present**

Figure 2: Drawing template for investigating CYP's perceptions of participation in policy and programme development over time

Thirteen drawings were completed by the young participants in this study. Some created their illustrations using a basic pen or pencil, while others utilised their digital tools, such as iPads or Galaxy Notes, for drawing. I discovered that each drawing from the beginning to the present was different. As indicated by their drawings and our discussions, most young participants in the local case study reported self-development progress or positive feelings as a result of their involvement in policy and programme

development. In contrast, young participants in the national case study shared some negative experiences related to policy participation. These drawings are analysed in Chapter 7, Section 7.3.

5.5.2.2 H-assessment tool

The H-assessment is a straightforward tool for young participants to explore the strengths and weaknesses of child and youth participation and make suggestions to improve it. This tool has been widely used by NGOs working with CYP, such as Save the Children, World Vision and Plan (Lansdown and O'Kane, 2014b). The H-assessment tool comprises four boxes: strengths and successes, weaknesses, challenges and threats, suggestions for improvement and the name of the programme/project. The tool's instructions provided by Landsdown and O'Kane (2014b, p.V) point out that all users "are encouraged to adapt the tools to the specific socio-cultural context in which you are working". Consequently, I modified the H-assessment, as presented in Figure 3. In the first box, I put the title "participation in policy" and left a space for the participant to fill out the date. In the second and third boxes, next to the smiley and sad face symbols, I asked participants to list all the strengths (personal and/or of policy and programme development) they identified and the weaknesses or problems (personal and/or of policy and programme development) they experienced in their participation experiences. Then, next to the light bulb symbol, I asked them how they overcame these obstacles.

Figure 3: H-assessments (Lansdown and O'Kane, 2014b, p.29)

This tool aimed to help answer the research question "What are the main obstacles CYP face, and how do they overcome these obstacles to participate in policy and programme development?". During the interviews, when questions about obstacles to child and youth participation and how they were overcome arose, I encouraged young participants to discuss and share successful examples, why they illustrated strengths

and challenges and how they overcame them. Thirteen of the young participants used this tool. Various young participants in both case studies identified strengths, weaknesses, challenges and examples of how they overcame the latter; this is described in Chapter 7, Section 7.4. When analysing the data produced via this tool, I incorporated interview transcripts and used H-assessments to elaborate.

5.5.2.3 Spider diagrams

The spider diagram is a participatory rural appraisal (PRA) tool for analysing the relative importance of or progress on different aspects of an intervention, including ranking programme performance during (monitoring) or at the end (evaluation) of a programme (Alur, Nath and Kumar, 2005; Singh et al., 2017). This method illuminates different views and evaluates progress towards objectives, and the completed shape resembles a spider web (Gujit, 2014). The spider diagram comprises different aspects identified based on the diagram's title and objectives. Each aspect is represented by one leg of the web frame and must be graded on a scale of 1 to 10 by the participants. However, this method is unsuitable for quantitative estimates, which participants find difficult to judge (Gujit, 2014).

Although spider diagrams are commonly employed in PRA, they can also be used in research with CYP and may provide the right stimulus for discussion in an individual interview (Punch, 2002a; Johnston, 2008). In the present research, the spider diagram served to answer the research questions about CYP's power-sharing experiences and their influence on policy decision-making. I generated a spider diagram entitled "My power and influence in policy decision-making", which comprised four legs, as shown in Figure 4. The first pair is "CYP's power in policy decision-making" and "policymakers' power in policy decision-making". The second pair is "CYP's influence on policy decision-making" and "Policymakers' influence on policy decision-making". Practically, when the topic of power and influence on policy and programme decision-making arose during interviews with young participants, I used the spider diagram to illustrate their responses. I asked young participants to explain how they rated the degrees of power and influence on policy decision-making in their spider diagrams. Then, I encouraged them to discuss their diagrams and continue our interview.

As concerns analysis, Punch (2002a, p.53) suggest that spider diagrams are "used as a visual aid on which to build information and probe more in-depth". As a result, during the analytical phase, I incorporated these diagrams into what I discovered in the interview transcripts, especially regarding CYP's perceptions of their influence on policy and programme decision-making as well as their perceptions of power and experiences of power-sharing (see Chapters 7 and 8). Nevertheless, the spider diagram will be divided into power (pairs 1 and 2) and influence (pairs 3 and 4) when I present it in Chapters 7 and 8, as opposed to having an X and Y structure, as illustrated on page 107.

4. Policymakers' influence on policy decision-making
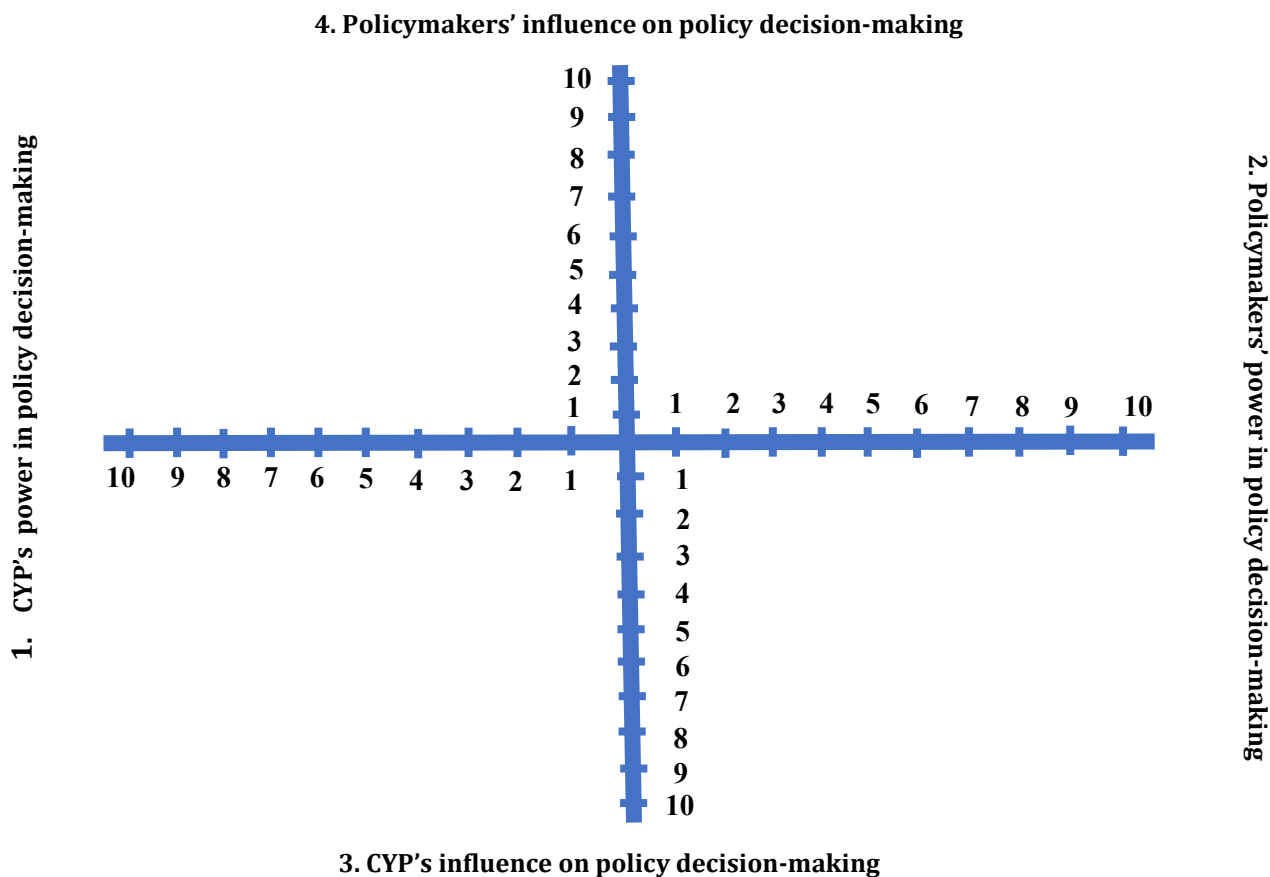
Figure 4: "My power and influence on policy decision-making" spider diagram

This was the most frequently chosen tool by young participants, and 15 diagrams were completed. Interestingly, these CYP perceived themselves as having either equal or more power and influence than adults in the local case study but significantly less power and influence in the national case study. More information on this topic is provided in Chapter 8.

In total, I collected 41 tools, consisting of 13 drawings, 13 H-assessments and 15 spider diagrams. The next section introduces the documentary data collection methods used in each case study for complementary data analysis.

5.5.3 Documentation

There is a variety of accepted types of documentation in case study research, including emails, memoranda, letters, diaries, meeting notes and minutes and other reports of events such as progress reports and internal records (Yin, 2018). I sought meeting minutes for the two case studies as well as reports and organisational plans detailing the participation of CYP in the local case study. The Director of DCYA and the Chief Executive Officer of Tung Samo SAO authorised my access to and use of all these documents (see Appendix D and E). As a result, all documents were accessible and allowed to be photocopied and disclosed to the public. The secretariat staff of the committee/sub-committee responsible for the meeting recorded each case study, scanned, and sent these documents to me via email. All documents were recorded in

Thai, and I translated relevant excerpts into English. The two types of documentation used in this study are outlined below.

5.5.3.1 Meeting minutes

Because the secretariat team of a meeting was typically responsible for taking minutes, I emailed each committee and sub-committee secretariat team to request meeting minutes after receiving approval from the Director of DCYA and the Chief Executive Officer of Tung Samo SAO. The meeting minutes I requested covered all meetings held by each committee and sub-committee between 2018 and 2020, as shown in Table 12. For the national case study, I received the minutes of meetings held between 2018 and 2020: eight from the NCPCYD, five from the SC-PCYUOM, four from the SC-PPCYD and one from the SC-PCYCA. At the local level, I obtained the minutes of meetings held in 2020: three each from TS-CCYD and TS-CYC meetings.

Table 12

Meeting minutes received for the two case studies

Case study	Committee/sub-committee name	Number
National	NCPCYD	8
	SC-PCYUOM	5
	SC-PPCYD	4
	SC-PCYCA	1
	Total	18
Local	TS-CCYD	3
	TS-CYC	3
	Total	6
Total		**N = 24**

These meeting minutes allowed me to examine the total number of committee/sub-committee members who attended each meeting. In the national case, I used them to investigate the research questions relevant to policymakers' perceptions of power and power-sharing.

5.5.3.2 Tung Samo Development Plan

All local governments in Thailand produce a four-year development plan to systematically identify their visions and strategies, including action plans for directing, implementing and evaluating each local government. Tung Samo SAO produced the Tung Samo SAO Development Plan B.E. 2561–2564 (2018–2021), which provides the

necessary information about Tung Samo SAO, the SAO's present vision and strategy, including action plans covering some vital programmes and activities relevant to CYP's participation. This development plan was used to investigate the following research question: "Do CYP believe that their views genuinely influence policy decision-making?".

In total, I received 25 relevant documents for the two case studies, which I analysed and validated using the primary data collecting method, namely, interviews. This study relies on a variety of data collection strategies, including interviews, documentation and child-friendly methods to ensure credibility and validity. After data collection had been completed, all research data were analysed through thematic analysis (TA), which is described in the next section.

5.6 Data Analysis

Researchers often regard TA as the foundational and most efficient method for conducting qualitative analysis in its various forms (Braun and Clarke, 2006; Sutton and Austin, 2015). TA is a highly flexible approach that can be used to summarise and organise vital features of an extensive data set, and it can be broadly applied across a range of epistemologies and research questions (Nowell et al., 2017). Researchers have written numerous instructions for utilising TA in qualitative research, but Braun and Clark's (2006, 2019) have become the most frequently adopted approach to TA for qualitative research (Kiger and Varpio, 2020; Byrne, 2022; Campbell et al., 2021). Braun and Clark (2019) identified three sub-types of TA: (1) reflexive thematic analysis (RTA), (2) codebook thematic analysis and (3) coding reliability thematic analysis. RTA is a non-linear strategy that allows researchers to revisit earlier steps based on new information or themes that require further investigation (Kiger and Varpio, 2020). Accordingly, I chose RTA as the analysis strategy for this study. RTA comprises six phases of analysis, which are shown in Table 13.

Table 13

Phases of RTA and their descriptions

Phase	Description of the process
1. Familiarising yourself with your dataset	Reading and re-reading the data and making notes about analytical ideas.
2. Coding	Coding interesting features of the data in a systematic fashion across the entire data set, collating data relevant to each code.
3. Generating initial themes	Collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each candidate theme.
4. Developing and reviewing themes	Checking if the themes work in relation to the coded extracts and the entire data set, generating a thematic "map" of the analysis
5. Refining, defining and naming themes	Ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme and the overall story the analysis tells, generating clear definitions and names for each theme.
6. Writing	Selection of vivid, compelling extract examples, the final analysis of selected extracts, relating back of the analysis to the research question and literature and producing a report of the analysis.

Source: Braun and Clarke (2006, 2021)

I deployed RTA following the Braun and Clarke model's six data analysis stages. I utilised the computer programme NVivo 14 to assist with the qualitative data analysis. In the first phase, I familiarised myself with all transcripts to immerse myself and ensure that I engaged and felt familiar with the depth and breadth of the content by reading and re-reading the data. Then, I engaged and familiarised myself with various documents, including meeting minutes and the Tung Samo Development Plan, drawings, the H-assessment tools and spider diagrams. The second phase consisted in generating initial codes; once I had read and familiarised myself with the data set, mainly via the interview transcripts, I formed ideas about what was contained in the data and what was interesting about them. In this second phase, I also reviewed all pertinent documentation and child-friendly methods to generate codes and incorporated them

into the codes derived from the interview transcripts. The next phase, searching for themes, meant organising and collating codes into potential themes and gathering all data relevant to each theme. The fifth phase was dedicated to defining and naming themes through an ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme and the overall story the analysis tells, generating exact definitions for each theme. Lastly, the sixth phase began once all data had been fully organised and all themes had been established and were ready for the final analysis and the writing of the report. During the analysis and writing process, I frequently revisited certain codes and themes, often renaming them multiple times.

This section introduced RTA as this research's primary strategy for qualitative data analysis. The next section considers particular limitations related to the COVID-19 pandemic and technological difficulties that emerged during the data collection stage.

5.7 Limitations of data collection

First, during the data collection phase for this study in 2021, the COVID-19 pandemic intensified continuously globally, including in Thailand, the research site. The Thai government introduced several new disease control measures at the national and local levels. Upon approval of the Council of Ministers, the Prime Minister declared an emergency situation in all areas of the country. This measure included transportation restrictions, encouraging non-essential workers to work from home and promoting active rapid COVID-19 testing nationwide. At the same time, the University of York's research policy suggested that all researchers avoid meeting people in person and face-to-face research should move online where possible. As a result, I encountered several difficulties during the data collection phase. My initial plan was to visit the research sites and meet, discuss and even interview all potential participants and related individuals in person. Nonetheless, I was not permitted to visit the research sites due to the pandemic-related regulations. This meant that I could not conduct any additional data collection, such as observation or a focus group. I was, however, allowed to conduct online interviews and request relevant and essential documentation for the documentary analysis. Unfortunately, some participants had been infected with COVID-19 when I chose to carry out the online interviews, while others – mainly government officers – were consumed with managing the impacts of COVID-19. In addition, my initial intention was to conduct a field study in various local governments across Thailand to elicit comparative perspectives from various policymakers and CYP. However, due to time and management constraints, including COVID-19 restrictions, I was limited to studying one local government, the Tung Samo sub-district.

Second, I sought out potential research participants with diverse backgrounds, but the majority of actual participants shared similar backgrounds due to the small size of the target population. In the national case study, I carefully considered the fact that CYP representatives at the NCPCYD and the three sub-committees lacked diversity. The representatives did not reflect CYP from different groups, such as children with

disabilities, vulnerable children or ethnic groups. The current committee/sub-committee representatives were the President of the CYCT, active members or administrators of the CYCT and some leaders of CYP organisations. In the local case study, when I selected Tung Samo SAO, I discovered that the committee/sub-committee also exhibited limited diversity due to the homogeneity of the local-level population.

Third, throughout the interviews, I experienced a variety of obstacles, most of which resulted from research participants' routine activities. For example, although I recommended that young participants choose a private area where they felt comfortable doing the interview, several wanted to be interviewed at home. Despite mitigating the risk by selecting a mutually convenient time, several interviews were interrupted when a family member asked the participant to perform tasks, such as household chores and other activities supporting the family. Additionally, during my online interviews with policymakers, I also faced many difficulties, caused mainly by unstable internet connections and the policymakers' routine activities disturbing the interview, such as needing to perform tasks or eat. To address this situation, I gave them the option of continuing the session or cancelling it. Fortunately, everyone remained, and the interview continued after a short break. These circumstances disrupted the flow and continuity of the interviews and made some participants anxious, potentially preventing them from expressing their ideas. I discovered this limitation while transcribing the interviews as some sentences or topics seemed to end unexpectedly.

The next section introduces researcher reflexivity to explain why and how this thesis is significant to the researcher.

5.8 Researcher reflexivity

I have been teaching social work and social development at the university for a decade and have actively promoted child and youth participation in Thailand for multiple years. After the release of two significant acts, NCYDP Act 2007 and NCYDP Act 2017, efforts have been made to enhance child and youth participation in the central government and local governance. I have participated in numerous training programmes to equip young representatives of child and youth councils nationwide with relevant knowledge about child and youth participation. This involved training several government and non-government officials to foster the engagement and participation of CYP. I have become acquainted with a few youth leaders while working with child and youth council representatives in 2015–2017. I engaged in conversations with them in person and observed their activities online, particularly on Facebook. They often shared their experiences and strategies for working with policymakers on matters related to policy and programme development within the central government committee. I observed that they were creative, intelligent and optimistic individuals. However, during my involvement with young representatives and adult officials, I perceived myself as having limited knowledge of how to promote more meaningful child and youth participation. This included the fact that knowledge about this issue was restricted; as mentioned throughout this thesis, the topic is often overlooked in research in Thailand (Gomaratut

et al., 2021). This inspired me to investigate the issues surrounding child and youth participation in Thailand's policy and programme development. Furthermore, during the initial phase of this thesis, my objective was solely to examine the participation of CYP in policy and programme development. Nonetheless, by conducting a literature review and participating in supervision and thesis advisory meetings, I realised that to adequately address the topic of child and youth participation in Thailand's policy and programme development, it is important to comprehend the fundamental concepts related to the NSC and power between CYP and adults. As a result, these concepts have been incorporated into my thesis, and I then expanded the research questions to cover CYP's and policymakers' perceptions of childhood and youth, including how they share power in policy and programme decision-making.

Moreover, during the interviews with my research participants, I was aware of the Thai cultural context, particularly the hierarchical structure, which affected both the young participants and me. As detailed in Chapter 4, Thai culture emphasises power in both individuals and society. In this culture, people's titles, ranks and social status determine their power level, and those in higher positions of power are respected and earn loyalty from those in lower ones (Komin, 1990; Jirapornkul and Yolles, 2010; Suwinyattichaiporn, Johnson and Fontana, 2019). When I interviewed young participants, I introduced myself as a PhD student at the University of York. Some young participants appeared to be excessively excited and displayed signs of anxiety in my presence. Given that my background is in social work, I built rapport and trust, for instance, by giving them a brief outline of what we would discuss and beginning with introductory questions rather than directly asking the guided research questions. I then explained that there were no correct or incorrect answers and that they could freely respond to all questions or take a break until they felt more comfortable continuing the interview. These methods enhanced their confidence, allowing them to proceed with the interviews. At the same time, I also experienced excessive excitement, stress and anxiety during interviews with senior or high-ranking policymakers because some of them were older than me and held high-ranking government positions. However, I controlled my emotions, concentrated on my professional duty and continued the interviews. Researchers may encounter anxiety or excessive excitement while conducting studies, including during interviews (Elliott, Suto and Walland, 2019), and the Thai context appears to influence this significantly due to the aforementioned cultural aspects related to hierarchy and power. My experiences potentially underline how the cultural components, particularly power and hierarchy, are embedded within Thai culture by illustrating how they impacted the research and some young participants.

5.9 Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to provide a detailed account of the research process, methodology and data analysis, including the limitations of the data collection. The first section emphasised the researcher's perspective on CYP as social actors and the importance of involving them by respecting their beliefs, perceptions and experiences. I

selected a case study method and investigated two cases, one national and one local. Additionally, the target populations were divided into two groups: CYP and policymakers. For the two case studies, I employed multiple data collection methods, including semi-structured interviews with both research participant groups and child-friendly methods with young participants. Another data collection method was documentation, which encompassed different types of documents. The study relied on a variety of data collection methods to ensure the credibility and validity of its findings. All data collected were analysed and used to address eight research questions using thematic analysis to organise the data into codes and themes. Anonymity and confidentiality were ensured throughout the research. Significantly, by establishing rapport with the participants and employing child-friendly methods, I sought to increase collaboration between researchers and participants (Pain, 2004; Gallagher, 2008b) and make the latter feel more comfortable during interviews.

As described in the literature review, understandings of childhood change over time and across space, and this study aimed to investigate these ideas. In the next chapters, I explore the findings in detail, beginning with research participants' perceptions of childhood and youth in the context of Thai culture.

Chapter 6: Understanding perceptions and experiences of childhood and youth in Thai culture

6.1 Introduction

As established in Chapter 2, a core position of this study is that childhood is a social construct that varies across cultures, time and space (James and Prout, 2001; James and James, 2012; Montgomery, 2013a). A key theme emerging from the interviews with young participants and policymakers concerns how childhood, youth and perceptions of children and young people (CYP) have changed/shifted and been constructed within the context of Thailand. The majority of perceptions of childhood, youth and CYP in Thailand often relate to elements of Thai culture, especially obedience, seniority (Yunus, 2005; Xu, Zhang and Hee, 2014; Kim et al., 2015) and repaying one's moral debt to one's parents (Liamputtong et al., 2004; Sinnott, 2014). Another key theme in this chapter is the expectation that Thai CYP will succeed in their education and increase their chances of obtaining a good job, which often refers to government positions. Additionally, there is a strong belief that CYP are the nation's future. These themes highlight some characteristics of Thai CYP, which have been widely acknowledged as the ideal norm for Thai CYP or fundamental elements of childhood and youth in Thai society. In the first part of this chapter, I illustrate the similarity between the perceptions and experiences of young people and policymakers regarding childhood, youth and CYP in Thai society. The second part of the chapter presents the distinct perceptions and experiences of policymakers, including expectations around children engaging in work to support their families. I then explore the role of gender in determining children's lives and highlight how Thai CYP can be perceived as vulnerable and innocent individuals. In illustrating these key findings, this chapter addresses the following research questions:

- How do CYP perceive childhood/children?
- How do policymakers perceive childhood/children?

This chapter draws on the data collected for the two case studies, as outlined in Chapter 5, primarily analysing interview transcripts to examine how childhood and youth have been constructed in the context of Thailand. Following this introduction, Section 6.2 lays out the findings regarding research participants' perceptions of childhood, youth and CYP and describes Thai culture and CYP's experiences of growing up in Thailand. Then, Section 6.3 introduces policymakers' perceptions and experiences of childhood and their views on Thai CYP in contemporary society.

6.2 Common perceptions and experiences in childhood and youth

As will be demonstrated throughout this section, most research participants' perceptions and experiences indicated that Thai CYP should be "*good people*". In the two case studies, according to research participants, being "good people' represents the norm or ideal that Thai society accepts and encourages as the ultimate goal for CYP. The characteristics defining good people often include obedience and respect for parents and older family members. Other key characteristics include gratitude towards parents, having a good education, obtaining a good job and becoming good citizens to ensure the country's future. These core characteristics are outlined in more detail below.

6.2.1 Obedience, respect for parents and resistance

Eleven of the young people in the two case studies felt that they should obey and show respect to their parents and adults in the broader society. They also believed that their parents frequently expected them to listen, respect and respond to their wishes in various areas of their lives. For example, Penguin (19 years old, local case study) confirmed: "*…Yes* [loud noise], *my parents want me to obey and follow what they said.*" Four young participants explained that Thai CYP are commonly taught to respect adults, saying that they should be polite, honoured and respectful towards adults. Aey (19 years old, local case study) reflected that "*Children are expected to obediently follow what adults tell them*". Dee (18 years old, local case study) emphasised the relationship between obedience and respect and being good people by stating that "*good children need to be respectful and obey elders*". The concepts of obedience and respect towards parents and older adults may partly demonstrate the historical influence of the Thai Buddhist doctrine and the current societal expectations set by the Thai government (see Chapter 4, Section 4.2.1). In *Mangala Sutta 38*, the Thai Buddhist doctrine emphasises the role of (good) children, which includes being submissive, easily admonished and not stubborn, following, obeying and refraining from arguing with adults (Dhammakaya Foundation, 2005; Tharapak, Dejwaln and Mrukapituk, 2021). Simultaneously, the Thai government's current expectations and values, as exemplified by the introduction of the contemporary version of Thailand's 12 Values of Thainess, underscore the importance for Thai CYP of exhibiting "good" manners, which includes demonstrating respect for those in higher social positions (Ngammuk, 2016; Bolotta, 2023). This highlights the significance of "good child" characteristics as fundamental components of Thai CYP, both historically and presently.

Similarly, almost all (18 of 19) policymakers in the two case studies reported that they obeyed their parents and other adults when they were children. Pensri (76 years old, national case study) pointed out a particular culture that affects how Asian parents, including Thai parents, require children to obey them: "*I think it is related to culture and tradition, depending on where we are. In Asia, children must listen to parents in many cultures in this region*". She further explained that "*proverbs like 'Dern tam phu yai ma mai kad'* ["those who follow their elders will not get in trouble"] *and 'Phu yai arb nam ron ma kon'* ["adults have observed the world before children; therefore, they should

obey them"] *are Asian proverbs*". Pensri thus deployed well-known proverbs, as illustrated in Chapter 4 (Section 4.2.1), to reflect the importance placed on children's respect for and obedience to parents. Similarly, the youngest policymaker, Anchalee (28 years old, local case study) shared this experience of obeying her parents, stating that "*children must obey parents, just like in my family*". This is crucial because it demonstrates that obedience has been firmly accepted in Thai culture for many generations and continues to be a characteristic of Thai childhood and CYP.

Some policymakers also agreed with young participants that CYP are required to follow their parents, which also includes obeying certain adults in the broader society. The teacher–student relationship in school is a powerful example of how students are taught to respect, obey and follow what adults often demand. Sadej (60 years old, local case study) stated:

> "*In my time, students highly respected teachers and teachers were very strict, like our second parents. I remember X, one of the teachers that many students were afraid of... X prohibited students from watching films at the outdoor cinema during the exam period. X said that students who did not follow her order would be physically punished in front of the stage at the flag ceremony the next morning.*"

Sadej's words reflect the importance of students' obedience to their teachers and reveal that like in several other regions of the world, in Thailand, physical punishment was accepted as the way to teach or control CYP. Although parents and teachers rarely choose physical punishment in contemporary Thai society, the belief that students must obey and respect their teachers remains firmly embedded in Thai culture and is transmitted to the current young generation through a number of practices and expectations. This was evidenced by Nok (23 years old, youth participant, national case study), who explained how students are also taught to respect their teachers and avoid arguing or questioning what they are taught:

> "*The culture is that teachers can do no wrong; whatever teachers say must be right; students must obey and follow teachers, and there should be no discussion. Many children are students in schools, and every Thai child must encounter this experience.*"

Sadej and Nok's quotations show that students were taught to respect and follow their teachers and that understanding the idea of obedience requires taking into account the particular context. In addition, obedience and respect for adults reflect young participants' perceptions of childhood and youth; these characteristics also impact young participants and create a challenge when they participate in policy or programme decision-making (see Chapter 8, Section 8.2.1).

Although most research participants stated that they and other CYP in Thai culture must obey and respect their parents, Zom (19 years old, local case study) affirmed that she does not comply with her parents' expectations and instead attempts to disobey them. Zom explained: "*I usually do what is different from what my parents told me. They complained that I never listened to them, and I said I had a reason to make the decision.*" Zom attempted to choose her higher education institution after graduating from

secondary school herself, without obeying her parents; later in the interview, she admitted that she must occasionally comply with her parents' requests or recommendations:

> *"I passed the admission exam at X University, which was the university where I really wanted to study. However, it is located in X province, and my family does not want me to stay there… I cried a lot at that time. My family forced me to study at another university located in Y province. Finally, I followed the condition my parents set up that they would not allow me to study in X University."*

Zom's statement indicates that although CYP demonstrate agency and attempt to assert their right to choose their own lives, they often encounter pressures and challenges and may sometimes feel that their parents are forcing them to follow a particular direction that they deem acceptable. Her words reveal her negative and painful emotions and her belief that her ability to disobey her parents' wishes is limited. Zom's experience is similar to Hathai's (37 years old, policymaker, local case study) childhood and youth experience, in which she attempted to demonstrate her agency by opting for a secondary school in X province, but her parents pressured her to go to the school in their hometown, instead. Hathai explained:

> *"I did not attend a secondary school in X province. My mother did not let me go… But I studied in Y* [hometown] *at that time; I felt that my mother had blocked me from doing what I desired since I was a child. That was not a problem for me. I listened to my mother."*

The experiences of Zom and Hathai represent the notion of children's agency, which CYP can demonstrate and choose, including by challenging adults; however, they often encounter pressures and challenges due to adults' moral judgement (Raithelhuber, 2016; Punch, 2016). Significantly, CYP are allowed to be and praised for being agents, but their agency must be of the appropriate kind based on the adults' perceptions (Bordonaro and Payne, 2012). Therefore, the performance of children's agency is further complicated by wider societal pressure to obey and respect adults, and this context must be taken into account to understand children's agency.

Even though some findings point to resistance to withstand the pressure to obey parents and respect adults, these characteristics have been accepted in Thai culture and have become the norm for controlling Thai CYP's behaviours. The next perception that emerged from research participants was an obligation to repay a moral debt to parents, another norm of Thai society concerning CYP.

6.2.2 Repaying the moral debt to parents

The nature of CYP's indebtedness to their parents is grounded in the notion that children owe a moral debt to their parents *(bun khun)* (Morita, 2007; Montgomery, 2014). As outlined in Chapter 4, this moral debt can be partly repaid in various ways, for instance, by being helpful around the house and farm or by being ordained as monks (Liamputtong et al., 2004; Sinnott, 2014). Thai people appear to believe in the importance of repaying one's moral debt to one's parents as it reflects their cultural

values and the belief that those who fulfil this obligation are good individuals. Wayupak (24 years old, national case study) explained that "*Thai culture values good merit and believes that people who repay their moral debt to others are good people. This is the culture and belief in our society.*" Nine of the young people in the two case studies emphasised this, indicating that the characteristics of good people must involve repaying the moral debt to one's parents, which may follow three approaches: helping with household chores, providing care when parents become older and, in some cases, being ordained as a monk. These approaches differed slightly from those put forward by policymakers, who cited only two: serving as monks (for men) and providing care to one's parents.

A distinct way to repay one's moral debt to one's parents that emerged mainly from young participants' accounts was helping with household chores. Miss A (14 years old, local case study) explained her responsibility to support her family and described why helping with household chores could help repay her moral debt to her parents:

> "*From when I grew up until now, I helped my mother to carry fertiliser along the rice fields and work on the rice fields. I help her* [Miss A's mother] *because she works alone, and she feels tired… My mother has two children, so she must be tired. I want to help her do household chores and other things as much as possible to respond to her moral debts.*"

Miss A's statement reveals that she feels and cares for her mother, highlighting children's high respect for Thai parents, especially mothers (Promchotchai, 2013; Wathreewattanarut, 2023). Her words also draw a connection between performing household chores and repaying the moral debt.

Additionally, ordination as monks is a unique way for men (see Chapter 4, Section 4.2.3) to repay their moral debt to their parents, as was indicated by research participants in the local case study. Penguin (19 years old, local case study) explained that "*being ordained is a way to express the gratitude of a son to his parents… My grandfather, my father and my brother have already been ordained.*" Dee (18 years old), the only male young participant in the local case study, expressed his belief that he should be ordained for the same reasons:

> "*Yes, I want to be ordained for my parents… I want to pay my moral debt to my parents because when I was young, I was not very good with them, I liked to argue and did not listen to them.*"

From Dee's perspective, ordination seems to be associated with young men repaying their moral debt to their parents. In addition, ordination may give young men a unique opportunity to demonstrate to their parents that they are good individuals who respond to their requests and display their filial responsibility (Saisuwan, 2016). Dee's story also indicates that ordination as a monk allowed him to release the personal guilt he felt towards his parents due to his poor behaviour and disobedience during his childhood.

His words highlight the significance of becoming a monk to fulfil his moral obligations to their parents. Some local policymakers also spoke of their childhood experiences regarding ordination as monks as a way to repay their moral debt to their parents. For example, Satri (55 years old, local case study) explained: "*My father asked my brothers to be ordained as monks when they turned 20 years old.*" In line with this, Nontapat (58 years old, local case study) stated that "*Thai society expected boys to study and be ordained as monks, which means that serving as monks is a way to repay their moral debt to their parents*". In addition, Hathai (37 years old, local case study) explained the reason for serving as a monk, arguing that "*Parents believed that if sons are ordained, they would receive extra merit and would go to heaven*". These policymakers' quotes further illustrate the societal and parental expectations for male to be ordained as monks in Thai society. They also highlight that parents can gain additional merit if their children become monks (Saisuwan, 2016). The statements made by young people and policymakers may suggest the long-standing cultivation of monk ordination in Thai culture, which has been transmitted across generations through a number of practices and expectations.

The findings also include the way parents indoctrinate their children to repay their moral debt by caring for them when they become older. Kratai (18 years old, local case study) stated that CYP are also expected to look after their parents when they are able to do so, such as upon graduation and when they are employed. Kratai explained: "*Thai society wants children to look after their family members; when they get a job, they should return to take care of their families. In my case, I will do it too.*" Tea (25 years old, national case study) provided a solid example of how Thai CYP are expected to look after their parents: "*Thai parents expect their children to provide them with financial support. Someone gets* [a salary of] *15,000 THB* [£ 350] *monthly and sends 6,000 THB to their parents.*" The concept of indoctrinating children to repay their moral debt by looking after their parents was also reflected in the accounts of policymakers. According to some of them, children can look after their parents through financial support or physical care. Sayum (35 years old, national case study) explained how he and other Thai people viewed the connection between providing financial support and repaying one's moral debt to one's parents:

> "*Children would like to give their parents money as a sign of their gratitude… Some parents just wait to spend the money given by their children and will accuse them of lacking gratitude when the children do not give them money.*"

At the same time, Nunthida (42 years old, local case study) explained how looking after parents and providing financial support was applied in her family:

> "*The three of us* [herself and her siblings] *agree that my younger sister working abroad will mainly provide financial support, and another younger sister who has one kid will provide physical care. So, I also provide financial support to my family.*"

Reflecting on the childhood experiences and expectations of Sayum and Nunthida, we can see the mechanism through which this translates into their current understandings.

This is significant as it evidences parents' cultivation of the notion that children must repay their moral debt by looking after them. These quotes also underline the importance placed on the success of how their parents placed influence on them to repay their moral debt to their parents by caring for their parents. Sayum and Nunthida emphasised the importance of CYP performing certain responsibilities for their parents later in life, particularly repaying their debt because their parents cared for and nurtured them from childhood to adolescence (Morita, 2007; Montgomery, 2014). Furthermore, Sayum's statement suggests that offering money to parents as a sign of gratitude has become an accepted practice among Thai people, and those unable to give their parents financial support are often considered irresponsible.

The connection between policymakers' accounts and how young participants explain being influenced to repay their moral debt to their parents is striking. Some key similarities and differences stand out when comparing how the policymakers were conditioned to repay their moral debt and how the young participants tend to repay theirs. The key similarity between the two groups of research participants is that looking after parents through physical care or financial support and being ordained as monks (for men) are particular ways of repaying one's moral debt. Conversely, a key difference is that young participants include helping with household chores as a mechanism through which they can repay their moral debt. In contrast, policymakers did not emphasise helping with household chores; instead, there was an assumption that they, as children, were economically valuable members of the family, and working and helping parents with household chores was commonplace (see Section 6.3.1). The important distinction here is that both policymakers and young participants felt the pressures associated with repaying the moral debt, but they were experienced and made sense of in different ways. For policymakers, the primary perception was that if they were unable to provide support to their parents, they would be seen as irresponsible, whereas for young participants, repaying the moral debt became a mechanism for controlling Thai CYP in a specific context by emphasising the characteristics associated with "good" people.

The childhood experience of the research participants concerning the repayment of one's moral debt to one's parents emphasises the importance of parents to their children and demonstrates that parents are highly respected by their children. The next theme emerged from both groups of research participants and further underscores the significance of parents and the importance placed on their wishes for their children to succeed academically and secure a good job.

6.2.3 Academic and professional achievement

Five young participants felt that their parents, as well as other adults in Thai society, believed that children should prioritise studying, with the expectation of achieving academic success. Penguin (19 years old, local case study) highlighted the significance of having a good education and studying well in school. Echoing the perceptions of

many Thai CYP, she stated: "*I think many adults in Thailand expect children to perform in school; they need their children to get very high scores... This includes my parents.*" The expectation of achievement in education generated stress for some young participants because they felt their parents often forced them to perform well in school. Aey (19 years old, local case study) explained: "*My family places pressure and puts expectations on my educational success. Some families pressure their children to study hard so that they can have a good future.*" Miss A (14 years old, local case study) described the experience of a friend, whose parents demand that they perform well: "*let's say my friends who are pressured by their parents who would like them to get high scores.*" Penguin (19 years old, local case study) further stated: "*I think Thai parents have high expectations and place a lot of pressure on education and the future of their children.*" This evidences the significance of academic achievement and the stress and pressure that young Thai people encounter due to their parents' expectations about their education.

As described above, some young participants connected the idea that CYP need a good education with the belief that a good education may lead to a successful future. In other words, educational achievement may result in a good job. For example, Wayupak (24 years old, national case study) explained: "*I think firstly children must have an education so that they can get a good job and achieve a higher status in their job in the future.*" Similarly, Ning (19 years old, local case study) argued that "*parents may want children to be smart and get a good job.*" Jinglean (16 years old, local case study) emphasised how her parents connected these two issues:

> "*I think Thai society and of course my parent expect their children to study too much... In Thailand, the graduation certificate is the most important thing; if you do not graduate from secondary school, you cannot get employed. I think Thai people place a huge belief in educational achievement.*"

Jinglean's statement highlights the considerable pressure that Thai parents put on their children to achieve academically. Although this issue is generally acknowledged in Asian countries, Thai parents' strong desire for their children to perform well academically could also reflect the Thai government's recent emphasis on enhancing and presenting education as the key to the nation's progress (Fry and Bi, 2013; Michel, 2015; Sirindhorn, 2018).

Regarding the definition of a good job, several research participants believed that the term refers to government employment. Wayupak, Plawaln and Chompoo from the national case study and Dao and Zom from the local case study argued that their families represent most Thai families in that they prefer that their children become government officials. According to young participants' accounts, government jobs are favoured in Thai families because those in government positions gain power and may become masters of others as they may earn loyalty and respect from their subordinates, who are expected to obey their commands (Supap, 1999; Thummachote and Yurdagul, 2018; Chinpraphap, 2021) (see Chapter 4, Section 4.2.1). Notably, being a government

official comes with a stable monthly salary and greater access to public welfare for family members, including spouses, children and parents than other jobs. For these reasons, many parents and adults in Thailand wish for Thai children to become government officials. In particular, being a master of others, including the idea that a government position can allow an individual to acquire power, has long been encouraged in Thai culture. This was emphasised by a few young participants in the two case studies. Dao (18 years old, local case study) stated:

> *"It is expected that children must only be government officials when they grow up, to have a good future. It is also expected that we will be promoted to a higher position in our career. It seems we should be the masters of others."*

Similarly, Wayupak (24 years old, national case study) offered an excellent illustration of the significance of being a government official to the Thai family:

> *"one person works for a private company with a 50,000 Baht* [about £1,145] *salary and the other works for a government agency with a 15,000 Baht salary and 5 million debt. Thai society respects the one working for a government agency more than the one working in the private sector. I think Thai society expects children to be masters of others, and, finally, children end up working for the government."*

Being a 'master of others' is important in Thai society and has become a parental expectation for their children. The participants' accounts also demonstrated that securing a government job would make parents proud and enhance children's reputations. Furthermore, Chompoo (23 years old, national case study) and Zom (19 years old, local case study) described government jobs as secure jobs with access to welfare. Chompoo stated that "*it is probably because parents would like to see their children have a good and comfortable life and stable economy*" while Zom explained, *"I would like to be a government official due to the welfare, which is relatively good, and I want my parents to get the welfare."* In Thailand, different occupations, such as government officials, labourers, businesspeople and farmers, have differing access to various forms of welfare, including pensions, health, medical care and social security. However, government officials and their families are more likely to obtain these advantages than people in other occupations. Nevertheless, the emphasis on being a master of others might relate to the desire for CYP to aspire to some degree of power over others in their role through the status that a government job offers them and their families and through the personal power that comes with a good stable income. As a result, the notion of being a master of others remains very significant in Thai culture; it was also reflected in policymakers' perspectives.

Unlike young people, policymakers (six individuals) directly stated that their parents strongly recommended that they become government officials. When discussing the reasons behind this parental pressure, some policymakers suggested that their parents' poverty and status as minority migrants in Thailand may have been the primary factors. This was highlighted by Sadej (60 years old, local case study): "*My family was poor… My parents wanted me to work in a government organisation. It would help me have a stable job and not be a poor family.*" Peth (52 years old, local case study) explained:

> *"My father was an X migrant who did not have a high education. He started working at X and did not have a chance to study. Hence, he wanted his children to be government officials."*

Although there is a broad range of reasons for becoming government officers, the majority of policymakers held similar beliefs to those of young participants, pointing out that government positions could provide stable wages and a certain prestige and honour. Sayum (35 years old, national case study) emphasised the expectation and importance of obtaining government jobs in Thai society and also linked being a government official to repaying one's moral debt to one's parents. Reflecting on his parents, Sayum explained:

> *"Their expectation for their children when they are 30 years old is to build a home* [for the parents] *and work as a government official. I see the parents of my friends who are government officials and how they will be more accepted by society than those whose children work in the private sector."*

Sayum's words show that government officials' positions are more important and accepted than other occupations. Peth (52 years old, local case study) further underlined that her parents expected her and her siblings to become government officials: *"My family expected us to be government officials… My father wanted his children to study and become government officials, and in this position, I would be a master of others."* In addition, Satri (55 years old, local case study) explained why government officials hold such significance for Thai families: "*adults may expect their children to graduate and work as government officials because it is a permanent job and a secure salary.*" These quotations evidence that being a government official has long been encouraged in Thai culture, which includes the belief that holding a higher position in the employment hierarchy gives power over others and offers job stability.

The accounts of both participant groups indicate that reverence for government officials has been embedded deeply in Thai culture from the past to the present. They show that government jobs are seen as important, well-accepted and recognised in Thai society. Nonetheless, this has been challenged, and a gradual change has been taking place. Satri (55 years old, local case study) demonstrated that contemporary Thai culture has consistently embraced various occupations instead of fixating solely on official government positions. She listed various types of jobs that Thai people can currently choose: "*Thai people may own businesses, such as owning a coffee shop or running a small restaurant, planting organic vegetables to generate income.*" The rising acceptance of new types of work was also evident in Chompoo's (23 years old, national case study) account, which shines a light on the significant change undergone by a contemporary Thai society that has become open to alternative occupations, such as programming and YouTube content creation:

> *"Now, people have more choices and freedom of thought because of more varied jobs, such as programmer and YouTuber, which are new and can generate high income. Occupations are not limited to working for the government like in the past."*

Alternative occupations reflect the evolution of what is regarded as a good job in Thai society. At the same time, new types of employment may generate more revenue and imply that persons in these positions may also gain income. Although some research participants offered alternative visions for employment, the prospect of government jobs often still took a higher priority due to the value of being a "master of others", job stability and access to welfare for family members.

This section discussed the views of the research participants and parents'/adults' expectation that CYP should prioritise education to secure good employment, particularly in government positions. The next section continues to investigate how CYP are expected to become the nation's future as they reach adulthood.

6.2.4 Becoming the nation's future

The accounts of young people and policymakers in both case studies were marked by the idea that CYP symbolise the nation's future. For instance, Loma (24 years old, national case study) emphasised that she was expected to preserve the nation's future and that CYP should be prepared as responsible citizens who drive Thai society towards progress: *"children and me today, we are expected to be the nation's future; we will be resources for developing the nation."* Wayupak (24 years old, national case study) provided additional information and echoed CYP's function of contributing to Thai society once they reach adulthood: *"I think Thai society expects children to be the future of the nation, to take charge of the country's development – no need to do it now but in the future."* Wayupak thus emphasised that, from the perspective of Thai adults, childhood is the process of becoming responsible future citizens, as opposed to a period characterised by specific rights (Uprichard, 2008) and the status of active participants in society.

The idea that CYP should become the nation's future also emerged from policymakers' accounts. However, when policymakers elaborated on this, they frequently linked it to their own perceptions or expectations of contemporary CYP in Thai society instead of drawing on their childhood experiences. Fourteen policymakers perceived CYP as the nation's future, using terms such as "nation's future" or "future adults". For instance, Sadej (60 years old, local case study) stated that *"children are the future of the nation"*, and Sukka (47 years old, local case study) affirmed that *"children today will be the adults of the future"*. Many policymakers agreed that CYP should be prepared physically, intellectually and emotionally from a young age. Anchalee (28 years old, local case study) pointed out the significance of CYP's indoctrination and socialisation in preparing them for the future. The emphasis was on the responsibility of parents and adults to *"educate and socialise children with positive values in the home, school, family and community."* Lip (66 years old, national case study) presented further arguments supporting this: *"I think adults today must raise and train children to replace us in the future."* As a result, many policymakers found adults' roles in teaching and training CYP to be (good) future adults particularly important. Kares (78 years old, national case study) asserted: *"we need to raise children to be the good future of the nation, to be good citizens."* In addition, two policymakers underscored the essential role of the Thai

government in preparing current CYP for the future. Natdanai (42 years old, national case study) explained: *"If the government really wants to see children as the future of the nation, the government must push, promote and develop children."* Lip (66 years old, national case study) affirmed: *"If society prepares and invests in children, with the collaboration of all sectors, the children can grow up well."* Teaching and training CYP to become good citizens connects to the norm of being "good people" and its key characteristics concerning Thai young people. This confirms that "good people" are the norm or ideal embraced by Thai society and promoted as the ultimate goal for CYP. In addition, the statements of policymakers and young people echo the literature arguing that the Thai government often considers Thai CYP to be the nation's future or the country's future citizens – an issue that has long been promoted in government agendas (Nimmannorrawong, 2015b).

Whereas some young people and policymakers expressed their perceptions and expectations of CYP as either the nation's future or future citizens, Wayupak (24 years old, national case study) resisted the dominant perception and proposed that CYP should be seen as current citizens who can actively engage in Thai society. Wayupak stated: *"I think children should not be the nation's future because children are today's nation."* Chompoo (23 years old, national case study) also challenged this notion by introducing the idea of increasing CYPs' participation to demonstrate that they are current citizens and capable of making contributions to society:

> *"I would like to see all CYP in Thailand have the right to positively share their views, as Thai citizens… I would like to see child and youth participation today increase because they are the current citizens of our nation."*

Chompoo and Wayupak's statements demonstrate resistance to one of the dominant images of children, namely, as the nation's future. They underlined the New Sociology of Childhood's (NSC) approach to children as social actors with rights, enhancing the recognition of children's agency and rights to participate in society (James and Prout, 2001; Jones, 2009b; Punch, 2016). Although it is criticised, the idea that CYP are the "nation's future" may provide a rationale for increasing CYP's participation in the public sphere.

In summary, the themes that emerged from the interviews with young people and policymakers highlight the influence of Thai culture, notably obedience, respect for parents (Yunus, 2005; Xu, Zhang and Hee, 2014; Kim et al., 2015) and repaying the moral debt to parents (Liamputtong et al., 2004; Sinnott, 2014), on how childhood and youth are perceived in Thailand and their experiences. These perceptions confirm that childhood cannot be understood without considering the broader context (Leonard, 2016; Wyness, 2019; Diana, 2020). The accounts of the research participants shared four similarities in terms of perceptions and experiences of childhood and CYP.

First, Thai CYP's need to obey and respect their parents and older adults in their families or society featured prominently. CYP's obedience and respectfulness may indicate the influence of Confucianism in Thailand (Yunus, 2005; Xu, Zhang and Hee,

2014; Kim et al., 2015). This was further complicated when several research participants associated these characteristics with the notion of "good people". As mentioned in Chapter 4 (Section 4.2.1), the concept of a good child echoes Thai feudalism, in which CYP are subordinates who are supposed to show respect, politeness, love and honour to adults who are in higher social positions by birth, education, knowledge and age (Tulananda and Roopnarine, 2001). Consequently, these characteristics become the norm that Thai CYP must follow when interacting with their parents and adults in Thai society. However, some research participants attempted to demonstrate their agency by challenging adults, for instance, disobeying their parents' demands, but various obstacles, especially adults' moral judgement, limited their agency. This shows the position of children as a minority that is often subordinated to adults (Corsaro, 2015; Mayall, 2015).

Second, the theme of indoctrination to repay one's moral debt to one's parents was frequently addressed. Participants identified two shared methods for repaying this moral debt: ordination as a monk and looking after parents in their old age. However, young participants further believed that helping with household chores is another way to achieve this. Despite differences in perceptions between young participants and policymakers, Thai CYP's upbringing and expectations of filial gratitude (Morita, 2007; Montgomery, 2014) turned into norms established by the powerful (parents/adults) and accepted by the powerless (young people). These are the societally accepted ways of repaying one's moral debt, which Thai people are often expected to follow. While this may align with the concept of symbolic power, referring to the capacity of the dominant group (such as parents or adults) to shape norms and values that are deeply ingrained and accepted as natural or unquestionable (France and Threadgold, 2016; Lewer, 2023), it could also reflect a reciprocal relationship of support within the family. This partly demonstrates the values of a collectivist culture, which highly prioritises family responsibilities and highlights the active participation of CYP, especially within their families (Mason and Bolzan, 2010; Alias, Mohamad Nasri and Awang, 2023).

Third, some young participants believed that Thai parents frequently place high expectations on their children's educational achievements. These findings reinforce the notion that childhood and youth are a time for investment, for which the Thai government invests in and promotes education, believing that it is an essential element of national development (Fry and Bi, 2013; Michel, 2015; Sirindhorn, 2018). Additionally, these young participants thought that success in education would lead to a good occupation, which often meant becoming a government official. These findings emphasise Thai feudalism, which conditions Thai people to acquire a higher status, mainly by working for government agencies, which enables individuals to gain honour, power, progress, respect and allegiance from others (Supap, 1999; Thummachote and Yurdagul, 2018; Chinpraphap, 2021). Despite the emphasis on government officials in Thai culture, both young participants and policymakers recognised that alternative jobs, for instance, in business and on YouTube, are gaining acceptance in contemporary Thai society.

Fourth, some research participants also believed they were expected to become the nation's future and were seen as resources for the country's progress. This echoed policymakers' expectations that the young people in Thai society should and would become the Thai nation's future. These perceptions are consistent with the wider literature indicating that since the 1950s, the Thai government has tended to view CYP as the nation's future or the future of the national labour force (Nimmannorrawong, 2015b; Bolotta, 2016; Kongsak, 2019). These perceptions may also serve as evidence of the Thai government's influence through the promotion of policies and agendas which have had a lasting impact on individuals' views, regardless of generational differences.

This section presented the commonalities in young participants' and policymakers' perceptions and experiences of childhood and youth. The next section introduces the distinct perspectives and experiences that emerged from the policymakers' accounts. Because these elements did not manifest during interviews with young participants, they provide insights into how childhood was perceived in a particular period and how this perception has changed/shifted over time (James and Prout, 2001; Kehily, 2009).

6.3 Policymakers' unique perceptions and experiences of childhood and youth

This section discusses three unique perceptions and experiences of policymakers concerning childhood and youth. Exploring their childhood memories, policymakers indicated that CYP were required to be involved in forms of work to support their family and their childhood experience showed that different genders faced different expectations in Thai culture. Policymakers also reported on their perception of contemporary Thai childhood and CYP as vulnerable and innocent individuals, illustrating how the minority world's conception of childhood has influenced the majority world. This is significant for a number of reasons, including what is regarded as the cultural domination of the majority world by the minority world (Wells, 2009; Cregan and Cuthbert, 2014) and how Thai culture adopted elements of this cultural domination.

6.3.1 Working and helping parents

In Thailand, it is common for CYP in Thai families to engage in work, whether paid or unpaid, to support their family's moral and financial well-being (Banpasirichote and Pongsapich, 1992; Mason and Bolzan, 2010; Capaldi, 2015). Nine policymakers, mainly from the local case study, addressed their childhood memories of being involved in forms of work. For example, male policymakers frequently performed farm work, whereas the work of female policymakers often related to household chores or looking after younger siblings. Sadej (male, 60 years old, local case study) revealed that he often worked on the farm: "*My parents were farmers and looked after 40–50 cows… I helped my father look after the cows on weekends when I was studying at junior high school.*" Similarly, Natdanai (male, 42 years old, national case study) was obligated to work in

the fields: "*My family was in the rural area of X province, we were farmers, and I was the youngest son of the family… Hence, I was a bit spoiled, but I went to work in the rice fields frequently.*" In contrast, Ar-sa (female, 52 years old, local case study) recalled looking after her young siblings:

> "*I needed to wake up early, prepare for school and work on household chores after coming back, such as cooking, bringing the water containers for the family's consumption and doing laundry.*"

Similarly, Satri (female, 55 years old, local case study) explained: "*I had to help with household chores. I have five younger siblings, so I needed to look after them when I returned from school… I also cooked for my younger siblings.*" These policymakers' childhood memories indicate that gender influenced the type of work performed by boys and girls. Furthermore, they suggest that engaging in household chores was an expected practice presupposing that they were economically valuable family members and showing that working and assisting their parents with housework was commonplace.

In addition, policymakers believed that different genders were perceived differently or faced different expectations in Thai culture. The importance of gender and family responsibilities is developed in the next section, building on policymakers' childhood memories.

6.3.2 Boys as family heads and girls as family carers

Eight policymakers discussed how boys and girls were treated differently in Thai society during their childhoods, with the former frequently expected to be household leaders and the latter tasked with domestic duties. Female research participants validated these perceptions, especially Kares (female, 78 years old, national case study) and Anchalee (female, 28 years old, local case study), who belonged to different generations. For example, Kares explained that "*boys might be expected to be soldiers or family leaders while girls were expected to be at home*', and Anchalee believed that "*Thai society expects boys to be family leaders. Girls are expected to look after their parents.*" These statements highlight the roles and responsibilities of women and girls in Thai society as family caretakers. Anchlee's words also show that Thai people were raised to look after their parents in their old age and emphasise the significance of parents to children (Morita, 2007; Montgomery, 2014) (See Section 4.2.3).

Some policymakers believed that in Thai culture, men are more capable and slightly more important than women, with Hathai (female, 37 years old, local case study) stating that "*boys are a little bit more important than girls*", and Nunthida (female, 42 years old, local case study) believing that "*men are more capable than women*". In these quotations, Nunthida used the terms "women" and "men", whereas Hathai employed "boys" and "girls". The different terminology may imply the subordinate position of women in Thai culture, a status that begins in childhood (girl) and persists until they reach adulthood (woman). Hathai and Nunthida's perceptions of the insignificance or incompetence of women corroborate literature showing that as a result of historical Thai feudalism and Thai patriarchy, Thai women are frequently regarded as having a lower status than men

(Malikhao, 2017). Their words further illustrate how this historical context continues to impact contemporary Thai society.

The perception of a lower position is an obstacle for women in various situations. For instance, despite Satri's (female, 55 years old, local case study) excellent academic performance, her father attempted to prevent her from continuing her secondary school education and did not allow her to pursue a university education, expecting her to be a family carer instead:

> '*My father told me that I did not need to study and should quit school to help the family with work. I negotiated that if I could get a scholarship, you* [her father] *should allow me to study until I graduated in year 12. I then got a 1,000 THB* [£23] *scholarship per term. My father then allowed me to study…. However, I could not study at university.*"

According to Satri's account, gender played a critical role in her transition from secondary school to university: Satri was forced to leave secondary school despite her outstanding grades. Although her father allowed her to attend secondary school, he did not permit her to continue her education at the university level. Because of her gender, Satri was expected to perform domestic caregiving duties and was not encouraged to pursue higher education, which may have elevated her to the position of family leader.

This section demonstrated the substantial influence of gender on childhood, which emerged from policymakers' childhood memories. Instead of drawing from their childhood experiences, as mentioned earlier, policymakers often spotlighted their own perceptions of CYP in Thai society. The next section introduces the last unique element in policymakers' perception of (current) CYP, namely, vulnerability and innocence.

6.3.3 Children as vulnerable and innocent

When policymakers elaborated on their view of children as vulnerable and innocent, they linked it to their own expectations of contemporary CYP in Thai society instead of drawing from their childhood experiences. Four policymakers from local case study revealed that they had mixed perceptions and expectations of the current CYP, who they saw as vulnerable and innocent individuals. These policymakers believed that Thai CYP were partly viewed as "*Pha Khao*" (pure white cloth), which refers to extreme purity and innocence (see Chapter 4, Section 4.2.4). For example, Peth (52 years old, local case study) stated that "*Children are like white cloths*". Similarly, Satri (55 years old, local case study) argued that "*CYP are like white cloths that will be beautiful if we paint them well. They are innocent people.*" These perceptions partly reflect what has been argued to be Thai culture's acceptance of the conceptual colonisation and cultural dominance of the minority world over the majority world, especially the spread of an understanding of childhood as a period of dependence conflated with innocence (West, 2007; Nimmannorrawong, 2015b). This is a contested concept because, while local policymakers often view CYP as capable individuals and recognise them as valid actors in policymaking, they also perceive CYP as innocent and vulnerable individuals. This illustrates the complexity of local policymakers' perspectives on the social world,

reflecting a mixture of perceptions about childhood and youth. It also highlights the intricate and multifaceted nature of childhood and youth as an academic field. In addition, Sukka (47 years old, local case study) further explained that children are vulnerable individuals and require adults to nurture them: "*children should depend on their guardians because children are not strong enough to start doing things by themselves unless adults offer them a chance to do so.*" Sukka's statement appears to reflect contemporary Thai families' perception of childhood as a phase of life when individuals are vulnerable to potential harm (Techacharoenrungrueang and Wanchai, 2017). This connects to the literature demonstrating the influence of the minority world's globalised model of childhood, which increasingly considers children as vulnerable individuals who should receive protection and compassion from adults or parents (Yunus, 2005). Importantly, this perception further highlights the wide reach of the minority-world construct of children as vulnerable and in need of care (Linde, 2014). Although this concept dominates policymakers' perceptions, their quotes suggest that Thai society has embraced and valued it within its cultural context. In Thailand, a majority-world country, this demonstrates how cultural elements shape the construction of childhood in specific contexts (Gemayel and Salema, 2023) alongside global influences such as international laws and actors (Wells, 2009). Therefore, to fully understand childhood as a social construct in a specific context, it is essential to recognise its dual influence from both global and local contexts (Wells, 2009). This perspective can foster cross-cultural conversations and encourage the use of relationships as a lens for driving forward some of the current debates on childhood studies (Punch and Tisdall, 2012).

In summary, the policymakers recounted their experiences and highlighted the importance of Thai CYP's participation in supporting their families. This suggests their belief that CYP in Asian cultures, including Thailand, are an economic utility or a source of cheap labour in their families (Thompson, 2015). As outlined in Section 6.2.2, this differs from some young participants' view of working and helping their families where emphasis was placed upon repaying the moral debt to parents (see Chapter 4, Section 4.2.3). This evidences young participants and policymakers' differing perceptions of how the moral debt can be repaid. Furthermore, policymakers' childhood memories illustrated how gender affects the type of labour performed by CYP, as well as the differential expectations placed on individuals of different genders. The findings related to working and helping families, including different genders serving different functions in the family, confirm the relevance of the NSC and, especially, of the notion that childhood can never be considered in isolation from other variables (James and Prout, 2001; Kehily, 2009). This theme corroborates literature arguing that different work divisions reflect a general gender labour division characteristic of patriarchal societies, in which women are responsible for domestic labour and care work and men are family leaders (Samonova et al., 2021). Thai cultural expectations of the two genders, which assign fixed roles to each gender, suggest the importance of the concept of power. The establishment of fixed gender roles aligns with the concept of symbolic power, where each *field* operates within formal and informal norms and rules that members perceive as natural (France and Threadgold, 2016; Lewer, 2023).

Lastly, perceptions of contemporary Thai CYP emphasised the vulnerability or innocence of CYP, reflecting the cultural dominance of the majority world by the minority world (Cregan and Cuthbert, 2014) and how Thai culture adopted elements of this cultural dominance. Accordingly, policymakers viewed CYP as innocent and dependent people and felt that CYP require protection, compassion, care and supervision from adults or parents (Kaewthep, 2011; Boonhok, 2020). Therefore, it was often deemed an obligation for parents to raise their children to conform to Thai societal norms. However, policymakers' perception of contemporary CYP as innocent and vulnerable differs from their own childhood experiences, during which they were expected to contribute to their families through work (sometimes hard work) and were not seen as vulnerable in the same way. This demonstrates how the perception of childhood and youth has changed over a particular period. The transformation of these perceptions seems to result from the global reach of the minority world's conceptualisation of childhood, which has led policymakers to view current CYP as innocent and vulnerable. Significantly, these policymakers' perceptions and experiences of childhood and youth were rarely reflected in the narratives of young participants, suggesting that they might evolve from one generation to the next. Importantly, this signals that the understanding of childhood has changed/shifted over time (James and Prout, 2001; Kehily, 2009).

6.4 Conclusion

Context is essential to fully appreciate and understand the complexities of what is meant by childhood or youth, including CYP's experiences of it. This chapter described how the context of Thai culture influenced research participants' perceptions of childhood, youth and CYP. The key themes emerging from the interviews revealed the dominant idea that CYP have a lower status than adults, which manifested in various ways, particularly the need for CYP to respect and obey their parents' or adults' demands. Although several research participants attempted to display their agency in disobeying their parents' demands, they encountered various obstacles and were often forced to follow their parents' wishes. They frequently faced resistance from their parents or the moral judgement of adults, which limited their agency. Consequently, the idea of children's obedience in this context may reinforce the marginalisation of childhood in society when compared to other groups (Prout, 2011). Not only does this indicate that CYP continue to be in a minority position with a lower status than adults, but it also suggests that they may lack political power and control over and access to resources (James and James, 2012).

Additionally, CYP discussed strong obligations to repay their moral debt to their parents in various ways. While this indicates that Thai CYP exhibit respect, love and care for their parents, they often felt that it put pressure on them. Other majority perceptions include the expectation that CYP will successfully complete their education, which often requires Thai CYP to focus on their education. Thai people also believe that personal educational achievement can help them secure good employment. Among various occupations in contemporary Thai society, becoming a government official remains a primary parental expectation. This is linked to government officials' role as an essential

component of Thai culture. It may also highlight a strong desire in Thai society to earn respect and power from others as serving as government officials grants power, respect and honour, elevating these individuals above ordinary citizens (Supap, 1999; Thummachote and Yurdagul, 2018). Another common perception painted CYP as the nation's future and assigned adults the responsibility for socialising them. The similarity in research participants' experiences and perceptions of childhood and youth and CYP across generations demonstrates that Thai CYP are subjected to adult expectations and pressure. It may also suggest that these characteristics have been passed down across generations and may represent a norm of "good children" that has greatly impacted the lives of CYP in Thai culture. These characteristics of childhood and youth have become the norms to which Thai CYP must adhere. This raises the question of how they have become accepted norms in Thai culture. The concept of power may be relevant here given that adults who possess more power often generate norms for CYP to follow (Devine, 2003). This aligns with the concept of symbolic power, in which the dominant group in Thai culture (adults) can influence norms to facilitate the acceptance of CYP with diminished resistance (Swartz, 2010). Notably, despite the persistent dominance of Thai culture/themes, generational differences must be acknowledged as they signal social change.

The findings in the second part of this chapter provide evidence of change in Thai culture and reinforce the idea that childhood has changed/shifted over time (James and Prout, 2001; Kehily, 2009). Some specific perceptions and expectations of childhood, youth and CYP were reported exclusively by policymakers. They included the idea that CYP should work to support their families, treatment and expectations differed based on gender and CYP could be perceived as vulnerable and innocent individuals. Examining the perception that childhood is a period of vulnerability illustrates the impact of minority-world childhood on the majority world (Cregan and Cuthbert, 2014). This indicates not only that Thai culture adopted this conceptualisation of childhood from the minority world but also that to understand childhood and youth, both the embedded context and the external context that may influence it must be acknowledged (Wells, 2009). Although the key themes of this chapter emphasise CYP's powerlessness and minority status in Thai culture, several findings also demonstrate that CYP can be seen as social actors with rights (James and Prout, 2001; Punch, 2016) and as active citizens who can contribute and participate in the private and public spheres in a variety of ways (Jones, 2009b). This encompasses participation in the broader society at the policy and programme development level. In the next chapter, I examine the viewpoints of young people and policymakers regarding child and youth participation and focus on young people's experiences in policy and programme development.

Chapter 7: Perceptions and experiences of child and youth participation in Thailand's policy and programme development

7.1 Introduction

The previous chapter revealed that the research participants' perceptions of childhood, youth and children and young people (CYP) were primarily influenced by the Thai cultural context. This chapter investigates the participants' perceptions and experiences of child and youth participation. Drawing on the notion that children are social actors with rights (James and Prout, 2001; Punch, 2016), awareness of CYP's right to participate and contribute to society is growing in Thai society (Kotchabhadi et al., 2009). This has enhanced the importance of CYP's participation in Thailand's policy and programme development. As a result, the findings in this chapter highlight how young participants and policymakers comprehend child and youth participation in the context of Thailand. This includes young participants' perceptions and experiences of participating in policy and programme development and how their perceptions changed as they gained more participation experience. The second half of the chapter illustrates the obstacles and challenges faced by the young participants in the two case studies, as well as a few obstacles unique to each case study and how they overcame them. Another theme that arose from young participants' accounts is their belief regarding their influence on policy and programme decision-making. The findings in this section reinforce the literature stating that CYP are often more successful at influencing local-level decisions than national-level ones (Williams, 2004; Checkoway, Allison and Montoya, 2005; Schuster and Checkoway, 2011; Crowley, 2015; Horgan, 2017b). In illustrating these key findings, this chapter addresses the following set of research questions relevant to the understanding, perceptions and experiences of child and youth participation in Thailand:

- How do CYP perceive child and youth participation?
- How do policymakers perceive child and youth participation?
- What are the main obstacles CYP face, and how do they overcome them to participate in policy and programme development?
- Do CYP believe that their views genuinely influence policy decision-making?

This chapter mainly draws on the analysis of interview transcripts with young participants from both case studies. The policymakers' interview transcripts are used to encourage a broader understanding of young participants' perceptions or experiences with policy and programme development. The chapter also integrates two child-friendly methods, namely, spider diagrams and H-assessment, as well as documentation for both case studies. Following this introduction, Section 7.2 investigates the understanding of child and youth participation in the Thai context. In Section 7.3, I consider participants'

perceptions of child and youth participation in policy and programme development, which evolved throughout the various stages of participation. Then, Section 7.4 identifies six significant obstacles to child and youth participation in policy and programme development and proposes solutions to each of these challenges. Lastly, Section 7.5 explores the young research participants' beliefs about their influence on policy and programme decision-making.

7.2 Understanding child and youth participation in Thailand

This section introduces research participants' understanding of child and youth participation. The findings rely primarily on the transcripts of the interviews conducted with young participants, combined with those of policymakers, in the two case studies. Research participants' answers regarding their understandings of child and youth participation exhibit two distinctive elements. The main explanation related to encouraging CYP to think independently and safely and freely express their ideas to adults. The second explanation referred to the implementation of community development projects through which CYP contribute to their community. These terms are defined and described below.

7.2.1 Encouraging CYP to think and freely express their views

The first understanding of child and youth participation among young participants, especially in the national case study, described it as encouraging CYP to think independently about matters that affect them and safely and freely express their ideas to adults. Two young participants in the national case study explained: "*child and youth participation refers to freely thinking together with friends*" (Plawaln, 23 years old) and "*child and youth participation means that children and young people can think and express their opinions freely*" (Chompoo, 23 years old). Chompoo further asserted that secure and open spaces, particularly Child and Youth Councils, could provide youth representatives the opportunity to speak on behalf of CYP across the country who would otherwise be unable to share their ideas with adults:

> "*I think most children and young people cannot speak for themselves or clearly talk to adults… I, therefore, take the Child and Youth Council as an opportunity to speak for my friends and other children and young people to express the problems they are encountering.*"

Natdanai (42 years old) and Lip (66 years old), two national policymakers, had a similar understanding of child and youth participation to young people. Natdanai stated that "*Child and youth participation means children and young people can think, share ideas and make suggestions to policymakers*, and Lip affirmed that "*child and youth participation means children and young people have a space to express their voices*". Sayum (35 years old, national case study) argued that the space where CYP can freely address their views should be safe and open: "*I think basically the space should be open and safe places for young people to express themselves. They should have a chance to*

share their thoughts on what they like or dislike." These quotes demonstrate that secure and open environments, such as child and youth councils or working groups, are required for child and youth participation. Evidence indicates that a secure and open environment is essential for CYP to express their views freely (Corney et al., 2020; Macauley et al., 2022; Foster et al., 2023).

However, a space to enable CYP to freely express their views did not necessarily correspond to a sense of 'being listened to'. To elaborate on this understanding, Loma (24 years old) spoke about her capacity to express her opinion while attending the X national committee meeting on the Child Support Grant Policy (CSG), a national policy providing for a monthly allowance to vulnerable families living in difficult conditions to assist parents with children:

> "*I proposed my ideas, which were initiated by thinking and discussion with several non-government organisations in the committee that we wanted to make the policy 'for all' that should be provided to every child, unrelated to their parents' income. But it was not a success.*"

Another example was cited by Plawaln (23 years old), who described expressing his opinions at the X national committee meeting on amending the main national act aimed at encouraging Thai CYP to participate in policy at the local governance level:

> "*I could express my views and comments on the National Child and Youth Development Act B.E. 2550 amendment in committee meetings. I want to encourage young people's participation not only in national governance but also in local governance. Some policymakers listened to what I said, but many did not listen.*"

Notably, a significant number of young participants expected child and youth participation not to be limited to expressing ideas freely; they argued that it should also include spaces for CYP to reflect on their ideas or opinions with adults and determine how those ideas are implemented. For example, Tea (25 years old, national case study) explained: "*Talking only about problems is not participation; you need to identify how to solve the problems, join the evaluation and eliminate weaknesses.*" More precisely, Plawaln (23 years old, national case study) categorised participation into three levels – upstream, midstream and downstream – with child and youth participation typically lacking at the downstream level. Plawaln explained:

> "*Child and youth participation is divided into upstream, midstream and downstream levels. Upstream participation means the involvement of children in thinking. Midstream participation refers to implementation by children, and downstream refers to the feedback and conclusion stage, in which we were never involved. Children do not participate at the downstream level. Hence, the participation of children is not complete. We just think and do, but nobody tells us about the results.*"

According to Plawaln, CYP need to know the outcome of the ideas they propose or discuss with adults while participating in policy or programme development. This highlights the importance of evaluation and follow-up processes when CYP are involved in policy and programme development. Moreover, Nok (23 years old, national case study) emphasised that a space must be open for CYP to follow up on their ideas: "*every idea must be reflected upon or provided feedback on by adults so children and young people will understand that what they propose can bring about consequences.*" These quotations resonate with the account of Pensri (76 years old), a national policymaker who also believed that child and youth participation should cover the follow-up stage to ensure that CYP's ideas are incorporated into policy implementation. Pensri stated: "*the follow-up stage, children and young people monitor how their idea turns into policy and what happens next. This is a very important part of the evaluation process.*" The lack of participation during the follow-up stage despite its importance in policy and programme development remains a difficulty for CYP in the two case studies, as I discuss in Section 7.4.2.

7.2.2 Implementing community development projects

The second understanding of child and youth participation expands on the first understanding, not only encouraging CYP to express their views to adults but also involving them in the implementation of community development projects that aim to address the community's problems or meet the needs of its members. This understanding mainly arose from the accounts of research participants in the local case study. Ning (19 years old) explained:

> "*I think child and youth participation means participating in activities to get concrete results, such as community development activities that we want to do… they* [CYP] *must have the chance to conduct activities in their community*."

Ning's words indicate her desire to actively engage in a project addressing the community's needs instead of merely talking freely about issues or having someone listen to her viewpoints. At the same time, Penguin (19 years old) shared and elaborated on Ning's understanding by including collaboration with other CYP during the projects: "*child and youth participation means that we are working together, sharing opinions with each other to develop projects in the community, and we should seek the best solutions together.*" Several local policymakers shared this view: Waree (47 years old) stated that "*child and youth participation involves thinking about the projects or activities that should be implemented and how to implement them*", and Sadej (58 years old) affirmed that "*child and youth participation is participation in community development*". Waree further described her own role in supporting and collaborating with CYP on community development projects:

> "*We all create the project and help to implement it together… if we support children in creating the project themselves, they will work together until the project reaches its goals. Then, children will also take responsibility for the activities or projects they create. We just support each other.*"

Similarly, Nunthida (42 years old) explained: *"I will consider what kinds of support can be applied to the project initiated by children and young people."* These policymakers' statements not only demonstrate their understanding of child and youth participation but also reflect the concept of co-production, namely, CYP and professionals working together to complete a task, especially the operation of a project (Crowley and Moxon, 2017). Regarding policymakers' roles in community development projects, the young participants also highlighted the significance of policymakers' collaboration with them. Jinglean (16 years old) argued that "*children lead the project, whereas policymakers are supporters and back us up*". Similarly, Zom (19 years old) felt that "*Policymakers always support our thoughts, ideas, suggestions and working with us*". These quotations highlight the importance of adults and CYP's collaboration in promoting more meaningful participation (Hart, 1992; Shier, 2001; Francis and Lorenzo, 2002; Wong and Zimmerman, 2010; Shier et al., 2014; Arunkumar et al., 2019; To et al., 2021).

Two community development projects, the Stroke Elimination Project (SEP) and the Game Competition Project (GCP), can provide useful and informative examples. Jinglean (16 years old) described how the SEP project was created:

> *"In the beginning, the father of X* [her friend] *had a stroke, causing X to feel stressed. So, X consulted with the Tung Samo Child and Youth Council on how to solve this problem because many community members also had the same stroke symptoms."*

In addition, Miss A (14 years old) recalled her experience with implementing this project:

> *"The project provided families with stroke patients or at-risk individuals with warning equipment that would make some noise when activated. Children and young people designed this equipment… I made a decision and participated by introducing the project to community members, providing medical check-ups to the elderly and advising them on how to look after their health to prevent strokes."*

These quotations demonstrate how these young people were involved in conducting this community development project. They also partially illustrate their influence on the establishment of this project, which was created based on the opinions of CYP in an effort to address health issues within their communities. Young people's belief in their influence on the SEP decision-making in the local case study is discussed further in Section 7.5.1.

The young participants also discussed the GCP, a project designed to manage parent–child conflicts that arise when CYP engage in online gaming at home while their parents expect them to perform their household responsibilities. These conflicts pushed the Tung Samo Child and Youth Council (TS-CYC) committee to generate solutions. Jinglean (16 years old) explained how the TS-CYC tackled this issue:

> *"The Tung Samo Child and Youth Council set the conditions between those parents and children. We ask those parents what they want their children to do on a day*

> *when children can play games and when they should help with family activities. Then we organised them into a schedule."*

After arranging timetables for playing games, completing homework and helping with household chores, Dee (18 years old), a member of the TS-CYC, created a game competition project in his SAO neighbourhood to spotlight the benefits of games and foster parents' understanding. Dee recalled: "*My friend and I once suggested organising a game competition, and the SAO supported us in organising this competition accordingly.*" While organising the game competition, Penguin (19 years old) explained the game's advantages to their parents and other adults who joined the activity: "*I told adults that games were not useless; children and young people can generate income for players if they have good skills.*" The details and solutions explained by Penguin, Dee and Jinglean indicate that they could identify issues they are concerned about and make innovative suggestions to policymakers (Lansdown, 2001; Checkoway, Allison and Montoya, 2005; Fernandez and Shaw, 2013). This includes demonstrating their ability to discuss challenging issues with parents whose children play online games. This involvement highlights children's role as social actors with expert knowledge about their own lives and concerns (Moss, 2001).

To summarise, this study revealed synergies with broader global agendas on child rights and participation. This agenda has likely influenced young people's and policymakers' perceptions because the main understanding of child and youth participation in their accounts was related to encouraging CYP to think independently and safely and freely express their ideas to adults. This understanding reflects the literature on child and youth participation in Thailand, which frequently refers to children having access to information, being able to express themselves and participating in activities about issues affecting them rather than to the primary definition of child and youth participation in Thailand, namely, engaging in daily work to support their families (Kotchabhadi et al., 2009). As a result, this understanding might partly indicate the disappearance of the Thai construct of child and youth participation. This suggests that the establishment of the UNCRC could be regarded as a new form of colonialism whereby the minority world imposes its values on the majority world (Montgomery, 2013b), which partially replaced the earlier understanding of child and youth participation in Thai culture.

Meanwhile, the second understanding was related to the implementation of community development projects that aim to address the problems and needs of community members. The findings shed light on young people's demonstration of their agency and ability to be involved in their community by conducting tangible projects to address the community's problems. This shows the persistence of Thai cultural norms in the construction of child and youth participation in Thai society, especially a collectivist culture that mandates active citizenship through work or family support and occasionally community involvement (Mason and Bolzan, 2010). In the local case study, local policymakers and young people also discussed child and youth participation in the form of partnerships between policymakers and CYP. Research participants highlighted the collaborative work and supportive roles of policymakers in carrying out community

development projects with CYP. These findings echo the literature review in Chapter 3, which indicated that partnership or collaboration between CYP and adults is essential to meaningful participation (Hart, 1992; Shier, 2001; Francis and Lorenzo, 2002; Wong and Zimmerman, 2010; Shier et al., 2014; Arunkumar et al., 2019; To et al., 2021).

This section provided an overview of how child and youth participation is understood in the contemporary context of Thai culture. The next section examines research participants' perspectives on and experiences with participation in specific areas of policy and programme development.

7.3 Perceptions and experiences of child and youth participation in policy and programme development

This section continues the analysis of child and youth participation by drawing on a wider range of data from the interviews with young people and policymakers in the two case studies. It opens with a discussion of their perceptions and experiences of child and youth participation in policy and programme development and how these changed throughout the various stages of participation. The analysis relies primarily on the transcripts of the interviews with young participants, and their drawings are used to enhance it. As outlined in Chapter 5, drawings are one child-friendly method I employed to elicit further discussion during the interviews (Webber, 2020); they can allow participants to communicate their feelings and experiences (Clark and Moss, 2001; Groundwater-Smith, Dockett and Bottrell, 2014). In addition, the data collected through interviews with policymakers is integrated as necessary. The key findings concern the participants' initial perceptions and feelings upon engaging in policy and programme development and how these changed as they gained more experience.

7.3.1 First-time perceptions

The majority of the young participants in the two case studies (12 individuals) felt a complex range of emotions during their first participation in the committees or sub-committees, including feeling upset, alone, shy, quiet, confused and nervous. Ning recalled: *I was upset and moody since I was alone for too long. I did not like it at first.* In her first drawing, she wrote two Thai words, "อารมณ์เสีย" ("upset") and "หงุดหงิด" ("moody"), to convey how she felt (Figure 5).
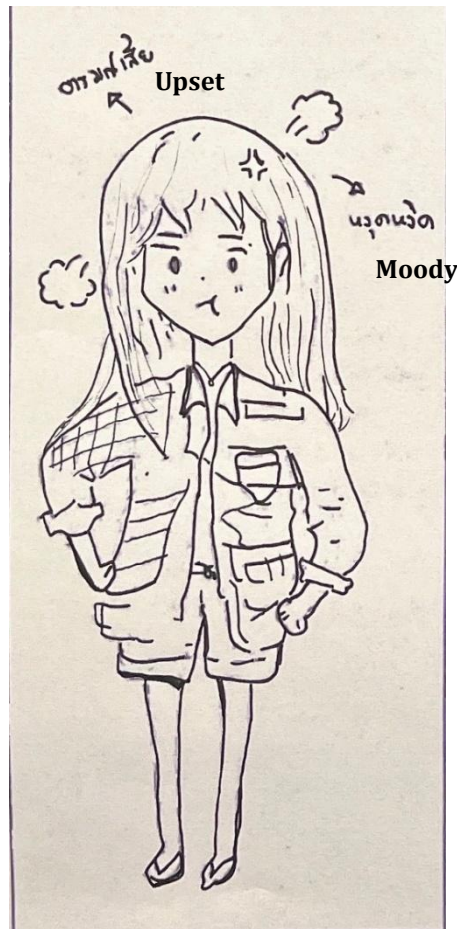
Figure 5: Ning's first-time perceptions

Several other young participants reported being shy, nervous and quiet and feeling unconfident during their first meetings with policymakers. As Miss A (14 years old, local case study) explained, "*when I first participated in the meeting, I was quiet*". Some young people admitted that they cried during their first meetings with policymakers because they felt pressured when policymakers asked for their opinions. For example, Ovaltin (16 years old) explained: "*it made me cry, so much pressure. I was behind my friends when they* [policymakers] *asked, I was too afraid to answer, I did not have the confidence to do anything*". Similarly, Penguin (19 years old) said: "*I felt pressured, and sometimes I cried*" (as illustrated in Figure 6). For his part, Dee (18 years old) had a contrasting experience and expressed a feeling of excitement at the first committee meeting. He described being "*excited because I have never been there. I got a chance to speak up and be encouraged to express my opinion.*" However, Dee's drawing (Figure 7), which features a crying character, seems to contradict his description of his experience.

Figure 6: Penguin's first-time perceptions
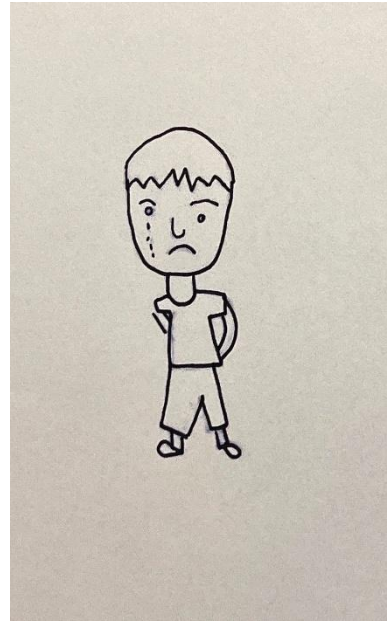
Figure 7: Dee's first-time perceptions

Nontapat (58 years old), a local policymaker, noted that the young people he works with frequently exhibit a lack of confidence when they initially engage in policy and programme development: *"At first, young people were unconfident, did not dare to think and avoided talking with policymakers. They just sit and listen to what policymakers tell them."* Similarly, Peth (52 years old) remarked that *"children might not be confident enough to speak with us in the beginning".* The quotes from young participants and policymakers indicate that these young participants felt very emotional during their first participation experiences for reasons related to negative perceptions, such as being alone, pressured and nervous. In addition, the statements not only show their lack of confidence or silence during their first-time participation with policymakers but may also partly confirm that CYP in Thailand are frequently silent in the presence of seniors and that silence is viewed as a virtue in Thai culture (Knutson et al., 2003).

Meanwhile, Wayupak (24 years old, national case study) clearly stated that his first experience of policy and programme development participation was insignificant: *"I was like a decoration."* He explained that he assumed the role of an observer and reiterated his perception that CYP are less experienced than adults and either lack confidence or are incapable of public speaking: *"I just listened to others during my first participation. I was not confident to speak up because I worried I would say the wrong thing… So, I intended to be a listener."* In addition, Wayupak drew an ear and wrote the Thai word "ฟัง", which translates to "listen" in English (Figure 8).

ฟัง
Listen

Figure 8: Wayupak's first-time perceptions

In contrast to other participants' diverse experiences, Zom (19 years old, local case study) viewed herself as neutral since she was neither impressed nor unimpressed with participation. Instead, she reported engaging in the activities or meetings simply for enjoyment:

> "*Yes, the first picture represents the time when I just joined the activities, showing that I just joined the photo-taking and did the activity just for fun. I did not have the confidence to do much in the beginning due to the presence of senior members of the Tung Samor Child and Youth Council at that meeting.*" (illustrated in Figure 9)

Figure 9: Zom's first-time perceptions

The findings indicate that young participants often felt excited, nervous, unconfident, worried or neutral at the beginning stage of their participation. However, Zom's experience could imply that some young people have a different level of confidence when they start participating in policy and programme development. This suggests that the first experience of child and youth participation in policy and programme development may generate a range of emotions, with negative feelings frequently emerging. This presents an opportunity for policymakers to enhance their involvement in bolstering the confidence of CYP in policy and programme development, starting from the initial phase of participation. The next section introduces examples of how CYP described these experiences as a process that evolved over time, focusing on their current perceptions of participation, that is, after they had acquired more experience with participation.

7.3.2 Current perceptions of participation

Most of the young participants (13 individuals) described feelings of confidence, bravery, encouragement and delight. Significantly, all research participants in the local case study discussed these positive emotions, but only Plawaln (23 years old), Chompoo (23 years old) and Wayupak (24 years old) reported similar perceptions in the national case study. Penguin (19 years old, local case study) and Dee (18 years old, local case study) indicated both verbally during the interviews and non-verbally via drawings that they were encouraged to share their ideas or views. Penguin explained: "*my second picture showed that I could speak in front of many people; it was the time that I was working on the Stroke Elimination Project.*" Dee recalled: "*I was more courageous because*

I was originally shy." In addition, Ning (19 years old) and Dao (18 years old) argued that their participation built their confidence in their communication skills (both speaking and listening). Ning stated: *"my listening skills have improved. I can sincerely listen to more people."* Dao referred to speaking skills in particular: *"Yes, participation can help children when they need to improve speaking."* Figure 10 shows Penguin holding the microphone in her hand and talking to an audience, which illustrates her increased confidence in her ability to speak publicly. Figure 11 presents Dee daring to grasp the microphone and speak in public with a smile.

Figure 10: Penguin's current perceptions

Figure 11: Dee's current perceptions

Although Zom's (19 years old, local case study) perception of her first time participating was neutral, she later associated participation with more positive emotions. Zom explained that through her experience of participation, *"I could develop myself in presentation and public speaking… It showed how I built my capacity after joining the activities."* Zom indicated in her drawing (Figure 12) that participation helped her build confidence and her public speaking abilities: *"I developed my public speaking and opinion sharing, educating others. Participating in activities makes me more confident and do what I have never done before."*
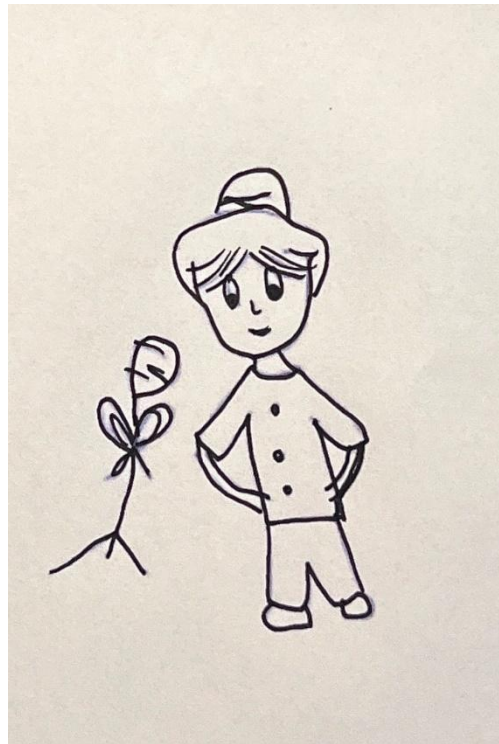
Figure 12: Zom's current perceptions

Nontapat (58 years old) and Peth (52 years old), two local policymakers, believed that CYP are unconfident in expressing their opinions to policymakers at the beginning stage of participation (Section 7.3.1); however, they felt that young people with more participation experience could develop positive characteristics, thereby boosting their self-confidence. Peth said: "*When young people work closer with policymakers for a period. They became more confident and could share their ideas with us.*" Nontapat explained:

> "*when we* [policymakers] *worked with them for a period, children then found that their thoughts had been taken into account. Their opinions have been incorporated into practice. Children then understand that they can think and do things with adults' support. It makes children more confident in expressing themselves.*"

These quotes not only reveal policymakers' belief that child and youth participation experience enhances young people's confidence but also emphasise the close relationship between policymakers and young people in their efforts to encourage child and youth participation in programme and policy development. Furthermore, once again, they underscore the collaborative nature of the partnership between policymakers and young people in the local case study.

In contrast, two young participants in the national case study, Tea (25 years old) and Nok (23 years old), expressed dissatisfaction, believing that policymakers discouraged and dominated them. Nok used metaphors in his drawing to represent his current perceptions: he drew a book, which he titled "An adult-written guidebook for child and youth development" (Figure 13). He explained:

> "*what this picture shows is the guidelines for child and youth development, but we can look at this picture, and it might reflect different dimensions. For example, despite the hard efforts of children to propose an idea, nothing happens if adults do not accept it.*"

Nok's explanation indicates that he may have felt dominated or controlled by adults. He continued: "*I think adults now do not listen to others; the government system controls everything, and there are many procedures that people must follow.*" Relatedly, in his drawing, Tea wrote the Thai words "ปัญหาดังกล่าวถูกแก้ไข แต่ไม่ถูกจุด ยังยึดติดกับความคิดเดิม การแก้ไขนั้นก็ไม่ตรงกับความต้องการของเด็ก" ("*the problems may be solved, but it was not correct, they* [policymakers] *have fixed beliefs, and those problems have rarely been resolved based on children's needs*").

Figure 13: Nok's current perceptions

The problems may be solved, but it was not correct, they have fixed beliefs, and those problems have rarely been resolved based on children's needs
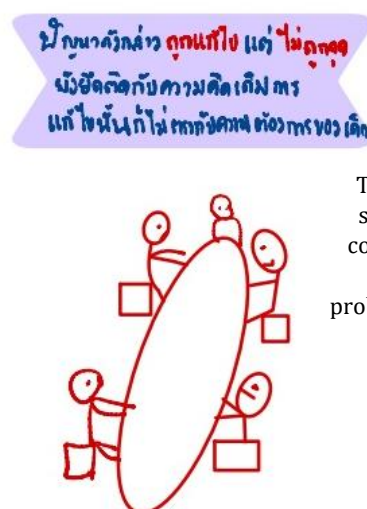
Figure 14: Tea's current perceptions

Although young participants' current perceptions varied, their belief in their ability to participate in policy and programme development generally increased after they gained participation experience. For example, Soranun (25 years old, national case study, 10 years of participation experience) stated: "*Yes, we are very capable in the present… Our capacity for participation is very high.*" Three young participants in the local case study affirmed their capacity to participate in policy and programme development: "*I believe that we are capable.*" (Zom, 19 years old, four years of participation experience), "*I*

believe I can participate in local policy." (Jinglean, 16 years old, four years of participation experience), and "*I think yes, I can participate in policy.*" (Ning, 19 years old, two years of participation experience). Nevertheless, some argued that in some situations, CYP may not be able to participate in policy and programme development. Nok (23 years old, national case study, 12 years of participation experience) affirmed: "*Children and young people sometimes are not capable enough to drive policies by themselves.*" Reflecting on personal experiences, Aey (19 years old, local case study, three years of participation experience) also explained: "*Honestly, I do not think I can participate in policy and programme because when I meet someone I do not know, I am quiet. I am not confident.*" Thus, Aey may not have felt confident being completely in charge of policy and programme development. This is important because it once again highlights lack of confidence as a significant characteristic of Thai CYP. Section 7.4.6 further elaborates on this characteristic as one of the unique challenges faced by young people in the local case study.

In conclusion, the majority of participants' perceptions shifted significantly from a range of negative emotions and perceptions, including excitement, nervousness, lack of confidence and neutrality, to more positive perceptions as a result of their further participation experiences. Their current perceptions feature feelings of confidence, bravery, encouragement and delight, which partially reflect a growing belief in their skills and capacity to participate in policy and programme development. As illustrated in Chapter 3, the literature often points out that CYP who have more participation experience, access knowledge and engage in various forms of participation become more self-aware and are encouraged to advocate for themselves (Day, 2008; Lansdown and O'Kane, 2014a). These findings also align with research showing that child and youth participation improves skills such as communication, negotiation, prioritisation, decision-making, self-esteem and self-development (Head, 2011; Kraftl, 2013; Macauley et al., 2022; Alias, Mohamad Nasri and Awang, 2023). Interestingly, most young participants, particularly in the local case study, had positive perceptions of and close relationships with policymakers, which was not often true in the national case study. This points to a specific connection/relationship between policymakers and young people in the local case study. Although the findings show that young people in the two case studies improved their skills, confidence and belief in their abilities, a frequently mentioned obstacle was a lack of confidence hindering them from actively engaging in policy and programme development, especially in the local case study. This highlights the need to foster a stronger collaboration/partnership between policymakers and CYP as a crucial element for promoting child and youth participation (Blanchet-Cohen and Rainbow, 2006).

This section identified key themes in research participants' perceptions of their participation and compared initial and present impressions. It revealed some of the difficulties faced by CYP participating in policy and programme development, which the next section explores further along with the methods they used to overcome them.

7.4 Challenges in child and youth participation in policy and programme development and their solutions

This section outlines the main obstacles to child and youth policy and programme participation and strategies for overcoming them according to the young participants in the two case studies. In both case studies, time management, a lack of feedback or follow-up and adult bias regarding CYP's capacity were identified as common obstacles. The national case study participants usually encountered two specific obstacles: complicated systems and processes and discrimination and feelings of unsafety. In comparison, young participants in the local case study confronted their own weaknesses, mainly their lack of confidence in participating with policymakers. In this section, I examine each challenge carefully and incorporate the proposed solutions based on what the young participants discussed during their interviews. The findings of the interview with policymakers regarding obstacles to child and youth participation are also consolidated as necessary. H-assessment tools were incorporated where relevant to the challenge or solution at hand. As outlined in Chapter 5, H-assessments, a child-friendly method, comprises four boxes: strengths and successes, weaknesses and challenges, how you overcame these problems and the date you completed this tool. This section focuses on three boxes: strengths or successes, weaknesses or problems and how you overcame (see Chapter 5, Section 5.5.2.2). The six primary challenges and their solutions are outlined below.

7.4.1 Time management difficulties

Most young participants (16 individuals) in the two case studies reported that their family members questioned their participation in policy, programme and project development. Kratai (18 years old, local case study) recalled: "*My aunt complained in the beginning when I left home frequently; she said that I did not do school assignments and left home every day.*" Koko (24 years old, national case study) further explained that he could not manage his household responsibilities or family activities, which caused conflict with family members:

> "*My parents said that they did not want me to work on this matter; it wastes time. I am not always at home, and my parents want me to be at home and work on some household chores.*"

Similarly, Tea (25 years old, national case study) evoked the dilemma between participation and a lack of time to look after his family: "*I do not have much time to rest or be with my family. I then feel that I spend a lot of time doing activities rather than looking after my family.*" He reported experiencing conflict due to a failure to manage his personal time when participating in meetings with policymakers: "*Sometimes, the meetings disturbed my study. It impacted me, and my free time was reduced.*" These arguments corroborate the literature indicating that CYP encounter difficulties as a result of being too busy, lacking the time or support to participate or feeling overburdened with additional responsibilities, which ultimately impacts their participation (Borden et al., 2005; Collins and Raymond, 2006; Nir and Perry-Hazan, 2016; Macauley et al., 2022). The notion of a conflict between participation and family

responsibilities may partly reflect parents' expectation for Thai CYP to perform some work to ensure the family's moral and financial well-being (Banpasirichote and Pongsapich, 1992; Mason and Bolzan, 2010; Capaldi, 2015). Some Thai parents still expect their children to perform various types of household chores, including looking after their family members. As a result, when some young participants abandoned their household responsibilities to attend committee/sub-committee meetings, they frequently faced conflict with their parents.

To overcome this obstacle, several young participants managed their time by prioritising and eliminating unimportant tasks and meetings and communicating with their parents. Ning (19 years old, local case study) stated: "*I joined activities when I was available; sometimes, I could not join. I choose what might be essential.*" Kratai (18 years old, local case study) sought to organise her schedule and communicate with her family: "*I finished my homework before going to SAO, and I promised to my parents that I would go back home right away after the SAO activity was done.*"

This first obstacle caused young participants to struggle to balance their participation in policy and programme development with the activities in their personal lives. The second obstacle shifts from personal concerns to issues related to the organisation in which they are involved.

7.4.2 Lack of formal feedback or follow-up

Three participants in the national case study, Tea (25 years old), Plawaln (23 years old) and Koko (24 years old), asserted that they never received any feedback from policymakers. For example, Tea stated that in his experience, policy evaluation and follow-up did not occur: "*Never, nobody informs me what happens after the policy implementation.*" Plawaln further explained that he had never been invited to participate in any evaluation of the policy in which he participated. Plawaln suspected that the evaluation may have occurred, but he was never invited: "*No, I have never seen any monitoring and evaluation activities organised under the X committee, or if it does, I was not invited to participate.*" In contrast, three young participants in the local case study had recently received informal feedback from policymakers on the committee or sub-committee in which they participated. For example, Jinglean (16 years old) explained: "*we were invited to be informed about the project achievement and impact, both negative and positive.*" These quotations emphasise the lack of (formal) feedback (Thomas, 2007; Morentin-encina, Pigem and Núñez, 2022), an organisational obstacle to child and youth participation that often prevents CYP's involvement in project, programme and policy development and decision-making. The absence of feedback from policymakers may be connected to the need for Plawaln (23 years old) and Nok (23 years old) to have a place for CYP to follow up on their ideas when they participated in national policy and programme development (See Section 7.2.1).

A few participants claimed that they overcame the lack of formal feedback from policymakers by voluntarily participating in government processes aimed at evaluating and following up on child- and youth-related policy, such as the annual national CYP assembly, to ensure that their views or voices were incorporated into policy and

programme development. For example, Cha-keaw (24 years old, national case study) explained:

> "I then followed up the policy I participated in by myself. Another activity that I joined was an evaluation process with academic working groups or child and youth development assembly organising to review the resolutions and movement to check how much each relevant organisation has done."

Without policymakers' support, Cha-keaw demonstrated his intent to evaluate the impact of his participation in the national policy by participating independently in a working group whose purpose was to monitor how the involved organisations reviewed or adopted CYP's opinions in practice. Cha-keaw's words show the importance of enhancing the feedback process when encouraging child and youth participation to improve mutual understanding and build partnerships among CYP and policymakers (Sinclair, 2004a; Borgne, 2014; Lundy, 2018; Foster et al., 2023) and ensure that CYP's ideas are implemented.

The inability to manage time and the absence of formal feedback from policymakers were obstacles faced by young participants in both case studies. The next section presents the last obstacle encountered in the two case studies.

7.4.3 Bias and misunderstanding of child and youth participation

Although most of the young participants in this research believed that they had the capacity to participate in policy and programme development (see Section 7.3.2), some in the national case study reported encountering bias from policymakers who were occasionally unable to accept their abilities, which led to mistrust and an unwillingness to permit them to participate or make decisions in the development of national policies or programmes. Tea (24 years old) stated: "*Some policymakers looked down on me or tried to ask me some questions, concluding that I did not have enough knowledge.*" Chompoo (23 years old) elaborated on policymakers' unwillingness to allow her to make decisions because they doubted her capabilities: "*Policymakers may believe us but not trust our capacities to allow children to do things or to make decisions fully.*" Although the young people in the local case study did not frequently identify this obstacle, interviews with some local policymakers uncovered evidence of bias regarding the capacities of CYP. Highlighting the significant differences between the experiences of adults and CYP, they suggested that adults are more mature and capable than CYP. For example, Anchalee (28 years old) stated: "*I think our children have less experience and maturity than adults in all aspects.*" Likewise, Sukka (47 years old) explained:

> "Children become adults when they have more maturity… Children are young individuals who have less experience than adults. They have learnt and know less than adults."

The quotes of policymakers and young people echo the literature surrounding the notion of adultism as an obstacle to child and youth participation, whereby CYP are subject to adults' biases or negative attitudes about their capacities (Borgne and Tisdall, 2017).

In addition, some young participants in the national case study reported that some policymakers whose duties were to encourage child and youth participation appeared to lack sufficient knowledge of how to promote it effectively. For example, Loma (24 years old) remarked:

> *"Many policymakers did not understand the meaning of participation. They thought that just inviting us to join the meeting was already called participation for them. Each policymaker's understanding of participation was also different."*

This statement demonstrates that policymakers' level of understanding of the promotion of child and youth participation varied. Moreover, it indicates that these policymakers could not enhance meaningful participation, which requires taking CYP's views into account or involving them in sharing decisions with policymakers (Cavet and Sloper, 2004; Inter-Agency Working Group on Children's Participation, 2008; Lansdown and O'Kane, 2014a; Kosher and Ben-Arieh, 2020).

To overcome this challenge, Tea proposed the following approaches in his H-assessment: "modify our behaviour", "slowly reconcile policymakers and children's ideas" and "permit those who have encountered adult bias to provide additional details" (Figure 15). Koko wrote "attempting to reconcile policymakers and children's thoughts" and "emotional control"(Figure 16).
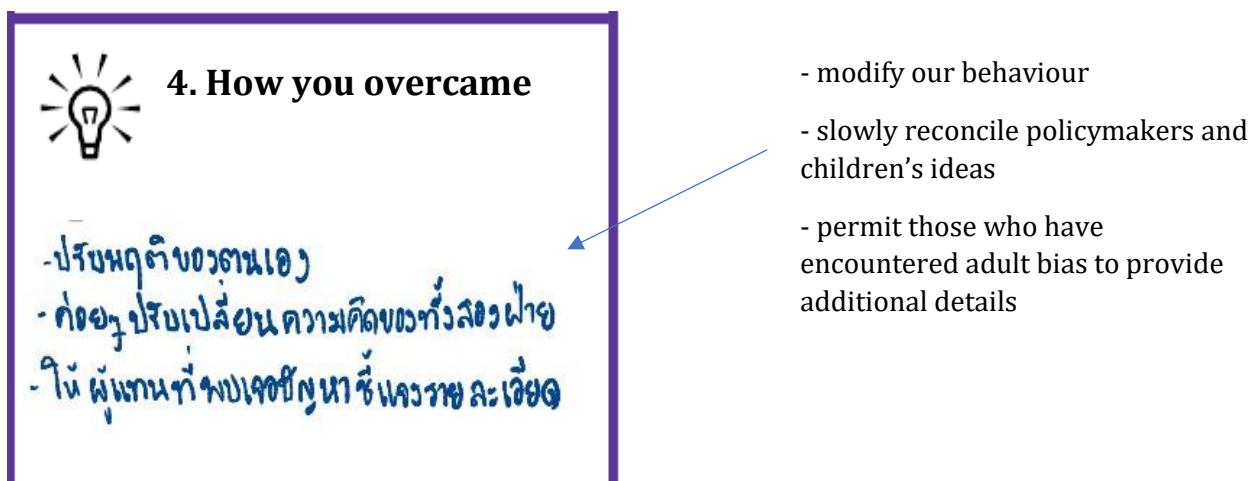
Figure 15: Tea's H-assessment
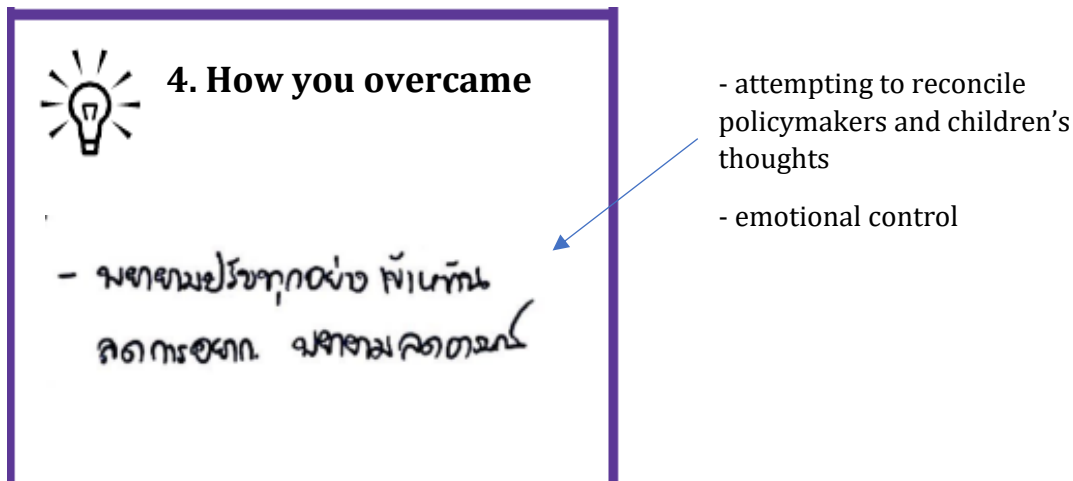
Figure 16: Koko's H-assessment

These answers indicate that young participants used particular skills, such as emotional management and communication, to solve this challenge. When an obstacle related to policymakers' bias regarding their abilities arose, they attempted to manage their emotions and persuade policymakers to open their minds and embrace their abilities.

For participants in the two case studies, engaging in policy and programme development involved interacting with several policymakers. The young participants encountered a range of attitudes exhibited by officials, including biases regarding their capacity. The next section examines an obstacle specific to the national case study, namely, the complexity of Thai bureaucracy.

7.4.4 The bureaucratic system and complex processes

The challenge relating to the complexity of bureaucracy was frequently identified as resulting from organisational policies that exclude CYP from project and programme development and decision-making (Shier, 2001; Cavet and Sloper, 2004; Martin et al., 2015; Blakeslee and Walker, 2018; Cuevas-Parra, 2022). Six young participants reported that Thai bureaucratic systems, particularly the national government, were an obstacle to their participation. Tea (25 years old) noted that "*Thai bureaucracy is a top-down and vertical structure that is more problematic than a horizontal one*". Due to the system's top-down nature, Loma (24 years old) could not believe that her participation could contribute anything of value or challenge adult society in any way:

> *"[laugh] I think the bureaucratic system makes me not believe in the system, the state, the bureaucracy, the structure, whatever. These things – no matter how many ideas and thoughts we have and how powerful we are, we cannot crash the structure."*

Loma's statement not only reflects the complexity of Thai bureaucracy but also reveals her feeling of powerlessness to challenge it. As shown in Figure 17, Thai bureaucracy

was identified as an obstacle to child and youth participation in Wayupak's (24 years old) H-assessment.
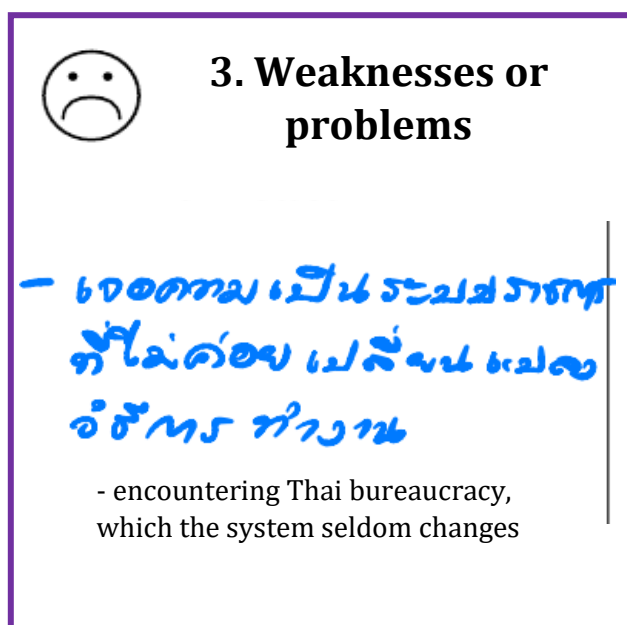
Figure 17: Wayupak's H-assessment

Wayupak further described this obstacle, indicating that the complex Thai bureaucracy cannot respond to the changing society: "*Most of the problems I encountered were about the fixed bureaucratic structure. The regulations in this system cannot respond well to the current situation.*" Lip (66 years old), a national policymaker, also identified this challenge, stating that the complex Thai bureaucratic procedures and processes were significant obstacles to child and youth participation: "*CYP's capacity is not that strong, especially when encountering the complications of national policy.*" According to Lip, this obstacle may contribute to CYP's limited capacity to participate in policy and programme development. These quotations emphasise that the complexity of Thai bureaucracy is an obstacle to child and youth participation.

According to several participants, Thai bureaucracy may be challenging to manage due to the country's extensive bureaucratic structure. For example, Plawaln (23 years old, national case study) affirmed: "*You mean government structure? No, it cannot be changed.*" As a result, young participants often could not propose any solution to this challenge. Because of the complexities of national policy, young participants found it challenging to participate in national policy and programme development. Simultaneously, as indicated in Section 7.3.1, this obstacle may be one reason young participants in the national case study were unsatisfied with their participation. The sense of unpleasantness associated with participation among young participants in the national case study may also connect to their experience of being discriminated against and feeling unsure while participating in policy or programme development, as I explore further below.

7.4.5 Being discriminated against and being unsafe

Three participants encountered discrimination by adults or policymakers, who opposed their participation in policies or programme development. Nok (23 years old) explained his direct experience:

> *"I commented on the Facebook of X* [a high-level government officer] *on the topic of increasing child and youth participation. Later, when X's secretary informed X of my comments on X's Facebook, I was no longer invited to participate in many activities."*

Nok's quotation relates to the concept of children's agency as he expressed his views to encourage CYP's participation in society by posting on the public social networking account of high-level officials. The relevant persons took action against him, and he was subsequently not invited from participating in government-sponsored initiatives. This demonstrates that when children challenge the existing structure, they often come head to head with adults' differing perceptions, and when children demonstrate agency, they encounter several pressures and challenges (Raithelhuber, 2016; Punch, 2016). This example also illustrates the disconnect between the UNCRC's prohibition of discrimination as a fundamental principle and the realisation of this principle in practice.

The study also revealed that when some young participants engaged in societal/political participation activities, they faced difficulties that made them feel uncomfortable and unsafe. For example, Nok reported feeling threatened by adults or policymakers, especially from the military, when they attempted to express their views as part of participation activities. He described his participation in a public activity involving criticism of school and government administration:

> *"I participated in the event focused on schools, education policies and government reform; when CYP started reading the declaration, the military came to ask about the agenda."*

Like other young Thai activists, Nok engaged with the contemporary problems of Thai education policies, which often include what are regarded as incompatible school rules and regulations, teacher–student relationships and social and political inequities in the educational system (Ayuwat, 2020; Chankaew, 2021). His argument may also indicate that despite Thailand's return to democracy (after the last coup in 2014), the Thai government may still attempt to implement martial law in contemporary Thai culture. For instance, the Thai government summoning activists and academics in 2021 for attitude adjustment and severely restricting civic and political rights (Bolotta, 2016). This obstacle exemplifies the present challenges of child and youth participation in Thailand. It also highlights the risks and dilemmas that arise when CYP's participation directly confronts the Thai structure or government, which might lead to feelings of insecurity. Consequently, this obstacle signals a divergent perspective on child and youth participation that has both favourable and unfavourable consequences for CYP.

To overcome this obstacle, Nok expressed his self-belief and proposed a solution: "*I did not do anything wrong. I did not care about discrimination, just continued to do what I*

should do. If I do things wrong, I will stop; otherwise, I will keep doing it." Nok felt that his actions were correct and would continue to perform them in the future. Nok's beliefs and actions reflect the UNCRC concept of CYP's rights to express themselves freely. Nok's words are important because he attempted to demonstrate an alternative perception of children as social actors to challenge the dominant constructions of childhood in Thailand, particularly that of a period of obedience. He also manifested his agency by resisting adults' dominant perception of Thai children as docile individuals who should follow, obey and should not argue with adults (Dhammakaya Foundation, 2005; Tharapak, Dejwaln and Mrukapituk, 2021).

In the national case study, the complexity of Thai bureaucracy and discrimination were identified as the most common obstacles faced by young participants. However, these obstacles were not reported by young participants in the local case study; the only particular obstacle local participants encountered was their shyness and lack of confidence in engaging with policymakers when participating in local policy or programme development.

7.4.6 Timidity and lack of confidence

Seven young participants in the local case study highlighted their personal weaknesses as representing a challenge, including shyness and lack of self-confidence, which may impact the quality of their participation. For instance, Kratai (18 years old) pointed out: "*My weakness is that I do not have the confidence to speak up*". In their H-assessments, Kratai and Zom (Figures 18 and 19) identified personal weaknesses that became obstacles during policy or programme development participation. Zom's H-assessment features the word "*nervous*', and Kratai wrote "*unconfident when existing in front of unfamiliar individuals and difficult to adapt*".

3. Weaknesses or problems

nervous
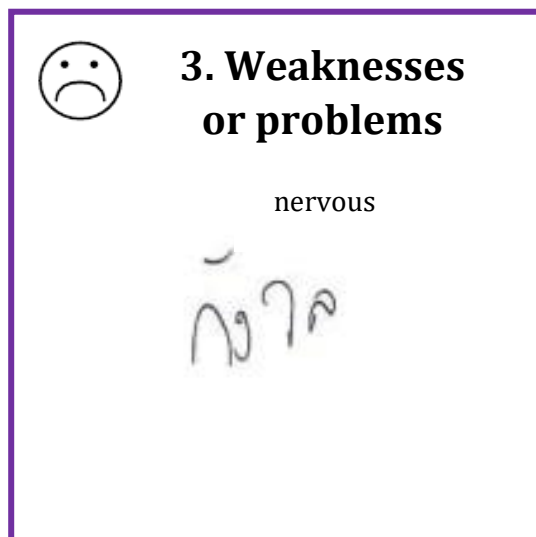
Figure 18: Zom's H-assessment

3. Weaknesses or problems

unconfident when existing in front of unfamiliar individuals and difficult to adapt
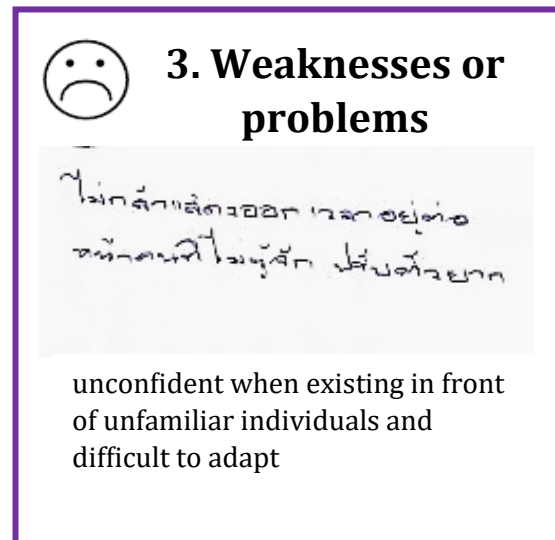
Figure 19: Kratai's H-assessment

These quotations and the data from the H-assessments may demonstrate the connection between this obstacle, including the timidity and lack of confidence of most participants in the local case study and how they perceived their participation during the first stage of their experience in policy and programme development. Many reported feeling various negative emotions and perceptions during their first experience, such as excitement, anxiety, lack of confidence and nervousness or neutrality (see Section 7.3.1).

To overcome this obstacle, Zom and Kratai recognised that they should relax, practice their communication skills, do more research on meeting topics beforehand or focus on objects in the room when working with policymakers. They proposed these strategies in their H-assessments (Figures 20 and 21). Zom wrote: "*Look at the ceiling to be more attentive when needing to work seriously*', and Kratai's H-assessment reads "*seek additional information and consult those who are knowledgeable about these issues*".
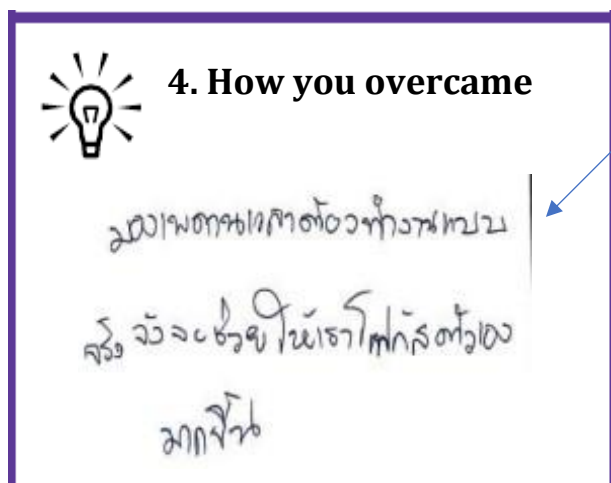
Look at the ceiling to be more attentive when needing to work seriously

Figure 20: Zom's H-assessment
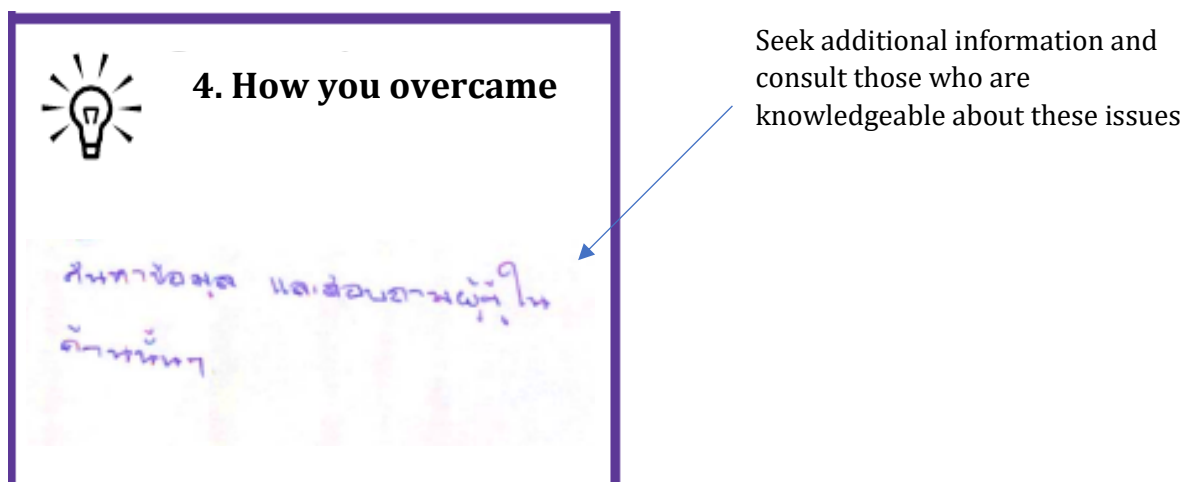
Figure 21: Kratai's H-assessment

Although most young participants in the local case study encountered difficulties associated with their personal characteristics, the information obtained from the H-assessments demonstrates how they attempted to solve this problem. Their more recent perceptions of their participation, which are more positive, indicate that this obstacle can partly be overcome. This implies that young participants' perceptions of participation in policy and programme development can change throughout the various phases of participation, as outlined in Section 7.3.2. Although young people in the local case study seldom mentioned lack of confidence in their current perceptions of participation (Section 7.3.2), they still need support from policymakers to become more confident and encourage meaningful participation. This is interesting because participants' accounts described the partnership between CYP and adults as not always smooth and sometimes exhibiting signs of tension, frustration and disappointment (Blanchet-Cohen and Rainbow, 2006).

In summary, time management in daily life was a common challenge for CYP engaged in participation activities, indicating that child and youth participation may disrupt the childhood of CYP. Because participation may interfere with routine activities, including helping with household work or engaging with paid work, this difficulty was often linked to conflicts between parents and children (Chantajam, 2020). As illustrated in Chapter 3, the lack of feedback, evaluation and follow-up remains one challenge for child and youth participation (Thomas, 2007; Morentin-encina, Pigem and Núñez, 2022). The results of the two case studies indicate that (formal) feedback and evaluation regarding CYP's participation in Thailand are still lacking. In addition, adults' bias towards CYP's capacity is a major challenge to CYP's participation worldwide (Borgne and Tisdall, 2017; Corney et al., 2021). In the national case study, particular challenges emerged, notably the complex Thai government system and discrimination and a feeling of insecurity experienced by some young participants when they expressed their opposition to the government openly and freely during policy or participation activities. The issue of feeling unsafe is the highest priority and must be

resolved if meaningful participation and involvement is to flourish. Lastly, personal weaknesses, like shyness and lack of confidence, were mentioned by the participants in the local case study. This corresponds to the literature stating that CYP in Thailand are quiet and unconfident in the presence of older people, younger people seldom disagree with older people and quietness is considered a virtue in Thai culture (Knutson et al., 2003).

This section presented the obstacles encountered by young people in the two case studies and incorporated significant findings from the accounts of policymakers. In contrast, the next section solely discusses the perceptions of young people in the two case studies, specifically their beliefs about their influence on policy decision-making.

7.5 CYP's belief in their influence on policies and programme decisions

This section presents young participants' beliefs regarding their influence on policy or programme decision-making. Participants' responses were divided into two categories. First, some local young participants believed that their views had strongly influenced local policy and programme decision-making. In contrast, some young participants, mainly in the national case study, hesitated to believe that their views had influenced national policy or programme decisions. When the topic of influence and power in policy and programme decision-making arose during interviews with young participants, a spider diagram was used to illustrate their responses. As outlined in Chapter 5, a spider diagram serves as a visual aid to build information and probe issues in greater depth (Punch, 2002a). The spider diagram employed in this research has four legs; each leg has a maximum score of 10 and a minimum score of 0. Two of these are related to this chapter: policymakers' influence on policy decision-making and CYP's influence on policy decision-making. This section also incorporates some related documentation, such as meeting minutes for the two case studies and The Tung Samo SAO Development Plan (TS-DP) described in Chapter 5, to expand the analysis.

7.5.1 Beliefs in the genuine influence on policy: the local case study

Seven young participants in the local case study believed they genuinely influenced local policy and projects' decision-making. Zom (19 years old) stated: "*Yes, I have an influence on local policy. However, I am not the only one who can have an influence; if many children have the same idea, it will be more influential.*" Similarly, Jinglean (16 years old) said: "*I believe that the ideas and perceptions of children can influence the Sub-District Administrative Organisation's policy decision.*" Penguin (19 years old) asserted her influence on the decision-making in establishing the Tung Samo Child and Youth Centre Construction (TS-CYCC):

> "*The centre was built from our ideas, and policymakers also supported our ideas. This centre is a place for children and young people in the Sub-District Administrative Organisation to do activities.*"

Furthermore, the establishment of TS-CYCC in the local case study partly supports Penguin's belief in her ability to influence its construction, given that the centre's objectives align with Penguin's stated intentions. The Tung Samo SAO Development Plan (TS-DP) B.E. 2561–2564 (2018–2021) reveals that the construction of the TS-CYCC was included in Tung Samo's strategic education plan and "to serve as a gathering place to encourage children and young people in Tung Samo Sub-district Administrative Organisation to conduct their activities together".

Although the data obtained from the interviews and the local policy document indicate that young participants believed they could have genuine influence the local policy and project decision-making, the spider diagrams offered greater insight into the nuance and complexity of their beliefs about their influence on local policy. This is significant because the perceptions or beliefs of CYP on the topic are complex and cannot be comprehended through a single data collection method. This also shows the importance of using various data collection methods to increase the credibility and validity of findings (Noble and Heale, 2019). According to the spider diagrams, when local young participants compared their influence to that of local policymakers, their perceptions could be divided into three categories: the belief that they had less influence, equal influence and more influence than policymakers. The influence of CYP and policymakers on policy decisions is measured by the ratio of CYP's influence score to the policymakers' influence score. The table below analyses the spider diagrams obtained from 10 young participants, which outline the aforementioned three categories.

Table 14

Young participants' belief in their influence on local policy and programme decision-making

Category I Less influence than policymakers (Policymakers:CYP)	Category II Equal influence level of policymakers' (Policymakers:CYP)	Category III More influence than policymakers (Policymakers:CYP)
Jinglean 9:8	Zom 9:9	Miss A 3:7
Ovaltin 9:8	Aey 5:5	Kratai 8:9
Dee 9:7	Dao 5:5	
Ning 7:6	Penguin 9:9	

Only two young participants (Miss A and Kratai) believed that they had more influence than policymakers (see Figures 22 and 23). Meanwhile, four research participants thought that they had less influence than policymakers and another four believed they had equal influence when making the decisions.

Policymakers' influence on policy decision-making

Policymakers' influence on policy decision-making

CYP's influence on policy decision-making

CYP's influence on policy decision-making

Figure 22: Miss A's spider diagram

Figure 23: Kratai's spider diagram

Miss A and Kratai explained why they rated their influence higher than policymakers. Kratai stated: "*I gave nine scores for an influence because I think children make decisions more than adults. I think 40% of decisions come from policymakers.*" Similarly, Miss A explained: "*I think the opinions of young people and children are key, and adults can advise and help if there is anything wrong.*" These two quotations demonstrate that they did not explicitly claim that they directly influence local policy but rather highlighted the value of their contribution to policy and programme decisions alongside policymakers. Miss A's quote underlines the importance of partnership or collaborative participation between CYP and policymakers (see Section 7.2.2), which is unique to the context of the local case study.

As shown in Table 14, eight individuals seemed to believe that they had a similar or lesser influence than policymakers. However, their scores on the spider diagrams indicated only a small gap between them and policymakers, for instance, for Jinglean (9:8), Dee (9:7) and Ning (7:6). This suggests that they thought that they and policymakers had a mutual influence on policy and programme decisions, which manifested in their collaborative participation. This coincides with the literature stating that collaborative participation enables CYP to share influence on the process and outcome of any particular policy or programme development (Lansdown, 2010).

Importantly, the findings in the local case study differed from those in the national case study, where the young participants hesitated to believe they had influenced national policy and programme decisions, as I explore below.

7.5.2 Lack of faith in CYP's influence on policy: the national case study

Many young participants in the national case study appeared to lack confidence in their genuine influence on national policy decision-making. Plawaln (23 years old) strongly believed that he and other CYP had no influence on several policies in which he had participated, such as the CSG and the X Regulations. The Meeting Minutes No. X/25XX of Committee X indicate that these regulations were developed by 21 members of the X committee, including Plawaln. Plawaln described his role as a member of Committee X: "*I worked on public relations to raise CYP's awareness against X issue.*" Plawaln later explained: "*When I worked with policymakers, I think I worked for them without influence on these regulations.*" Moreover, subsequently, Plawaln confessed: "*Regarding the X Regulations, 1% originated from children and 99% came from policymakers.*" He also described his experience in participating in the creation of the CSG: "*Most policies, such as the CSG, have already been proposed and approved by the government. No influence from children or young people.*" However, Plawaln's beliefs regarding CYP's influence on the CSG appear to conflict with Loma's (24 years old) firm belief that she had a substantial influence on this policy. Loma recalled her involvement in enhancing the policy's benefits:

> "*In 2016, 400 THB grants were given monthly to children ages 0 to 3 whose parents earned an annual income of 36,000 THB* [£ 900]. *I participated in the policy and boosted the subsidies for new-born babies from 400[5] THB to 600 THB and widened the age range of eligible babies from 0–4 years to 0–6 years.*"

Loma's words show that she felt she influenced the decisions related to the CSG by raising the monthly allowance from 400 THB to 600 THB and expanding the age range of eligible babies to six years old. However, Plawaln's quotation makes Loma's beliefs about her role in this increase difficult to comprehend. This highlights the contrasting beliefs stemming from the distinct participation experiences of these two individuals. Plawaln's quote also challenges the literature stating that youth representatives in the national committee were key to expanding the eligibility age for this benefit (Department of Children and Youth Affairs, 2017). This illustrates the complexity of the insights into the social world of CYP, which may differ from what has been discovered in the literature. It also underlines the significance of involving CYP in research promoting respect for their ideas, understanding and experiences, as this thesis asserts (see Chapter 5, Section 5.2).

In these two examples, Plawaln appeared to believe he had little or no influence on the X Regulations and the CSG, whereas Loma demonstrated her positive beliefs about her influence on the CSG. These two individuals illustrate the complexities of determining

---

[5] As mentioned in Chapter 4, before 2019, the CSG was designed to offer benefits for children aged 0–3 years (Department of Children and Youth Affairs, 2017).

CYP's genuine influence on national policy. However, this issue was verified by the spider diagrams generated from the responses of six young participants, with four of these claiming that CYP had less influence on decision-making than policymakers and two reporting an equal level of influence. Meanwhile, none of them believed that they had more influence on national policy or programme decisions than policymakers. For a further discussion of CYP's influence on national policy, the table below analyses the spider diagrams of the two categories of young participants.

Table 15

Young participants' beliefs in their influence on national policy and programme decision-making

Category I Less influence than policymakers (Policymakers:CYP)	Category II Equal influence (Policymakers:CYP)
Nok 8:4	Plawaln 6:6
Cha-keaw 10:6	Loma 5:5
Chompoo 9:6	
Tea 9:4	

Table 15 shows that four individuals believed they had less influence on national policy than policymakers. Their spider diagrams point to a significant gap between their influence and adults'. For example, Nok (23 years old) evaluated CYP's influence at 4 and policymakers' at 8, and Tea (24 years old) also gave CYP's influence at 4 and policymakers at 9, as shown in Figures 24 and 25.

**Policymakers' influence
on policy decision-making**

**Policymakers' influence
on policy decision-making**

**CYP's influence on policy
decision-making**
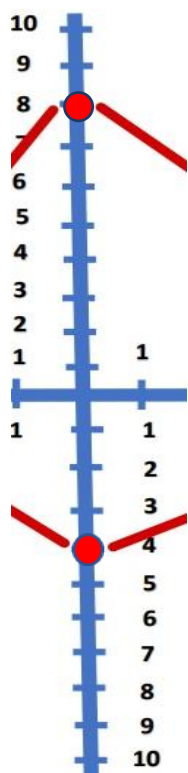
**CYP's influence on policy
decision-making**

Figure 24: Nok's spider diagram
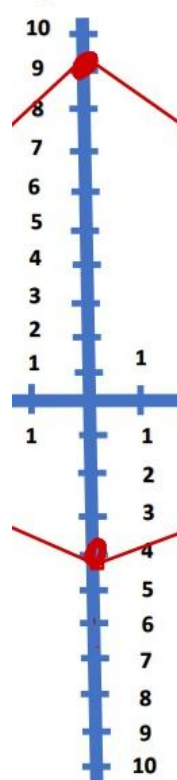
Figure 25: Tea's spider diagram

Describing his spider diagram, Nok reiterated that policymakers have more influence in decision-making than CYP: "*I gave 4 for the influence of CYP and 8 for the influence of adults. I think making a decision on policy-related issues is the work of adults.*" Nok appeared to believe that policy decisions should be made by adults rather than CYP. His statement may challenge society's awareness of children's agency and the concepts of children's right to participate and contribute to decision-making as social actors (Jones, 2009b). In contrast, it brings to light the significance of the minority status of CYP, in which CYP are typically excluded from full participation in their society (West, 2007; Maconochie, 2013). This explanation and the evidence from the spider diagram

emphasise the policymakers' influence on national policy and programme decisions and the low influence of CYP.

However, the table also exhibits some contradictory information. For instance, Loma (24 years old) strongly believed that she had a significant influence on national policy, as mentioned above regarding the CSG. In contrast, in her spider diagram, she gave equal scores to her influence on national policy and that of policymakers (5:5). Loma later revealed that despite similar scores, the most influential individuals in the final decision may be top-level government officials or politicians because they have more power:

> "*the issue is related to policy or legal amendment; it cannot be finalised in the meeting I attended with those policymakers. The issue will pass to be discussed among high-level policymakers, who are more powerful than us.*"

Similarly, Plawaln (23 years old) stated: "*I gave both similar scores because now, X committee consists of more politicians who have the real influence.*" These statements are interesting because they indicate that these participants (and perhaps the policymakers in the national case study) may have low influence on national policy or programme decisions, but the strongest influence could be politicians in higher positions. This corroborates the literature stating that the highest-ranking politicians, such as ministers and deputy ministers, are the most influential people (Arunittrakhoon, 2020) when developing national policy and programmes. The influence of high-level politicians on policy and programme decisions seems to be related to how power is operationalised in decision-making processes, which is thoroughly examined in Chapter 8. In the national case study, the data obtained from interviews and spider diagrams verified that young participants believed that they had little to no influence on national policy and programme decisions.

To summarise, most young participants in the local case study thought that their ideas or opinions had influenced local policies and projects. The belief that CYP influenced decisions in the local case study appears to connect to perceptions of meaningful participation of CYP, including potentially successful promotion by local policymakers at Tung Samo SAO (see Section 7.2.2). Therefore, local policymakers' support when CYP initiate and implement projects is crucial. At the same time, the findings in the local case study demonstrate that policymakers have moved beyond consulting with CYP to forming a partnership with them, which involves fostering children's confidence in their ability to influence policy. This finding emphasises that encouraging partnership or collaboration between CYP and adults is a fundamental element of meaningful participation (Hart, 1992; Shier, 2001; Francis and Lorenzo, 2002; Wong and Zimmerman, 2010; Shier et al., 2014; Arunkumar et al., 2019; To et al., 2021). In addition, local policymakers seemingly attempted to protect CYP from policy tokenism, in line with the literature indicating that establishing a strong partnership in which children have a genuine influence on policy and decision-making could prevent policy tokenism (Marx et al., 2008; Lintelo, 2011). Although the literature on the roles of youth representatives in local government participation in Thailand found that CYP are not essential participants and play a less significant role in local government activities and

decision-making (Songsoontorawat, 2016), the evidence from this research indicates that some young participants felt that they were key players in local policies and programme decision-making.

In contrast, young participants in the national case study believed that they had little to no influence on national policies or programmes. Two examples (the CSG and X Regulations) demonstrate that they continue to have a minimal effect on public decision-making. Even if CYP's participation has influenced policy, its impact on policy decision-making has been limited or remains unclear (Kirby and Bryson, 2002; Checkoway, Allison and Montoya, 2005; Collins et al., 2020; McMellon and Tisdall, 2020; Tisdall and Cuevas-Parra, 2021; Janta et al., 2021). This is consistent with the literature, which points out that the extent of CYP's participation in national policy is often difficult to determine in terms of how CYP's views are utilised and prioritised after consultation and whether they are incorporated into the national plan (Horgan, 2017b; McMellon and Tisdall, 2020). In addition, young participants in the national case study may have experienced tokenism and discouragement when participating in policy and programme development given that they thought that their ideas or perspectives did not appear to influence policy decisions (Hart, 1992; Tisdall, 2015; Lundy, 2018; Arunittrakhoon, 2020). The results of the two case studies reinforce the literature suggesting that CYP have had more success in influencing decisions at the local level rather than national ones (Williams, 2004; Checkoway, Allison and Montoya, 2005; Schuster and Checkoway, 2011).

7.6 Conclusion

The key themes emerging from this research revealed two distinct understandings of child and youth participation. First, the dominant understanding referred to encouraging CYP to think and freely express their thoughts to adults. As a result, it may be assumed that the UNCRC agenda has influenced the perceptions of young people and policymakers. This understanding also partly reflects the spread of the minority world's conceptualisation of child and youth participation, which represents a new form of colonisation and cultural dominance (Thomas, 2007; Mason and Bolzan, 2010; Montgomery, 2013b) because it emphasises the consideration of and respect for CYP's views as the key principles of the UNCRC introduced by the minority world's agenda for children's rights. Based on this evidence, I conclude that the concept of child and youth participation in the minority world has been acknowledged in Thailand and has gained significant traction. In contrast, the second understanding of child and youth participation relates to implementing community development programmes to tackle the problems or needs of CYP's communities. This understanding treats CYP as active citizens capable of taking on responsibilities and playing an active role in the community (Mason and Bolzan, 2010; Nurhadi, 2015; Thompson, 2015). It also evidences the persistence of Thai cultural norms in the construction of child and youth participation, especially a collectivist culture that mandates active citizenship through work or family support and, occasionally, community activities (Mason and Bolzan, 2010). The second understanding also highlights the distinctive characteristics of the

local case study, where policymakers and young people collaborated and provided mutual support. This component is crucial for promoting meaningful participation (Hart, 1992; Shier, 2001; Francis and Lorenzo, 2002; Wong and Zimmerman, 2010; Shier et al., 2014; Arunkumar et al., 2019; To et al., 2021).

The interviews and drawings revealed how young participants' perspectives on their participation in policy and programme development changed throughout the various stages of participation. Their initial impressions included various negative perceptions and feelings. In contrast, thanks to their further participation experience, most research participants' perceptions had shifted to more positive perceptions. In all, CYP's participation and interactions with policymakers impacted their feelings, with many participants reporting a lack of self-confidence and emotional experiences during their first participation experience. This suggests that policymakers should provide a more welcoming environment or increase collaboration/partnership to avoid unpleasant or emotional experiences for CYP. Regarding the evolution of young participants' perceptions of participation as they progressed through its various phases, all local case study participants described more positive current perceptions, whereas some national case study participants still had negative perceptions. This may reflect the local case study participants' positive/close relationships with policymakers, which are specific to this case study. Although young people expressed different perceptions, the findings indicate that they often believed in their capacity to contribute to developing policies and programmes. Despite this confidence in their ability, the research also revealed that a partnership between CYP and policymakers aimed at providing support was the key to increasing CYP's capacity and ensuring meaningful child and youth participation in policy and programme development.

Young participants' accounts of the obstacles they faced in their participation in policy and programme development coincided with wider the literature. In the two case studies, participants frequently experienced tensions between their involvement in participation activities and their parents' expectations that they would support their families. This includes a lack of space for evaluation, feedback and follow-up for CYP to monitor their participation. Several young participants encountered bias from policymakers who consistently doubted their ability to participate in complex activities such as policy and programme development. The young participants in the national case study reported facing challenges within the Thai bureaucracy, which diminished their ability to participate effectively. They also experienced discrimination and felt unsafe during their participation in policy and programme development. Feeling unsafe is an unacceptable consequence of child participation; no one should be treated unfavourably for demonstrating their agency. While young participants in the national case study faced various challenges, the main obstacle for those in the local case study was their own lack of confidence when engaging in local policy with policymakers. Despite their good relationships with local policymakers, CYP remained unconfident when participating in policy with policymakers. This suggests the need for more encouragement and respect from local policymakers, even when a good relationship already exists. Importantly, the research revealed that no young participant in the two case studies mentioned the role of or support from policymakers when discussing how

they overcame these challenges. Instead of seeking support from policymakers, they viewed it as their personal responsibility to overcome obstacles. This finding may indicate a need for increased partnership and collaboration as well as an in-depth understanding of the significance of child and youth participation on the part of policymakers so that they may step in when CYP encounter difficulties.

Lastly, a clear division emerged from interviews with CYP in the two case studies regarding their influence on policy, programme and project decision-making: young participants in the local case study believed that they had a genuine influence on local policy and projects, whereas those in the national case study felt that they had little to no influence on national policy or programme decisions. These results imply a connection between CYP's beliefs regarding their own influence and their perceptions of their participation. The genuine influence on local policy and projects felt by the young participants in the local case study may explain their positive view of their participation, whereas the national young participants' feeling of having little to no influence on national policy may have led to dissatisfaction with participation.

The previous chapter and this chapter investigated the research questions focusing on research participants' perceptions of childhood, youth and child and youth participation in policy and programme development or decision-making processes. Previous research has identified key components of child and youth participation and the sharing of power in decision-making (Hart, 1992; Shier, 2001; Alias, Mohamad Nasri and Awang, 2023; Woodman, Roche and McArthur, 2023). Therefore, the next chapter draws on the concept of power-sharing between CYP and policymakers involved in policy and programme decision-making. This is important because the discourse around meaningful child and youth participation in policy and practice frequently refers to the notion of power-sharing or redistribution between adults and children (Hart, 1992; Shier, 2001; O'Kane, 2003; Hill et al., 2004; Farrow, 2018; Botchwey et al., 2019).

Chapter 8: Power and power-sharing in policy and programme decision-making

8.1 Introduction

The previous chapter presented research participants' perceptions and experiences of child and youth participation in policy and programme development. The findings encompassed the understanding of child and youth participation and the evolution of young people's perceptions of their participation as they gained more participation experience. This included identifying obstacles and explaining how they overcame them. The findings presented young participants' beliefs regarding their influence on policy and programme decision-making. In this chapter, we draw on the idea that power is a social relationship between two agents and can operate at both institutional and individual levels (Scott, 2001; Punch, 2005). In operationalising these concepts, the findings continue to combine the perceptions and experiences of power-sharing of the two research participant groups. This chapter investigates two key research questions focusing on how policymakers sought to share power with CYP and how CYP perceived this experience:

1) How do policymakers seek to share power with CYP in policy and programme decision-making?
2) How do CYP perceive their power-sharing experiences with policymakers in policy and programme decision-making?

The chapter begins by examining how both groups of research participants perceived power and then explores how policymakers shared power with young participants and how young participants experienced power-sharing with policymakers. To address these topics, the chapter uses existing power theory, concentrating on the dichotomy of power as centralised or diffused (Bachrach and Baratz, 2002; Avelino, 2021). The key themes that emerge from this chapter demonstrate that various research participants perceived power differently depending on their experiences, which were unique to each case study. This differentiation by case also affected how policymakers sought to share power and how young participants experienced power-sharing in each context. Policymakers mainly utilised three methods to share power with CYP: dialogue, voting and working groups. As a result, young participants had two distinct power-sharing experiences with policymakers: dialogue and voting on key agendas. Notably, none of the young participants reported having participated in the small working groups mentioned by policymakers.

Following this introduction, Section 8.2 investigates research participants' perceptions of power. Next, Section 8.3 explores how policymakers attempted to share power with CYP in policy/programme decision-making and young participants' experiences of power-sharing with policymakers.

8.2 Perceptions of power in policy or programme decision making

Understanding how research participants perceived power may offer insight into how power operates in each case study and, thus, serve as the first step towards understanding how policymakers seek to share power and how young participants experience power-sharing. The findings in this section rely on the transcripts of the interviews conducted for the two case studies. Eighteen meeting minutes (see Chapter 5, Section 5.5.3.1) are also incorporated into the analysis to provide important contextual information concerning the national case study. In addition, spider diagrams were used as a visual aid to build information and probe issues more in-depth during the interviews (Punch, 2002a) and illustrate young participants' perceptions of power within the policy decision-making context. The spider diagrams employed in this chapter comprise two legs, each with a maximum score of 10 and a minimum score of 0, to visualise young participants' estimations of their and policymakers' power levels in policy and programme decision-making (see Chapter 5, Section 5.5.2.3 for further details).

The themes that emerged raised interesting issues regarding research participants' perceptions of power in policy and programme decision-making. Their responses were categorised into two perceptions dependent on the context in which participation occurred. These two perceptions reflect the dichotomy of power as centralised or diffused (Bachrach and Baratz, 2002; Avelino, 2021) (See Chapter 2, Section 2.5). Power as centralised is defined as a force between two groups and consolidated within one of them (Bachrach and Baratz, 2002; Avelino, 2021). This viewpoint is represented in the accounts of research participants in the national case study, who revealed that policymakers frequently held more power in policy/programme decision-making. In contrast, the alternate view treats power as relatively distributed through the participation of diverse interest groups (Lasswell and Kaplan, 1950; Bachrach and Baratz, 2002; Avelino, 2021). It assumes that power can be shared (equally) between policymakers and CYP. This perspective was evident in the accounts of young participants in the local case study, who perceived themselves as having either more or equal power to policymakers.

8.2.1 Power and power-sharing in the national case study

The majority of research participants in both participant groups in the national case study believed that policymakers typically held more power than CYP when making policy and programme decisions. For example, Koko (24 years old) referenced the workings of power, stating that "*adults made the decision on policies; it was the adults' role and power to make the decision'.* Similarly, Tea (25 years old) said: "*I think the power of adults is important in determining policies.*" These quotations illustrate young participants' perceptions of power in policy decision-making, in which greater power and decision-making responsibilities are assigned to policymakers. This perception was confirmed by Kanita (60 years old), a policymaker who referred to Thai culture, in which adults are often seen as powerful individuals: "*Thai culture makes people believe*

that adults are more powerful than children. It is true in Thai society." Policymakers' greater power in policy decision-making represents a challenge for CYP in various contexts around the world (Kirby and Bryson, 2002; Yamaguchi et al., 2023). However, within the Thai context, this also reflects the subordinate position of CYP in Thai society and the cultural significance of obedience to adults and people in hierarchical positions (Thanasankit, 2002; Rattanadilok Na Phuket, 2017; Techacharoenrungrueang and Wanchai, 2017). The culture of obedience serves as a cultural tool to legitimise and perpetuate the dominance of certain groups (adults) while subordinating others (CYP) (Swartz, 1997). This aligns with the notion of symbolic power, illustrating the importance of culture in reproducing social class inequalities between dominant (adults) and dominated (CYP) (Swartz, 1997; Creaney and Burns, 2024). Furthermore, drawing on Bourdieu's concept of *field*, the national case study highlights a clear hierarchical structure that divides people into dominant and dominated (Gadinger, 2023).

Although CYP are often categorised as subordinate/powerless when compared to adults, the complexity of the Thai hierarchy demonstrates that both CYP and some policymakers occasionally face situations in which they must follow or agree with any decision made by those perceived to be in a higher position. For instance, Sor (34 years old), a national policymaker, explained that he and some lower-position policymakers only wield a small amount of power when making policy decisions, while other higher-policymakers hold more: "*I believe 80:20; 20% comes from sub-committee members* [lower position], *but 80% comes from certain groups of* [higher position] *policymakers and the chairperson.*" Further complexity arose when the chairperson appeared to be at the centre of power in committee or sub-committee decision-making processes. However, Soranun (25 years old) argued that the final decision-maker may not be the chairperson but the highest-ranking official in the relevant ministry. He explained: "*Only the minister! Not the permanent secretary of the ministry. They must follow the minister, the highest-ranking person and power of their organisation.*"

These quotations, which echoed young participants' accounts (see Chapter 7, Section 7.5.2), imply that those in high positions play the most significant role in decision-making. Significantly, the national case study included several levels of committees, and the highest committee, comprising high-ranking individuals such as ministers and the prime minister, was given more power, allowing them to be the final decision-makers. Although this may be a universal viewpoint (Basi, 1998; Haruța and Cobârzan, 2010), in the Thai context, feudalism further emphasises hierarchy and is likely to result in the higher-ranking individuals holding more weight. These quotes also highlight the complexities of power, depicting the dichotomy of power between CYP and adults but also including other factors that play vital roles, such as individual positions in the hierarchical structure. Accordingly, Soranun's and Sor's quotes echo the notion in Thai culture that an individual's power is associated with their title, rank and status (Komin, 1990; Suwinyattichaiporn, Johnson and Fontana, 2019), not only age or status as an adult or child. This also aligns with the notion of symbolic power, which is derived from the recognition of renown, prestige, honour, glory, and authority (Pellandini-Simányi, 2014). Higher-ranking individuals are granted a privileged status, which is

accepted by those in lower positions. As a result, they possess the authority to make final decisions.

As stated earlier, spider diagrams were employed to gain a deeper understanding of power and influence in policy and programme decision-making. Interestingly, the spider diagrams of six young research participants in the national case study and one in the local case study revealed that they felt they had less power than policymakers when making decisions. As described in Chapter 5, the spider diagram referenced here includes the headings "CYP's power in policy decision making" and "policymakers' power in policy decision making', with a maximum score of 10 and a minimum score of 0. The table below presents a list of young participants who felt that they had less power than policymakers in policy and programme decision-making.

Table 16

Young participants who rated their power lower than that of policymakers in the spider diagrams

Young research participant's name	Participation experience (years)	Power level of CYP	Power level of policymakers
National case study			
Nok (23 years old)	12	4	7
Plawaln (23 years old)	7	5	8
Loma (24 years old)	8	5	9
Cha-keaw (24 years old)	10	8	10
Chompoo (23 years old)	12	5	8
Tea (25 years old)	12	7	9
Local case study			
Dee (18 years old)	3	7	8

Plawaln explained why he evaluated CYP's power at 5 and policymakers' at 8 (see Figure 26): "*I gave us a 5. I think adults are more powerful than us in terms of decision-making because they can allocate the budget and manage it since they are the organisation's administration.*" Loma similarly felt that policymakers often held more power when making policy decisions, giving CYP a power score of 5 and policymakers a score of 9 (see Figure 27). Loma explained:

> "*I think children and young people do not have much power to develop any policy, but we can propose ideas that can be conveyed to the policymakers who can realize the policies. So, I scored this item half* [5 points] *because children and young people*

can participate in only half of the decision-making process as the problems' owners. Regarding the power of policymakers, I think it is obvious that adults have the power to do many things and make the final decisions on policies that are directly related to children and young people."

These scores and their explanations once again reinforce the common experiences of CYP who participated in policy and programme decision-making, in which policymakers were perceived to have more power (Kirby and Bryson, 2002; Yamaguchi et al., 2023). However, they also demonstrate that adults do not hold absolute power and that CYP have some (minimal) power (Sercombe, 2009) to make decisions. Therefore, it would be inaccurate to argue that CYP are completely powerless. The findings show that young participants still have the power to challenge policymakers' power, echoing the wider literature arguing that the power of adults over children is not absolute and can be challenged (Punch, 2001). For instance, Loma can at least challenge the power of adults through discussion, and her beliefs indicate that her ideas could play a role in the decision-making process; thus, she retains some power to challenge adults.

Policymakers' power in policy decision-making

CYP's power in policy decision-making

Figure 26: Plawaln's spider diagram

Policymakers' power in policy decision-making

CYP's power in policy decision-making

Figure 27: Loma's spider diagram

Dee (18 years old), the only participant from the local case study, assessed CYP's power as lower than that of policymakers. Although one might assume from this that he believed that policymakers hold more power than CYP, his interview included the assertion that "*Children have more power. Policymakers recognise the significance of children.*" Dee's words and his spider diagram demonstrate the contradiction between the findings obtained using different tools. This may confirm that power is a complex mutual relationship between two entities and our daily lives feature a variety of experiences associated with varying degrees of power and powerlessness (Punch, 2007b; Gallagher, 2008a; Sercombe, 2009). It may also manifest the difficulty of quantifying abstract ideas into a score as in the spider diagrams. Therefore, the spider diagram may be unsuitable for quantitative estimates, which participants found difficult to judge (Gujit, 2014), as outlined in Chapter 5. However, the contradiction and complexity of these issues underline the importance of using multiple types of data collection methods to increase the trustworthiness of research (Noble and Heale, 2019) and illustrate the complexity of social life.

Expanding on the theme of adults' greater power in decision-making, I analyse a selection of minutes from national committee and sub-committee meetings and incorporate them with some young participants' explanations taken from interview transcripts. As outlined in Chapter 5, I collected 18 documents outlining meeting minutes from four national committees/sub-committees: the National Commission on the Promotion of Child and Youth Development (NCPCYD), the Sub-Committee on the Protection of Children and Youth from Using Online Media (SC-PCYUOM), the Sub-Committee on Policy and Planning for Children and Youth Development (SC-PPCYD) and the Sub-Committee on the Promotion of Child and Youth Council Affairs (SC-PCYCA). Their analysis showed that fewer young representatives attended the meetings than policymakers. Table 17 compares the attendance of youth representatives and policymakers recorded in the meeting minutes.

Table 17

Attendance of youth representatives and policymakers at national committee and sub-committee meetings from 2018 to 2020

Committee/sub-committee name	Year	Meeting minutes document number	Ratio of youth representatives to policymakers
NCPCYD	2018	No.1/B.E. 2561	3:27
		No.2/B.E. 2561	3:26
		No.3/B.E. 2561	3:26
		No.4/B.E. 2561	2:24
	2019	No.1/B.E. 2562	3:22

Committee/sub-committee name	Year	Meeting minutes document number	Ratio of youth representatives to policymakers
		No.2/B.E. 2562	3:26
	2020	No.1/B.E. 2563	3:27
		No.2/B.E.2563	3:23
SC-PCYUOM	2018	No.2/B.E.2561	1:13
		No.3/B.E.2561	1:17
		No.4/B.E.2561	1:17
	2019	No.2/B.E.2562	1:13
	2020	No.1/B.E.2563	3:23
SC-PPCYD	2018	No.1/B.E.2561	1:20
		No.2/B.E.2561	1:27
	2019	No.1/B.E.2562	1:24
	2020	No.1/B.E.2563	1:24
SC-PCYCA	2020	No.3/B.E.2563	5:12

According to the table above, which presents the ratios of young representatives to policymakers at each meeting, there were between one and five young representatives for every 12 to 27 policymakers. On this topic, some young participants believed that the presence of fewer youth representatives on these committees/sub-committees gave them less power in decision-making. For instance, Chompoo (23 years old) elaborated on her experience at a meeting with policymakers, where she discovered that her decision-making power was diminished by the small number of young people attending compared to the large number of policymakers: *I think the proportion of children attending that meeting was very few compared to adults sitting in the meeting room. That makes us have little power.* Chompoo's argument reflects the existing situation and how it can complicate CYP's acquisition of more power and influence on national policy or programme decisions. This is supported by the fact that there are only three child and youth representatives in the NCPCYD compared to 27 high-level policymakers from various ministries (Arunittrakhoon, 2020). This may indicate that a small number of child and youth representatives on national committees results in less influence and more difficulty influencing policy decision-making for CYP (Wonganant et al., 2014). These findings may be related to young research participants' belief that they had less influence over national policy, as described in Chapter 7, Section 7.5.2. As shown in Table 17, the SC-PCYCA No.3/B.E.2563 contains the highest number of youth representatives (five) and the highest ratio of youth representatives to policymakers

(5:12). However, during interviews with young participants, no significant difference was reported regarding how the number of seats held by youth representatives in this sub-committee affected their perceptions of power or how the number of seats indicates that they held more power. This may imply that despite more favourable ratios, it is difficult for CYP to challenge adults' power in the national case study, where power is difficult to share between policymakers and CYP.

Overall, adults are perceived to hold more power in decision-making, and power sharing between policymakers and CYP is difficult. Power in the national case study seems to reflect binary groups in society, in line with the existing literature on power as centralised, where one agent possesses power over society or another social group (Bachrach and Baratz, 2002; Avelino, 2021). The dichotomy between adults and CYP in this case emphasises the hierarchical arrangement in which one actor (adults) has power over subordinates (children) (Hill et al., 2004) and can use their power to regulate and control the subordinates' bodies and minds (Punch, 2007a). Consequently, policymakers wield the power to control the actions of CYP in numerous ways, such as determining when and with whom they must seek consultation during meetings (Cairns, 2001; Fleming and Boeck, 2012). While research participants appeared to believe that policymakers had more power than CYP in national policy decision-making, young participants also thought that they possessed some degree of decision-making power (Sercombe, 2009). Although evidence from this case study highlights the dichotomy between CYP and policymakers, young participants' perceptions shed light on other factors, such as individual titles, positions and ranks, that also play a vital role in policy or programme decisions (Komin, 1990; Suwinyattichaiporn, Johnson and Fontana, 2019). As is the case globally (Basi, 1998; Haruţa and Cobârzan, 2010), policymakers observed that those in the highest-ranking positions frequently make the final decisions as they have the most power in bureaucratic systems. However, this is more complicated in the Thai context, where hierarchical structures are prevalent and people in the most powerful positions are likely to have more weight and power. The findings in the national case study align with research conducted by UNICEF (2016), which analysed the overall contemporary situation of CYP in Thailand, including obstacles to child and youth participation. This study found that youth representatives on (national) committees were frequently excluded from policy decision-making and planning because Thai societal norms emphasise the power imbalance between adults and CYP (UNICEF, 2016). The complexity of understanding power was further illustrated by the accounts of young people and policymakers in the local case study. This raises a number of important issues, including the belief that CYP hold more or equal power compared to policymakers, which I examine below.

8.2.2 Power and power-sharing in the local case study

Another theme that emerged from the accounts of the research participants, especially in the local case study, is the notion that CYP have either more or equal power compared to policymakers. For example, Ovaltin (16 years old) believed that she had more decision-making power than policymakers: *"when making the decision, children have more power."* In contrast, Zom (19 years old) and Aey (19 years old), felt that they and policymakers had equal power in local policy decision-making. Zom stated, "*I think*

we have equal power", and Aey said, "*I think our power is probably the same.*" Dee (18 years old) also discussed the importance of meaningful child and youth participation, which includes seeking and incorporating CYP's perspectives into policy decision-making (Head, 2011). This had become an essential component in his opinion that he and policymakers held a similar amount of power: "*We are all the same, everyone was asked their opinions, and all opinions would be gathered for decision making.*" This highlights the belief that power can be shared between policymakers and CYP, potentially encouraging meaningful child and youth participation (Arunkumar et al., 2019).

The spider diagrams of nine young local participants indicated that they felt that CYP frequently held higher or equal decision-making power compared to policymakers, as represented in Table 18. This differs significantly from the national case study, whose participants felt that policymakers had more power than CYP in policy/programme decision-making (see Table 16, Section 8.2.1).

Table 18

Young participants who rated their power higher than or equal to that of policymakers in the spider diagrams

Young research participant's name	Participation experience (years)	Power level of CYP	Power level of policymakers
Jinglean (16 years old)	4	8	7
Ovaltine (16 years old)	3	8	7
Miss A (14 years old)	3	7	3
Ning (19 years old)	2	7	5
Kratai (18 years old)	2	9	8
Dao (18 years old)	5	5	4
Zom (19 years old)	3	9	9
Penguin (19 years old)	3	9	9
Aey (19 years old)	3	5	5

Analysing the ages of the young participants in Table 18 reveals that those who evaluated their power as equal to or higher than policymakers were aged between 14 and 19 years. This group is younger than that of the national case study, in which most young participants who judged their power to be lower than policymakers' were between the ages of 23 and 25 (see Table 16). In addition, younger participants who had

less participation experience (2–5 years) reported levels of power equal to or higher than policymakers, whereas older ones with more participation experience (7–12 years) rated their power as lower than that of policymakers. These situations evidence the complexity of participation experiences and power as growing experience in child and youth participation may provide advantages in terms of empowerment and the development of personal skills (Head, 2011; Kraftl, 2013; Macauley et al., 2022; Alias, Mohamad Nasri and Awang, 2023) (see Chapter 7, Section 7.3.2) but may not align with perceptions of higher or lower levels of power. This issue was highlighted by Ovaltin (16 years old, three years of participation experience), who explained in her spider diagram why she believes that CYP have more power than policymakers: "*Children are creators, make decisions and are implementers, so I gave a high score, while adults are supporters, I gave lower scores.*" Similarly, Kratai (18 years old, two years of participation experience) rated CYP's power as higher than that of policymakers: "*I gave the score of 9 for children's power because I think children make more powerful decisions than adults.*" These strong statements asserting that CYP can make more powerful decisions than adults contradict previous research on CYP in policy/organisation decision-making in Thailand, which concludes that adults hold more power and are powerful decision-makers (Thanasankit, 2002; Bakalis and Joiner, 2002; Buchenrieder et al., 2017). These two young participants' accounts reflect their experiences of collaboratively sharing their ideas and suggestions with policymakers in policy and programme decision-making; this resonates with the literature stating that CYP prefer to make decisions and participate collaboratively with adults rather than independently (Willow et al., 2004). Figures 28 and 29 display Ovaltin's and Kratai's spider diagrams.

Policymakers' power in policy decision-making
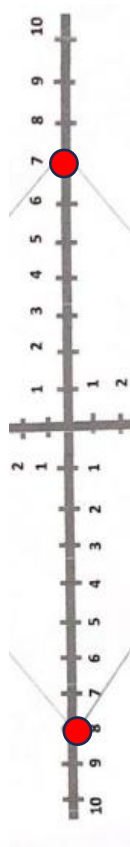
Policymakers' power in policy decision-making

CYP' s power in policy decision-making
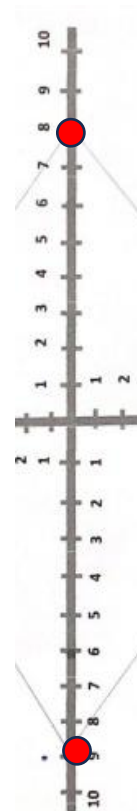
CYP' s power in policy decision-making

Figure 28: Ovaltin's spider diagram

Figure 29: Kratai's spider diagram

Whereas six individuals believed that they held more power than policymakers, the other three young participants evaluated their power score to be equivalent to that of policymakers. For example, Penguin (19 years old) explained why she gave both groups similar power scores:

> "*I gave nine points to us because I think we had the power to make decisions, and adults needed to listen to us. The power of adults in terms of decision-making, I also gave nine points because adults had the right to make decisions. Adults have rights and we need to listen too.*"

Her explanation indicates her belief in policymakers' right to make decisions in collaboration with CYP. She also recognises policymakers' right to express their views, which should be considered. Evidence from two young participants in the local case study, Miss A and Kratai, supports this (see Chapter 7, Section 7.5.1): despite estimating

their influence over policy decision-making to be greater than that of policymakers, they believed that policymakers could also share some influence on policy decision-making with them. Thus, they did not explicitly claim that they directly influenced local policy but instead emphasised the significance of the collaboration between the two parties in influencing policy and programme decisions. This is consistent with the literature proposing that power-sharing should be mutual between adults and children instead of occurring at a distinct level where children make decisions independently (Shier, 2001; Willow et al., 2004). Although these young participants provided different power scores, their perceptions could imply that policymakers did not hold all power in decision-making and that power can be shared with CYP when making decisions. This points to clear synergies with the wider literature in that power is neither exclusively in the hands of one group that controls another group (Jobb, 2019); instead, it is diffused throughout society, open to change over time, with social groups in society simultaneously experiencing and exerting power (Devine, 2000; Jobb, 2019).

Perceptions of power in local policymakers' accounts confirmed young research participants' view of power as diffused. Sukka (47 years old) firmly stated that policymakers must share decision-making power with CYP: "*we must give them decision-making power and realise that they are more powerful than we are on some issues.*" This suggests that policymakers in the local case study did not feel that they held all power; instead, it can (and should) be shared with CYP. Thus, power was not presented as something the dominant group must exercise over the subordinate group or something that can be given to someone but as a general term for specific types of actions (Gallagher, 2008a; Sercombe, 2009).

Moreover, Nunthida (42 years old) explained how policymakers and CYP can alternate between roles when they initiate, decide on and implement local policy or projects:

> "*We can switch our roles. Sometimes, we lead children, and it has changed from leading children to supporting children and acknowledging their thoughts. We sometimes share our decisions with them.*"

Nunthida's quote demonstrates that child and youth participation is a dynamic process, which means that CYP could flexibly adapt their participation depending on their willingness and the surrounding context (Cahill and Dadvand, 2018); as a policymaker, she could shift her level of participation or role from leading to supporting. The dynamic processes of child and youth participation in which CYP and adults can adapt their participation flexibly may lead to a more equitable balance of power in decision-making between CYP and adults (Arunkumar et al., 2019). Nunthida's words also confirm the literature stating that power in child and youth participation is dynamic and not something that children either possess or do not possess but instead fluid, dynamic, negotiated and contextual (Malone and Hartung, 2010). This viewpoint highlights the nature of power in the local case study: it can be transferred, re-distributed and exchanged between adults and CYP as well as shared among them (Hill et al., 2004; Botchwey et al., 2019). This is important, and the findings from the accounts of local policymakers seem to contradict the literature on intergenerational power dynamics in Thai organisational decision-making. For example, research has shown that decision-

making in policy and organisation frequently reflects unequal power relationships. Typically, adults have power over CYP because they possess specific knowledge, wisdom or experiences, which makes CYP less likely to participate in decision-making processes to avoid confrontation with adults (Thanasankit, 2002; Rattanadilok Na Phuket, 2017). This includes a hierarchy that emphasises the importance of power in people and society, where those in positions of power gain respect and loyalty; as a result, children, who have less power, are more likely to rely on and obey the demands of adults (Thanasankit, 2002; Jirapornkul and Yolles, 2010; Rattanadilok Na Phuket, 2017). The findings of this study illustrate and reinforce aspects of this argument but also point to greater complexity, shedding light on how power is diffused to CYP by adjusting their roles and functions in child and youth participation.

The data for the local case study provides interesting findings that help understand the mechanisms and processes fostering more meaningful child and youth participation. Notwithstanding some complexities surrounding power or underplaying the challenges of accounting for factors that might obscure power-sharing, the participants provided examples of what they perceived to be good practices for both policymakers and CYP. Comparing the data to that of the national case study revealed a seemingly different ethos surrounding child and youth participation, most notably evidenced by the policymakers' perceptions of power and their willingness to share decision-making power with CYP. Some local policymakers argued that they could not and should not hold absolute power, expressing their intention and willingness to share decision-making power with CYP to achieve more meaningful participation. This reflects efforts by policymakers to achieve a more meaningful level of participation and cultivate an ethos of child and youth participation that enables CYP to feel that they can confidently share decision-making power with policymakers.

In conclusion, the findings in this section draw attention to the dichotomy of power, which is typically regarded as either centralised or diffused (Bachrach and Baratz, 2002; Avelino, 2021). The view of power as centralised indicates that power is concentrated in the hands of elites or a particular social group that dominates another social group (Bachrach and Baratz, 2002; Avelino, 2021), resulting in difficulties in distributing power. In contrast, the second viewpoint treats power as relatively diffused or distributed through the participation of diverse interest groups (Lasswell and Kaplan, 1950; Bachrach and Baratz, 2002; Avelino, 2021). Several young participants, especially in the national case study, stated unequivocally that power was consolidated among national policymakers and that they faced difficulty in sharing power with them. Based on their experience, policymakers still wield and hold power even in the process of child and youth participation and decision-making, which aims to increase the power of CYP. This adds weight to the literature showing that the minority status of CYP means that they are often exploited and discriminated against due to their lack of political power (James and James, 2012) and are frequently seen as subordinates (Techacharoenrungrueang and Wanchai, 2017), which includes being excluded from full participation (West, 2007; Maconochie, 2013). This underscores Bourdieu's concept of *field,* as the national case study significantly reveals a distinct hierarchical structure that categorises individuals into dominant and subordinate positions (Gadinger, 2023).

In the national case study, drawing on Bourdieu's concept of symbolic power, the strict culture of obedience among CYP toward policymakers highlights how culture reproduces social class inequalities between the dominant (adults) and the dominated (CYP)(Swartz, 1997; Creaney and Burns, 2024). The findings also evidence the complexity of Thai hierarchy, where some policymakers occasionally face situations that force them to follow or agree with any decision made by those in higher positions. This emphasises that various elements, such as individual status, position, rank and personal title (Komin, 1990; Suwinyattichaiporn, Johnson and Fontana, 2019), play essential roles in the complex hierarchy of power in Thai culture. This reflects symbolic power where higher-ranking individuals hold a privileged status accepted by those in lower positions. The findings also suggest that the limited number of child and youth representatives on various committees or sub-committees diminished CYP's decision-making power. These findings include when and where policymakers determined it necessary to allow or control the participation of child and youth representatives to express their opinions during meetings or why the number of youth representatives on committees/sub-committees was deemed acceptable despite being inadequate. Why was the power of these policymakers in these cases accepted without question? These issues resonate with the literature showing that power can be quietly wielded through manipulation based on a variety of organised inducements to convince the subordinated to accept their current situation as unavoidable or acceptable and remain unaware of their oppression (John, 2003; Hill et al., 2004). It also aligns with the concept of symbolic power, where the truths articulated by a small number of young representatives on the national committee are accepted as unquestionable, thereby reinforcing the existing power structure (in the national committee) dominated by adults (France and Threadgold, 2016).

In contrast, many young participants in the local case study believed that they could share decision-making power with local policymakers, echoing the notion that power is diffused through the participation of diverse groups (Lasswell and Kaplan, 1950; Bachrach and Baratz, 2002; Avelino, 2021). Their experiences revealed that power is dynamic, fluid, transferable and subject to change based on the phases of participation and negotiation with policymakers. This highlights that power in child and youth participation is dynamic, negotiated and contextual and not something that CYP either do or do not possess (Malone and Hartung, 2010). Because power always involves a complex mutual relationship between at least two entities (Gallagher, 2008a; Sercombe, 2009), some local policymakers expressed their willingness to share power with young participants. This is important because it demonstrates that the diffusion of power stems partly from policymakers' willingness to share it with CYP. In addition, young participants' power over local policies and project decisions may result from an actual power transfer from adults to CYP. This analysis is in keeping with previous research, which argued that for CYP to hold real power over decision-making processes, adults must authentically share power with children (Shier, 2001; Macauley et al., 2022). Power can thus be shared, resulting in more equal or just power relations (Avelino, 2021).

Lastly, the findings of both case studies show that no individual is considered completely powerless; each individual possesses at least the power to act and may choose to cede it to others or not (Sercombe, 2009). Despite the common perception that CYP have the status of a minority and have less power than adults (Mayall, 2002; Malone and Hartung, 2010), they can and do hold power and are capable of exercising power over adults through their actions (Gallagher, 2008b; James and James, 2012). Evidence in the two case studies also suggests that in their daily lives, individuals go through diverse experiences associated with varying degrees of power and powerlessness (Punch, 2007b). Delving into the idea that power-sharing between adults and children is key to encouraging child and youth participation, the next section examines the mechanisms through which policymakers sought to share power with CYP in the two case studies.

8.3 Power-sharing: policymakers' methods and CYP's perceptions

Power-sharing in decision-making is crucial, and the concept of (meaningful) child and youth participation often highlights how decision-making power can be shared/distributed between CYP and policymakers (Hart, 1992; Shier, 2001; O'Kane, 2003; Botchwey et al., 2019). The analysis presented in this section concerns policymakers' attempts to share power with CYP in policy and programme decision-making and young participants' perceptions and experiences of power-sharing with policymakers. The findings suggest that although power is more centralised and difficult to share in the national case study context, some national policymakers challenged the centralisation of power and attempted to share it with CYP. This section presents three main power-sharing methods: dialogue, voting and small working groups. I then discuss how young participants experienced these methods. Each theme in this section is introduced separately, but the complexity of power-sharing methods indicates that policymakers often used a range of methods with CYP.

8.3.1 Dialogue towards a joint decision

As outlined in Chapter 3, dialogue with children about their desire to have some control over agenda-setting and decision-making, including co-learning and reflection, can be a power-sharing method in policy decision-making (O'Kane, 2003; Williams, 2004; Falconer et al., 2020; Smithson and Jones, 2021). Five local policymakers reported using this method to foster power-sharing with CYP in decision-making. Nunthida (42 years old) explained: "*We talk and listen to understand children's views deeply. I think talking is essential for sharing power with children. We cannot force them to make decisions or do things.*" In addition, Sukka (47 years old) discussed when dialogue should be utilised to share power in decision-making and mentioned principles of dialogue, such as the idea that decisions are neither right nor wrong but rather context dependent:

> "*while making decisions, it requires talking, dialogue and discussion with CYP…*
> *Every choice or decision is within the feasible framework, depending on the*

children's decision… Some ideas are good but are not feasible. The decision cannot be right or wrong; it depends on the context."

Moreover, Hathai (37 years old) described the connection between dialogue and building trust with CYP, arguing that "*Dialogue causes mutual trust, respect and understanding between children and policymakers".* Hathai believed that dialogue can help policymakers and CYP create mutual trust, respect and understanding. Her statements echo previous research findings that dialogue can bridge the gaps between policymakers and young people, raising mutual trust and respect between the two groups (Percy-Smith, 2007). The quotations above illustrate how policymakers employ dialogue to share power with CYP and outline the fundamentals of dialogue, which include profound respect for and understanding of each other's viewpoints (Percy-Smith, 2007; Falconer et al., 2020) and the ability to communicate freely and without judgement. Below, I further investigate some young participants' accounts of dialogue experiences offered by local policymakers, which could mitigate the power hierarchy between adults and CYP and promote the expression and consideration of the latter's views during their interactions with adults or involvement in policy decision-making.

Eight young participants in the local case study experienced dialogue as a way to share power with local policymakers. Penguin (19 years old) reported experiencing dialogue with policymakers throughout the committee decision-making process: "*Everyone* [on the committee] *brainstormed and figured it out together. We discussed and shared ideas before looking for common thoughts or decisions to follow together.*" Similarly, Jinglean explained: "*We sometimes share our thoughts with policymakers, and we would summarise at the end of the meeting what we discussed and make decisions.*" These quotes show how dialogue promotes shared decision-making between CYP and policymakers and illustrates how power can be shared between them. This suggests that local policymakers did not hold all decision-making power but that power was partially distributed to CYP through the process of dialogue. The experiences of these two young participants support previous discussions of how some local policymakers, such as Sukka (47 years old) and Nunthida (42 years old), used dialogue to share power with local CYP. These findings point to the effectiveness and importance of dialogue as a method for power-sharing in decision-making and the success of local policymakers in attempting to share power with young participants in this case study.

In addition, four young participants described how some policymakers worked closely with them, occasionally providing guidance and support when they struggled to reach a shared decision. Ovaltin (16 years old) recalled:

"*Several ideas were proposed, and an argument occurred. Sometimes, Mrs X, Mr X and Mr Y* [policymakers] *joined to comment. They advise, merge and combine some ideas and then we can make a decision.*"

Similarly, Kratai (18 years old) explained: "*Mrs X helped me and my friends brainstorm. Mrs X would think and suggest whether our idea could be realised. Then, adults would join the decisions.*" These quotations underline the significant roles of child and youth representatives in the committee's/sub-committee's deliberations and show the

importance of policymakers facilitating the discussion and decision process when complex issues arise as young participants assume leadership positions. This is consistent with the literature on meaningful participation and collaboration, which argues that adult involvement should be minimal. Policymakers should act as facilitators to enable CYP to determine their objectives by providing information, guidance, support and organisational assistance (Lansdown, 2010; OECD, 2017). Moreover, although these young participants in the local case study did not explicitly mention trust or mutual understanding with policymakers, they reflected on these concepts when they stated that policymakers provided them with close advice and aimed for joint decision-making with them. The importance of developing trust and mutual understanding was reinforced by Nontapat (58 years old), a local policymaker: "*We need to make children trust that we are on their side; we are their friends… This helps them feel more confident in sharing decisions with us.*" In addition, Miss A (14 years) stated:

> "*Our relationship* [between herself and policymakers] *was good; policymakers usually encouraged me when I sometimes needed to make a presentation or talk about the project. They always supported me and gave me suggestions and discussions.*"

The findings regarding the relationships between CYP and policymakers in the local case study differed from the national case study, in which young participants tended to emphasise their loose relationship with policymakers and how this perceived distance hindered their ability to establish trust with policymakers. For example, Wayupak (24 years old) explained: "*I did not have a close relationship with anyone while working with the X committee. Honestly, I felt that I could not trust some policymakers working on that committee.*" Similarly, Plawaln (23 years old) said: "*I did not know anyone from X Ministry. I was not close to those from that Ministry… I cannot even say 'hello' or tell them my opinion.*" The quotations across the two case studies highlight the key role of the (close) relationship between policymakers and CYP in facilitating dialogue to encourage CYP's participation in policy decision-making. The different relationships in the two case studies illustrate the particularities of the local context, which promoted dialogue.

Local policymakers utilised dialogue as the initial mechanism for sharing power with CYP. Evidence suggests that dialogue may reduce the gap between policymakers and CYP by increasing mutual trust and respect. Some local young participants believed that dialogue could increase their confidence in participating in policy decisions and encourage power-sharing with policymakers. The next section addresses another way to share power, namely, by allowing CYP to vote on key decisions. The findings show that some policymakers employed dialogue alongside voting when sharing policy-making power with CYP.

8.3.2 Voting

Voting is another power-sharing method that emerged from interviews with three policymakers, Peth (52 years old) and Ar-sa (52 years old) from the local case study and Natdanai (42 years old) from the national case study. These policymakers believed that voting was an effective means of distributing power to CYP, assuming that it was a

transparent method. This supposes that every meeting attendant has an equal right to vote in decision-making. For example, Natdanai stated that "*Each child has the right to vote.*" Rather than concentrating power in the hands of policymakers, voting demonstrates that decision-making power can be distributed to CYP. Peth provided an example of how she shared decision-making power with CYP when selecting a camping location as part of the child and youth participation activities supported by the SAO:

> "*I asked children where they wanted to go camping; girls wanted to go to the area located near the river, while boys wanted to go to the waterfall. Then, we voted to choose the place where the majority wanted to go.*"

These quotes demonstrate that voting can be an effective way for policymakers and CYP to share power because it allows all members to express their support for or opposition to a proposition. In addition, evidence from the two case studies explains the effectiveness of voting as a method for sharing power with CYP differently. In the national case study, due to the overrepresentation of adults on the committees, when complicated issues or conflicting ideas arose between youth representatives and policymakers, policymakers' propositions usually received the majority of the votes, and youth representatives frequently followed policymakers' decisions. As Natdanai explained:

> "*Youth representatives will follow the majority of decisions. Children usually follow the decisions of adults and are not confident enough to disagree with adults during the meeting. They will follow adults' decisions. Children would follow the majority* [policymakers], *although those decisions might not reflect their ideas. They did not want to be different so they just raised their hand to vote, something like that.*"

This quote indicates that the voting mechanism in the national case study was not confidential, which may have affected young people's confidence in expressing their thoughts and disagreeing with officials. The overrepresentation of policymakers on committees and the non-confidential voting mechanism thus became obstacles to power-sharing in the voting process, further reinforced by the Thai cultural context, whereby CYP may display a reluctance to disagree with adults, exacerbating feelings of powerlessness. Natdanai's quote can be contextualised and highlight the common characteristics of Thai CYP, such as lacking the confidence to argue with adults, frequently having to obey them and often avoiding expressing opposing opinions or contradicting adults (Kuwinpant, 2002; Knutson et al., 2003; Thanasankit and Corbitt, 2002; Nguyen, 2005; Yuenyong and Yuenyong, 2012; Iemamnuay, 2019), as outlined in Chapter 6. This is critical as it shows how the cultural characteristics of Thai CYP may impact their participation in policy decision-making and their ability to share power with policymakers. This finding strengthens the literature demonstrating that children, as subordinates, are less likely to participate in decision-making processes to avoid confrontation with their superiors (Thanasankit, 2002; Buchenrieder et al., 2017).

In contrast, the local case study indicates that some policymakers view voting as an efficient means of distributing power to CYP. Ar-sa (52 years old) firmly believed that policymakers in the local case study occasionally voted to support the ideas of CYP

rather than their own. Ar-sa's belief suggests that voting could effectively encourage power-sharing:

> "*Some policymaker committees and I agreed with the children. It is not about children's or adults' opinions but focuses on encouraging children's participation, rationale and the sincere sharing of power. Most of them support children and help children think before proposing their ideas or making a decision.*"

Like the national case study, the local case study featured an overrepresentation of policymakers on various committees, which may have contributed to the perception of voting to share decision-making power between policymakers and CYP as unfair. However, the quote above demonstrates Ar-sa's understanding of (meaningful) child and youth participation, which, despite the overrepresentation of policymakers, aims to support power-sharing and promote CYP's effective participation in decision-making. It suggests that (some) policymakers truly understand (meaningful) child and youth participation, which could lead to votes that can mitigate unequal committee membership. Ar-sa's words also express her intention to utilise voting to share power in decision-making with CYP and highlight the importance of policymakers' sincerity and willingness to share power with CYP. This corroborates the literature stating that policymakers' willingness to share power and their attitude towards CYP are key to encouraging power-sharing with children (Macauley et al., 2022).

Although voting can serve as a means for policymakers to share power with CYP, some policymakers' accounts indicate that voting has yet to be employed independently in practice. Natdanai (42 years old) drew a connection between dialogue and voting by stating that committee members frequently discuss an idea before voting: "*The sub-committee would make conversation, discuss, dialogue or debate before voting on some decisions during the meeting.*" Like other theories and research on child and youth participation (Shier, 2001; Francis and Lorenzo, 2002; Hart, 2008; Wong and Zimmerman, 2010; Borgne, 2014), this quotation helps explain power-sharing in decision-making between policymakers and CYP as a connected process or series of stages. Interestingly, although these two methods were described separately when implemented, they can be and were used simultaneously.

Eight young participants in the two case studies experienced voting with policymakers. The findings demonstrate similarities between the accounts of policymakers and young participants in the two case studies. Like Natdanai (a national policymaker), Plawaln (23 years old, national case study) and Loma (24 years old, national case study) thought that voting may not be an effective way to share power when making decisions. Plawaln felt that national policymakers had more opportunities to express their views during decision-making as a result of them holding more committee/sub-committee seats: "*most of the opinions are from adults rather than child and youth representatives. There are more adult members. It is not fair to vote.*" This quote reinforces Natdanai's argument that the overrepresentation of adults in the committees meant that policymakers' ideas usually received the majority of the votes (see page 187). In addition, Loma judged that although youth representatives were allowed to vote, "*the chairperson would make the final decision*'. These statements demonstrate that although voting was used to share

decision-making power with CYP, young national participants still believed that it could not effectively lead to power-sharing. These young participants also experienced unequal representation on committees and sub-committees, where adults outnumbered CYP significantly, as outlined in this section (page 187). Loma's quote shows that the committee chairperson's central position of power made it difficult for CYP to share power with policymakers while making policy decisions and again emphasises the complexity of power in general (Basi, 1998; Haruţa and Cobârzan, 2010) and in particular in the context of the Thai hierarchical system (Thanasankit, 2002; Buchenrieder et al., 2017), in which those in higher positions often have more decision-making power (see Chapter 4, Section 4.5).

Like local policymakers, young participants in the local case study believed that voting was a way to share power with policymakers and exert their right to address their views. Kratai (18 years old) described how voting allowed everyone to express their thoughts equally and simultaneously and felt that it gave everyone an equal opportunity to participate in every decision: "*We will ask all members to raise their hands to explain why. Then, policymakers and child and youth representatives have one vote on one issue.*" Ning (19 years old, local case study) explained that voting was used when committee or sub-committee members held diverse views but sought to determine the most acceptable decision: "*We used a voting system to know which idea is the most interesting one.*" Despite the issue of overrepresentation of policymakers on the committee, Kratai (18 years old) asserted that voting encouraged her to value and respect the majority's decisions: "*we will follow the majority. Policymakers have never intervened in a vote; they are collaborative and follow the majority voice.*" Kratai's statement indicates that CYP and policymakers were obligated to adhere to the decision of the majority and that, in her experience, policymakers frequently accepted the decision of the majority. Thus, her words suggest that instead of being concentrated in the hands of local policymakers, power was partially distributed to young local participants despite unequal representation on committees. This raises a number of important points, including the possibility that voting could serve as an effective means of power-sharing with CYP and instil in CYP a sense of reverence for majority judgements.

However, the complexities of power dynamics at the practical level of power-sharing in child and youth participation may reveal how policymakers exert control over voting when working with CYP. This is also exemplified by Kratai (18 years old, local case study), who voiced concerns about how local policymakers might control who should vote, when and what should be voted on: *"We* [CYP] *will be asked to raise our hands to show if we agree with the project or not and tell them the reason. Then, policymakers will gather our perspectives before deciding how to vote on the issue."* Although power can (partly) be shared between policymakers and CYP, Kratai's quote illustrates the opposing idea that while power is shared, it can also be centralised in the hands of adults and they can exercise power over CYP. Kratai's words thus suggest that in the context of child and youth participation, power can be defined as the capacity of the powerful to exert control over the agenda (Gunn, 2008) as local policymakers appeared to have control over the time or the issues on which CYP are permitted to vote. Importantly, however, Kratai was unaware that policymakers exercised control and

influence over her. This points to the hidden nature of power: children may be unaware that they have been influenced and never acknowledge conflict (Lukes, 2005).

This section described how policymakers in the two case studies sought to share decision-making power with CYP through voting and how young participants experienced the use of this method. Although voting may enable efficient power-sharing in decision-making, some concerns were raised regarding the excessive number of policymakers in committees. In particular, in the national case study, the overrepresentation of adults created a majority that can limit CYP's voting rights. This includes the possibility of centralising power with adults when policymakers or the committee's chairperson exercise their power by calling a vote in the local case study. The next section examines an additional approach to power-sharing, namely, the formation of small working groups, which emerged only in the national case study.

8.3.3 Forming small working groups or workshops

In the context of Thai bureaucracy, which often involves complicated processes (see Chapter 7, Section 7.4.4), some national policymakers explained that small working groups were formed to collect pertinent ideas or information from CYP in an effort to share power with them before making decisions. Pinhathai (56 years old) and Sayum (35 years old), from the national case study, mentioned the use of small working groups or workshops to share decision-making power with CYP: "*Power can be shared by forming small group workshops or working groups.*" This quote connects to the literature about the possibility of forming working groups as a method for sharing power because it can establish a co-created safe space for CYP. As the literature states, building co-created safe-space workshops with CYP around activities that interest them could mitigate some hierarchical power dynamics between policymakers and CYP (Smithson and Jones, 2021). Sayum (35 years old) explained how the committee in which he participated created such structures: *"The X committee, by chairperson X tasked policymakers and youth representatives with creating working groups. Additional meetings were organised in the working groups."* Whilst such mechanisms may be a means through which to share power, it also illustrates how those in more 'powerful' positions (in this case the chairperson) can ultimately determine such structures and control the agenda (Gunn, 2008). The chairperson's power to form small working groups is accepted by policymakers and/or CYP; therefore, power may be frequently wielded quietly through manipulation and organised inducements to persuade the subordinated to accept their current situation as unavoidable (John, 2003; Hill et al., 2004). Despite some criticisms of small working groups, Pinhathai felt that they could represent an effort to respect CYP's power in policy decision-making:

> "*Forming small working groups sometimes happens when a decision cannot be made, and then the group-forming process will be implemented… However, policymakers do not make decisions based on our power; we need to distribute power and show respect for children's power.*"

Pinhathai's quote illustrates how policymakers attempted to prevent the centralisation of power and share it with CYP. It also sheds light on the complexities of power in child and youth participation in policy decision-making processes. However, Pinhathai's

explanation that the formation of these small working groups aimed at power-sharing with CYP raises questions. Although Pinhathai argued that small working groups allow "*CYP to share power and provide more information before making decisions*", Pinhathai could not produce evidence to support the advantages of small working groups as a way to share power with CYP. This points to the issue of tokenism, in which policymakers seem to consult or discuss the perspectives of CYP but rarely consider them seriously or allow them to have a significant impact on policy decisions (Hart, 1992; Tisdall, 2015; Lundy, 2018; McMellon and Tisdall, 2020; Arunittrakhoon, 2020). Interestingly, although some policymakers established small working groups to encourage power-sharing with CYP, none of the young participants in the national case study indicated that they heard about or had direct experience with this way of sharing power with policymakers. Moreover, the national case study's illustration of power implies that adults possessed a greater degree of power or that power was centralised, challenging power distribution.

To summarise, three power-sharing methods utilised by policymakers emerged from the research: dialogue, voting and small working groups. Dialogue between local policymakers and CYP served as the initial method proposed by policymakers for sharing power with CYP when making policy decisions. Numerous young local participants engaged in what they perceived as meaningful dialogue, and this process was seen to be fundamental in the power-sharing process. Some local young participants also reflected on the importance of receiving guidance and support from policymakers when they struggled to make decisions. These findings not only emphasise the dialogue between the two parties but also evidence young participants' positive and close relationships with policymakers in such circumstances. However, this may again be specific to the context of the local case study, in which both parties collaborated more meaningfully on specific programmes or projects (see Chapters 7, Section 7.5.1). Voting was another method of power-sharing used by policymakers in the two case studies, allowing CYP to exercise their voting rights. However, the overrepresentation of adults on national committees/sub-committees likely ensures them a majority of the votes. The lack of anonymity also raised important concerns. This was most evident when we consider common characteristics of Thai CYP, such as obedience and a lack of confidence to challenge adults (Kuwinpant, 2002; Knutson et al., 2003; Thanasankit and Corbitt, 2002; Nguyen, 2005; Yuenyong and Yuenyong, 2012; Iemamnuay, 2019), which also played significant roles in neutralising voting's efficiency as a way to share power. This contrasts with the local case study, where policymakers and CYP tended to be sincere and willing to share power and encourage more meaningful participation.

Although dialogue and voting were discussed separately and utilised differently at different times and in different contexts, they were partially interrelated and interdependent in practice, with dialogue frequently used as the first step before voting. This combination may be a useful suggestion for policymakers attempting to share power in policy decision-making with CYP. The final method of power-sharing implemented was the formation of small working groups, as explained in the national case study. Small working groups are formed when thorough information on a policy or

project is needed to make decisions at the national level, especially for policies that would affect the entire nation. However, none of the young participants had any experience with these working groups. Although policymakers described utilising small working groups and voting to share and distribute power to CYP, there are concerns that they may exercise their power to determine when and where forming working group or voting should be implemented. This highlights the fact that adults continue to have power over CYP, whether that power is centralised or diffused.

8.4 Conclusion

In this research, young people and policymakers across the two case studies perceived power and experienced power-sharing in decision-making differently. In the national case study, participants felt that policymakers held more centralised forms of power, which was seldom shared with CYP. Their perspectives show that policymakers frequently have the power and responsibility to make policy decisions. Moreover, within the Thai context, the culture of obedience among CYP toward adults and those in hierarchical positions (Thanasankit, 2002; Rattanadilok Na Phuket, 2017; Techacharoenrungrueang and Wanchai, 2017) underscores the role of culture in reproducing social class inequalities between CYP and adults (Swartz, 1997; Creaney and Burns, 2024). In addition, some young participants argued that their lower power in policy decision-making was due to the small number of youth representatives on the committees. However, policymakers were rarely aware that the amount of youth representatives should be modified or increased. This reflects the complexity of power dynamics in social groupings in which adults can establish or control the agenda and influence preferences and desires (Lukes, 2005; Gunn, 2008; O'Connell and Brannen, 2014). It also aligns with the concept of symbolic power, where the unquestioned truths of a few young representatives on the national committee reinforce its adult-dominated power structure (France and Threadgold, 2016). This is further complicated by Thai culture when lower-level policymakers perceive themselves as having less power in policy decision-making than higher-level individuals. This perception stems from their belief that committee chairpersons or higher-level government officials acquire more power to make policy decisions. While this is a common situation in many organisations worldwide (Basi, 1998; Haruța and Cobârzan, 2010), Thai feudalism emphasises hierarchy, with chairpersons or people in higher positions potentially wielding more power. Therefore, in Thai culture, power may not be a binary concept dependent on age (e.g. CYP versus adults); instead, it is frequently related to an individual's position, rank and social status (Komin, 1990; Suwinyattichaiporn, Johnson and Fontana, 2019). Individuals with higher titles, positions and prestige have more power to dominate those with a lower status. Therefore, CYP's minority status subjects them to possible oppression by adults who have power over them or powerlessness (James and James, 2012). Although the young participants in the national case study reported a pervasive feeling of powerlessness, it is essential to recognise that they are not completely powerless: they do possess some power and can use it to challenge policymakers'

power in policy decision-making (Gallagher, 2008b; Sercombe, 2009; James and James, 2012).

In contrast, participants in the local case study felt that policymakers and CYP could share power when making policy and programme decisions. These young participants thus perceived their power to be greater than or equal to that of policymakers. These perceptions emphasise that rather than centralised, power is diffused, can be shared and neither fixed exclusively in the hands of one group that controls another (Scott, 2001; Jobb, 2019). Their beliefs contradict the literature on decision-making in Thai culture, which frequently portrays power as centralised in powerful individuals or high-level management, who typically make the decisions (Bakalis and Joiner, 2002; Thanasankit and Corbitt, 2002; Buchenrieder et al., 2017). In addition, some local policymakers, for example, expressed their willingness to share power when making policy or programme decisions and seek to collaborate and create partnerships with CYP, including by switching roles as leaders, followers and supporters at different stages of participation. These policymakers' actions not only contribute to perceptions of more equal power distribution but also echo the nature of child and youth participation in the local case study as based on collaboration or partnership (see Chapters 7, Section 7.5.1). Despite the willingness of local policymakers to share power and encourage collaborative child and youth participation, some evidence suggests that power dynamics are complex at the practical level, where policymakers may intentionally or unintentionally control CYP. Some local policymakers exercise power over what should be done and when, particularly in the power-sharing voting system, and CYP might not be aware they are being controlled. This exemplifies the complicated hidden nature of power, as a result of which children may be unaware that they are being influenced and fail to recognise a conflict (Lukes, 2005). Despite some criticism of power and power-sharing in the local case study, its results differ from those of previous research. The existing literature frequently asserts that CYP are less likely to participate in decision-making processes to avoid confrontation with their superiors and that superiors typically have the power to make decisions (Bakalis and Joiner, 2002; Thanasankit and Corbitt, 2002; Buchenrieder et al., 2017). Young participants in the local case study demonstrated that they have decision-making power alongside policymakers and can play important roles in this process.

Policymakers used three main methods for sharing power with CYP when making policy decisions: dialogue, voting and small working groups. Local policymakers mainly employed dialogue, which has numerous advantages not just as a power-sharing method but also in terms of increasing mutual trust and respect, fostering close relationships and promoting a better understanding between policymakers and CYP. Local young participants appeared to experience these benefits similarly. Although voting was implemented in the two case studies and appeared to be an effective power-sharing method based on the principles of transparency and equal right to vote, the participants' experiences in each case study varied. In the national case study, the overrepresentation of adults on committees/sub-committees and some common characteristics of Thai CYP, particularly obedience to adults and lack of confidence in opposing adults' views, obstructed the effective use of voting for sharing power. This

contrasts with the findings of the local case study, where despite the overrepresentation of adults on the committees, policymakers tended to vote to support CYP's ideas rather than their own. This connects to local policymakers' willingness or sincerity in sharing power with CYP when making policy decisions. In addition, the method of forming small working groups emerged from the accounts of national policymakers, and its primary purpose was to collect well-rounded ideas from CYP when complex issues arose during the decision-making process for national policy. Although national policymakers employed this method, none of the young national participants acknowledged it, reported having experience with it or expressed their opinions about it. The findings presented here raise concerns about the effectiveness of this method in involving CYP in decision-making.

Lastly, although the findings of this research project indicate that the nature of power in the two case studies differed, evidence shows that regardless of whether power is centralised or diffused, adults sometimes hold power over CYP intentionally or not. Irrespective of their willingness or unwillingness to share power with CYP in policy decisions through various power-sharing methods, policymakers exhibit a certain degree of control over the timing of participation, the individuals involved and the information shared with CYP. This may again point to the minority status of CYP, which results from differential power relations with adults (Mayall, 2002; Malone and Hartung, 2010). Thus, CYP may still tend to be excluded from full participation in their society (West, 2007; Maconochie, 2013).

Chapter 9: Conclusion and discussion

9.1 Introduction

This thesis explored policymakers' and children and young people's (CYP) perceptions and experiences of childhood and child and youth participation in two case studies (national and local) in the Thai context. Adopting the main principles of the New Sociology of Childhood (NSC), this thesis demonstrated how crucial this paradigm shift is to our understanding of the constructions of childhood in different cultural contexts. This is despite the continued dominance of the minority world's frameworks, which imply that childhood is a universal phenomenon independent of cultural influences. Nevertheless, since the emergence of the NSC in the 1980s, an alternative perspective for understanding childhood, youth and CYP has gained increasing importance. According to the NSC, childhood is socially constructed and varies over time and across contexts (James and Prout, 2001; James and James, 2012; Montgomery, 2013a). Understanding Thailand's conception of childhood and CYP through the lens of the NSC, I demonstrated the unique characteristics of the Thai context that diverge from those of other cultures, particularly given the dominance of the minority world's perceptions of childhood. The growing acknowledgement of the NSC has also raised global awareness of children's role as active social actors in society, leading to a shift in how CYP are perceived and their right to participate in decision-making (Smith, 2002; Tisdall and Bell, 2006; Sorin and Galloway, 2006; Kellet, 2009; Lansdown, 2010; Jones, 2011). This recognition has substantially boosted the promotion of CYP's participation in various areas and disciplines (Hart, 1992; Shier, 2001; Jones, 2009b; Wong and Zimmerman, 2010). However, child and youth participation cannot be comprehended without considering its social, cultural and political contexts (Percy-Smith and Thomas, 2010). Accordingly, this thesis investigated child and youth participation in the Thai context based on the perceptions of policymakers and CYP. This included an exploration of the experiences of CYP involved in policy and programme decision-making.

Although the NSC appears to empower CYP by increasing their participation and awareness in society, another vital part of the theory indicates that children are a minority group affected by the inequalities resulting from power differentials between adults and CYP (Mayall, 2002; Malone and Hartung, 2010). Because they are in a minority position with more limited power, their voices are seldom heard, and their opinions are not considered sincerely (Mayall, 2000; Gallacher and Kehily, 2013). This suggests that the concept of power and its distribution are closely linked when it comes to comprehending and promoting the participation of CYP (Hart, 1992; Shier, 2001; O'Kane, 2003). This issue was also explored from the perspectives of policymakers and CYP participating in policy and programme decision-making. This contribution demonstrated the power dynamics in two case studies and deepened the understanding of the power dynamics embedded in Thai culture. For this purpose, I probed how policymakers seek ways to share power with CYP and how the latter experience these

methods. This research is timely because the Thai government established the essential acts (NCYDP Act 2007 and NCYDP Act 2017) and mechanisms for the promotion of CYP's participation in national governance in 2007 and local governance in 2017. These acts and mechanisms were introduced long enough ago that an evaluation is needed by now.

The interrelation between the conceptualising of childhood as a social construct and recognition of CYP as social actors with a right to participate in society as well as the importance of power and power-sharing in child and youth participation is worth investigating in depth, especially in the context of Thai culture. Therefore, this thesis presented eight research questions that focused on the influence of Thai culture on the construction of Thai childhood and the comprehension and experience of child and youth participation within this context. Additionally, the research explored the significance of power and power distribution in child and youth participation within Thai culture. The present chapter highlights the study's findings from Chapters 6 to 8 and makes suggestions for improving policy and practice to ensure more meaningful child and youth participation and for future research. The chapter begins by summarising and discussing the research's findings. Section 9.3 then presents the policy and practice recommendations that emerged from the findings. In section 9.4, I discuss the thesis's contribution and possible directions for future research on child and youth participation in Thailand. Then, Section 9.5 introduces the study's limitations and future research. Section 9.6 concludes the thesis.

9.2 Overview of the study's findings

The various qualitative methods used with CYP and policymakers produced rich data regarding participants' perceptions and experiences, resulting in answers to the research questions that are described in detail in Chapters 6–8. Three overarching themes emerged, which are summarised in this section: the influence of Thai culture on the construction of childhood and youth, child and youth participation in Thailand, and finally, the importance of power in child and youth participation.

9.2.1 The influence of Thai culture on the construction of childhood and youth

This section focuses upon the findings of Chapter 6, which address young participants' and policymakers' perceptions of childhood, youth and CYP. Although the notion that childhood is a social construct has been criticised for its complexity and continuous evolvement (Tatlow-Golden and Montgomery, 2020), this thesis foregrounded the conceptual framework to explore how particular contexts and cultures influence individuals' perceptions of childhood, youth and CYP. Drawing on the notion that childhood is socially constructed across time, space and culture (James and Prout, 2001; James and James, 2012; Montgomery, 2013a), this thesis illustrated how Thai culture influenced the perception of childhood and youth. In response to the research questions

"How do CYP perceive childhood/children?" and "How do policymakers perceive childhood/children?", young participants and policymakers demonstrated how particular aspects of Thai culture, such as obedience (Tulananda and Roopnarine, 2001; Black, 2013), Thai feudalism (Rabibhadana, 1969; Vorng, 2017), gratitude (Liamputtong et al., 2004; Sinnott, 2014) and Buddhist doctrines (Klibthong, 2013; Malikhao, 2017; Iemamnuay, 2019), shaped the construction of childhood and societal perceptions of and expectations towards Thai CYP. Most participants perceived childhood as a time of obedience and respect for parents, adults and older people. This perception highlights that obedience is a unique aspect of childhood in Thai culture, where CYP are often expected to obey their parents and show respect for adults of higher status and older age (Tulananda and Roopnarine, 2001; Yunus, 2005; Black, 2013; Xu, Zhang and Hee, 2014; Kim et al., 2015). This similarity in young participants' and policymakers' accounts suggests that these characteristics remain firmly embedded in Thai culture and are transmitted across generations despite wider social change. In addition, it is essential to note that these dynamics seem to have constrained CYP's ability to fully participate in wider society (Tharapak, Dejwaln and Mrukapituk, 2021), especially in the national case study, where CYP were expected to obey and follow policymakers or high-level government official decisions (see Chapters 7 and 8).

Another perception common to the two participant groups was the importance of repaying one's moral debt to one's parents, with evidence showing that Thai individuals frequently believe that CYP owe moral obligations to their parents for looking after them from an early age and, consequently, feel a strong sense of duty (Morita, 2007; Montgomery, 2014). Similar ways of repaying this moral debt emerged from the two participant groups, namely, looking after parents and/or being ordained as a monk (for men only) (Liamputtong et al., 2004; Sinnott, 2014). Thai people were taught these repayment methods since childhood and had to apply them from childhood until adulthood. Nonetheless, there were notable differences. While young participants believed that helping their parents by working on the farm or around the house was part of repaying the moral debt, policymakers regarded helping parents as a given. The assumption was that CYP are economically useful family members and that working with one's parents on household tasks is normal and not part of repaying one's moral debt to one's parents. This indicates that the perceptions of these two groups differed and suggests that perceptions of childhood have shifted over time (James, Jenks and Prout, 2010; James and James, 2012). Despite similarities and differences between these two groups on this topic, their perceptions and expectations overall reflect the importance of parents to their children and the respect that children are expected to show for their parents (Promchotchai, 2013; Wathreewattanarut, 2023). Notwithstanding important criticisms, the methods for repaying the moral debt to parents imply that Thai CYP are partly seen as active citizens in the private sphere who can contribute to their family's affairs. Another similarity between the two groups was the expectation of attaining "good" jobs, with numerous research participants stating that their parents encouraged them to become government officials (Supap, 1999; Chinpraphap, 2021). More precisely, however, policymakers' childhood memories revealed high parental expectations that their children would become government officials, whereas these demands appeared less significant for young participants.

Despite these differences, the two groups' rationales for pursuing government employment in Thai culture were similar: working for a government agency could lead to honour, power and a higher position in society, including the respect and allegiance of others, often referred to in Thai culture as "being masters of others" (Supap, 1999; Thummachote and Yurdagul, 2018; Chinpraphap, 2021). The evidence on the issue suggests that earning honour and power is important in Thai society, and power may influence the construction of Thai childhood and youth. In addition, power is an essential component in Thailand's policy decision-making process, as explained in Section 8.2, which discussed the importance of understanding the workings of power in this context. Another shared perspective regarding childhood was the framing of CYP as the nation's future and expectations for CYP to perform as future citizens who are instrumental to progress in Thai society. These perspectives offer valuable insight into the success of the policies and agendas of the Thai government that rely on the belief that CYP represent the future of the nation (Nimmannorrawong, 2015b). Even though the research participants belonged to distinct generations, this notion influenced their perspectives.

The majority perceptions above demonstrate that the two participant groups perceived childhood and youth similarly, albeit with minor differences. In contrast, the perceptions that emerged from the accounts of policymakers indicate that different generations have different perceptions of what childhood and youth mean. This underlines that the understanding of childhood has changed over time (James and Prout, 2001; Kehily, 2009). For example, some policymakers reported their childhood memories in which they were involved in forms of work to ensure their family's well-being. These policymakers' childhood experiences illustrate the acceptance of labour and suggest that policymakers may assume that CYP are perceived as valuable economic assets by their families. It also exemplifies the differing viewpoints of policymakers and young participants on work, with the latter viewing it as a means of repaying their moral debt to their parents. Further, some policymakers described childhood experiences in which they were treated differently due to their genders. They described a firm belief in gender segregation within the family, in which men serve as family leaders and women as family carers (Samonova et al., 2021). This notion was rarely found in the accounts of young participants. This suggests that the idea of gender segregation within the family may have declined in contemporary Thai society. Although the central argument of this research is that childhood is socially constructed in a specific context, the influence of the minority world's understanding of childhood on the majority world cannot be ignored, especially regarding the consensus on children's universal vulnerability and need for protection from adults (Yunus, 2005; Linde, 2014). This was reflected by some policymakers who saw the current Thai CYP as vulnerable and innocent individuals. This spotlights the spread of what has been argued to be colonialism and cultural dominance of the majority world by the minority world (Wells, 2009; Cregan and Cuthbert, 2014). However, the perceptions and constructions of childhood, youth and CYP in the two research participant groups could also demonstrate that the construction of childhood in Thailand, a country in the majority world, is shaped by both global and local variables (Wells, 2009). In the global context, childhood has been shaped by the spread of international law, international standards

and international actors (Wells, 2009). In specific contexts, cultural characteristics, ethnicity, gender, religion and rural/urban location also play a significant role (Gemayel and Salema, 2023). These two groups of variables add to the complexity of Thai childhood, youth and CYP because they were perceived in combination by the research participants, which occasionally led to contradictions. For example, CYP were expected to be responsible family members or active citizens in the family sphere by taking on household responsibilities. This appears to contradict the idea of CYP as vulnerable and innocent individuals who are incapable and dependent on adults for care or protection (Linde, 2014; Boonhok, 2020).

The findings about constructions of childhood and youth highlight how adults form and shape the understanding of CYP (Jones, 2009b). They also evidence the symbolic power of adults, who can generate norms for Thai childhood and youth, and adults' ability to impose these norms in Thai culture, demanding that CYP comply (John, 2003; Farthing, 2012; France and Threadgold, 2016; Lewer, 2023). These constructions emphasise the minority status of CYP, who are subjected to oppression by adults, the majority social group (Prout, 2011). The experience of children, as a minority group in Thai culture, is marked by an awareness of pressure from parents and adults. Parents' perceptions and expectations that their children must achieve a good education put some young participants under stress to get high scores in their studies as well as conform to the norm of being "good people". Some policymakers felt pressure associated with repaying their moral debt to their parents because they could be perceived as irresponsible if they were unable to support their parents. Rather than playing a passive role in these circumstances, research participants demonstrated on numerous occasions that they exercised their agency to challenge or resist adult and adult-generated norms (see Chapter 6, Section 6.2.1). Nevertheless, when they exercised their agency, they often encountered challenges, especially adults' moral judgement (Raithelhuber, 2016; Punch, 2016), which limited their agency and once again brought into focus their minority status or their feelings of powerlessness. Although the key findings emphasise CYP's powerlessness or minority status in Thai culture, this research also indicates that CYP can be seen as social actors with rights (James and Prout, 2001; Punch, 2016) and as active citizens who can contribute and participate in Thai society.

9.2.2 Child and youth participation in the context of Thailand

Two research questions, "How do CYP perceive child and youth participation?" and "How do policymakers perceive child and youth participation?', aimed to investigate young participants' and policymakers' perceptions of child and youth participation in Thai society. Interestingly, these two participant groups perceived child and youth participation as similar in many respects. In Chapter 7, the first understanding of child and youth participation emerging from various young participants' accounts, mainly from the national case study, referred to encouraging CYP to think freely and then openly communicate their ideas to adults securely and openly. Similarly, many national policymakers characterised child and youth participation as encouraging CYP to think and express their opinions freely and argued that adults should listen to them. The studies also shed light on areas for improvement as numerous young participants

expressed a strong desire to include a follow-up mechanism for CYP to reflect on their ideas with policymakers and determine how these ideas are implemented in policy and programme development. This highlights one global challenge in child and youth participation, namely, the absence of follow-up in policy and programme development (Thomas, 2007; Morentin-encina, Pigem and Núñez, 2022), which also applies to the Thai context (see Chapter 7, Section 7.4.2). The analysis of the first understanding suggests that research participants have been influenced by the dominant construction of child and youth participation in the minority world, according to which CYP are capable of forming their own views and can express those views freely in all matters affecting them (Punch and Tisdall, 2012; Montgomery, 2013b). The CYP's and policymakers' perceptions appear consistent with Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), which affirms children's right to participate in all matters affecting them (Convention on the rights of the child, 1989). The growing significance of the minority world's concept of child and youth participation has impacted Thai society, diverging from the traditional Thai values of CYP's participation, which involve taking care of family members and engaging in daily labour to provide for the family (Kotchabhadi et al., 2009). The enduring significance of colonialism and its impact on colonial areas was thus uncovered by examining the development of the concept of child and youth participation in Thai society.

However, the influence of Thai culture on the perception of child and youth participation in the country should not be overlooked. The second understanding of child and youth participation is relevant to encouraging its implementation in community development projects to address local issues and needs. This understanding was mainly put forward by research participants in the local case study. It partly shows the roles of CYP involved in the activities of adults to deal with problems that affect people in their community. It also reflects the characteristics of a collectivist society, where the bond between society and individuals is strong and individuals are integral parts of cohesive groups (Prabhu, 2011). This demonstrates the persistence of this cultural element in the cultural norms related to the conception of child and youth participation in Thai society (Mason and Bolzan, 2010). Young participants in the local case study identified two projects addressing the needs and challenges of their community, and they reported receiving collaborative support from local policymakers – an important finding that emerged from the local case study. Although this perception could suggest that policymakers successfully encouraged collaborative participation, young people in the local case study still called for more collaboration with local policymakers to build more confidence to participate and be involved in policy and programme decision-making. Thus, collaboration is required throughout the child and youth participation process, regardless of the stage of participation. Although research participants comprehended child and youth participation differently, their understandings highlight the growing awareness that CYP are social actors with the right to participate in society, in line with children's agency (Jones, 2009b; Punch and Tisdall, 2012) and the belief that CYP are active citizens in Thailand's public sphere. This encompasses CYP's participation in complicated fields, such as policy and programme development.

9.2.2.1 Participation at different stages of policy and programme development: perceptions and challenges

As explored in Chapter 7, there were both similarities and differences in how young participants in the two case studies perceived their participation at different stages. Concerning their first participation experience, most (12) participants recalled feeling a complex range of negative emotions or being very emotional (e.g. upset, unconfident, pressured and nervous). These feelings echo the common characteristics of Thai CYP, who are often silent in the presence of seniors (Knutson et al., 2003). However, local young participants' perceptions shifted considerably as they acquired more participation experience: they described more optimistic perspectives, feeling confidence, encouragement and delight. This suggests that CYP who have more participation experience and engage in various forms of participation become more self-aware and are encouraged to advocate for themselves (Day, 2008; Lansdown and O'Kane, 2014a; Markogiannaki, 2016) or learn the advantages of participation in terms of empowerment and personal skill development (Sinclair, 2004b; Head, 2011; Kraftl, 2013; Tasios and Kalyva, 2013; Cummins, Horgan and Martin, 2022). Although young local participants were more positive about their participation, they still needed more collaboration from local policymakers to feel more confident in participating in and influencing local policy. In contrast, some young participants in the national case study highlighted the persistence of negative emotions or dissatisfaction with their participation despite having more participation experience. These findings were also complicated by the fact that young people did not necessarily reflect on how to increase their power in decision-making with policymakers (Chapter 8). These situations point to the complexity of CYP's participation experiences and power in decision-making. The results show that young people with significant participation experience in the national case study did not always believe strongly in CYP's decision-making power.

Although young participants perceived and experienced their participation in policy and programme development differently, overall, they initially believed that they and other Thai CYP could contribute to the work of organisations as well as local and some national policies (Checkoway, Allison and Montoya, 2005; Thomas, 2007; Guyot, 2011; Shier et al., 2014; OECD, 2017). However, some young participants in the two case studies questioned their own or other CYP's capacity to participate and lacked confidence in CYP's influence on policy decision-making. Similarly, some policymakers in the two case studies doubted CYP's capacity: some national policymakers argued that the complexity of the national policy process and procedures may limit CYP's capacity to participate, and some local policymakers questioned young participants' capacity due to lack of experience. This reveals adults' biases or negative attitudes towards CYP's capacities, which represent a major obstacle to child and youth participation around the world (Chapter 7, Section 7.4.3) (Laura, 2007; Hinton, 2008; Martin et al., 2015). At the same time, it might once again indicate CYP's need for encouragement to build the confidence necessary to participate and be involved in policy and programme decision-making.

In Chapter 7, the research question "What are the main obstacles that CYP face, and how do they overcome them to participate in policy and programme development?" was addressed. The findings identified shared and unique elements in the two case studies. Time management issues, which include CYP feeling too busy, and associated conflict with parents (Borden et al., 2005; Collins and Raymond, 2006; Nir and Perry-Hazan, 2016; Macauley et al., 2022) were mentioned by 16 individuals. In addition, 13 participants lamented the lack of formal feedback or follow-up in the participation process (Borgne, 2014; Arunkumar et al., 2019), which left them unaware of whether their perspectives were integrated into policy or programme development or disregarded. This was pointed out by some young participants in the national case study who often faced adults' biases regarding their capacity (Shier, 2012; Corney et al., 2021). Similarly, some local policymakers exhibited biases towards CYP when they described their experiences working with youth representatives .Young participants from the national case study pointed out policymakers' lack of comprehension or knowledge necessary for enhancing (meaningful) child and youth participation and argued that they frequently failed to involve CYP in their activities (Lansdown, 2001). Additionally, the national case study was marked by unique obstacles, notably the complexity of organisations and processes as the key element discouraging child and youth participation (Percy-Smith, 2007; McMellon and Tisdall, 2020) and influencing policy or programme decision-making. Furthermore, a few young participants in the national case study experienced discrimination by policymakers or threats to their safety, particularly when they expressed views relevant to societal or political issues in the context of their participation activities. This again suggests that when CYP demonstrate their agency or challenge the existing structures, they face adults' contrasting perceptions, pressure and various challenges (Raithelhuber, 2016; Punch, 2016). This also reveals a disconnect between the UNCRC's prohibition on discrimination as a fundamental principle and the realisation of this principle in practice. The last obstacle reported by some young participants in the local case study relates to common characteristics of young Thai people, timidity and lack of confidence (Knutson et al., 2003), which limit their ability to participate. This obstacle connects to young participants' experiences with participation at different stages (Chapter 7, Section 7.3.1), with the beginning stages characterised by negative perceptions or feeling very emotional.

In both case studies, young participants elaborated on how they overcame these obstacles. Overall, they successfully managed to solve their problems independently, for instance, by organising their time to support their family while also being involved in participation activities or working groups to evaluate the impact of their participation. They demonstrated their ability to overcome obstacles by presenting themselves as active citizens and raising awareness of Thai CYP as social actors. However, these solutions imply a lack of support from policymakers; therefore, policymakers have an opportunity to offer more support to help CYP face these challenges more effectively. Another notable issue was young participants' inability to find solutions to the problem

of Thai bureaucracy, especially in national governance. This structure is hierarchical and complex, involving multiple levels of committees and making decision-making challenging for CYP and policymakers (See Chapter 7, Section 7.4.4). This differs from local governance, where the smaller scale facilitates CYP's participation. Despite the differences between the case studies, this issue indicates that a more friendly or simpler system is needed to enable CYP's effective participation.

9.2.3 The importance of power in child and youth participation

Chapter 8 sought to answer the questions "How do policymakers seek to share power with CYP in policy and programme decision-making?" and "How do CYP perceive their power-sharing experiences in policy and programme decision-making with policymakers?". On this topic, participants in each case study had a unique perception of power, which impacted how policymakers attempted to share it and how young participants perceived it. Overall, perceptions of power in the two case studies connected to the dichotomy of power as centralised or diffused (Bachrach and Baratz, 2002; Avelino, 2021). This is significant for several reasons. First, it illustrates the nature of power in each case study, which varies depending on the context. Additionally, understanding the nature of power helps explain the power dynamics in each case study.

In the national case study, research participants believed that policymakers often held more power in policy decision-making, leading to the perception that power is centralised and difficult to share (Bachrach and Baratz, 2002; Avelino, 2021). Most young people in the national case study described various experiences that emphasised the hierarchical arrangements in which adults have power over CYP as subordinates. Although bureaucratic organisations give decision-making power primarily to high-ranking individuals (Basi, 1998; Haruţa and Cobârzan, 2010), in Thai culture, this issue is reinforced by the culture of obedience, with CYP expected to obey adults and refrain from arguing with them (Thanasankit, 2002; Knutson et al., 2003; Rattanadilok Na Phuket, 2017; Techacharoenrungrueang and Wanchai, 2017). Importantly, drawing on Bourdieu's concept of symbolic power, the culture of obedience in the national case study highlights how culture reproduces social class inequalities between adults and CYP (Swartz, 1997; Creaney and Burns, 2024). In contrast, participants in the local case study tended to believe that CYP wielded either more power or the same amount of power as policymakers in policy and programme decision-making. The evidence also confirms that power is neither exclusively in the hands of one group that controls another nor fixed entirely in one entire group (Jobb, 2019), but can be shared between two parties in policy and programme decision-making. The experiences of research participants in the local case study emphasised (meaningful) child and youth participation, in which power can be shared or distributed from adult policymakers to CYP (Hart, 1992; Shier, 2001; O'Kane, 2003; Botchwey et al., 2019).

The findings further demonstrated the complexity of power in the context of Thai culture. The national case study highlighted the impact of the key element of Thai culture, in which an individual's position, rank and social status (Komin, 1990; Suwinyattichaiporn, Johnson and Fontana, 2019) are involved in their decision-making

power. When making decisions, lower-level policymakers in the national case study believed that they had less power than high-level policymakers. They were also required to adhere to the decisions made by higher-level policymakers. Importantly, those in high positions of power receive respect and loyalty from those in lower ones (Jirapornkul and Yolles, 2010). Moreover, regardless of whether young people and policymakers perceived themselves to have greater or lesser influence than each other, all participants believed that they had (a small amount of) power to act, which every individual possesses (Sercombe, 2009). This may be explained in part by the idea that no one is completely powerless and that the daily lives of humans feature a variety of experiences linked with varied degrees of power and powerlessness (Punch, 2007b).

As discussed in Chapter 8, policymakers in the two case studies described methods for sharing power with CYP when making policy decisions. Power-sharing was deemed acceptable in the local case study because it aligned with the nature of power as shareable. This contrasts with the idea that power is primarily centralised and seldom shared in the national case study. However, policymakers in the two studies sought to share power and discussed three methods for sharing it with CYP: dialogue, voting and forming small working groups. Most research participants in the local case study highlighted that dialogue was an effective way to share power when making policy decisions (O'Kane, 2003; Williams, 2004; Falconer et al., 2020; Smithson and Jones, 2021; To et al., 2021) because policymakers could encourage CYP to share their ideas and boost their confidence so they may get involved in policy decision-making. The local policymakers also tended to believe that dialogue means profound respect, mutual trust and understanding of each other's viewpoints and could signal a sincere willingness to learn about CYP's perspectives (O'Kane, 2003; Williams, 2004; Percy-Smith, 2007; Falconer et al., 2020; Smithson and Jones, 2021). Importantly, evidence from the two case studies indicates that the (close) relationship between policymakers and CYP can be a key element in facilitating dialogue to encourage child and youth participation in policy decision-making (Chapter 8, Section 8.3.1). The second power-sharing method was voting, which emerged from two case studies but was perceived differently in each. Although voting offers several advantages for sharing power based on the assumption of a transparent method in which every meeting attendee has an equal right to vote in decision-making, research participants in the national case study questioned this method. They often pointed out the overrepresentation of policymakers on committees/sub-committees, which ensures them a majority in voting, and reported that adults indeed often won the votes. In contrast, most research participants in the local case study believed that voting was an effective way to share power, and policymakers used voting to encourage CYP to participate rather than vote on the issues of concern to them. The final power-sharing approach that emerged from the national case study involved forming small working groups, referred to as building co-created safe-space workshops (Smithson and Jones, 2021). These working groups involved a combination of policymakers and youth representatives to collect additional relevant data regarding the issues on which decisions would be made. Nevertheless, while some policymakers reported establishing small working groups to encourage power-sharing with CYP in policy decision-making, none of the young participants in the national case

study had heard about or had direct experience with this. Therefore, the formation of small working groups can be questioned as a method for sharing power.

Even though policymakers tended to oppose centralised power in the national case study and attempted to increase power distribution in the local case study, evidence shows that policymakers intentionally or unintentionally exercised their power over CYP. Several issues related to how policymakers exercise power over CYP appeared unknown to young participants. This demonstrates the complexities of power at the practical level, where it operates silently and CYP may be unaware that they have been influenced and never perceive conflict (Lukes, 2005). Consequently, it also echoes the wider context of unequal power between the two social groups: children are often pushed to the margins of the social structure by more powerful adults (Corsaro, 2015; Mayall, 2015).

9.2.3.1 The connection between power and influence

Chapter 7 presented findings that addressed the research question "Do CYP believe that their views genuinely influence policy decision-making?". Young people's beliefs regarding their influence on policy differed noticeably in the two case studies. Young participants in the local case study believed that they had a strong influence on local policy, whereas young participants in the national case study lacked faith in their impact on policy. These findings also point to a connection between power and influence (Willer, Lovaglia and Markovsky, 1997; Raven, 2008). This differentiation sheds light on key elements that either promote or hinder young participants' belief in their own policy influence, partially proving the correlation between perceptions of influence and power. This differentiation may be explained by discussing the similarities in the key elements for promoting young participants' belief in their influence on policy and enhancing power-sharing in policy decision-making and key elements discouraging this belief and dampening power-sharing in policy decision-making.

Similar key elements for promoting young participants' belief in their influence on policy and enhancing power-sharing in policy decision-making were generally related to the roles of policymakers, for instance, supporting or facilitating participation by providing suggestions or guidance and organisational assistance (Lansdown, 2010; OECD, 2017), collaborative participation and collaborative decision-making (Willow et al., 2004; To et al., 2021). Young participants in the local case study reported receiving significant support from local policymakers when initiating and implementing initiatives to address the problems or needs of their community. Discussing their roles in promoting CYP projects, several local policymakers also believed that partnership or collaborative work with CYP were key to promoting and encouraging CYP's influence on local policy and power-sharing in local policy decision-making (Hart, 1992; Shier, 2001; Francis and Lorenzo, 2002; Wong and Zimmerman, 2010; Shier et al., 2014; Crowley and Moxon, 2017; Arunkumar et al., 2019; To et al., 2021). Another key element in ensuring that CYP believed in their influence on local policy decisions was the positive relationship between policymakers and CYP in the local case study. This included the engagement of CYP in tangible and uncomplicated projects to address community issues. Some young participants in the local case study presented two tangible projects

that showcased their active participation throughout the process: information gathering, identifying the community's problems or needs, making decisions and project implementation. This suggests that CYP have had more success in influencing local-level decision-making (Williams, 2004; Checkoway, Allison and Montoya, 2005; Schuster and Checkoway, 2011). However, questions arise as to why child and youth participation is restricted to the local level, why it tends to be unsuccessful on a national scale and what policymakers should do to increase CYP's participation at the national level.

Youth participants in the national case study expressed a lack of confidence in their genuine influence on policy. Key elements discouraging young people's belief in their influence on policy were identified, particularly in the national case study: complex processes and systems and Thai feudalism (see Chapter 7, Section 7.5.1). Due to the complexity of policy and programme development, multiple organisation representatives join the decision-making process. Because the young participants were members of these various organisations, they lacked confidence in their ability to influence policy decisions. Another discouraging element was Thai feudalism, which divides people into superiors *(phu yai),* such as adults, and subordinates *(phu noi),* especially CYP (Tulananda and Roopnarine, 2001; Vorng, 2017). Thai feudalism requires CYP, who have less power, to be respectful, polite, loved, honoured and obedient to people with a higher social status by birth, education, knowledge and age (Tulananda and Roopnarine, 2001; Black, 2013). Due to this cultural element and consequent patterns of behaviour, young national participants did not believe that they or the policymakers on the committees or sub-committees in which they have participated could influence policy and programme decision-making. This illuminates the nature of power in the national case study, where the individuals who could influence policy and programme decision-making were those in upper government positions (Arunittrakhoon, 2020). These issues might show the connection when discussing young participants' perceptions of power-sharing in policy decision-making because they felt that power lies with adults in higher positions, giving them greater control over policy decisions (Chapter 8, Section 8.2.1). That those in positions of power are primarily responsible for making decisions is widely accepted (Basi, 1998; Haruţa and Cobârzan, 2010), but in the Thai context, and particularly in the national case study, the importance of hierarchical structures is further emphasised, and people in higher positions are likely to have more weight and significance.

9.3 Policy and practice recommendations

This research resulted in suggestions for policies and practices to enhance the participation of CYP in policy and programme development in Thailand. The goal is to increase awareness of children's agency and promote deeper engagement of CYP, empowering them to have more influence on policy and participate in decision-making regarding policies and programmes.

9.3.1 Improving national or local policy for more meaningful child and youth participation

As outlined in Chapter 4, Thailand comprises multiple groups of people with distinct cultures, including northern and north-eastern communities and the Muslim population in the southern region (Montgomery, 2009). Research indicates that these demographic groups frequently underestimate their value and experience subjugation or confrontation with the Thai national government (Laungaramsri, 2003; Chaikhambung and Tuamsuk, 2017). Therefore, at the policy level, it should be ensured that CYP from these groups can participate in policy and programme development in Thailand.

While policymakers in both case studies encouraged and valued the participation of CYP in policy and programme development, there is no organisational guarantee of future success given the potential turnover in organisational leaders and/or policymakers. To promote child and youth participation effectively, systems must change and concrete organisational procedures or policies must be implemented to ensure that CYP's views are integrated into policy and programme decision-making, including by sharing power and responsibility for policy and programme development (Shier, 2001).

As described in Section 7.4.2 and echoing the literature (Shier, 2001; Cavet and Sloper, 2004; Martin et al., 2015; Blakeslee and Walker, 2018; Cuevas-Parra, 2022), many young people in both case studies had never been formally informed of how their views impacted policy and programme development, underlining the absence of formal feedback from policymakers. Consequently, this calls for creating a structured feedback mechanism where CYP involved in a particular policy or programme can verify or clarify whether their opinions have been included (Sinclair, 2004a; Borgne, 2014; Lundy, 2018; Foster et al., 2023). This may foster mutual understanding and partnership building between policymakers and CYP (Shier, 2001; Cavet and Sloper, 2004; Arunkumar et al., 2019).

This research's findings coincide with the wider literature in identifying the complex (government) system (Percy-Smith, 2007; McMellon and Tisdall, 2020), particularly in the national case study, as a barrier to child and youth participation, which often limits their involvement in programme and policy development and decision-making (Shier, 2001; Cavet and Sloper, 2004; Martin et al., 2015; Blakeslee and Walker, 2018; Cuevas-Parra, 2022). Therefore, this thesis argues for creating a more child-friendly environment to facilitate CYP's participation at different stages of policy and programme development. This is required to ensure access to participation for CYP with different backgrounds or who are unfamiliar with or less confident regarding the policy-making process.

The findings also revealed that the small number of youth representatives on national committees results in limited power and greater difficulty influencing policy decision-making (Wonganant et al., 2014). This may suggest that more youth representatives must be added to each committee/sub-committee; however, there is no simple answer as to the most effective number of youth representatives. Although some national committees boasted a smaller gap between the number of young participants and policymakers, young participants still believed that they had less power and influence.

This was especially the case when compared to the local case study, which evidenced that the number of youth representatives may not significantly impact their ability to influence decision-making. Further research may thus be needed to determine the relationship between the satisfactory number of youth representatives on a committee/sub-committee but also which factors foster a culture of meaningful participation, especially in the context of Thai society and the organisational structures of relevant institutions.

Relatedly, I have reported throughout this study that young people experienced a lack of confidence when involved in policy and programme development or a range of negative perceptions, including the idea that they were incapable of engaging in policy and programme development. In particular, they did not feel that their involvement in national policy-making processes and structures was meaningful. Equipping CYP with specific knowledge or skills to increase their confidence is therefore necessary, and policymakers should encourage more meaningful participation. This may be achieved through training for national policymakers to better understand meaningful participation and how to effectively promote CYP's voices (Cavet and Sloper, 2004; Lansdown and O'Kane, 2014a; Kosher and Ben-Arieh, 2020), including knowledge about sharing power in policy and programme development.

Lastly, the findings revealed that some young participants experienced discrimination by policymakers and felt insecure after their involvement in policy and programme development or broader societal affairs. The examples of such treatment presented in this thesis are worrying and should not be a consequence of child and youth participation; it is unacceptable to penalise anyone for exercising their agency. Hence, all actions undertaken by CYP in the exercise of their rights and agency must be safeguarded at the policy level.

9.3.2 Suggestions for encouraging meaningful child and youth participation

Section 9.2.1 described the influence of Thai culture, especially the continued emphasis on obedience to and respect for adults, who are considered superior by virtue of their positions and age. These characteristics have become norms and are firmly embedded in the Thai context and transmitted to the younger generations through various practices and expectations that partly aim to control the views and behaviours of CYP. These norms impact and obstruct CYP's capacity to participate in society (Tharapak, Dejwaln and Mrukapituk, 2021) and affect their confidence when they are involved in policy decision-making. Consequently, policymakers must be aware of these biases and societal norms and challenge the barriers to child and youth participation.

As identified in Chapters 2 and 3, despite the growing recognition of children's agency and children's rights – which are key to child and youth participation – at the practical level, many young participants reported biases or negative attitudes of policymakers regarding their capacities. Policymakers should thus genuinely recognise and respect the agency of children, who are experts in their own lives and experiences, as well as acknowledge their right to participate in and contribute to the development of policies

and programmes. This issue was more prominent in the national case study, where obstacles to participation appeared to be reinforced by policymakers' belief that CYP are unfit to participate in national policy due to its complexity.

This study also presented evidence of policymakers' critical roles and functions in enabling meaningful participation in policy and programme development and giving CYP the confidence necessary to influence policy decision-making. This often took the form of providing relevant data, consulting and offering suggestions, guidance and organisational assistance (Lansdown, 2010; OECD, 2017) as well as partnerships or collaborative work (Hart, 1992; Shier, 2001; Francis and Lorenzo, 2002; Wong and Zimmerman, 2010; Shier et al., 2014; Crowley and Moxon, 2017; Arunkumar et al., 2019; To et al., 2021), including collaboratively making decisions with CYP (Willow et al., 2004; To et al., 2021). Policymakers should incorporate these critical roles into their practice when encouraging CYP's participation in policy and programme development.

The thesis findings also demonstrate that child and youth participation is a dynamic process and young participants in the two case studies faced difficulties that affected their feelings at the various stages of participation. Therefore, collaborative participation should be further implemented when CYP encounter obstacles at the different stages of participation. A clear example was when CYP experienced various emotions and feelings throughout their participation (see Chapter 7, Section 7.3). In addition, in the two case studies, young participants' answers about the obstacles they faced and their strategies for overcoming them indicated that they generally sought solutions alone rather than seeking policymaker support. This suggests the need for policymakers to build more partnerships and collaboration and develop an in-depth understanding of the significance of child and youth participation so that they can advocate for more meaningful forms of participation.

In parallel to the policy recommendations outlined in 9.3.1, concrete organisational procedures or policies are needed to ensure that CYP's views are incorporated into policy and programme decision-making, including the encouragement of power-sharing between policymakers and CYP in policy and programme development (Shier, 2001). At the practical level, policymakers must improve their performance by sincerely signalling their willingness to share power with CYP when making policy decisions (Shier, 2001; Macauley et al., 2022). Notably, policymakers should build mutual respect and be willing to listen to CYP's perspectives and actively promote their involvement in decision-making (Williams, 2004; Borgne, 2014; Chamisa and Shava, 2016).

In the two studies, dialogue was used at various levels to enhance child and youth participation in policy and programme decision-making (Lansdown and O'Kane, 2014a; Birch et al., 2017; Toros, 2021; To et al., 2021). As described in Section 9.2.3, dialogue encourages power-sharing between policymakers and CYP. This spotlights the advantages of dialogue in enhancing child and youth participation in policy and programme development in Thailand. Once again, the cultural context is important. The local case study demonstrates that dialogue can help policymakers and young people understand each other better, which may challenge the culture of obedience by fostering mutual understanding instead of unquestioning conformity. Accordingly, policymakers should be aware that child and youth participation is a dynamic process (Cahill and Dadvand, 2018; Arunkumar et al., 2019) in which children may face different

difficulties that obstruct their participation at different stages. Clear guidelines on the use of dialogue throughout the participation process should be provided to policymakers when working with CYP in policy and programme development.

As outlined in the literature review (Cummins, Horgan and Martin, 2022; Yamaguchi et al., 2023) and mentioned in the discussion of the limitations of data collection for this research (see Chapter 5, Section 5.7), the issue of diversity among youth representatives on committees/sub-committees arises when encouraging child and youth participation worldwide, including in Thailand. CYP from underrepresented or disadvantaged backgrounds often face substantial obstacles when attempting to participate in policy and programme development. In light of this, policymakers should ensure that CYP from diverse backgrounds and groups are represented and involved in these processes.

9.4 Contributions of the study

This thesis contributes to the knowledge and theory of childhood and youth studies, and particularly the area of child and youth participation in Thailand and worldwide. In addition, methodological contributions include the use of child-friendly methods and internet-based data collection. The research project also contributed to encouraging CYP to be involved in research and demonstrated how different data collection methods can be used to involve CYP more effectively.

By adopting the lens of the NSC, this research makes an original contribution to the academic literature by analysing new empirical evidence that illustrates the construction of childhood and youth in the context of Thailand. This thesis endeavoured to establish a foundational understanding of childhood and youth in Thailand by examining the perspectives of CYP (14–25 years) and policymakers (28–78 years) of diverse genders, academic and occupational backgrounds and generations. This enriches the literature on childhood and youth in Thailand, which often lacks an NSC perspective (Gomaratut et al., 2021). More broadly, this thesis adds to the research on child and youth participation in Thailand, especially their participation in policy and programme development, which is underdeveloped in the field of childhood studies in Thailand (Gomaratut et al., 2021). The thesis systematically examined the topic through two case studies addressing national and local governance, respectively, which remains rare in childhood and youth studies in this context. Exploring the social and cultural constructions of childhood in Thai culture may promote mutual understanding among different age groups in Thailand. Understanding child and youth participation may also help policymakers effectively support CYP in developing policies and programmes.

It is within this context that this thesis incorporated and explained the concept of power to investigate its application when CYP and policymakers make policy and programme decisions. This approach adds nuance to our understanding of policymakers' methods for sharing power with CYP in policy decision-making and illuminates CYP's perceptions of their power-sharing experiences with policymakers. This not only extends the application of the concepts of power and power-sharing to CYP's participation in policy

and programme decision-making but it also evidences and fills knowledge gaps regarding how CYP can have meaningful influence and power in the policy-making process (Shier et al., 2014). Understanding power dynamics can help the policymakers in both case studies recognise the essence of power and adapt to share power more flexibly with CYP. Identifying power-sharing methods and their perceptions can also be useful for policymakers to determine effective strategies and areas for improvement to enhance power-sharing towards meaningful participation.

This thesis aimed to amplify CYP's voices in research, approaching CYP as social actors and incorporating them into the study by promoting and respecting their ideas, understandings and experiences (Christensen and Prout, 2002), as outlined in Chapter 5. Hence, it makes an essential contribution by illustrating how research can encourage CYP to become active social actors capable of discussing a wide range of social issues (Christensen and Prout, 2002; Jones, 2009b) and providing answers to academic inquiries about their participation in policy and programme development. Young participants were also encouraged to share their perspectives using various child-friendly methods. Therefore, their voices may be heard more profoundly and effectively. This thesis also makes a methodological contribution regarding the use of child-friendly methods with CYP through online interviewing. The research process demonstrated that using different data collection methods can help CYP provide more detailed answers to researchers' questions. Multiple approaches offer valuable insights into the complexity of individuals' thoughts or beliefs and enable them to validate or supplement their responses.

Because internet-based data gathering is increasingly being used in social science research (Lobe, Morgan and Hoffman, 2020), the two studies could serve as examples or guidelines for conducting research with CYP using online interviewing and child-friendly data collection methods. The thesis also illustrated how challenges, such as unstable internet access and interruptions by family, can arise during interviews; consequently, it can serve as a guide for future investigations into ways to mitigate these challenges.

9.5 Limitations of the study and potential for future research

This thesis presented a range of findings about childhood, youth and child and youth participation as perceived by research participants. This section identifies the research's limitations and areas that deserve further investigation.

First, this thesis concentrated on only two case studies (one national and one local) due to time management constraints and logistical issues. Furthermore, the outcomes of the local case study seem to indicate the effectiveness of promoting meaningful child and youth participation in local governance, in contrast to national governance. Despite these important contrasts, they may not be generalised to all other local governments (7,772) in Thailand given that the local case study was chosen for its reputation on this

particular issue. Nonetheless, the results reveal various strategies that may be effective in promoting CYP's participation in policy and programme development.

Second, as mentioned previously, Thailand comprises several groups of people with distinct cultural norms and beliefs (Montgomery, 2009) who may have differing views on childhood and youth. However, this thesis was limited by the selection of a case study, which precludes the exploration of other areas, including ethnic groups. In addition, although the recruitment process acknowledged the ethnicities of the research participants, the research could not incorporate these diverse ethnic groups.

Third, the fieldwork stage of the project generated a substantial amount of data, making it challenging to include all of the findings in this thesis. The writing process required difficult choices regarding the most important findings. Consequently, interesting and valuable data had to be excluded from the final research due to limitations in available space.

This section also identifies potential areas for future study and suggests ways to address research gaps in the field of childhood and youth studies and enhance child and youth participation in Thailand.

First, as stated above, different regions and ethnic groups in Thailand may have distinct perspectives on childhood, youth and CYP. Further investigation into how people from various ethnic groups conceive of childhood and youth could help understand constructions that differ from those of the majority of Thai people as well as fill a knowledge gap in the field. This would contribute to a more understanding or inclusive society in which people with varied perspectives are respected and would raise awareness of the diverse ethnic groups in the country.

Second, this research found evidence that the perceptions of young participants in the two case studies are complex and change throughout the stages of their participation (Chapter 7, Section 7.3). Qualitative longitudinal research (QLR) (Treanor, Patrick and Wenham, 2021) would enable a more detailed understanding of the impact of various participation stages on CYP's lives over time. QLR can provide guidelines for those working in this area to be aware of the complex circumstances occurring at each stage of participation and how to alleviate the impact of these circumstances. This is important for policymakers and professionals involved in the promotion of child and youth participation in Thailand's policy and programme development because policy and programme development processes are typically lengthy. Conducting QLR could also improve or contribute to a more friendly environment for CYP when they participate in these processes.

Third, the thorough analysis of additional local case studies would deepen our understanding and offer another perspective on how to encourage child and youth participation. This may be valuable for comparing how local governments in Thailand promote child and youth participation, filling a knowledge gap in the field as a result.

Fourth, most child and youth participation models were created in the context of the minority world (Hart, 1992; Shier, 2001; Francis and Lorenzo, 2002; Wong and Zimmerman, 2010; Arunkumar et al., 2019; Botchwey et al., 2019), whereas only a few models originate from the majority world (Shier et al., 2014; Cahill and Dadvand, 2018). These models were not designed taking into account the characteristics of Thai culture. Hence, future investigations may focus on designing a child and youth participation model that incorporates the specificities of Thai culture and sensitivity. Developing one such model can help mitigate the risks of colonialism in child and youth participation. This includes avoiding the adoption of models and concepts from the minority world without considering the local context.

Finally, as discussed in Chapter 3, child and youth participation can be divided into two categories: individual participation and higher, strategic-level participation in public decision-making (Lansdown, 2001; Tisdall, 2008; Brady, 2020; McCall-Smith, 2021). Additional studies should be conducted on individual participation, which frequently includes decisions about individuals' lives, such as participation in health and care planning or democratic voting (Lansdown, 2001; Brady, 2020). This is important because these issues are not the focus of the present thesis, and as noted in Chapter 5, knowledge regarding child and youth participation in Thailand remains limited (Gomaratut et al., 2021).

9.6 Conclusion

This study revealed that Thai culture has shaped the construction of Thai childhood and youth, and the perceptions of childhood, youth and CYP in Thailand have changed over time (James and Prout, 2001; James and James, 2012; Montgomery, 2013a). Hence, the dominant constructions of childhood and youth frequently reflect these cultural influences and are transmitted across generations. Although childhood is a social construct embedded in a specific context, the Thai understanding of childhood and youth has also been impacted by the globalised concept of childhood and the recognition of children's vulnerability through the international diffusion of paediatric and child development theories (Linde, 2014; Nimmannorrawong, 2015a). Therefore, the construction of childhood and youth in Thailand has been shaped by two variables, which add to its complexity because the resulting constructions are perceived in combination by the research participants and occasionally contradict each other. Perceptions of childhood, youth and CYP are complex and difficult to comprehend. This thesis argues that there is no single or standard childhood (Jones, 2009b). Instead, childhood is diverse and is constructed and reconstructed over time in each context.

Although constructions and perceptions of childhood and youth in Thailand are varied, Thai CYP are often perceived as a minority, with adults shaping how CYP are understood (Jones, 2009b). As a result, CYP frequently encounter many limitations to their ability to act when they attempt to display their agency. The research also indicates that childhood and youth are a time marked by pressure and expectations

from adults. While the perception of CYP as the future of the nation suggests that they are accepted as citizens who should be prepared to contribute to society in the future, CYP are rarely treated as social actors with rights who can participate in society presently. Hence, notwithstanding the growing recognition of the importance of CYP in Thai society, child and youth participation continues to be a challenge, and further efforts are required to advocate for CYP's rights to participate in Thai society.

There is clear evidence of successful conceptual colonisation by the concept of child and youth participation through the spread of the 1989 UNCRC, which focuses on the global construct of child and youth participation. In the two case studies, the predominant perceptions of this term referred to the notion that CYP are capable of forming their own views and expressing them freely in all matters affecting them (Punch and Tisdall, 2012; Montgomery, 2013b). This indicates that the global definition has partly replaced the initial understanding of the term in Thailand, which emphasised the participation of CYP in the family (Kotchabhadi et al., 2009). Despite increased recognition and respect for CYP's agency and right to participate, their capacities are often doubted by both policymakers and themselves; as a result, they lack the confidence to get involved in policy and programme decision-making. In addition, evidence shows that at various stages of child and youth participation, CYP may experience multiple emotions and negative feelings. This thesis demonstrated that participation is not a smooth process, and CYP continue to confront several obstacles that originate from personal factors, policymaker practices and organisational structures.

Further, the evidence in this thesis underlines the importance of power and power-sharing in decision-making in child and youth participation (Hart, 1992; Shier, 2001; O'Kane, 2003; Botchwey et al., 2019). The degree of power-sharing in the two case studies depended on the nature of power dynamics between adult policymakers and CYP in each case study. Although power in child and youth participation is often approached as a binary concept, namely, as possessed either by CYP or by adults, the findings reveal that several elements, such as individuals' positions, ranks and social statuses, are involved in policy and programme decision-making and make power more complex (Komin, 1990; Suwinyattichaiporn, Johnson and Fontana, 2019). Through the lens of child and youth participation, this thesis demonstrates that cultural factors make power in each culture more complex and emphasises that power is essential and takes a particular form in Thai culture. Consequently, this thesis highlighted perceptions of power and experiences of power-sharing connected to the belief that CYP effectively influence policy and programme decision-making. CYP felt that they had a significant influence on policy decision-making when they saw themselves as having more power than or equal power to policymakers. In contrast, if they believed that adults held more power than them, they often lacked faith and confidence in their involvement in decision-making and influence over it. These beliefs reflect different key roles of policymakers, which include acting as facilitators or supporters by providing suggestions or guidance and organisational assistance (Lansdown, 2010; OECD, 2017), collaborative participation and collaborative decision-making (Willow et al., 2004; To et al., 2021). Lastly, this study shed light on three power-sharing methods used by policymakers in the two case studies to share power with CYP in policy and programme

decisions: dialogue, voting and forming small working groups. Despite the use of various power-sharing methods, power-sharing might fail without the ability to adapt participation flexibly and sincerely sharing power between policymakers and CYP (Shier, 2001; Macauley et al., 2022). Thus, promoting authentic power-sharing is essential in fostering meaningful child and youth participation, enabling CYP to become more actively involved in policy decision-making processes.

I hope that this study will foster research that aims to promote an understanding of childhood as a social construct and encourage more meaningful participation of CYP in Thailand, in which their views are taken into account in policy and programme development. Importantly, when it comes to policy and programme decision-making, CYP can share power with policymakers. I believe that "childhood is a time of meaning-making and active participation in the world" (Sorin and Galloway, 2006, p.19).

Appendices

Appendix A: Information sheet for children and young people

Department of Social Policy and Social Work   **UNIVERSITY *of York***

Information Sheet

[Understandings of Childhood and Youth and Experiences of Child and Youth Participation in Thailand's Policy and Programme Development]

Would you please consider sharing with me what you think about your participation in Thailand's policy and programme development? I am running a research project and am interested in listening to your views.

Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with your family, friends or staff responsible for supporting children and young people if you wish. If anything is unclear, or if you would like more information, my contact details are provided at the end of this form.

Why would I like to talk with you?

You are either a national/local committee member on policy development or a children and youth council representative involved in policy and programme development.
I would like to speak with you about your participation experiences in policy and programme development in Thailand. This study will be undertaken by myself, Mr Chanon Komonmarn, a PhD student at the University of York and all the information you provide will be kept strictly confidential. My aim is to understand your experiences in policy and programme development at the national or local level and investigate your influence on policy and programme decision-making.

I would like to talk to you about a wide range of issues covering your power-sharing experiences in policy and programme development with policymakers, your beliefs and experiences regarding your influence on policy and programme decision-making, the main barriers you face when participating in policy and programme development and how you overcome potential obstacles. Your participation in this research is purely voluntary. If you do decide to take part, you may still withdraw from the study at any time. This will not impact on your position on any committees or councils. If you are under the age of 18, the staff responsible for child and youth participation in your area will require permission for passing on this information to me.

How will I conduct the research?

I plan to talk to 20 children and young people aged between 14 – 25 years who have been involved in policy and programme development in Thailand. At the national level, you have at least one year of participation experience in one of the following; the National Commission on the Promotion of Child and Youth Development (NCPCYD), the Sub-Committee on the Protection of Children and Youth from Using Online Media (SC-PCYUOM), the Sub-Committee on Policy and Planning for Children and Youth Development Organisations (SC-PPCYD), or the Sub-Committee on the Promotion of Child and Youth Council Affairs (SC-PCYCA). At the local level, you have at least one year of participation experience either in the Tung Samo Committee on Children and Youth Development (TS-CCYD) or the Tung Samo Child and Youth Council (TS-CYC).

If you are under the age of 18, the staff responsible for child and youth participation in your area is aware of the study and might ask you if you are interested in taking part. They are also happy to ensure that we find a private space and a suitable time for the online interview.

I will ask a number of questions, but you will only discuss things you feel happy with. During the interview, I will ask a number of questions that include:

- Personal background; age, family, ethnicity, hometown, years of experience in policy participation
- Ideas about childhood and youth
- Policy and/or programme in which you have participated
- Relationship with policymakers
- Your perception towards participation in policy and programme development
- Feelings towards, and experiences of, this participation
- Perception of power you have shared with policymakers
- Your views on how your participation may influence decision-making
- Examples of policies or programmes that indicate outcome/impact from your participation
- Obstacles you may have faced and overcome when participating in policy and programme development

I also employ child-friendly methods, such as drawing, H-assessment and spider diagram, to facilitate the interview. You may choose to make a "My power and influence on policy decision-making" spider diagram, create drawings about your perception of participation with adults in policy and programme development or assess your participation experiences through the H-assessment tool. As you are children and young people participating in national or local children and youth councils or youth leaders, you may already be familiar with these methods given your experience in children and young people capacity building or training conducted by various organisations. However, my child-friendly methods might slightly differ from the tools that those organisations use. After the completion of each interview, I will ask you to scan the

completed tools and send them to me via email. This data will immediately transfer to secure storage protected by a password.

As part of this study, I also plan to conduct online interviews with policymakers at the national and local levels to understand how they perceive children and young people's participation and their methods and techniques to share power with children and young people in policy and programme decision-making.

What would taking part involve?

I will send you the consent form via email. If you agree to participate in the study, you will be asked to sign and send a scanned copy of this consent form to me before we conduct the interview. For participants under the age of 18, I will obtain the consent form from your parents or carers, by asking you to pass this form to them for their signature, then scan it and return it on email to me.

After all consent forms have been signed and I have received the electronic consent files, you would be interviewed via Zoom or Skype by me (the researcher) at a place of your choice, in private, for approximately one hour. You will be free to stop the interview for a break or to stop taking part in the research altogether at any time. Although I will conduct the interview online via Zoom or Skype, I will record only audio files, which will be stored securely. Once the transcription has taken place, I will delete the audio files. All transcripts will also be kept securely, and I will create a new and fake name when the transcription is written up. No real names will be included with any comments or opinions I might use in reports. You may also request a copy of this written record if you wish. In order to ensure strict privacy, I will create a password to protect your data.

I will share all anonymised transcripts with my supervisor at the University of York. I will not share anything you have told me with policymakers or anyone else without your permission. However, there are very rare circumstances where confidentiality may need to be breached. Such a breach would only occur in the most extreme cases if, for example, information disclosed is related to criminal activity or implies that an individual has been, or is, at risk of harm.

What happens to the information I gather?

I will carefully examine all the information I collect. The main points will be written up in a report to promote children and young people's participation in policy and programme development in the future. I will raise awareness of these issues and publicise my findings as widely as I can in order to ensure your views are heard.

All the names will be changed so that your comments cannot be connected with you in any way. I will also share the main findings with you. If you are happy leaving your address, I can post these to you. Personal identifiable information (e.g. name and contact details) will be kept for up to six months after the project ends and then destroyed. Consent forms will be retained for three years from the end of the study. Anonymised transcripts will be maintained for ten years from the last requested access.

Lastly, I would let you know that although I will strive to maintain confidentiality and anonymity throughout the research process, due to the small number of youth representatives involved in both national and local policy committees, this cannot be fully guaranteed.

If you would like to participate or require more information about the research, please contact me (the researcher) using the details below:

If you are under the age of 18, please speak to the staff responsible for child and youth participation in your area who will arrange a time to discuss this with me.

The study has been reviewed and approved by the University of York, Department of Social Policy and Social Work Research Ethics Committee.

Who should I contact with questions about the study?

Prior, during or after your participation, you can contact the researcher Mr Chanon Komonmarn at UK mobile phone number 07515552881 or Thai mobile phone number + 66850623774 or send an email to ck1012@york.ac.uk.

Appendix B: Information sheet for policymakers

Department of Social Policy and Social Work   **UNIVERSITY** *of* **York**

Information Sheet

[Understandings of Childhood and Youth and Experiences of Child and Youth Participation in Thailand's Policy and Programme Development]

Invitation

I would like to invite you to take part in a research project that will involve one online interview through Zoom or Skype with a researcher. Before you decide whether to take part, it is important that you understand why the research is being conducted and what it will involve. Please take time to read this form carefully and contact the researcher if you need further clarification or information.

Who is undertaking the study?

I am Chanon Komonmarn, a PhD candidate at the Department of Social Policy and Social Work (SPSW), The University of York, United Kingdom.

What is the purpose of the study?

This study forms a part of my PhD thesis requirement at SPSW, the University of York. It investigates how policymakers at national and local policy levels perceive children and young people's participation in policy and programme development within the Thai context. As part of this study, I would like to ask you about your power-sharing experiences in policy and programme development decision-making with children and young people. I hope that the information you provide will help to promote the participation of children and young people in Thailand's policy in the future.

I also plan to interview 20 children and young people involved in policy and programme development decision-making at the national and local level.

Why have I been invited to take part?

You have been chosen as a policymaker who has experience in children and young people participation in policy and programme development in Thailand. At the national level, you have at least one year of participation experience in one of the following; the National Commission on the Promotion of Child and Youth Development (NCPCYD), the Sub-Committee on the Protection of Children and Youth from Using Online Media (SC-

PCYUOM), the Sub-Committee on Policy and Planning for Children and Youth Development Organisations (SC-PPCYD), or the Sub-Committee on the Promotion of Child and Youth Council Affairs (SC-PCYCA). At the local level, you are an experienced member of the Tung Samo SAO administrators or Tung Samo Committee on Child and Youth Development (TS-CCYD).

What does taking part involve?

You will be invited to an online interview via Zoom or Skype, which will take approximately 60 – 90 minutes. I will ask guided questions regarding your perceptions of childhood and experience in encouraging child and youth participation in policy and programme development. If you are uncomfortable with any questions, we will skip to the next.

Do I have to take part?

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. If you do decide to take part, you should indicate your agreement on the online consent form. You have the right to withdraw at any time without providing a reason.

What are the benefits of participating?

It is hoped that this study will have a beneficial impact on how policymakers support and promote children and young people's rights to participate in policy and programme development both at the national and local level.

Will the information I give remain confidential?

All the information collected during this study will be kept strictly confidential. Your name will remain as a pseudonym, and your position will not be disclosed in the final report or publication. However, due to the small number of the target population in this study, there is a slight possibility that others may guess who is involved in this study. Please rest assured that I will not make disclosures as to your name, position, committee or sub-committee name, and anonymity and confidentiality will be applied strictly. Although the interview will be conducted online via Zoom or Skype, I will record only audio files. These files and transcripts will be stored securely in the university's centrally managed filestore, and a password is required to unlock these files. Audio files cannot be shared under any circumstances. However, I will share all anonymised transcripts with my supervisor at the University of York. Once the transcription is completed, I will delete the audio files. Consent forms will be retained for three years from the end of the study. Anonymised transcripts will be maintained for ten years from the last requested access.

Who is funding the research?
- Thammasat University, Thailand, website https://www.tu.ac.th
- The Royal Thai Government, website https://www.ocsc.go.th/

Who has given approval to conduct the research?

This study has been ethically approved by the Social Policy and Social Work Ethics Committee, University of York, United Kingdom.

Who should I contact with questions about the study?

Prior, during or after your participation, you can contact the researcher Mr Chanon Komonmarn at UK cell phone number 07515552881 or Thai cell phone number + 66850623774 or send an email to ck1012@york.ac.uk.

What happens next?

Please keep this information sheet and feel free to discuss taking part with others. If you decide to take part or if you have any questions at all about this study, please do get in touch with me.

How do I make a complaint?

In the first instance, complaints should be directed to the principal investigator of the research. If the participant is not satisfied, they may approach the Departmental Ethics Committee at this email address: spsw-ethics@york.ac.uk.

Appendix C: Confirmation of ethical approval

UNIVERSITY *of* **York**

DEPARTMENT OF
SOCIAL POLICY AND
SOCIAL WORK
Heslington, York YO10 5DD
Direct Telephone (01904) 321231
www.york.ac.uk/spsw
mark.wilberforce@york.ac.uk

12 May 2021

Chanon Komonmarn
PhD Social Policy and Social Work

Dear Chanon

Application to Social Policy and Social Work Ethics Committee

Project title: Child youth participation in Thailand's Social Policy
Reference: SPSW/P/2021/2

Thank you for submitting your application to the SPSW Ethics Committee for the above named research project. Your application has been reviewed by the Committee and I am pleased to inform you that they have approved your application. Where relevant, any conditions attached to this approval are enclosed. The reviewers have made a suggestion, which is included in the attached reviewer form.

As your project progresses, please do let the Committee know via spsw-ethics@york.ac.uk if there are any material changes to the project that will require further ethical approval (for example, changes to your research methods).

Yours sincerely

Mark Wilberforce

Dr Mark Wilberforce
On behalf of the SPSW Ethics Committee

Encs.

Appendix D: Approval letter for data gathering for a national case study

5 Garrowby Way

York, United Kingdom

YO105DW

24 พฤษภาคม 2564

เรื่อง ขออนุญาตเก็บข้อมูลกับคณะกรรมการ กดยช. และ อนุกรรมการภายใต้ กดยช.

เรียน อธิบดีกรมกิจการเด็กและเยาวชน

สิ่งที่ส่งมาด้วย 1. เอกสารรับรองทางจริยธรรม เลขที่อ้างอิง : SPSW/P/2021/2
2. เอกสารชี้แจงการวิจัยจำนวน 2 ฉบับ
3. หนังสือรับรองสถานภาพนักศึกษาปริญญาเอก มหาวิทยาลัยยอร์ก สหราชอาณาจักร

กรมกิจการเด็กและเยาวชน
รับ ที่ _____ 5143
วันที่ 2 4 /พ.ค. 2564
เวลา _____ 9.01 น.
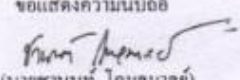
รองอธิบดีฯ
รับที่ 671
วันที่ 24 พ.ค. 256
เวลา 12.37

ศูนย์กิจการเด็กและเยาวชน
รับที่ 629
วันที่ 25 พ.ค. 2564
เวลา 08.50

ด้วย นายชานนท์ โกมลมาลย์ นักศึกษาปริญญาเอก ภาควิชานโยบายสังคมและสังคมสงเคราะห์ มหาวิทยาลัยยอร์ก สหราชอาณาจักร ได้ดำเนินการศึกษาวิจัยเรื่อง การมีส่วนร่วมของเด็กและเยาวชนในนโยบายสังคมประเทศไทย (Child and youth participation in Thailand's social policy) การวิจัยมีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อศึกษามุมมองของผู้กำหนดนโยบายประเทศไทยต่อการมีส่วนร่วมของเด็กและเยาวชนในนโยบายสังคมและการพัฒนาโครงการทางสังคมในบริบทของประเทศไทย รวมถึงประสบการณ์การแบ่งปันพลังอำนาจของผู้กำหนดนโยบายในการตัดสินใจด้านนโยบายและการพัฒนาโครงการทางสังคมร่วมกับเด็กและเยาวชน นอกจากนี้การวิจัยยังมีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อศึกษาประสบการณ์การแบ่งปันพลังอำนาจในการตัดสินใจทางนโยบายสังคมและโครงการทางสังคมของเด็กและเยาวชนร่วมกับผู้จัดทำนโยบาย ตลอดจนปัญหาอุปสรรคที่เด็กและเยาวชนเผชิญในการมีส่วนร่วมในนโยบายสังคมของประเทศไทยรวมถึงแนวทางในการจัดการกับอุปสรรคเหล่านั้น

การวิจัยได้ผ่านการรับรองทางจริยธรรมจากคณะกรรมการจริยธรรมภาควิชานโยบายสังคมและสังคมสงเคราะห์ มหาวิทยาลัยยอร์ก สหราชอาณาจักร เมื่อวันที่ 12 พฤษภาคม พ.ศ. 2564 เลขที่อ้างอิง : SPSW/P/2021/2 ขั้นตอนต่อไปคือการเก็บรวบรวมข้อมูลโดยการสัมภาษณ์กับผู้กำหนดนโยบายและผู้แทนเด็กและเยาวชนในคณะกรรมการและอนุกรรมการฯ ดังต่อไปนี้ (1) คณะกรรมการส่งเสริมการพัฒนาเด็กและเยาวชนแห่งชาติ (กดยช.) (2) คณะอนุกรรมการพัฒนานโยบายและแผนพัฒนาเด็กและเยาวชน (3) คณะอนุกรรมการส่งเสริมกิจการสภาเด็กและเยาวชน และ (4) คณะอนุกรรมการส่งเสริมการปกป้องคุ้มครองเด็กและเยาวชนในการใช้สื่อออนไลน์ นักวิจัยจึงขอความกรุณาท่านโปรดพิจารณาอนุญาตให้เก็บข้อมูลกับคณะกรรมการและอนุกรรมการฯ ชุดดังกล่าว ทั้งนี้นักวิจัยจะใช้การสัมภาษณ์ทางออนไลน์กับผู้กำหนดนโยบายและผู้แทนเด็กและเยาวชนจำนวน 20 คน เมื่อได้รับการอนุญาตให้ดำเนินการ นักวิจัยจะประสานงานกับคณะกรรมการและอนุกรรมการฯ ทางอีเมลต่อไป

จึงเรียนมาเพื่อโปรดพิจารณาอนุญาตจักขอบพระคุณยิ่ง

ขอแสดงความนับถือ

(นายชานนท์ โกมลมาลย์)

เรียน อธิบดี ผ่านรองอธิบดี (นาง ฯ อุไรฯ
เพื่อโปรดพิจารณา

๑. การขออนุญาตให้นายชานนท์
โกมลมาลย์ นักศึกษาปริญญาเอก ภาควิชานโยบาย
สังคมและสังคมสงเคราะห์ มหาวิทยาลัยยอร์ก
สหราชอาณาจักร เก็บรวบรวมข้อมูลกับ
คณะกรรมการ กดยช. และ อนุกรรมการภายใต้
กดยช. โดยใช้การสัมภาษณ์ทางออนไลน์

๒. มอบ กยผ. , กสส. และ กคค.
ดำเนินการในส่วนที่เกี่ยวข้อง

(นางวัฒนา มังคะดาบุะรา)
เลขานุการกรม
2 4 พ.ค. 2564

(นางสาวสุโร เล็กน้อย)
รองอธิบดีกรมกิจการเด็กและเยาวชน
2 4 พ.ค. 2564

- อนุญาต ตามข้อ ๑.
- ดำเนินการตามเสนอ ตามข้อ ๒.

(นางสุภัชชา สุทธิพล)
อธิบดีกรมกิจการเด็กและเยาวชน
2 5 พ.ค. 2564

Appendix E: Approval letter for data gathering for a local case study

ที่ กจ ๗๗๒๐๑/�‍๑๘๑

ที่ทำการองค์การบริหารส่วนตำบลทุ่งสมอ
อำเภอพนมทวน จังหวัดกาญจนบุรี ๗๑๑๔๐

๒ มิถุนายน ๒๕๖๔

เรื่อง อนุญาตให้เก็บข้อมูลผู้จัดทำนโยบายและสภาเด็กและเยาวชน ตำบลทุ่งสมอ จังหวัดกาญจนบุรี

เรียน นายชานนท์ โกมลมาลย์

    ตามที่ นายชานนท์ โกมลมาลย์ นักศึกษาปริญญาเอก ภาควิชานโยบายสังคมและสังคม
สงเคราะห์ มหาวิทยาลัยยอร์ก สหราชอาณาจักร ได้ดำเนินการศึกษาวิจัยเรื่อง การมีส่วนร่วมของเด็กและ
เยาวชนในนโยบายสังคมประเทศไทย (Child and youth participation in Thailand's social policy)
ซึ่งเป็นส่วนหนึ่งของการศึกษาในระดับปริญญาเอกของมหาวิทยาลัยดังกล่าว โดยสัมภาษณ์ทางออนไลน์กับ
ผู้กำหนดนโยบายและผู้แทนเด็กและเยาวชนจำนวน ๒๐ คน นั้น

    องค์การบริหารส่วนตำบลทุ่งสมอ พิจารณาแล้ว อนุญาตให้ดำเนินการสัมภาษณ์ออนไลน์ตามที่
ผู้วิจัยร้องขอ ดังนี้

    ๑. คณะผู้บริหารองค์การบริหารส่วนตำบลทุ่งสมอ
    ๒. คณะกรรมการส่งเสริมและพัฒนาเด็กและเยาวชนตำบลทุ่งสมอ
    ๓. สภาเด็กและเยาวชนตำบลทุ่งสมอ

    จึงเรียนมาเพื่อโปรดพิจารณา

ขอแสดงความนับถือ

(นายณัฐพล แผนกุล)
นายกองค์การบริหารส่วนตำบลทุ่งสมอ

สำนักปลัดองค์การบริหารส่วนตำบลทุ่งสมอ
โทร/โทรสาร ๐-๓๔๕๔-๐๗๕๔

Appendix F: Child-friendly methods instruction sheet

This document will provide an explanation as to how to use the three child-friendly methods of drawings, H-assessment and spider diagrams. All of the tools are included in this email; however, you might prefer to select only one or two, or even three. You may also prefer to either partly draft or fully draw your ideas using the tools before the interview commences. Please feel free to contact me if you need further details, or if you have any questions. Lastly, please bring the tools you have applied along with you when you attend the interview.

A. Drawings

You are invited to make drawings comparing your initial perception of participation with adults in policy and programme development with your current perception. This tool is divided into two columns; on the left side, you will convey your perceptions from when you were first participating with policymakers, while on the right side, you will present your current perceptions having experienced a number of policies, programmes and projects. You are free to draw whatever you wish. You may also prefer to add some words or phrases to your drawings to make them more meaningful.

Me when I am working with policymakers in policy and programme development	
First time	**Present**

B. H-assessment tool

The second tool asks you to evaluate your participation with policymakers in policy and programme development. It is divided into four boxes, and each box contains various information about what you discovered while engaging in policy and programme development. I have placed the title "Participation in policy" in the first box and left the date blank for you to fill out. In the second and third boxes, under the smiley and sad face symbols, I ask you to list all the strengths/positive experiences of being involved in policy and programme development as well as the weaknesses or problems that you might have experienced in policy and programme development. Then, under the light bulb symbol, I would like you to list how you overcame potential obstacles (if you faced any at all).

What to do?

1. Please fill in the date in the top middle panel (box 1).
2. Under the smiley face symbol (box 2), think about and list all the strengths (personal and/or of policy and programme development) related to your experience at different stages of the policy and programme development. You might share examples of success and present why these examples indicate strengths or successes.
3. Under the sad face symbol (box 3), can you think about and list the weaknesses, challenges or threats (personal and/or of policy and programme development) related to your involvement at different stages of the policy and programme development, and why you consider these to be weaknesses or challenges.
4. Under the light bulb symbol (box 4), please share and list how you have overcome these challenges or provide broader suggestions for improving participation.

H-assessment

2. Your strengths or successes	1. Participation in policy Date…………………	3. Weaknesses or problems
	4. How you overcame	

C. Spider diagram

The spider diagram tool allows you and the researcher to investigate your power-sharing experiences and influence on policy decision-making. The title of this spider diagram is "My power and influence in policy decision-making", and it has four legs. The first pair of legs is identified as "CYP's power in policy decision-making" and "Policymakers' power in policy decision-making". The second pair of legs is titled "CYP's influence on the policy decision-making" and "Policymakers' influence on policy decision-making". A scale of 1 to 10 is used for each leg, with 1 indicating the least power/influence and 10 indicating the most power/influence.

What to do?

1. Try to recall experiences of when you have participated in policy and programme development with policymakers. Then, think back to when you were making policy and programme development decisions with policymakers (a committee of which you are a member). At that time, do you think you or policymakers had more power to convince or influence decisions?
2. Look at leg one of the diagram and try to think about how much power you have when policy decision-making arises. Then, go across leg two to compare how much power the other social groups have.
3. In the third leg, please try to think about your beliefs in terms of how much you can convince or influence policy when it comes to making decisions. Go on to leg four and compare your beliefs about the policymakers' power to convince or influence policy.
4. After that, in each leg, plot the number you have selected.

"My power and influence on policy decision-making" spider diagram

4. Policymakers' influence on policy decision-making

2. CYP's power in policy decision-making

2. Policymakers' power in policy decision-making

2.

3. CYP's influence on policy decision-making
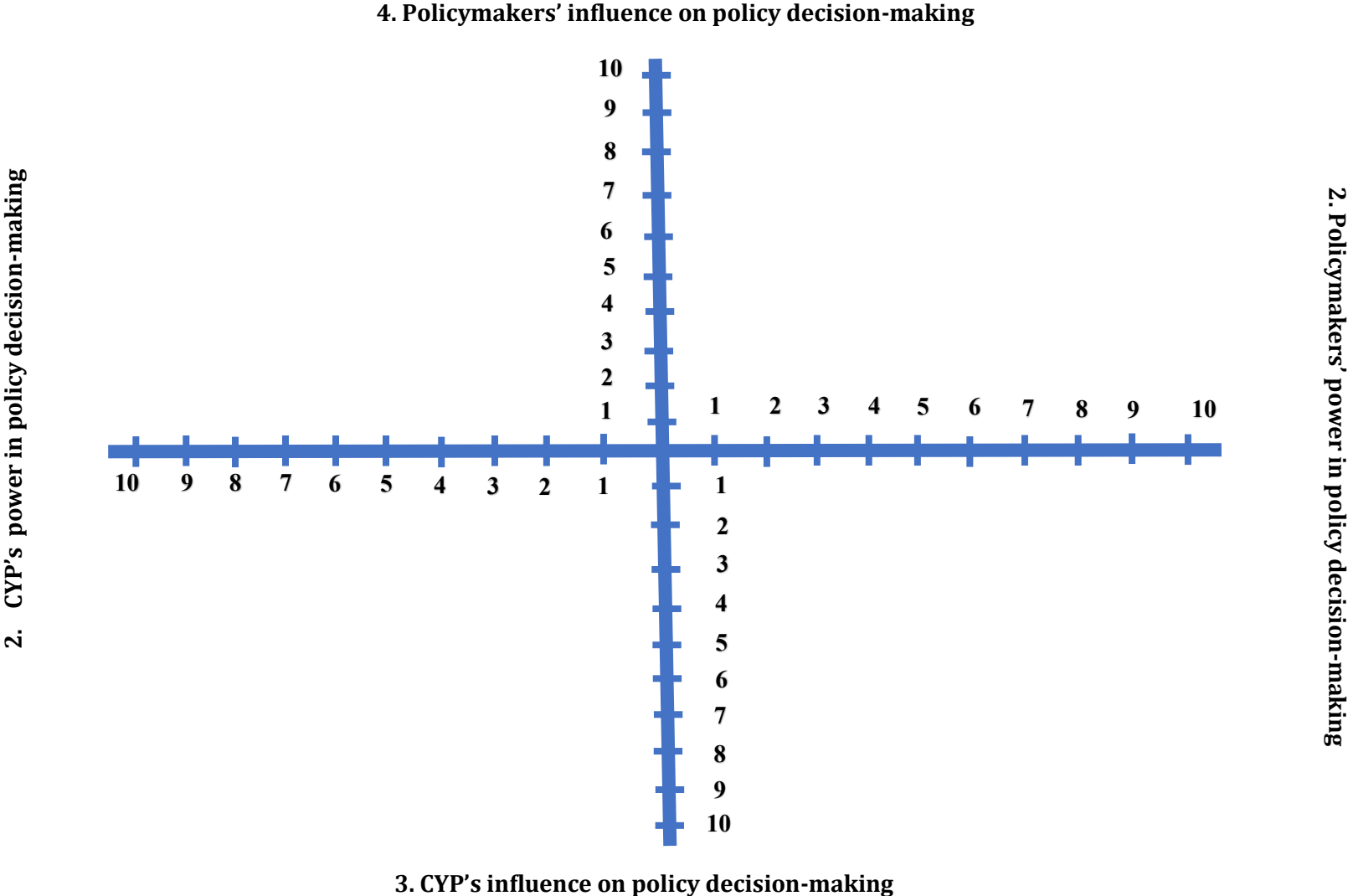
Appendix G: Consent form

Project title: Understandings of Childhood and Youth and Experiences of Child and Youth Participation in Thailand's Policy and Programme Development

		Please sign your initials in the box
1	I have been told what this research is about and what it involves. I have been given an information sheet [dated …/…./…..] and have had opportunity to ask questions.	
2	I understand that I do not have to take part in the research. I am free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason	
3	I will not be named in any research reports, and my personal information will remain confidential.	
4	I understand that if the researcher thinks that I or someone else might be at risk of harm, they may have to contact the relevant authorities. But they will try and talk to me first about the best thing to do.	
5	I agree to be audio-recorded. I understand that I can still take part without being recorded if I wish.	
6	I understand that my words, but not my name, may be used in research reports.	
7	I understand that I will not be able to amend or withdraw information I provide [after 15 days following the completion of the interview]	
8	I agree for my anonymous data to be archived at the university's centrally managed filestore in my personal filestore, and it will be protected by a password.	
9	I agree to take part in the research	

Participant signature: _____   Date: _____

Researcher signature:_____   Date: _____

Appendix H: Parental permission for child's participation in research

Project title: Understandings of Childhood and Youth and Experiences of Child and Youth Participation in Thailand's Policy and Programme Development

Introduction

The purpose of this form is to provide you with information that may affect your decision as to whether or not to let your child participate in this research study. Please read the information below and ask any questions you might have before deciding whether or not to give your permission for your child to take part. If you decide to let your child be involved in this study, this form will be used to record your permission.

Purpose of the Study

If you agree, your child will be asked to participate in a research study about personal experiences regarding participation in Thailand's policy and programme development. The purpose of this study is to investigate children and young people's experience of participation with policymakers, their views regarding their influence on policy decision-making, including obstacles they may face, and how they overcome potential obstacles when participating in policy and programme development in Thailand.

What is my child going to be asked to do?

If you allow your child to participate in this study, they will be interviewed via Zoom or Skype. I will use a semi-structured interview guide to ask questions on the following:

- Personal background: age, family, ethnicity, hometown, years of experience in policy participation
- Ideas about childhood and youth
- Policy and/or programme in which they have participated
- Relationship with policymakers
- Perception of their participation in policy and programme development
- Feelings towards their participation experiences
- Perception of power they have shared with policymakers
- Views on their influence on decision-making
- Examples of policies or programmes that indicate outcome/impact from their participation
- Any obstacles and how they overcome these obstacles when participating in policy and programme development

This study will involve one online interview for approximately one hour. I will apply the drawings methods and encourage your child to create drawings that express their perception of participation with adults in policy and programme development, comparing their initial views with their present views. There will be 20 children and young people in this study. I will record only audio files. These files will be stored securely at the university's centrally managed filestore in my personal filestore. Once the transcription has taken place, I will delete the audio files. All transcripts are also kept securely, and a pseudonym is used. No name will be associated with any comments or opinions I might use in the reports.

What are the risks involved in this study?

Your child may feel shy, nervous and lose courage when they face me (as an adult researcher). To address this, I will try to build rapport and trust, e.g., introduce myself, give a brief outline of what we will discuss, and begin with introductory questions rather than go directly to the guided research questions.

Your child may feel a little stressed during the interview when they talk about uncomfortable experiences with policymakers in the past. As I use video call via Zoom or Skype, I will be able to observe any signal, gesture, and response when asking the questions. I can immediately adapt to those situations, such as change the question, move to another topic or take a break as needed. I will allow time at the end of the interview to offer your child the opportunity to debrief and talk about how they are feeling.

My research questions are related to children's experiences with politicians or high-positioned government officers as policymakers. In some cases, your child might feel concerned about themselves and their family wellbeing if their answers specifically refer to those policymakers. To mitigate this challenge, I confirm that confidentiality and anonymity will be fully applied throughout the study.

Your child may have concerns about what they have already shared with me. After data collection has been completed, your child may worry that they have shared some personal issues or expressed criticism of particular individuals. They may no longer wish this information to be part of the research study. To address this, your child can withdraw and remove their data from the research study within 15 days after each interview has been completed. I will discuss this again with your child prior to the interview commencing.

During interviews, some unexpected situations may arise, such as someone interrupting the interview or the presence of others on the screen. Your child can ask me to pause or stop this interview at any time, and I will continue the interview after they are ready and feel comfortable to do so.

There is a low risk of potential distress being caused by data collection, and all research questions and expected answers will not stray into deeply personal territory. However, some questions related to personal feelings or experiences may make your child feel worried or upset. If your child requests to pause or terminate the interview, I will immediately act upon this, and they will not be questioned about why they refuse. I

would also be able to suggest a member of staff in that particular service if your child would prefer.

Does my child have to participate?

No, your child's participation in this study is voluntary. Your child may decline to participate or withdraw from participation at any time. Withdrawal or refusing to participate will not affect your child's position in any committees or sub-committees. You can agree to allow your child to be in the study now and change your mind later.

What are the benefits of taking part?

It is hoped that this work will have a beneficial impact on how policymakers in Thailand promote children and young people's participation in Thailand's policy and programme development.

How will my child's privacy and confidentiality be protected if s/he participates in this research study?

If you allow your child to participate in this study, your child will be audio recorded. Any audio recordings will be stored securely, and only I will have access to the recordings. Once the transcription has taken place, I will delete the audio files. All transcripts are also kept securely, and a pseudonym is used. No name will associated with any comments or opinions I might use in the reports. Consent forms will be retained for three years from the end of the study, and anonymised transcripts will be retained for ten years from the last requested access.

Who should I contact with questions about the study?

Prior, during or after your participation, you can contact the researcher Mr Chanon Komonmarn at UK cell phone number 07515552881 or Thai cell phone number   + 66850623774 or send an email to ck1012@york.ac.uk. This study has been reviewed and approved by the University of York, Department of Social Policy and Social Work Research Ethics Committee.

Who should I contact with questions concerning my child's rights as a research participant?

For questions about your and/or your child's rights or any dissatisfaction with any part of this study, you can contact, anonymously if you wish, the Departmental Ethics Committee at this email address: spsw-ethics@york.ac.uk.

Signature

You are making a decision about allowing your child to participate in this study. Your signature below indicates that you have read the information provided above and have decided to allow them to participate in the study. If you later decide that you wish to withdraw your permission for your child to participate in the study, you may discontinue his or her participation at any time. You will be given a copy of this document.

_____

Printed Name of Child

_____   _____

Signature of Parent(s) or Legal Guardian   Date

_____   _____

Signature of Researcher   Date

Appendix I: Topic guides for interviewing children and young people

A. General questions for children and young people

1) How are you today?
2) What is your full name and what name do you want me to call you?
3) How old are you?
4) Where is your hometown?
5) What ethnic group do you belong to?
6) What is your parents' occupation?
7) What level of education are you studying?
8) How long have you been involved in children and young people participation activities in policy and programme development?
9) Are you a member of any committees/sub-committees (national or local)?
10) Are you either a member of a children and youth council or children and youth network organisation?
   - If yes, can you please identify your organisation?
   - If not, can you please explain how you have become that committee member?
11) How long have you been involved in the aforementioned committees/sub-committees?

B. How children and young people perceive childhood, and children and young people's participation?

1. Perceptions of childhood and youth

1) Do you think there are differences or similarities between your childhood/youth and childhood/youth in the past?
2) When do you believe childhood ends and adulthood begins?
3) Do you think Thai culture has different expectations for childhood compared to other cultures (minority world)?
   a. If so, what makes Thai culture distinctive?
   b. What might be the impacts on the experience of growing up for children and young people?

2. Perceptions of children and young people's participation

1) What initially sparked your interest in participating in policy and programme development?
2) Can you tell me what children and young people's participation means to you?
3) Do you think policymakers want to engage children and young people to participate in local/national policy and programme development?
   - What makes you think like that?
4) How do you feel about your participation in policy and programme development? (a comparison of the past and the present) ** Use the drawing method together with this question.

5) Do you believe that involving children and young people in policy and programme development is valuable?
- Why is it (or not) a valuable component of policy and programme development?

6) Do you believe that you have the capacity to meaningfully participate in policy and programme development?
- What makes you say that?
- Can you please give me specific examples that support your point of view?

7) Do you believe that including children and young people improves the success of policies or programmes?
- What makes you say that?

3. Experiences of children and young people in participation in policy and programme development

1) What are the policies or programmes you have participated in?
2) How long have you participated in these policies or programmes?
3) How can you describe your relationship with policymakers in your committee/sub-committee?
- What makes you say that?
4) Can you tell me what the most satisfactory aspects of participation in policy and programme development are? **Use H-assessment together with question 4) – 5).
- Why do you identify these areas as strengths?
5) Can you describe challenges you have encountered when you participate in policy and programme development?
- Why do you identify these areas as weaknesses/challenges?
6) Have policymakers ever listened to and accepted your views/ideas in order to initiate a policy or programme?
- Can you please give me some examples?
- In your opinion, should policymakers listen more to your opinions and ideas, and if so, what impact would this have?
7) Have you ever been invited to monitor or follow up on any policy to ensure that proposed changes take effect in practice?
8) Have policymakers ever discouraged your participation?
- How did you feel at that time?
- How did you deal with/overcome that situation?
9) Do you believe your opinions/ideas are more significant than other social groups such as adult policymakers and experts?

4. Children and young people's expectation towards their participation in policy and programme development

1) Can you tell me a bit more about how you think policymakers should promote children and young people's voices more meaningfully?

2) At the same time, how should children and young people try to ensure their voices are heard more meaningfully?

C. How children and young people perceive their power-sharing experiences in policy and programme decision-making with policymakers?

1. Perceptions/ideas of power and power-sharing

1) Who is in charge of making policy and programme decisions?
   - Please explain why you think that way.
   - Would you say there is someone who is the focal point when it comes to making decisions?.
     - Who is the focus of attention?
     - Why are they the focus instead of others?
     - Could you give me some examples?
   - If you say no one is the focal point,
     - When policy and programme development decisions need to be made, who makes the decisions?
     - Are those in positions of decision-making authority permanent, or can they be replaced?
     - Could you give me some examples?
2) Do you believe that policymakers should allow children and young people to share decision-making in policy or programme development?
   - Please explain why you think that way. At what level could children and young people share decision-making with policymakers?

2. Children and young people's experiences of power-sharing in policies and programme decision-making

1) How did you deal with policymakers (at the committee where you are a member) while making decisions in policy and programme development?
2) Have policymakers (at the committee where you are a member) ever allowed you to share your ideas/views while making policy and programme development decisions?
   - If yes
     - How did you feel at that time?
     - What methods/techniques do policymakers use?
     - Can you please explain your experiences and give an example of a specific situation?
   - If not
     - Do you have any idea why they denied you the opportunity to share decision-making?
     - How did you feel about that?
     - Do you want policymakers to allow you to share decision-making?
3) Do you think you can equally share your ideas/views when decisions need to be made with policymakers (at the committee where you are a member)?

- What makes you say that?

D. Do children and young people believe their views genuinely influence policy and programme decision-making?

1. Beliefs of children and young people regarding their ability to influence policy and programme decisions

1) Have policymakers ever provided you with a range of ideas or activities to help you express your views?
   - Can you please give me some examples?
2) Do you think that policymakers sincerely listen to your views and make decisions in policy or programme development based upon your views?
   - What is the reason for this?
   - How did you come to that conclusion?
3) Can you tell me a bit more about who has the most influence on policy decisions? **Use a spider diagram with this question.
4) Do you believe your views can influence policy decisions?
   - If yes
     - What makes you believe that?
   - If not
     - What makes you believe that?
     - What, if anything, blocked your influence in policy decision making?
     - How did you feel?
     - Please tell me more about any experiences you may have had which led you to this view

2. Examples of policies or programmes which are influenced by children and young people

1) Can you give me an example of a successful policy or programme that developed from your participation?
2) Why do you think these policies or programmes were successful?
3) How do you know whether your participation has had an impact on these policies and programmes?

E. What are the main obstacles faced by children and young people in policy and programme development, and how do they overcome these obstacles?

1. Obstacles faced by children and young people when participating in policy and programme development

1) Do you think your participation in policy and programme development has negatively affected your life in any way?
   - What makes you say that?
2) Have you ever been excluded from participating in policy and programme development by either policymakers or other children and young people?

- If yes
    - Who excluded you?
    - What made you feel excluded?
    - How did you feel?
    - Can you give me some examples?
- If not
    - Have you ever known others who have been excluded?
    - Can you please give me some details?

3) Can you tell me what challenges you face as a participant during policy and programme development? **Continue H-assessment together with this question.
    - What do these obstacles look like?
    - Why have these been obstacles?

2. How children and young people overcome obstacles when participating in policy and programme development

1) Have you ever had to overcome obstacles while working on policy or programme development?
    - How did you overcome those obstacles?
2) Have you ever received assistance from others to help you overcome these obstacles?
    - If yes
        - Who helped you?
        - When did they help you?
        - How did they help you?
        - How did this make you feel?
        - Can you give me some examples?
    - If not
        - Do you expect any help from others?
    3) How do you preempt the potential obstacles from happening in the future?

………………………………………………

Appendix J: Topic guides for interviewing policymakers

A. General questions for policymakers

1) How are you today?
2) What is your full name and what name would you like me to call you?
3) How old are you?
4) Where is your hometown?
5) What ethnic group do you belong to?
6) What is your current position and in what organisation?
7) How long have you been involved in children and young people's participation activities?
8) Are you a member of any committees/sub-committees (national or local)?
9) How long have you been involved in these committees/sub-committees?

B. How policymakers view childhood/youth and children and young people?

1. Perceptions of childhood/youth

1) Can you tell me about your experiences and perceptions of childhood/youth?
2) Are there any differences or similarities between your childhood and today's childhood context?
3) Can you tell me how, if at all, young people differ from children?
4) When do you believe childhood ends and adulthood begins?
5) How do adults differ from children?
   - Do they differ from adults in terms of cognitive or physical abilities?
6) Do you think adult society holds authority over children and young people?
   - Why do you think that?
7) How do you feel about the following statement: "Children and young people are the future of our country"?
   - What makes you say that?

2. Society's expectations toward childhood/youth

1) What do you believe our culture expects from childhood/youth?
2) What do you think about the relationship between adults and children in our culture?
   - Should they be obedient to adults?
   - If so, why?
   - How should children and young people who disobey authority be treated?

3) How should adults in our culture treat children and young people?
   - Should adults guide children to fit in with society?
   - Should adults protect children and young people?
   - Should adults control/limit children and young people's ideas or views?

- Should adults control/limit children and young people's behaviour?

4) Do you think Thai culture has different expectations for childhood/youth compared to other cultures (minority world)?
    - If so, what makes Thai culture distinctive?
    - What might be the impacts on the experience of growing up for children and young people?

5) Do you believe that children and young people's contributions to our society are different from adults?
    - Should do they do more to help society?

C. How policymakers perceive children and young people's participation?

1. Perceptions of children and young people's participation

1) What sparked your interest becoming involved in children and young people's participation in policy and programme development?
2) Can you tell me what children and young people's participation means to you?
3) Do you think that the present state of children and young people's involvement in our culture differs from that of the past?
    - What has changed, and why has it changed?
4) Can/Should children and young people engage in policymaking on a larger scale, such as at the national policy level?
    - If yes, proceed to the following questions.
        - What makes you say that?
        - Should we limit the involvement of children and young people to small scale involvement, such as local level policy?
    - If no, move on to the question 2. Policymakers' experiences of children and young people's participation.
5) Should you (policymakers) listen and respect children and young people's views/ideas?
    - What makes you say that?
6) Do you believe that children and young people can meaningfully participate in policy and programme development?
    - What makes you say that?
    - Can you please give me specific examples that support your point of view?
7) Do you believe that involving children and young people improves the success of policies or programmes?
    - Why might that be beneficial?
    - What might be the disadvantages?

2. Policymakers' experiences of children and young people's participation

1) Can you tell me about children and youth representatives in your committee or sub-committee?
    - Do they contribute to the committee/sub-committee?
    - Can they participate meaningfully?

2) How would you describe your relationship with children and youth representatives involved in your committee/sub-committee?
   - What makes you say that?
3) Have you ever listened to the views/ideas of children and youth representatives and used their ideas to initiate policy or programme development?
   - Could you share any examples?
4) Based on your experience, can you give me an example of a successful policy or programme that includes the participation of children and youth representatives?
5) Do you have any examples of programme development with children and young people that did not work so well?

D. How do policymakers seek to share power with children and young people in policy and programme decision-making?

1. Perceptions/ideas of power and power-sharing

1) Who is in charge of making policy and programme decisions?
   - What makes you say that?
   - Who would you say is the primary decision maker?
     - Who is the focus of attention?
     - Why are they the drivers of making decisions instead of others?
     - Could you give me some examples?
   - If you say no one is the focal point,
     - When policy and programme development decisions need to be made, who makes the decisions?
     - Are those in positions of decision-making authority permanent, or can they be replaced?
     - Could you give me some examples?
2) Is it important to share decision-making in policy and programme development with children and young people?
   - What makes you say that?
   - At what level would you allow them to make a decision?
3) Have you ever shared decision-making with children and youth representatives in policy and programme development?
   - If yes
     - Why did you decide to share the decision-making with them?
     - How did you feel about that?
     - Can you please describe your experiences in specific situations?

   - If not
     - Why have you never shared decision-making with them?
     - Will you try to allow them to do so in the future?
     - What made you decide that?

4) When a policy decision has to be made, how did you weigh or balance the perspectives and ideas of children and youth representatives alongside other social groups such as the elderly or other policymakers?

2. Level of power-sharing in decisions making

1) Does your decision-making process enable you to take children and young people's views into account?
2) Is there a procedure that enables children and young people to join in the decision-making?
3) Is there a procedure that enables children/young people and policymakers to share their authority and responsibility for decisions?
4) Is it a policy requirement that children, young people and policymakers share their authority and responsibility for decisions?

3. Policymakers' experiences of power-sharing in decision-making

1) What methods or techniques do you usually use when sharing decisions with children and young people in policy and programme development?
   - Why do you choose these methods?
   - When will you choose these methods?
   - What is the strength of these methods?
   - What is the weakness of these methods?
2) How did you apply the methods or techniques you mention when sharing decision-making with children and young people in policy and programme development?
3) What were the impacts of sharing decision-making with children and young people in policy or programme development?
4) Did you consider the risks that can arise when sharing decision-making with children in policy and programme development?
   - What makes you say that?
5) Are you responsible for what will happen to the policy or programme after children and young people have been involved in policy making/participation?
   - What makes you say that?
   - Can you give me a specific example?

……………………………………………………..…

List of abbreviations

CYC	Child and youth council
CYP	Children and young people
DCYA	Department of Children and Youth Affairs
GCP	Game Competition Project
CSG	Child Support Grant Policy
MSDHS	Ministry of Social Development and Human Security
NCPCYD	National Commission on the Promotion of Child and Youth Development
NCYCT	National Child and Youth Council of Thailand
NCYDP Act 2007	National Child and Youth Development Promotion Act B.E. 2550
NCYDP Act 2007	National Child and Youth Development Promotion Act B.E. 2560
NSC	New Sociology of Childhood
PE	Postgraduate education
RTA	Reflexive thematic analysis
SAO	Sub-District Administrative Organisation
SC-PCYCA	Sub-Committee on the Promotion of Child and Youth Council Affairs
SC-PCYUOM	Sub-Committee on the Protection of Children and Youth from Using Online Media
SC-PPCYD	Sub-Committee on Policy and Planning for Children and Youth Development
SD-CYC	Sub-District Children and Youth Council
SEP	Stroke Elimination Project
TA	Thematic analysis
TS-CCYD	Tung Samo Committee on Child and Youth Development

TS-CYC	Tung Samo Child and Youth Council
TS-CYCC	Tung Samo Child and Youth Centre Construction
TS-DP	Tung Samo Sub-District Administrative Organisation Development Plan
UE	Undergraduate education
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund

References

Adhabi, E. and Anozie, C. B. (2017). Literature review for the type of interview in qualitative research. *International Journal of Education*, 9 (3), pp.86–97.

Adu-Gyamfi, J. (2013). Can children and young people be empowered in participatory initiatives?: perspectives from young people's participation in policy formulation and implementation in Ghana. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 35 (10), pp.1766–1772. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1016/j.childyouth.2013.08.003.

Ahunovna, M. D. (2021). Important aspects of the psychological characteristics of adolescence. *JournalNX*, 7 (02), pp.59–61. [Online]. Available at: https://www.neliti.com/publications/336908/.

Alias, A., Mohamad Nasri, N. and Awang, M. M. (2023). A tracer study on child participation in child councillor programmes aimed towards development of the child friendly cities initiative. *Children*, 10 (4), pp.1–18. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.3390/children10040732.

Alur, A., Nath, S. and Kumar, P. (2005). *Participatory monitoring and evaluation: field experiences*. Carter, J. (Ed). Hyderabad, India: Intercooperartion. [Online]. Available at: https://www.fsnnetwork.org/resource/participatory-monitoring-and-evaluation-field-experiences.

Ansell, N. (2010). The discursive construction of childhood and youth in AIDS interventions in Lesotho's education sector: beyond global - local dichotomies. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 28 (5), pp.791–810. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1068/d8709.

Anyan, F. (2013). The influence of power shifts in data collection and analysis stages: a focus on qualitative research interview. *Qualitative Report*, 18 (18), pp.1–9. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.46743/2160-3715/2013.1525.

Arunittrakhoon, P. (2020). *Children and youth councils and public policy: meaningful or tokenistic*. [Online]. Bangkok Available at: https://siythailand.org/the-children-and-youth-council-and-public-policy/ [Accessed 10 March 2021].

Arunkumar, K. et al. (2019). Conceptualizing youth participation in children's health research: insights from a youth-driven process for developing a youth advisory council. *Children*, 6 (3). [Online]. Available at: doi:10.3390/children6010003.

Avelino, F. (2021). Theories of power and social change. Power contestations and their implications for research on social change and innovation. *Journal of Political Power*, 14 (3), pp.425–448. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1080/2158379X.2021.1875307.

Ayuwat, T. (2020). Student flash mob: criminology perspective. In: *The National Conference on Law and Social Sciences 'New imagination and Landscape in Thai Law'*. 2020. Chiang Mai. pp.215–225.

Bachrach, P. and Baratz, M. (2002). Two faces of power. In: Haugaard, M. (Ed). *Power: A*

reader. Manchester: Manchester University Press. pp.28–37.

Baird, I. G., Leepreecha, P. and Yangcheepsutjarit, U. (2017). Who should be considered 'Indigenous'? A survey of ethnic groups in northern Thailand. *Asian Ethnicity*, 18 (4), pp.543–562. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1080/14631369.2016.1268044.

Bakalis, S. and Joiner, T. A. (2002). *The effectiveness of decision making delegation among Thai managers*. [Online]. Available at: http://gebrc.nccu.edu.tw/proceedings/APDSI/2002/papers/paper34.pdf.

Baker, C. and Phongpaichit, P. (2014). *A history of Thailand*. 3rd ed. Australia: Cambridge University Press.

Baker, S. and Hess, M. (2001). Changing concepts of work in Thailand. *Journal of Comparative International Management*, 4 (1), pp.33–52.

Banpasirichote, C. and Pongsapich, A. (1992). *Child workers in hazardous work in Thailand*. Bangkok: Chulalongkorn University.

Barber, B. L. et al. (2014). Meaningful activity participation and positive youth development. In: Furlong, M. J., Gilman, R. and Huebner, E. S. (Eds). *Handbook of positive psychology in schools*. New York: Routledge. pp.227–244.

Basi, R. S. (1998). Administrative decision making: a contextual analysis. *Management Decision*, 36 (4), pp.232–240. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1108/00251749810211036.

Bell, D. N. F. and Blanchflower, D. G. (2011). Young people and the great recession. *Oxford Review of Economic Policy*, 27 (2), pp.241–267. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1093/oxrep/grr011.

Bessell, S. (2009). Children's participation in decision-making in the Philippines: understanding the attitudes of policy-makers and service providers. *Childhood*, 16 (3), pp.299–316. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1177/0907568209335305.

Bindeman, S. (2017). Foucault on silence as discourse silence. In: *Silence in philosophy, literature, and art*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill. pp.143–146. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1163/9789004352582.

Birch, J. et al. (2017). Participating together: dialogic space for children and architects in the design process. *Children's Geographies*, 15 (2), pp.224–236. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1080/14733285.2016.1238039.

Black, J. C. (2013). *'Mai Pen Rai' = If nothing can be done, what is there to do ?: cross-cultural perspectives on social work in Thailand and the United States*. Unpublished: Smith College. MA thesis.

Blaisdell, C. (2020). Children as competent social actors. *The SAGE Encyclopedia of children and childhood studies*, Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, Inc. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.4135/9781529714388.n149.

Blakeslee, J. E. and Walker, J. S. (2018). *Assessing the meaningful inclusion of youth voice*

in policy and practice: state of the science. Portland: Research and Training Center for Pathways to Positive Futures, Portland University.

Blanchet-Cohen, N. and Rainbow, B. (2006). Partnership between children and adults?: The experience of the international children's conference on the environment. *Childhood*, 13 (1), pp.113–126. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1177/0907568206059976.

Blum, R. W. and Nelson-Mmari, K. (2004). The health of young people in a global context. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 35 (5), pp.402–418. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1016/j.jadohealth.2003.10.007.

BM, W. and BS, L. (2002). Child prostitution: global health burden, research needs, and interventions. *Lancet*, 359 (April 20), pp.1417–1422. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1016/S0140-6736(02)08355-1. PMID: 11978356.

Bolotta, G. (2016). The good child's duties: childhood in militarised Thailand. *Kyoto Review of Southeast Asia*, (19). [Online]. Available at: http://kyotoreview.org/yav/childhood-militarized-thailand/.

Bolotta, G. (2023). Parenthood versus childhood: young people's generational rebellion in Thailand. In: Buhler-Niederberger, D. et al. (Eds). *The Emerald handbook of childhood and youth in Asian societies*. Leeds: Emerald Publishing Limited. pp.283–299.

Boonhok, S. (2020). Child is a white cloth (?): relationships between children characters and social issues represented in S.E.A. write's short stories. *Vanvitas*, 20 (2), pp.174–201.

Borden, L. M. et al. (2005). To participate or not to participate: that is the question. *New Directions for Youth Development*, (105), pp.33–49. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1002/yd.106.

Bordonaro, L. I. and Payne, R. (2012). Ambiguous agency: critical perspectives on social interventions with children and youth in Africa. *Children's Geographies*, 10 (4), pp.365–372. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1080/14733285.2012.726065.

Borgne, C. (2014). *What Next ? ways forward for children's and young people's participation*. Middlesex. [Online]. Available at: https://www.worldvision.de/sites/worldvision.de/files/pdf/Studie WVI Kinderbeteiligung.pdf.

Borgne, C. and Tisdall, E. K. M. (2017). Children's participation: questioning competence and competencies? *Social Inclusion Open Access Journal*, 5 (3), pp.122–130.

Borojević, T. et al. (2023). Youth participation for sustainable value creation: the role and prioritization of SDGs. *Sustainability*, 15 (16456). [Online]. Available at: doi:10.3390/su152316456.

Botchwey, N. D. et al. (2019). Including youth in the ladder of citizen participation: adding rungs of consent, advocacy, and incorporation. *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 85 (3), pp.255–270. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1080/01944363.2019.1616319.

Bourdieu, P. (1984). *Distinction: a social critique of the judgment of taste*. Massachusetts: Havard University Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1991). *Language and symbolic power*. Thompson, J. B. (Ed). Cambridge: Polity Press.

Bovaird, T. (2007). Beyond engagement and participation: user and community coproduction of public services. *Public Administration Review*, 67 (5), pp.846–860. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1111/j.1540-6210.2007.00773.x.

Boyden, J. et al. (2019). Adolescence and youth: a time of responsibility and transformation. In: *Tracing the consequences of child poverty*. Bristol: Policy Press. pp.101–132. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.56687/9781447348368-009.

Bozalek, V. (2011). Judging children's participatory parity from social justice and the political ethics of care perspectives. *Perspectives in Education*, 29 (1), pp.55–64.

Bradbury-Jones, C. and Taylor, J. (2015). Engaging with children as co-researchers: challenges, counter-challenges and solutions. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 18 (2), pp.161–173. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1080/13645579.2013.864589.

Brady, L.-M. (2020). Introduction: embedding young people's participation. In: Brady, L.-M. (Ed). *Embedding young people's participation in healthcare*. Bristol: Policy Press. pp.1–27.

Brady, L.-M. and Graham, B. (2019). *Social research with children and young people: a practical guide*. Bristol: Policy Press.

Brannen, J., Bhopal, K. and Eptinstall, E. (2000). *Connecting children: care and family life in later childhood*. London: Routledge.

Braun, V. and Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3 (2), pp.77–101. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1191/1478088706qp063oa.

Braun, V. and Clarke, V. (2019). Reflecting on reflexive thematic analysis. *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health*, 11 (4), pp.589–597. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1080/2159676X.2019.1628806.

Braun, V. and Clarke, V. (2021). *Thematic analysis : a practical guide*. London: SAGE Publications.

Brockliss, L. and Montgomery, H. (2013). Childhood: a historical approach. In: Kehily, M. J. (Ed). *Understanding childhood: A cross disciplinary approach*. 2nd ed. Policy Press. pp.75–125.

Buchenrieder, G. et al. (2017). Participatory local governance and cultural practices in Thailand. *Cogent Social Sciences*, 3 (1), pp.1–19. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1080/23311886.2017.1338331.

Buddasarn, A. and Ngamchitcharoen, W. (2019). The application model of the principle of 38 blessings of life in Thai society. *Journal of Buddhist Studies Chulalongkorn University*, 26 (3), pp.1–32. [Online]. Available at: https://so02.tci-thaijo.org/index.php/jbscu/article/view/173811%0A.

Burns, S. (2023). Transformative constraints in practices of co-production with social workers and young people in Hong Kong. In: Percy-Smith, B. et al. (Eds). *A handbook of children and young people's participation: perspectives from theory and practice*. London: Routledge. pp.51–59.

Byrne, D. (2022). A worked example of Braun and Clarke's approach to reflexive thematic analysis. *Quality and Quantity*, 56, pp.1391–1412. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1007/s11135-021-01182-y.

Cahill, H. and Dadvand, B. (2018). Re-conceptualising youth participation: a framework to inform action. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 95, pp.243–253. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1016/j.childyouth.2018.11.001.

Cairns, L. (2001). Investing in children: learning how to promote the rights of all children. *Children and Society*, 15 (5), pp.347–360. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1002/chi.665.

Callahan, K. (2007). Citizen participation: models and methods. *International Journal of Public Administration*, 30 (11), pp.1179–1196. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1080/01900690701225366.

Campbell, K. A. et al. (2021). Reflexive thematic analysis for applied qualitative health research. *Qualitative Report*, 26 (6), pp.2011–2028. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.46743/2160-3715/2021.5010.

Capaldi, M. P. (2015). Rethinking independent child migration in Thailand: victims of exploitation or competent agents? *Journal of Population and Social Studies*, 23 (1), pp.17–33. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.14456/jpss.2015.10.

Cavet, J. and Sloper, P. (2004). The participation of children and young people in decisions about UK service development. *Child: Care, Health and Development*, 30 (6), pp.613–621. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1111/j.1365-2214.2004.00470.x.

Chaikhambung, J. and Tuamsuk, K. (2017). Knowledge classification on ethnic groups in Thailand. *Cataloging and Classification Quarterly*, 55 (2), pp.89–104. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1080/01639374.2016.1271074.

Chamisa, S. F. and Shava, E. (2016). Youth involvement in policy making: a case of South Africa. *Journal of Social Sciences*, 49 (1–2), pp.165–174. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1080/09718923.2016.11893609.

Chankaew, P. (2021). *Child protection practitioners' perceptions of working with children whose rights were violated due to their participation in the protests in Thailand in the year 2020*. Unpublished: University of Stavanger. MA thesis.

Chantajam, A. (2020). *The study on developing suggestions for supporting local*

government promotion of child and youth councils and young people groups to encourage creative activity for solving community and social problems. Patumthani.

Checkoway, B. (2011). What is youth participation? *Children and Youth Services Review*, 33 (2), pp.340–345. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1016/j.childyouth.2010.09.017.

Checkoway, B., Allison, T. and Montoya, C. (2005). Youth participation in public policy at the municipal level. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 27 (10), pp.1149–1162. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1016/j.childyouth.2005.01.001.

Checkoway, B. and Richards-Schuster, K. (2003). Youth participation in community evaluation research. *American journal of evaluation*, 24 (1), pp.21–33.

Chinpraphap, P. (2021). The development of roles and interaction of parents with sons in family novels from 1927 - 2017: the case of parenting children. *Journal of Graduate Studies and Social Sciences*, 11 (1), pp.60–72. [Online]. Available at: https://so06.tci-thaijo.org/index.php/GRAURU/article/view/245433.

Christensen, P. and Prout, A. (2002). Working with ethical symmetry in social research with children. *Childhood*, 9 (4), pp.477–497. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1177/0907568202009004007.

Cladis, M. S. (1996). Rousseau's Soteriology: deliverance at the Crossroads. *Religious Studies*, 32 (1), pp.79–91. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1017/s0034412500024082.

Clark, A. and Moss, P. (2001). *Listening to young children: the mosaic approach*. London: National Children's Bureau for the Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

Clarke, J. (2004). Histories of childhood. In: Wyse, D. (Ed). *Childhood studies: An introduction*. Wiley. pp.1–12.

Coates, D. and Howe, D. (2016). Integrating a youth participation model in a youth mental health service: challenges and lessons learned. *Child and Youth Services*, 37 (3), pp.287–300. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1080/0145935X.2015.1119652.

Cockburn, T. and Devine, D. (2020). Recognising children's citizenship in the social care system. *The British Journal of Social Work*, 50, pp.2135–2151. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1093/bjsw/bcz135.

Coles, B. (1995). *Youth and social policy: youth citizenship and young careers*. London: UCL Press.

Coles, B. (2004). Welfare services for young people: better connections? In: Roche, J. et al. (Eds). *Youth in society*. London: Sage publications Ltd. pp.90–101.

Coles, B. and Wenham, A. (2016). Young people. In: Alcock, P. et al. (Eds). *The student's companion to social policy*. 5th ed. Sussex: Wiley. pp.425–431. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1016/S0140-6736(55)90285-3.

Collins, K. and Raymond, I. (2006). Dare we jump off Arnstein's ladder? Social learning as a new policy paradigm. In: *Proceedings of PATH (Participatory Approaches in Science*

& Technology) Conference. 2006. Edinburgh, 4-7 June.

Collins, T. M. et al. (2020). Involving child and youth advisors in academic research about child participation: the child and youth advisory committees of the International and Canadian Child Rights Partnership. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 109, pp.1–9. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1016/j.childyouth.2019.104569.

Committee on the Rights of the Child. (2009). *General comment No.12 (2009) The right of the child to be heard*. Geneva. [Online]. Available at: https://www.refworld.org/legal/general/crc/2009/en/70207.

Connolly, P. and Healy, J. (2004). Symbolic violence, locality and social class: the educational and career aspirations of 10-11-year-old boys in Belfast. *Pedagogy, Culture and Society*, 12 (1), pp.15–33. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1080/14681360400200187.

Convention on the rights of the child. (1989). *Treaty no. 27531. United Nations Treaty Series, 1577*. [Online]. Available at: https://treaties.un.org/doc/Treaties/1990/09/19900902 03-14 AM/Ch_IV_11p.pdf [Accessed 3 July 2020].

Corney, T. et al. (2020). *Approaches to youth participation in youth and community work practice: a critical dialogue*. Victoria, Australia: Youth Workers Association.

Corney, T. et al. (2021). Youth participation : adultism, human rights and professional youth work. *Children & Society*, 36, pp.677–690. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1111/chso.12526.

Corsaro, W. A. (2015). Social theories of childhood. In: *The sociology of childhood*. London: SAGE Publications, Inc. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.4135/9781483399027.n1.

Coster, W. (2008). Social construction of childhood. In: Zwozdiak-Myers, P. (Ed). *Childhood and youth studies*. Exeter: Learning Matters. pp.3–24.

Couzens, M. (2012). Exploring public participation as a vehicle for child participation in governance: a view from South Africa. *International Journal of Children's Rights*, 20 (4), pp.674–704. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1163/157181812X634210.

Couzens, M. and Mtengeti, K. (2011). *Creating space for child participation in local governance in Tanzania*. Tanzania: Research on Poverty Alleviation (REPOA).

Creaney, S. and Burns, S. (2024). Freedom from symbolic violence? Facilitators and barriers to participatory practices in youth justice. *Youth Justice*, 24 (1), pp.31–52. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1177/14732254231156844.

Cree, V. E. (2010). *Sociology for social workers and probation officers*. 2nd ed. Oxon: Routledge.

Cregan, K. and Cuthbert, D. (2014). *Global childhoods: issues and debates*. London: SAGE Publications.

Creswell, J. W. and Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research design: qualitative, quantitative, and*

mixed methods approaches. 5th ed. London: SAGE Publications, Inc.

Creswell, J. W. and Poth, C. N. (2017). *Qualitative inquiry and research design*. 4th ed. London: SAGE Publications, Inc.

Cronin, C. (1996). Bourdieu and Foucault power and modernity. *Philosophy&Social Criticism*, 22 (6), pp.55–85.

Crossley, J. (2017). *Government's troubled families programme 'making trouble': a Bourdieusian analysis of the UK government's troubled families programme*. Unpublished: Durham University. PhD.

Crowley, A. (2015). Is anyone listening? The impact of children's participation on public policy. *International Journal of Children's Rights*, 23 (3), pp.602–621. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1163/15718182-02303005.

Crowley, A., Larkins, C. and Pinto, L. M. (2020). *Listen-Act-Change Council of Europe Handbook on children's participation for professionals working for and with children*. [Online]. Available at: https://edoc.coe.int/en/children-s-rights/9288-listen-act-change-council-of-europe-handbook-on-childrens-participation.html.

Crowley, A. and Moxon, D. (2017). *New and innovative forms of youth participation in decision-making processes*. France: Council of Europe. [Online]. Available at: https://rm.coe.int/new-and-innovative-forms-of-youth-participation-in-decision-making-pro/1680759e6a.

Cuevas-Parra, P. (2022). Multi-dimensional lens to article 12 of the UNCRC: a model to enhance children's participation. *Children's Geographies*. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1080/14733285.2022.2071598.

Cummins, A., Horgan, D. and Martin, S. (2022). "The children's soap box" evaluating active citizenship through creative engagement. In: *Child and youth participation in policy, practice and research*. London: Routledge. pp.43–56. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.4324/9781003099529.

Daniel, P. and Ivatts, J. (1998). *Children and social policy*. London: Macmillan International Higher Education.

Davis, J. (2012). Involving children. In: *Researching with children and young people: research design, methods and analysis*. London: Sage publications. pp.154–193. [Online]. Available at: doi:https://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781446268315.

Davy, D. (2014). Understanding the complexities of responding to child sex trafficking in Thailand and Cambodia. *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy*, 34 (11/12), pp.793–816. [Online]. Available at: 10.1108/IJSSP-10-2013-0103.

Day, C. (2008). Children's and young people's involvement and participation in mental health care. *Child and Adolescent Mental Health*, 13 (1), pp.2–8. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1111/j.1475-3588.2007.00462.x.

Dekker, J. J. H. et al. (2012). Discoveries of childhood in history: an introduction.

Paedagogica Historica: International Journal of the History of Education, 48 (1), pp.1–9. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1080/00309230.2012.644988.

Delgado, P., Carvalho, J. M. S. and Alves, S. (2023). Children and young people's participation in decision-making in foster care. *Child Indicators Research*, 16 (1), pp.421–445. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1007/s12187-022-09979-5.

Department of Children and Youth Affairs. (2017). The needs of young people capacity development toward participation in community and social development. *Thai Health Promotion Foundation*, Bangkok.

Department of Children and Youth Affairs. (2018). *Children and youth development annual report 2018*. Bangkok.

Department of Children and Youth Affairs. (2019). *Annual report 2019*. Bangkok. [Online]. Available at: https://dcy.go.th/webnew/upload/download/file_th_20201106131158_1.pdf.

Department of Children and Youth Affairs. (2020). *The list of Thailand children and youth council administrators*. Department of children and Youth Affairs, Ministry of Social Development and Human Security.

Department of Children and Youth Affairs. (2021). *Thailand's child and youth councils statistics*. [Online]. Available at: https://opendata.nesdc.go.th/dataset/the-children-and-youth-council-of-thailand.

Devine, D. (2000). Constructions of childhood in school: power, policy and practice in Irish education. *International Studies in Sociology of Education*, 10 (1), pp.23–41. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1080/09620210000200053.

Devine, D. (2003). *Children, power and schooling: how childhood is structured in the primary school*. England: Trentham Books Ltd.

Dhammakaya Foundation. (2005). *A manual of peace: 38 steps towards enlightened living*. Patumthani: Dhammakaya Foundation.

Diana, C. (2020). Global south childhoods. *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Children and Childhood Studies*, SAGE Publications, Inc. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.4135/9781529714388.n312.

Dickens, J. (2016). *Social work and social policy: an Introduction*. 2nd ed. London: Routledge.

Duschinsky, R. (2013). Augustine, Rousseau, and the idea of childhood. *Heythrop Journal*, 54 (1), pp.77–88. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1111/j.1468-2265.2009.00562.x.

Einarsdottir, J., Dockett, S. and Perry, B. (2009). Making meaning: children's perspectives expressed through drawings. *Early Child Development and Care*, 179 (2), pp.217–232. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1080/03004430802666999.

Elliott, G., Suto, I. and Walland, E. (2019). *What makes researchers anxious? It's time to talk about talking about research*. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.17863/CAM.100387.

Ellis, P. (2016). The language of research (part 11) - research methodologies: interview types. *Wounds UK*, 12 (4), pp.104–106. [Online]. Available at: https://wounds-uk.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2023/02/content_11878.pdf.

Ergler, C. (2015). Beyond passive participation: from research on to research by children. In: Evans, R., Holt, L. and Skelton, T. (Eds). *Methodological approaches*. Singapore: Springer Singapore. pp.1–19.

Evans, C. (2018). *Analysing semi-structured interviews using thematic analysis: exploring voluntary civic participation among adults*. London: SAGE Publications, Ltd. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.4135/9781526439284.

Falconer, C. et al. (2020). *Co-creation and participation in the youth justice system*. Youth Justice Board.

Farrington, A. (2016). *Global study on sexual exploitation of childrenin travel and tourism: regional report Southeast Asia*. Bangkok: ECPAT International. [Online]. Available at: https://ecpat.org/resource/southeast-asia-regional-report/.

Farrow, A. (2018). *SALTO Think Tank on youth participation: closer to the edge of participation and activism*. Tallinn: SALTO-YOUTH Participation and Information Resource Centre. [Online]. Available at: https://www.salto-youth.net/downloads/4-17-3830/Raport_210x210mm_sm.pdf.

Farthing, R. (2012). Why youth participation? Some justifications and critiques of youth participation using new labour's youth policies as a case study. *Youth & Policy*, 109, pp.71–97. [Online]. Available at: https://www.youthandpolicy.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/farthing_why_youth_participation.pdf.

Fernandez, G. and Shaw, R. (2013). Youth council participation in disaster risk reduction in Infanta and Makati, Philippines: A policy review. *International Journal of Disaster Risk Science*, 4 (3), pp.126–136. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1007/s13753-013-0014-x.

Fleming, J. (2013). Young people's participation - where next? *Children and Society*, 27 (6), pp.484–495. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1111/j.1099-0860.2012.00442.x.

Fleming, J. and Boeck, T. (2012). What is research with young people? In: Fleming, J. and Boeck, T. (Eds). *Involving Children and Young People in Health and Social Care Research*. London: Routledge. pp.7–16. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.4324/9780203116319.

Flewitt, R. (2014). Interviews. In: Clark, A. et al. (Eds). *Understanding research with children and young people*. London: SAGE Publications, Ltd. pp.136–153.

Foster, M. et al. (2023). Children and young people's participation in decision-making within healthcare organisations in New Zealand: an integrative review. *Journal of Child Health Care*, 0 (0), pp.1–18. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1177/13674935231153430.

Foucault, M. (1978). *The History of Sexuality.* New York: Random House, Inc.

Foucault, M. (1997). *Discipline and Punish: the birth of the prison*. New York: Pantheon. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1093/bjps/axv048.

Fox, N. (2006). Using interviews in a research project. *The NIHR RDS for the East Midlands/Yorkshire & the Humber 2006*.

France, A. (2012). Young people. In: Fraser, S. et al. (Eds). *Doing research with children and young people*. London: Sage publications.

France, A. and Threadgold, S. (2016). Youth and political economy: towards a Bourdieusian approach. *Journal of Youth Studies*, 19 (5), pp.612–628. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1080/13676261.2015.1098779.

Francis, M. and Lorenzo, R. (2002). Seven realms of children's participation. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 22 (1–2), pp.157–169. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1006/jevp.2001.0248.

Fraser, N. (2010). *Injustice at intersecting scales: on 'social exclusion' and the 'global poor'*. 13 (3), pp.363–371. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1177/1368431010371758.

Fraser, N. and Honneth, A. (2005). *Redistribution or recognition? A political-philosophical exchange*. London: Verso. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1177/1743453x0500100209.

Fraser, S., Flewitt, R. and Hammersley, M. (2014). What is research with children and young people? In: *Understanding research with children and young people*. London: Sage publications. pp.34–50.

Friedman, R. M. (2001). A conceptual framework for developing and implementing effective policy in children's mental health. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders*, 11 (1), pp.11–18. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1177/106342660301100103.

Fry, G. W. and Bi, H. (2013). The evolution of education reform in Thailand: the Thai educational paradox. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 51 (3). [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1108/09578231311311483.

Funk, A. et al. (2012). Climbing the 'ladder of participation': engaging experiential youth in a participatory research project. *Canadian Journal of Public Health*, 103 (4), pp.288–292. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1007/bf03404237.

Gadda, A. (2008). Rights, Foucault and power: a critical Analysis of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. *Edinburgh Working Papers in Sociology, 31*, pp.1–13. [Online]. Available at: http://www.sociology.ed.ac.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0010/13015/WP31_Gadda.pdf.

Gadinger, F. (2023). Fields, trajectories, and symbolic power. In: Gadinger, F. and Scholte, J. A. (Eds). *Polycentrism: how governing works today*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. pp.213–235. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.4324/9781315232850-6.

Gal, T. (2017). An ecological model of child and youth participation. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 79, pp.57–64. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1016/j.childyouth.2017.05.029.

Galal, A. (2017). The most controversial but undoubtedly influential: Michel Foucault and his concept of power. *Journal of humanities and cultures studies R&D*, 2 (1), pp.1–21.

Gallacher, L. and Kehily, M. J. (2013). Childhood: a sociocultural approach. In: Kehily, M. J. (Ed). *Understanding childhood: A Cross disciplinary approach*. Policy Press. pp.213–263.

Gallagher, M. (2008a). Foucault, power and participation. *International Journal of Children's Rights*, 16 (3), pp.395–406. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1163/157181808X311222.

Gallagher, M. (2008b). 'Power is not an evil': rethinking power in participatory methods. *Children's Geographies*, 6 (2), pp.137–150. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1080/14733280801963045.

Galstyan, M. (2022). Re-conceptualising youth: theoretical overview. *Journal of Sociology: Bulletin of Yerevan University*, 13 (2), pp.22–27. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.46991/bysu:f/2022.13.2.022.

Gemayel, S. M. El and Salema, Y. (2023). Negotiating power dynamics through co-reflexivity in research with young children in disadvantaged communities. *Children & Society*, 37, pp.1596–1611. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1111/chso.12766.

Gill, N. (2006). *"Second nature": the nature/nurture debate in enlightenment pedagogical thought, from Locke to Rousseau*. Oregon: The American Society for Eighteenth Century Studies.

Gillham, B. (2000). *Case study research methods*. London: Bloomsbury Academic.

Gittins, D. (1998). *The child in question*. London. Macmillan Press Ltd.

Gittins, D. (2009). The historical construction of childhood. In: Kehily, M. J. (Ed). *An introduction to childhood studies*. 2nd ed. England: Open University Press. pp.35–49.

Gomaratut, S. et al. (2021). Child and adolescent research gap in Thailand: implications for practice and policy. *Suthiparithat Journal*, 35 (1), pp.110–123. [Online]. Available at: https://so05.tci-thaijo.org/index.php/DPUSuthiparithatJournal/article/view/249200/169827.

Gordon, H. R. (2007). Allies within and without: how adolescent activists conceptualize ageism and navigate adult power in youth social movements. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 36 (6), pp.631–668. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1177/0891241606293608.

Gottschalk, F. and Borhan, H. (2023). *Child participation in decision making: implications for education and beyond*. Paris. [Online]. Available at: https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/a37eba6c-en.

Groundwater-Smith, S., Dockett, S. and Bottrell, D. (2014). Innovative methods. In: *Participatory research with children and young people*. London: SAGE Publications, Ltd. pp.101–138. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.4135/9781473910751.

Gujit, I. (2014). Participatory approaches. *UNICEF Office of Research*, Florence. [Online]. Available at: https://www.betterevaluation.org/sites/default/files/Participatory_Approaches_ENG.pdf.

Gunn, R. (2005). Young people's participation in social services policy making. *Research Policy and Planning*, 23 (3), pp.127–137.

Gunn, R. (2008). The power to shape decisions? An exploration of young people's power in participation. *Health and Social Care in the Community*, 16 (3), pp.253–261. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1111/j.1365-2524.2008.00779.x.

Gurdal, S. and Sorbring, E. (2018). Children's agency in parent–child, teacher–pupil and peer relationship contexts. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies on Health and Well-being*, 13. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1080/17482631.2019.1565239.

Gustafsson, J. (2017). *Single case studies vs. multiple case studies: a comparative study*. Halmstad University., pp.1–15.

Guyot, J. (2011). Child and youth participation in Finland: a Council of Europe policy review. *Council of Europe*, Finland.

Hallett, T. (2007). Between deference and distinction: interaction ritual through symbolic power in an educational institution. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 70 (2), pp.148–171.

Hamilton, J. L., Nesi, J. and Choukas-Bradley, S. (2022). Reexamining social media and socioemotional well-being among adolescents through the lens of the COVID-19 pandemic: a theoretical review and directions for future research. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 17 (3), pp.662–679. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1177/17456916211014189.

Hammarberg, K., Kirkman, M. and De Lacey, S. (2016). Qualitative research methods: when to use them and how to judge them. *Human Reproduction*, 31 (3), pp.498–501. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1093/humrep/dev334.

Hanson, K. (2012). Schools of thought in children's rights. In: Liebel, M. et al. (Eds). *Children's rights from below: cross-cultural perspectives*. Reading: Palgrave Macmillan. pp.63–79. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1057/9780230361843.

Hart, R. A. (1992). *Children's participation: from tokenism to citizenship*. Florence: UNICEF International Child Development Centre.

Hart, R. A. (2008). Stepping back from 'The ladder': reflections on a model of participatory work with children. In: *Participation and learning: Perspectives on education and the environment, health and sustainability*. Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands. pp.19–31.

Haruța, C. and Cobârzan, B. (2010). The invisible hand or what makes bureaucracy indispensable? A short theoretical inquiry into the bureaucracy's role in the policy making process. *Transylvanian Review of Administrative Sciences*, (29), pp.62–70.

Hay, C. (2002). *Political analysis: a critical introduction*. London: Red Globe Press.

Head, B. W. (2011). Why not ask them? Mapping and promoting youth participation. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 33 (4), pp.541–547. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1016/j.childyouth.2010.05.015.

Hester, S. and Moore, A. (2018). Understanding children's participation through an Eliasian lens: habitus as a barrier to children's everyday participation rights. *The International Journal of Children's Rights*, 26 (3), pp.446–467.

Hill, M. et al. (2004). Moving the participation agenda forward. *Children and Society*, 18 (2), pp.77–96. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1002/chi.819.

Hinton, R. (2008). Children's participation and good governance: limitations of the theoretical literature. *International Journal of Children's Rights*, 16 (3), pp.285–300. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1163/157181808X311141.

Hoefer, R. (2021). The surprising usefulness of the policy stages framework. *Journal of Policy Practice and Research*, 2, pp.141–145. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1007/s42972-021-00041-2.

Hofmänner, A. (2018). New international science and technology policies: key issues and questions in Switzerland. *SWIR Exploratory Studies*, 1 (June 2018).

Hofstede, G. (1986). Cultural differences in teaching and learning. *International Journal of intercultural relations*, 10 (3), pp.301–320.

Hopkins, P. E. (2010). *Young people, place and identity*. London: Taylor & Francis.

Horgan, D. (2017a). Child participatory research methods: attempts to go 'deeper'. *Childhood*, 24 (2), pp.245–259. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1177/0907568216647787.

Horgan, D. et al. (2017). Children's participation: moving from the performative to the social. *Children's Geographies*, 15 (3), pp.274–288. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1080/14733285.2016.1219022.

Horgan, D. (2017b). Consultations with children and young people and their impact on policy in Ireland. *Social Inclusion Open Access Journal*, 5 (3), pp.104–112.

Howlett, M. and Giest, S. (2013). The policy-making process. In: Araral, E. et al. (Eds). *Routledge handbook of public policy*. London: Routledge. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.4324/9780203097571.

Hultgren, F. and Johansson, B. (2019). Including babies and toddlers: a new model of participation. *Children's Geographies*, 17 (4), pp.375–387. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1080/14733285.2018.1527016.

Iemamnuay, S. (2019). *Early childhood curriculum in Thailand: an investigation into perceptions of the cultivation of Thainess in young children*. Unpublished: Victoria University of Wellington. PhD.

Inter-Agency Working Group on Children's Participation. (2008). *Children as active citizens: policy and programme guide*. Bangkok: Inter-Agency Working Group on Children's Participation.

Ishkanian, A. (2022). Social movements and social policy: new research horizons. *Journal of Social Policy*, 51 (3), pp.582–595. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1017/S0047279421001008.

James, A. and James, A. (2004). *Constructing childhood: theory, policy and social practice*. New York: Macmillan International Higher Education.

James, A. and James, A. (2012). *Key concepts in childhood studies*. 2nd ed. London: SAGE Publications, Ltd.

James, A., Jenks, C. and Prout, A. (2010). *Theorizing childhood*. 9th ed. Cambridge: Polity Press.

James, A. and Prout, A. (2001). A new paradiagm for sociology of childhood? provenance, promise and problems. In: James, A. and Prout, A. (Eds). *Constructing and reconstructing childhood: contemporary issues in the sociological study of childhood*. 2nd ed. London: Falmer Press. pp.7–33.

James, N. J. (2018). Law and power: ten lessons from Foucault. *Bond Law Review*, 30 (1), pp.31–42. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.53300/001c.5658.

Jann, W. and Wegrich, K. (2006). Theories of the policy cycle. In: Fischer, F., Miller, G. J. and Sidney, M. S. (Eds). *Handbook of public policy analysis*. Florida: CRC Press. pp.1–512. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.4135/9781848608054.

Janta, B. et al. (2021). *Study on child participation in EU political and democratic life*. Luxemburg: Publications Office of the European Union. [Online]. Available at: https://commission.europa.eu/document/3f0302c5-f208-4f3a-a910-4cac49adbc12_en.

Jenks, C. (2001). Sociological perspectives and media representations of childhood. In: Fionda, J. (Ed). *Legal concepts of childhood*. London: Hart Publishing.

Jenks, C. (2015). Constructing childhood sociologically. In: Kehily, M. J. (Ed). *An introduction to childhood studies*. England: Open University Press. pp.53–70.

Jirapornkul, S. and Yolles, M. (2010). Assessing values and value change in Thai organizations. *Journal of Organisational Transformation & Social Change*, 7 (3), pp.321–347. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1386/jots.7.3.321_1.

Jobb, C. (2019). Power, space, and place in early childhood education. *Canadian Journal of Sociology*, 44 (3), pp.211–232. [Online]. Available at: https://www.jstor.org/stable/26795018.

John, M. (2003). *Children's rights and power: charging up for a new century*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Johnston, J. (2008). *Methods, tools and instruments for use with children*. Department of

International Development University. [Online]. Available at:
https://www.younglives.org.uk/publications/methods-tools-and-instruments-use-children.

Jones, G. (2009a). *Youth*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Jones, P. (2009b). *Rethinking childhood: attitudes in contemporary society*. London:
Continuum International Publishing Group.

Jones, P. (2011). What are children's rights? contemporary developments and debates.
In: Jones, P. and Walker, G. (Eds). *Children's rights in practice*. London: SAGE
Publications, Ltd. pp.3–16.

Kaewthep, K. (2011). เด็กกับการสื่อสาร. *[Children and communication].* Bangkok:
Chulalongkorn University.

Keddell, E. (2023). Recognising the embedded child in child protection: children's
participation, inequalities and cultural capital. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 147,
pp.1–11. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1016/j.childyouth.2023.106815.

Kehily, M. J. (2007). A cutural perspctive. In: Kehily, M. J. (Ed). *Understanding youth:
perspectives, identities and practices*. London: SAGE Publications. pp.11–44.

Kehily, M. J. (2009). Understanding childhood: an introduction to some key themes and
issues. In: Kehily, M. J. (Ed). *An introduction to childhood studies*. 2nd ed. England: Open
University Press. pp.1–16. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1177/009430610603500214.

Kellet, M. (2009). Children and young people's participation. In: Montgomery, H. and
Kellett, M. (Eds). *Children and young people's worlds: Developing frameworks for
integrated practice*. Bristol: Policy Press. pp.41–60.

Kiger, M. E. and Varpio, L. (2020). Thematic analysis of qualitative data: AMEE Guide No.
131. *Medical Teacher*, 42 (8), pp.846–854. [Online]. Available at:
doi:10.1080/0142159X.2020.1755030.

Kim, K. et al. (2015). Relationships between adults and parents in Asia. In: Cheng, S.-T. et
al. (Eds). *Successful aging: Asian perspectives*. New York: Springer. pp.101–122. [Online].
Available at: doi:10.1007/978-94-017-9331-5.

King, V. T. (2008). *The sociology of Southeast Asia: tranformations in a developing region*.
Copenhagen: NIAS Press.

Kirby, P. et al. (2003). *Building a culture of participation: involving children and young
people in policy, service planning, delivery and evaluation*. London: PK Research
Consultancy Ltd.

Kirby, P. and Bryson, S. (2002). *Measuring the magic? evaluating and researching young
people's participation in public decision making*. London: Carnegie Young People
Initiative.

Klibthong, S. (2013). Exploring Thai early childhood teachers' understanding, beliefs

and concerns of inclusive education: a case study of an early childhood centre. *MIER Journal of Educational Studies, Trends & Practices*, 3 (1), pp.16–32.

Knutson, T. J. et al. (2003). A cross-cultural comparison of Thai and US American rhetorical sensitivity: implications for intercultural communication effectiveness. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 27 (1), pp.63–78. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1016/S0147-1767(02)00060-3.

Komin, S. (1990). Culture and work-related values in Thai organisations. *International Journal of Psychology*, 25, pp.681–704.

Kongkirati, P. (2012). Thailand: the cutural politics of student resistance. In: Weiss, M. L. and Aspinall, E. (Eds). *Student activism in Asia*. Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press. pp.105–112.

Kongsak, V. (2019). Culture of family building. *Journal of Multidisciplinary Academic Research and Development*, 1 (3), pp.28–42.

Kosher, H. (2018). What children and parents think about children's right to participation. *International Journal of Children's Rights*, 26 (2), pp.295–328. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1163/15718182-02602005.

Kosher, H. and Ben-Arieh, A. (2020). Social workers' perceptions of children's right to participation. *Child and Family Social Work*, 25 (2), pp.294–303. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1111/cfs.12685.

Kotbungkair, W. et al. (2017). *The Ministry of Social Development and Human Security policies evaluation and follow-up in fiscal year 2017*. Bangkok: Thammasat University.

Kotchabhadi, N. et al. (2009). Thailand. In: Mason, J., Bolzan, N. and Kumar, A. (Eds). *Children's participation? Learning from children and adults in Asia-Pacific region*. Australia: Common Ground. pp.39–48.

Kraftl, P. (2013). Public spaces. In: Clark, A. (Ed). *Childhoods in context*. 2nd ed. Bristol: The Policy Press. pp.111–159.

Kuwinpant, P. (2002). *Thai society and culture*. Nagoya: Nagoya University. [Online]. Available at: https://www.gsid.nagoya-u.ac.jp/sotsubo/OFW2008_Thai_Society_by_ProfPreecha.pdf.

Ladkin, D. and Probert, J. (2021). From sovereign to subject: Applying Foucault's conceptualization of power to leading and studying power within leadership. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 32 (4), pp.1–12. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1016/j.leaqua.2019.101310.

Lane, J. et al. (2020). Strengthening health policy development and management systems in low- and middle- income countries: South Africa's approach. *Health Policy OPEN*, 1 (100010). [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1016/j.hpopen.2020.100010.

Lansdown, G. (2001). *Promoting children's participation in democratic decision-making*. Florence: UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre.

Lansdown, G. (2005a). *Can you hear me?: The right of young children to participate in decisions affecting them*. Bernard van Leer Foundation. [Online]. Available at: https://bibalex.org/baifa/Attachment/Documents/114976.pdf.

Lansdown, G. (2005b). *The evolving capacities of the child*. Florence. [Online]. Available at: http://ideas.repec.org/p/ucf/innins/innins05-21.html.

Lansdown, G. (2010). The realisation of children's participation rights. In: Percy-Smith, B. and Thomas, N. (Eds). *A handbook of children and young people's participation: perspectives from theory and practice*. New York: Routledge. pp.11–23.

Lansdown, G. and O'Kane, C. (2014a). Introduction. In: *A toolkit for monitoring and evaluating children's participation*. London: Save the Children.

Lansdown, G. and O'Kane, C. (2014b). Tools for monitoring and evaluating children's participation. In: *A toolkit for monitoring and evaluating children's participation*. London: Save the Children.

Larson, R., Walker, K. and Pearce, N. (2005). A comparison of youth-driven and adult-driven youth programs: balancing inputs from youth and adults. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 33 (1), pp.57–74. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1002/jcop.20035.

Lasswell, H. D. and Kaplan, A. (1950). *Power and society*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Lau, C. (2008). Child prostitution in Thailand. *Journal of Child Health Care*, 12 (2), pp.144–155. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1177/1367493508090172.

Lauckner, H., Paterson, M. and Krupa, T. (2012). Using constructivist case study methodology to understand community development processes: proposed methodological questions to guide the research process. *Qualitative Report*, 17 (13), pp.1–22.

Laungaramsri, P. (2003). Ethnicity and the politics Thailand. In: Mackerras, C. (Ed). *Ethnicity in Asia*. London: RoutledgeCurzon. pp.157–173.

Laura, L. (2007). 'Voice' is not enough: conceptualising Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. *British Educational Research Journal*, 33 (6), pp.927–942. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1080/01411920701657033.

Lee, N. (2001). *Childhood and society: growing up in an age of uncertainty*. Maidenhead: McGraw-Hill Education (UK).

Leonard, M. (2016). Becoming and being - developments in the sociology of childhood. In: *The sociology of children, childhood and generation*. London: SAGE Publications, Ltd. pp.11–37.

Lertchoosakul, K. (2012). *The rise of the octobrists: power and conflict among former left wing student activists in contemporary Thai politics*. Unpublished: London School of Economics and Political Science. PhD.

Lertchoosakul, K. (2021). The white ribbon movement: high school students in the 2020 Thai youth protests. *Critical Asian Studies*, 53 (2), pp.206–218. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1080/14672715.2021.1883452.

Lewer, K. (2023). Depicting Bourdieu's concepts as a set of stackable and transparent lenses. *Sociology Lens*, 36 (4), pp.469–473. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1111/johs.12436.

Liamputtong, P. et al. (2004). When I become a mother!: discourses of motherhood among Thai women in northern Thailand. *Women's Studies International Forum*, 27, pp.589–601. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1016/j.wsif.2004.09.017.

Linde, R. (2014). The globalization of childhood: the international diffusion of norms and law against the child death penalty. *European Journal of International Relations*, 20 (2), pp.544–568. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1177/1354066113475464.

Lintelo, D. te. (2011). *Youth and policy processes*. Future Agricultures Consortium Secretariat, University of Sussex. [Online]. Available at: www.future-agricultures.org.

Llewellyn, A., Agu, L. and Mercer, D. (2008). *Sociology for social workers*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Lobe, B., Morgan, D. and Hoffman, K. A. (2020). Qualitative data collection in an era of social distancing. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 19. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1177/1609406920937875.

Lueangvilai, W., Kanchanakunjara, S. and Wongpinpech, P. (2021). Volunteer spirit development in the context of Thailand. *Panyapiwat Journal*, 13 (1), pp.336–350. [Online]. Available at: https://so05.tci-thaijo.org/index.php/pimjournal/article/view/240392.

Lukes, S. (2005). *Power: a radical view*. 2nd ed. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Lundy, L. (2018). In defence of tokenism? Implementing children's right to participate in collective decision-making. *Childhood*, 25 (3), pp.340–354. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1177/0907568218777292.

Macauley, T. et al. (2022). Youth participation in policy-making processes in the United Kingdom: a scoping review of the literature. *Journal of Community Practice*, 30 (2), pp.203–224. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1080/10705422.2022.2073308.

MacDougall, C. and Darbyshire, P. (2018). Collecting qualitative data with children. In: Flick, U. (Ed). *The SAGE handbook of qualitative data collection*. London: Sage publications. pp.617–630. [Online]. Available at: doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781526416070.

Maconochie, H. A. (2013). *Young children's participation in a Sure Start children's centre*. Unpublished: Sheffield Hallam University. PhD.

Magee, K. and Purisuttamo, M. (2020). Sexual diversity and realisation in Theravada buddhist philosophical perspective. *Journal of Social Science and Buddhistic*

Anthropology, 5 (5), pp.200–216. [Online]. Available at: https://so05.tci-thaijo.org/index.php/Palisueksabuddhaghosa/article/view/259095.

Malikhao, P. (2017). *Culture and communication in Thailand*. Servaes, J. (Ed). Springer Nature Singapore Pte Ltd.

Malone, K. and Hartung, C. (2010). Challenges of participatory pratice with children. In: Percy-Smith, B. and Thomas, N. (Eds). *A handbook of children and young people's participation: Perspectives from theory and practice*. New York: Routledge. pp.24–38.

Marfu'ah, E. L. et al. (2023). The nexus of power and oppression: a Foucauldian and Gramscian study of prospero's dominance in the tempest. *Elite : English and Literature Journal*, 10 (2), pp.129–142. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.24252/elite.v10i2.43217.

Markogiannaki, A. (2016). *Children's perceptions of participation: a study using Forum Theatre*. Unpublished: ISCTE IUL. MA thesis.

Marshall, B. et al. (2013). Does sample size matter in qualitative research?: a review of qualitative interviews in is research. *Journal of Computer Information Systems*, 54 (1), pp.11–22. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1080/08874417.2013.11645667.

Martin, S. et al. (2015). *An examination of children and young people's views on the impact of their participation in decision-making*. Dublin: Department of Children and Youth Affairs.

Marx, M. et al. (2008). *Youth participation guide: assessment, planning, and implementation*. New York: Family Health International.

Mason, J. and Bolzan, N. (2010). Questioning understandings of children's participation. In: Percy-Smith, B. and Thomas, N. (Eds). *A handbook of children and young people's participation: Perspectives from theory and practice*. New York: Routledge. pp.125–132.

Mason, M. (2010). Sample size and saturation in PhD studies using qualitative interviews. *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 11 (3). [Online]. Available at: doi:10.17169/fqs-11.3.1428.

Matsui, M. (1990). Evolution of the feminist movement in Japan. *NWSA Journal*, 2 (3), pp.435–449. [Online]. Available at: https://www.jstor.org/stable/4316048.

Matthews, H. (2001). Citizenship, youth councils and young people's participation. *Journal of Youth Studies*, 4 (3), pp.299–318. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1080/13676260120075464.

Matthews, S. H. (2007). A window on the 'New' Sociology of Childhood. *Sociology Compass*, 1 (1), pp.322–334. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1111/j.1751-9020.2007.00044.x.

Mayall, B. (2000). The sociology of childhood in relation to children's rights. *International Journal of Children's Rights*, 8 (3), pp.243–259. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1163/15718180020494640.

Mayall, B. (2002). *Towards a sociology for childhood: Thinking from children's lives*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Mayall, B. (2003). *Sociologies of childhood and educational thinking*. London: Institute of Education, University of London.

Mayall, B. (2013). *A history of the sociology of childhood*. London: Institute of Education Press. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1080/14733285.2014.952188.

Mayall, B. (2015). Understanding inter-generational relations: the case of health maintenance by children. *Sociology of Health and Illness*, 37 (2), pp.312–324. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1111/1467-9566.12227.

McAuliffe, B. J. et al. (2003). Individualist and collectivist norms: when it's ok to go your own way. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 33 (1), pp.57–70. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1002/ejsp.129.

McCall-Smith, K. (2021). Entrenching children's participation through UNCRC Incorporation in Scotland. *International Journal of Human Rights*, 27 (8), pp.1181–1204. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1080/13642987.2021.1969920.

McCargo, D. (2021). Disruptors' dilemma? Thailand's 2020 Gen Z protests. *Critical Asian Studies*, 53 (2), pp.175–191. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1080/14672715.2021.1876522.

McMellon, C. and Tisdall, E. K. M. (2020). Children and young people's participation rights: looking backwards and moving forwards. *The International Journal of Children's Rights*, 28 (1), pp.157–182. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1163/15718182-02801002.

Michel, S. (2015). Education in Thailand: when economic growth is no longer enough. *London Review of Education*, 13 (3), pp.79–91. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.18546/LRE.13.3.11.

Ministry of Digital Economy and Society. (2021). *An overview of the present situation of Thai children and young people in 2021*. [Online]. Available at: https://www.mdes.go.th/law [Accessed 12 July 2021].

Montgomery, H. (2003). Childhood in time and place. In: Woodhead, M. and Montgomery, H. (Eds). *Understanding childhood: an interdisciplinary approach*. Haddington: Wiley. pp.45–83.

Montgomery, H. (2009). Cultural constructions of childhood. In: *Modern babylon?: prostituting children in Thailand*. Oxford: Berghahn Books. pp.53–68.

Montgomery, H. (2011). Defining child trafficking & child prostitution: the case of Thailand. *Seattle Journal for Social Justice*, 9 (2), pp.775–811.

Montgomery, H. (2013a). Childhood: an antropological approach. In: Kehily, M. J. (Ed). *Understanding childhood: A cross disciplinary approach*. Bristol: Policy Press. pp.163–206.

Montgomery, H. (2013b). Interventions and ideologies. In: Montgomery, H. (Ed). *Local childhood, global issues*. 2nd ed. Bristol: The Policy Press. pp.1–52.

Montgomery, H. (2014). Child prostitution as filial duty? The morality of child-rearing in a slum community in Thailand. *Journal of Moral Education*, 43 (2), pp.169–182. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1080/03057240.2014.893420.

Montgomery, H. (2015). Understanding child prostitution in Thailand in the 1990s. *Child Development Perspectives*, 9 (3), pp.154–157. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1111/cdep.12122.

Montgomery, H. (2016). Anthropological perspectives on children's rights. In: Ruck, M. D., Peterson-badali, M. and Freeman, M. (Eds). *Handbook of children's rights*. New York: Routledge. pp.97–113. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.4324/9781315766300.

Morentin-encina, J., Pigem, E. N. and Núñez, M. B. (2022). Inclusion as a value in participation: children's councils in Spain. *Social Inclusion*, 10 (2), pp.54–65. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.17645/si.v10i1.4924.

Morita, L. C. (2007). *Religion and family of the Chinese and Thai in Thailand and influences*. Nagoya University. [Online]. Available at: https://nagoya.repo.nii.ac.jp/records/6196.

Morrow, V. (2008). Ethical dilemmas in research with children and young people about their social environments. *Children's Geographies*, 6 (1), pp.49–61. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1080/14733280701791918.

Morrow, V. and Boyden, J. (2019). A view from the global south: commentary on the special section. *Developmental Psychology*, 55 (3), pp.601–605. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1037/dev0000679.

Morss, J. R. (2002). The several social constructions of James, Jenks, and Prout: a contribution to the sociological theorization of childhood. *International Journal of Children's Rights*, 10 (1), pp.39–54. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1163/157181802772758119.

Moss, P. (2001). *Beyond early childhood education and care*. OECD. [Online]. Available at: https://search.oecd.org/education/school/2535274.pdf [Accessed 7 July 2021].

Moules, T. and O'Brien, N. (2012). Participation in perspective: reflections from research projects. *Nurse Researcher*, 19 (2), pp.17–22. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.7748/nr2012.01.19.2.17.c8904.

Movshovich, J. (2014). *Children's participation in society; a key to development: children as essential actors in improving their lives and communities*. Unpublished: University of Paris. MA thesis.

National Child and Youth Development Promotion Act B.E.2550. (2007). *Thailand: The National Assembly of Thailand*. [Online]. Available at: https://law.m-society.go.th/law2016/law/view/4.

National Child and Youth Development Promotion Act B.E.2560. (2017). *Thailand: The National Assembly of Thailand*. Thailand. [Online]. Available at: https://www.ratchakitcha.soc.go.th/DATA/PDF/2560/A/063/1.PDF.

Navarro, Z. (2006). In search of a cultural interpretation of power: the contribution of Pierre Bourdieu. *IDS Bulletin*, 37 (6), pp.11–22. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1111/j.1759-5436.2006.tb00319.x.

Nayaka Thera, M. V. (2014). *Parents and children transmitting the Buddhist heritage across generations*. Sri Lanka: Buddhist Publication Society.

Neaum, S. (2019). Children and childhood: a historical perspective. In: *Child development for early years students and practitioners*. 4th ed. London: Learning Matters Ltd. pp.3–20. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1080/03004279.2011.586642.

Newton, N. (2010). The use of semi-structured interviews in qualitative research: strengths and weaknesses. *Exploring qualitative methods*, 1 (1), pp.1–11.

Ngammuk, P. (2016). (2016). *A comparison of the twelve core values of Thai people defined by the Head of the National Council for Peace and Order (NCPO) found in Thai private and public university students*. In: 2016. Hawaii International Conference on Education. Hawai, 3-6 January 2016.

Nguyen, T. H. (2005). *Thailand: cultural background for ESL/EFL teachers*. [Online]. Available at: https://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/document?repid=rep1&type=pdf&doi=20f93f4c2e026efb becffcdb84011273f2e2af2e [Accessed 8 September 2020].

Nimmannorrawong, P. (2015a). Children and childhood: historical perspectives reconsidered. *Journal of Liberal Arts*, 2 (15), pp.71–100. [Online]. Available at: https://so03.tci-thaijo.org/index.php/liberalarts/article/view/46156.

Nimmannorrawong, P. (2015b). *The history of children and childhood during the elderly Bangkok period to the Chakri Reformation*. Unpublished: Thammasat University. MA thesis.

Nir, T. and Perry-Hazan, L. (2016). The framed right to participate in municipal youth councils and its educational impact. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 69, pp.174–183. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1016/j.childyouth.2016.07.012.

Noble, H. and Heale, R. (2019). Triangulation in research, with examples. *Evidence-Based Nursing*, 22 (3), pp.67–68. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1136/ebnurs-2019-103145.

Nowell, L. S. et al. (2017). Thematic analysis: striving to meet the trustworthiness criteria. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 16 (1), pp.1–13. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1177/1609406917733847.

Nurhadi. (2015). *Child labour in rural Indonesia: children and parents' perspectives*. Unpublished: University of York. PhD.

O'Connell, R. and Brannen, J. (2014). Children's food, power and control: negotiations in

families with younger children in England. *Childhood*, 21 (1), pp.87–102. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1177/0907568213476900.

O'Dell, L., Crafter, S. and Montgomery, H. (2013). Children and work. In: Clark, A. (Ed). *Childhoods in context*. 2nd ed. Bristol: The Policy Press. pp.214–262.

O'Kane, C. (2003). *Children and young People as citizens: partners for social change*. Amtzis, J. (Ed). Kathmandu: Save the Children.

Oakley, A. (1994). Parallels and differences between children's and women's studies. In: Mayall, B. (Ed). *Children's childhood observed and experienced*. London: The Falmer Press. pp.13–32.

OECD. (2017). *Evidence-based policy making for youth well-being: a toolkit*. OECD Development Policy Tools. [Online]. Available at: doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264283923-en.

Pain, R. (2004). Social geography: participatory research. *Progress in Human Geography*, 28 (5), pp.652–663. [Online]. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1191/0309132504ph511pr.

Panpothong, N. (2015). Thai primary school history textbooks: a textually-oriented critical discourse analysis. *Journal of Language and Linguistics*, 34 (1), pp.66–93. [Online]. Available at: https://so04.tci-thaijo.org/index.php/joling/article/view/118177.

Papadopoulos, T. and Roumpakis, A. (2013). The meta-regulation of European industrial relations: power shifts, institutional dynamics and the emergence of regulatory competition among Member States. *International Labour Review*, 152 (2).

Peckham, S. et al. (2022). Policy success: what is the role of implementation support programmes? *Social Policy and Administration*, 56 (3), pp.378–393. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1111/spol.12771.

Pellandini-Simányi, L. (2014). Bourdieu, ethics and symbolic power. *Sociological Review*, 62 (4), pp.651–674. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1111/1467-954X.12210.

Percy-Smith, B. (2007). 'You think you know? ... You have no idea': youth participation in health policy development. *Health Education Research*, 22 (6), pp.879–894. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1093/her/cym032.

Percy-Smith, B. and Thomas, N. (2010). Conclusion: emerging themes and new directions. In: Percy-Smith, B. and Thomas, N. (Eds). *A handbook of children and young People's participation: Perspectives from theory and practice*. New York: Routledge. pp.356–366.

Perovic, B. (2016). Defining youth in contemporary national legal and policy frameworks across Europe. *Youth participation in Europe*. [Online]. Available at: https://pjp-eu.coe.int/documents/42128013/47261653/Analytical+paper+Youth+Age+Bojana+Perovic+4.4.16.pdf/eb59c5e2-45d8-4e70-b672-f8de0a5ca08c.

Perry-Hazan, L. (2016). Children's participation in national policymaking: 'you're so adorable, adorable, adorable! I'm speechless; so much fun!' *Children and Youth Services Review*, 67, pp.105–113. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1016/j.childyouth.2016.05.015.

Phrakhrukositwattananukul. (2020). Women and religion: social perspectives on religious activities management of Theravada bhikkuni in Thailand. *Journal of Social Science and Buddhistic Anthropology*, 5 (11), pp.276–287. [Online]. Available at: https://so04.tci-thaijo.org/index.php/JSBA/article/view/242981.

Pink, R. M. (2013). Child trafficking in Thailand: prevention and prosecution challenges. *Asian Affairs: An American Review*, 40 (4), pp.163–174. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1080/00927678.2013.847746.

Powell, M. A. and Smith, A. B. (2009). Children's participation rights in research. *Childhood*, 16 (1), pp.124–142. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1177/0907568208101694.

Prabhu, V. P. (2011). Risk-taking. 2nd ed. *Encyclopedia of creativity*, 2, Elsevier Inc., pp.319–323. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1007/BF00486156.

Promchotchai, A. (2013). *Child policy making in Thai society: the formation and development*. Unpublished: Thammasat University. MA thesis.

Prout, A. (2005). *The future of childhood: towards the interdisciplinary study of children*. Oxon: RoutledgeFalmer.

Prout, A. (2011). Taking a step away from modernity: reconsidering the New Sociology of Childhood. *Global Studies of Childhood*, 1 (1), pp.4–14. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.2304/gsch.2011.1.1.4.

Prout, A. and Tisdall, E. K. M. (2006). Conclusion: social inclusion, the welfare state and understanding children's participation. In: Tisdall, E. K. M. et al. (Eds). *Children, young people and social inclusion: participation for what?*. Bristol: Bristol University Press. pp.235–246. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1332/policypress/9781861346629.003.0013.

Punch, S. (2001). Negotiating autonomy: children's use of time and space in rural Bolivia. In: Alanen, L. and Mayall, B. (Eds). *Conceptualising child-adult relations*. London: RoutledgeFalmer. pp.23–36.

Punch, S. (2002a). Interviewing strategies with young people: the 'secret box', stimulus material and task-based activities. *Children and Society*, 16 (1), pp.45–56. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1002/chi.685.

Punch, S. (2002b). Research with children: the same or different from research with adults? *Childhood*, 9 (3), pp.321–341. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1177/0907568202009003045.

Punch, S. (2003). Childhoods in the majority world: miniature adults or tribal children? *Sociology*, 37 (2), pp.277–295. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1177/0038038503037002004.

Punch, S. (2005). The generationing of power: a comparison of child-parent and sibling relations in Scotland. *Sociological Studies of Children and Youth*, 10, pp.169–188. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1016/S1537-4661(04)10009-3.

Punch, S. (2007a). Generational power relations in rural Bolivia. In: Panelli, R., Punch, S. and Robson, E. (Eds). *Global perspectives on rural childhood and youth: young rural lives*. New York: Routledge.

Punch, S. (2007b). Migration Projects: Children on the move for work and education. *Workshop on Independent Child Migrants: policy Debates and Dilemmas*, London.

Punch, S. (2016). Exploring children's agency across majority and minority context. In: Esser, F. et al. (Eds). *Reconceptualising agency and childhood: new perspectives in childhood studies*. London: Taylor & Francis. pp.184–196.

Punch, S. and Tisdall, E. K. M. (2012). Exploring children and young people's relationships across majority and minority worlds. *Children's Geographies*, 10 (3), pp.241–248. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1080/14733285.2012.693375.

Pupavac, V. (2001). Misanthropy without borders: the international children's rights regime. *Disasters*, 25 (2), pp.95–112. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1111/1467-7717.00164.

Quennerstedt, A. and Quennerstedt, M. (2014). Researching children's rights in education: sociology of childhood encountering educational theory. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 35 (1), pp.115–132. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1080/01425692.2013.783962.

Rabibhadana, A. (1969). *The organisation of Thai society in the early Bangkok period, 1782-1873*. New York: Cornell University.

Raithelhuber, E. (2016). Extending agency: the merit of relational approaches for childhood studies. In: Esser, F. et al. (Eds). *Reconceptualising agency and childhood: new perspectives in childhood studies*. London: Taylor & Francis. pp.97–109.

Rattanadilok Na Phuket, W. (2017). Power relations between adulthood - childhood in the book series 'Muea Khunta Khunyai Yang Dek'. *Journal of the Faculty of Arts, Silpakorn University*, 39 (2), pp.104–126.

Raven, B. H. (2008). The bases of power and the power/interaction model of interpersonal influence. *Analyses of Social Issues and Public Policy*, 8 (1), pp.1–22. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1111/j.1530-2415.2008.00159.x.

Read, J. (2009). Working with children: an integrated approach. In: Kehily, M. J. (Ed). *An introduction to childhood studies*. 2nd ed. Berkshire: Open University Press.

Ribbens McCarthy, J. et al. (2017). Childhood, children and family lives in China. In: Zang, X. and Zhao, L. X. (Eds). *Handbook on the family and marriage in China*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing. pp.286–304.

Richards-Schuster, K. and Timmermans, R. (2017). Conceptualizing the role of adults

within youth-adult partnerships: an example from practice. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 81 (July), pp.284–292. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1016/j.childyouth.2017.07.023.

Ridge, T. (2002). *Childhood poverty and social exclusion: from a child's perspective*. Bristol: Policy press.

Roberts, J. K., Pavlakis, A. E. and Richards, M. P. (2021). It's more complicated than it seems: virtual qualitative research in the COVID-19 era. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 20, pp.1–13. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1177/16094069211002959.

Robinson, R. S. (2014). Purposive sampling. Michalos, A. C. (Ed). *Encyclopedia of quality of life and well-being research*, Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands., p.5243. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1007/978-94-007-0753-5_2337.

Rodgers, D. M. (2020). *Children in social movements: rethinking agency, mobilization and rights*. New York: Routledge. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.4324/9781003014294.

Rogers, J. M. and Karunan, V. (2020). Is the deinstitutionalisation of alternative care a 'wicked problem'? A qualitative study exploring the perceptions of child welfare practitioners and policy actors in Thailand. *International Social Work*, 63 (5), pp.626–639. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1177/0020872820940016.

Rojanapanich, P. and Pimpa, N. (2011). Creative education, globalization and social imaginary. *Creative Education*, 02 (04), pp.327–332. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.4236/ce.2011.24046.

Rousseau, J.-J. (1921). *Emile, or Education*. New York: E.P. Dutton.

Ruiz-Casares, M. et al. (2017). Children's rights to participation and protection in international development and humanitarian interventions: nurturing a dialogue. *International Journal of Human Rights*, 21 (1), pp.1–13. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1080/13642987.2016.1262520.

Ruscoe, A., Barblett, L. and Barratt-Pugh, C. (2018). Sharing power with children: repositioning children as agentic learners. *Australasian Journal of Early Childhood*, 43 (3), pp.63–71. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.23965/AJEC.43.3.07.

Saar-Heiman, Y. (2023). Power with and power over: social workers' reflections on their use of power when talking with parents about child welfare concerns. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 145 (December 2022). [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1016/j.childyouth.2022.106776.

Saisuwan, P. (2016). *Male femininity in Thai among men who identify with non-normative male roles*. Unpublished: Queen Mary University of London. PhD.

Samonova, E. et al. (2021). Power, agency and children's time use in rural Sierra Leone. *Children's Geographies*, 0 (0), pp.1–14. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1080/14733285.2021.1985432.

Schoch, A. et al. (2020). Participation of children and parents in the swiss child protection system in the past and present: an interdisciplinary perspective. *Social Sciences*, 9 (8). [Online]. Available at: doi:10.3390/SOCSCI9080148.

Schuster, K. R. and Checkoway, B. (2011). Youth participation in public policy at the local level new lessons from Michigan municipalities. *European Coatings Journal*, (11), pp.38–40. [Online]. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1002/ncr.273.

Schwandt, T. A. and Gates, E. E. (2018). Case study methodology. In: Denzin, N. K. and Lincoln, Y. S. (Eds). *The SAGE Handbook of qualitative research*. 195 (5). SAGE Publications, Inc. pp.2065–2088. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1007/s11229-017-1319-x.

Scott, J. (2001). *Power*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Seebach, M. (2008). Youth participation and youth work. *Youth Studies Ireland*, 3 (2), pp.37–53. [Online]. Available at: https://www.youthworkireland.ie/who-we-are/youth-studies-ireland-journal/.

Seramethakul, M. (2019). *Principles for the protection of children's rights under the concept of the best interests of the child*. Bangkok: Duan Tula Printing House.

Sercombe, H. (2009). Power ethics and youth work. In: Rob, W. (Ed). *Concepts and methods of youth work. Doing youth work in Australia*. Hobart: Tasmania. [Online]. Available at: http://strathprints.strath.ac.uk/26488/.

Sharafuddin, M. A. (2015). Types of tourism in Thailand. *e-Review of Tourism Research*, 12 (3–4), pp.210–219.

Shek, D. T. L. and Sun, R. C. F. (2014). Parenting in Hong Kong: traditional Chinese cultural roots and contemporary phenomena. In: Selin, H. (Ed). *Parenting across culture*. London: Springer. pp.25–38.

Shier, H. (2001). Pathways to participation: openings, opportunities and obligations a new model for enhancing children's participation in decision-making, in line with Article 12.1 of the United Nations convention on the rights of the child. *Children & Society*, 15, pp.107–117. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1002/CHI.617.

Shier, H. (2006). Pathways to participation revisited: Nicaragua perspective. *Dialogue and Debate*, (2), pp.14–19. [Online]. Available at: http://www.harryshier.net/docs/Shier-Pathways_to_Participation_Revisited_NZ2006.pdf.

Shier, H. (2010). Pathways to participation revisited learning from Nicaragua's child coffee workers. In: Percy-Smith, B. and Thomas, N. (Eds). *A handbook of children and young people's participation: Perspectives from theory and practice*. New York: Routledge. pp.215–228.

Shier, H. (2012). *What does 'equality' mean for children in relation to adults?* CESESMA, San Ramón, Matagalpa, Nicaragua/Queen's University Belfast, Northern Ireland. [Online]. Available at: http://hdl.handle.net/10197/12059.

Shier, H. et al. (2014). How children and young people influence policy-makers: lessons from nicaragua. *Children and Society*, 28 (1), pp.1–14. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1111/j.1099-0860.2012.00443.x.

Simons, H. (2012). Evolution and concept of case study research. In: *Case study research in practice*. London: SAGE Publications, Ltd. pp.12–27. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.4135/9781446268322.n1.

Sinclair, R. (2004a). Participation in practice: making it meaningful, effective and sustainable. *Children and Society*, 18 (2), pp.106–118. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1002/chi.817.

Sinclair, R. (2004b). *Quality protects research briefing No.3 young People's participation*. Department of Health.

Singh, G. et al. (2017). Participatory rural appraisal (PRA) approach for watershed management in India: a review. *International Journal of Current Microbiology and Applied Sciences*, 6 (7), pp.1924–1940. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.20546/ijcmas.2017.607.229.

Singh, J. P. and Hart, S. A. (2007). Sex workers and cultural policy: mapping the issues and actors in Thailand. *Review of Policy Research*, 24 (2), pp.155–173. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1111/j.1541-1338.2007.00274.x.

Sinnott, M. (2014). Baby ghosts: child spirits and contemporary conceptions of childhood in Thailand. *Trans-Regional and-National Studies of Southeast Asia*, 2 (2), pp.293–317. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1017/trn.2014.8.

Sirindhorn, H. R. . P. M. C. (2018). History and development of Thai education. In: Maclean, R. and Symaco, L. P. (Eds). *Education in Thailand: an old elephant in search of a new mahout*. Springer. pp.4–32.

Sirkko, R., Kyrönlampi, T. and Puroila, A. M. (2019). Children's agency: opportunities and constraints. *International Journal of Early Childhood*, 51 (3), pp.283–300. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1007/s13158-019-00252-5.

Skauge, B., Storhaug, A. S. and Marthinsen, E. (2021). The what, why and how of child participation—A review of the conceptualization of "child participation" in child welfare. *Social Sciences*, 10 (2), pp.1–15. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.3390/socsci10020054.

Smith, A. B. (2002). Interpreting and supporting participation rights: contributions from sociocultural theory. *The International Journal of Children's Rights Rights*, 10 (1), pp.73–88. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1163/157181802772758137.

Smith, K., Chanlett-Avery, E. and Dolven, B. (2020). *Thailand: 2020 student protests and U.S.-Thai Relations*. [Online]. Available at: https://www.everycrsreport.com/reports/IF11676.html [Accessed 21 January 2021].

Smithson, H. and Jones, A. (2021). Co-creating youth justice practice with young people: tackling power dynamics and enabling transformative action. *Children & Society*, 35 (3),

pp.348–362. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1111/chso.12441.

Sombat, T. (2011). Attributions and attitudes of mothers and fathers in Thailand. *Parent Sci Pract*, 1 (11), pp.190–198. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1080/15295192.2011.585566.

Sombatpoonsiri, J. (2020). *Thailand's anti-establishment protests for many young people, these protests are the last chance to fight for a better politics that respects popular sovereignty*. [Online]. Available at: https://www.ips-journal.eu/regions/asia/thailands-anti-establishment-protests-4604/ [Accessed 21 January 2021].

Songsoontorawat, P. (2016). *The children and youth council's role in driving the municipality of Nakhon Ratchasima activities*. Unpublished: Thammasat University. MA thesis.

Sorin, R. and Galloway, G. (2006). Constructs of childhood: constructs of self. *Children Australia*, 31 (2), pp.12–21.

Sriwichiana, K., Tonbootb, S. and Pannarunothaib, S. (2021). Knowledge synthesis and situations of public policy driving in an issue of health rights of vulnerable groups. *Journal of Social Work*, 29 (1), pp.177–209.

Sturm, A. (2006). *The king's nation: a study of the emergence and development of nation and nationalism in Thailand*. Unpublished: University of London. PhD.

Supap, S. (1999). สังคมและวัฒนธรรมไทย: ค่านิยม ครอบครัว ศาสนา ประเพณี *[Thai society and culture: value, family, religion, and tradition]*. Bangkok: Thai Watana Panich.

Sutton, J. and Austin, Z. (2015). Qualitative reserch: data collection,analysis,and managment. *The Canadian Journal of Hospital Pharmacy*, 68 (3), pp.226–231. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.4212/cjhp.v68i3.1456.

Suwinyattichaiporn, T., Johnson, Z. D. and Fontana, J. (2019). Investigating the influence of student–teacher Facebook interaction in Thailand. *Asian Journal of Communication*, 29 (5), pp.391–404. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1080/01292986.2019.1651882.

Swartz, D. (1997). *Culture and power: the sociology of Pierre Bourdieu*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Swartz, D. (2010). Pierre Bourdieu's political sociology and public sociology. In: Warde, A. and Lamont, M. (Eds). *Cultural analysis and Bourdieu's legacy cultural*. Oxon: Routledge.

Swauger, M., Castro, I. E. and Harger, B. (2017). The continued importance of research with children and youth: the 'new' sociology of childhood 40 years later. In: Castro, I. E. et al. (Eds). *Sociological studies of children and youth*. United Kingdom: Emerald Publishing Limited. pp.1–7. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1108/S1537-466120180000022001.

Tasios, T. N. and Kalyva, E. (2013). The importance of children's participation in decision- making about themselves and the barriers, which might encounter. In:

Gonidis, F. et al. (Eds). *The 8th Annual South-East European Doctoral Student Conference: infusing research and knowledge in South-East Europe.* 2013. South-East European Research Centre, Greece, 16-17 September 2013. [Online]. Available at: https://www.seerc.org/new/?view=book&layout=details&id=28.

Tatlow-Golden, M. and Montgomery, H. (2020). Childhood studies and child psychology: disciplines in dialogue? *Children and Society*, (March), pp.1–15. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1111/chso.12384.

Taweephon, Y. et al. (2018). Policy decision of citizens, bureaucrats and politicians: a lesson from decentralisation policy in Thailand. *Journal of Southern Technology Vol.11*, 11 (1).

Techacharoenrungrueang, S. and Wanchai, M. (2017). Power relations between adults and children in Thai children literature: the critical discourse analysis revisited. In: *The 10th International Conference of HUSOC Academic Research 2017*. 2017. Chiang Rai Rajabhat University, Chiang Rai, 2-3 February 2017. [Online]. Available at: http://human.crru.ac.th/husoc2017/download/Conference Proceedings.pdf.

Technical Promotion and Support Office. (2019). *The evaluation of children and youth council*. Department of Children and Youth and Technical Promotion and Support Office. [Online]. Available at: https://tpso3.m-society.go.th/images/pdf/ChildrenandYouth/ ประเมินผลการดำเนินงานสภาเด็กและเยาวชน.pdf.

Thammaboosadee, R. (2021). 'Bad student' and story(re)telling: the dispalcement of stories through language, space and body in a high-school-student movement in 2020 Thailand. *Journal of Suan Sunandha Arts and Culture*, 1 (1), pp.87–107.

Thanapornsangsuth, S. and Anamwathana, P. (2022). Youth participation during Thailand's 2020-2021 political turmoil. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education*, 00 (00), pp.1–15. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1080/02188791.2022.2037513.

Thanasankit, T. (2002). Requirements engineering - exploring the influence of power and Thai values. *European Journal of Information Systems*, 11 (2), pp.128–141. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1057/palgrave/ejis/3000423.

Thanasankit, T. and Corbitt, B. (2002). Understanding Thai culture and its impact on requirements engineering process management during information systems development. *Asian Academy of Management Journal*, 7 (1), pp.103–126. [Online]. Available at: http://web.usm.my/aamj/7.1.2002/AAMJ 7-1-6.pdf.

Tharapak, R., Dejwaln, V. and Mrukapituk, S. (2021). *ยัง MOVES พลังคนรุ่นใหม่ขับเคลื่อนสังคม.* ⌈*Young moves: young people's power driving society]*. Tharapak, R. (Ed). Nonthaburi: Phappim Press.

Thomas, D. (2017). Factors that explain academic dishonesty among university students in Thailand. *Ethics and Behavior*, 27 (2), pp.140–154. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1080/10508422.2015.1131160.

Thomas, N. (2007). Towards a theory of children's participation. *International Journal of*

Children's Rights, 15 (1), pp.199–218. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1163/157181895X00384.

Thomas, N. (2014). Sociology of childhood. In: Maynard, T. and Powell, S. (Eds). *An introduction to early childhood studies*. 3rd ed. London: SAGE Publications, Inc.

Thompson, K. (2015). *The social construction of chilhoood*. [Online]. Available at: https://revisesociology.com/2015/05/06/social-construction-of-childhood/ [Accessed 17 December 2020].

Thomson, A., Peasgood, E. and Robertson, S. (2022). The youth patient and public involvement Café—A youth-led model for meaningful involvement with children and young people. *Health Expectations*, 25, pp.2893–2901. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1111/hex.13597.

Thongsawang, S., Rehbein, B. and Chantavanich, S. (2020). Inequality, sociocultures and habitus in Thailand. *Sojourn*, 35 (3), pp.493–524. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1355/sj35-3d.

Thongtong, R. (2019). Truth: just pure intent or reality for kids. *Journal of Srilanchang Review*, 5 (1), pp.67–75. [Online]. Available at: http://ojs.mbu.ac.th/index.php/jslc/article/view/1243/858.

Thummachote, R. and Yurdagul, E. (2018). The competency of Thai officials. *Kasem Bundit Journal*, 19 (May-June), pp.378–388.

Tisdall, E. K. M. (2008). Is the honeymoon over? Children and young people's participation in public decision-making. *International Journal of Children's Rights*, 16, pp.419–429. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1163/157181808X311240.

Tisdall, E. K. M. (2015). Children and young people's participation: a critical consideration of Article 12. In: Vandenhole, W. et al. (Eds). *Routledge International Handbook of Children's Rights Studies*. London: Routledge. pp.185–200. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.4324/9781315769530.ch11.

Tisdall, E. K. M. and Bell, R. (2006). Included in governance? children's participation in 'public' decision making. In: Tisdall, E. K. M. et al. (Eds). *Children, young people and social inclusion: Participation for what?*. Bristol: The Policy Press. pp.103–122.

Tisdall, E. K. M. and Cuevas-Parra, P. (2021). Beyond the familiar challenges for children and young people's participation rights: the potential of activism. *International Journal of Human Rights*, 26 (5), pp.792–810. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1080/13642987.2021.1968377.

Tisdall, E. K. M. and Punch, S. (2012). Not so 'new'? looking critically at childhood studies. *Children's Geographies*, 10 (3), pp.249–264. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1080/14733285.2012.693376.

To, S. M. (2006). Using Foucault's concept of power to analyze school discipline and draw implications for school social work service in Hong Kong. *International Social Work*, 49 (6), pp.779–790. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1177/0020872806070974.

To, S. M. et al. (2021). Youth empowerment in the community and young people's creative self-efficacy: the moderating role of youth–adult partnerships in youth service. *Youth and Society*, 53 (6), pp.1021–1043. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1177/0044118X20930890.

Torelli, C. J. and Shavitt, S. (2010). Culture and concepts of power. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 99 (4), pp.703–723. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1037/a0019973.

Toros, K. (2021). A systematic review of children' s participation in child protection decision-making: tokenistic presence or not ? *Children & Society*, 35 (3), pp.395–411. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1111/chso.12418.

Treanor, M. C., Patrick, R. and Wenham, A. (2021). Qualitative longitudinal research: from monochrome to technicolour. *Social Policy and Society*, 20 (4), pp.635–651. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1017/S1474746421000270.

Tuckness, A. (2010). Locke on education and the rights of parents. *Oxford Review of Education*, 36 (5), pp.627–638. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1080/03054985.2010.514439.

Tuicomepee, A. et al. (2018). *The research synthesis on children and youth in Thailand*. Thailand Research Fund. [Online]. Available at: https://digital.library.tu.ac.th/tu_dc/frontend/Info/item/dc:179108.

Tulananda, O. and Roopnarine, J. L. (2001). Mothers' and fathers' interactions with preschoolers in the home in Northern Thailand: relationships to teachers' assessments of children's social skills. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 15 (4), pp.676–687. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1037/0893-3200.15.4.676.

Twum-Danso, A. (2010). The construction of childhood and the socialisation of children in Ghana Implications for the implementation of Article 12 of the CRC. In: Percy-Smith, B. and Thomas, N. (Eds). *A handbook of children and young people's participation: Perspectives from theory and practice*. New York: Routledge. pp.133–140.

Ungkleang, S. et al. (2019). *The development of the Sub-District of Thailand aimed to promote child and youth participation*. Bangkok: Thammasat University.

UNICEF. (2010). A summary of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. *Unicef United Kingdom*. [Online]. Available at: https://www.unicef.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/UNCRC_summary-1_1.pdf.

UNICEF. (2016). *A situation analysis of adolescents in Thailand 2015-2016*. [Online]. Available at: https://www.unicef.org/thailand/sites/unicef.org.thailand/files/2018-08/adolescent-situation-analysis-thailand-en.pdf [Accessed 10 March 2022].

UNICEF. (2023). *Connected, engaged and empowered? – A landscape analysis of young people's participation in Thailand*. Bangkok.

United Nations. (2018). *World Youth Report: youth and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development World*. United Nations. [Online]. Available at:

https://www.un.org/development/desa/youth/publications/2019/01/youth-and-sdgs/ [Accessed 25 January 2022].

United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (2014). *Definition of youth*. [Online]. Available at: www.un.org/esa/socdev/documents/youth/fact-sheets/youth-definition.pdf [Accessed 12 January 2024].

Uprichard, E. (2008). Children as 'being and becomings': children, childhood and temporality. *Children and Society*, 22 (4), pp.303–313. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1111/j.1099-0860.2007.00110.x.

Van-Campen, K. S. and Russell, S. T. (2010). Cultural differences in parenting practices: what Asian American families can teach us. *Frances McClelland Institute for Children, Youth, and Families ResearchLink*, 2 (1), pp.1–4.

Vorng, S. (2017). *A meeting of masks: status, power and hierarchy in Bangkok*. Copenhagen: NIAS Press.

Waite, S., Boyask, R. and Lawson, H. (2010). Aligning person-centred methods and young people's conceptualizations of diversity. *International Journal of Research and Method in Education*, 33 (1), pp.69–83. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1080/17437271003597618.

Waiwitlikhit, P. (2020). The next generation?: a comparison between Thailand's 1973 protests and Thailand's 2020 protests. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 10 (12), pp.16–25. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.30845/ijhss.v10n12p3.

Walkerdine, V. (2009). Developmental psychology and the study of childhood. In: Kehily, M. J. (Ed). *An introduction to childhood studies*. 2nd ed. Berkshire: Open University Press. pp.112–123. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1177/009430610603500214.

Ward, S. et al. (2024). Building recognition, redistribution, and representation in disadvantaged neighbourhoods:eExploring the potential of youth activism in Scotland. *Social Inclusion Open Access Journal*, 12, pp.1–19.

Wathreewattanarut, R. (2023). Legal measures on gratitude in Thailand. *Santapol College Academic Journal*, 9 (2), pp.147–155. [Online]. Available at: https://so05.tci-thaijo.org/index.php/scaj/article/view/264239.

Webber, L. (2020). Researching with children using Skype interviews and drawings: methodological and ethical issues explored. *Journal of Early Childhood Research*, 18 (4), pp.339–353. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1177/1476718X20938084.

Webster, M. and Rashotte, L. S. (2009). Fixed roles and situated actions. *Sex Roles*, 61 (5–6), pp.325–337. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1007/s11199-009-9606-8.

Wells, K. (2009). *Childhood in a global perspective*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

West, A. (2007). Power relationships and adult resistance to children's participation. *Children, Youth and Environments*, 17 (1), pp.123–135. [Online]. Available at:

https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7721/chilyoutenvi.17.1.0123.

Whitely, L. (2010). *Youth(s), truth(s), and Pierre Bourdieu: taking another (closer) look at at-risk youth intervention programmes*. Unpublished: University of Toronto. MA.

Wiboonchutikula, P. (1984). The growth of Thailand in a changing world economy: past performance and current outlook. *Southeast Asian Affairs*, pp.326–339. [Online]. Available at: https://www.jstor.org/stable/27908510.

Wilkinson, C. et al. (2022). Using methods across generations: researcher reflections from a research project involving young people and their parents. *Children's Geographies*, 20 (5), pp.648–660. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1080/14733285.2021.1951168.

Wilkinson, J. (2000). *Children and participation: research, monitoring and evaluation with children and young people*. Save the Children. [Online]. Available at: https://www.participatorymethods.org/resource/children-and-participation-research-monitoring-and-evaluation-children-and-young-people [Accessed 25 March 2021].

Willer, D., Lovaglia, M. J. and Markovsky, B. (1997). Power and influence: a theoretical bridge. *Social Forces*, 76 (2), pp.571–603. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1093/sf/76.2.571.

Williams, E. (2004). *Children's participation and policy change in South Asia*. Childhood Poverty Research and Policy Centre. [Online]. Available at: https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/document/childrens-participation-and-policy-change-south-asia-chip-report-no-6/#:~:text=Children and young people are,have been inclined to support. [Accessed 15 September 2020].

Williams, T. P. and Rogers, J. (2016). Rejecting 'the child', embracing 'childhood': conceptual and methodological considerations for social work research with young people. *International Social Work*, 59 (6), pp.734–744. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1177/0020872814539985.

Willow, C. et al. (2004). *Young children's citizenship: ideas into practice*. Neale, B. (Ed). York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

Wong, N. T. and Zimmerman, M. A. (2010). A typology of youth participation and empowerment for child and adolescent health promotion. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 46 (1), pp.100–114. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1007/s10464-010-9330-0.

Wonganant, A. et al. (2014). Child and youth participation problems in the National Promotion of Child and Youth Development Act B.E.2550. In: *Graduate Research Conference 2014*. 2014. Khon Kaen University, Khon Kaen, 28 March 2014. [Online]. Available at: https://gsbooks.gs.kku.ac.th/57/grc15/proceedings.html.

Woodhead, M. (2013). Childhood: a developmental approach. In: Kehily, M. J. (Ed). *Understanding childhood: A cross disciplinary approach*. Bristol: Policy Press. pp.99–160.

Woodhead, M. (2015). Childhood studies: past, present and future. In: Kehily, M. J. (Ed).

An introduction to childhood studies. 2nd ed. England: Open University Press. pp.19–33.

Woodman, E., Roche, S. and McArthur, M. (2023). Children's participation in child protection—How do practitioners understand children's participation in practice? *Child and Family Social Work*, 28 (1), pp.125–135. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1111/cfs.12947.

Wright, H. R. (2015). *The child in society*. London: SAGE Publications, Ltd.

Wyness, M. G. (2019). *Childhood and society*. 3rd ed. New York: Red Globe Press.

Xu, Y., Zhang, L. and Hee, P. (2014). Parenting practices and shyness in Chinese children. In: Selin, H. (Ed). *Parenting across culture*. London: Springer. pp.13–22. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1007/978-94-007-7503-9_3.

Yamaguchi, S. et al. (2023). Participation of children and youth in mental health policymaking: a scoping review [Part I]. *Administration and Policy in Mental Health and Mental Health Services Research*, 50 (1), pp.58–83. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1007/s10488-022-01223-0.

Yang, K. (1981). The formation and change of Chinese personality: a cultural-ecological perspective. *Acta Psychologica Taiwanica*, 23 (1), pp.39–55.

Yin, R. K. (2018). *Case study research and applications: design and methods*. 6th ed. London: Sage publications Ltd. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1177/109634809702100108.

Yuenyong, J. and Yuenyong, C. (2012). Connecting between culture of learning in Thai contexts and developing students' science learning in the formal setting. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 46, pp.5371–5378. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1016/j.sbspro.2012.06.441.

Yunus, S. M. (2005). Childcare practices in three Asian countries. *International Journal of Early Childhood*, 37 (1), pp.39–56. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1007/BF03165831.

Zeldin, S., Christens, B. D. and Powers, J. L. (2012). The psychology and practice of youth-adult partnership: bridging generations for youth development and community change. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 51 (3–4), pp.385–397. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1007/s10464-012-9558-y.

Zeldin, S., Petrokubi, J. and MacNeil, C. (2008). Youth-adult partnerships in decision making: disseminating and implementing an innovative idea into established organizations and communities. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 41 (3–4), pp.262–277. [Online]. Available at: doi:10.1007/s10464-008-9158-z.

Zimmerman, R. F. (1974). Student 'Revolution' in Thailand: the end of the Thai bureaucratic polity? *Asian Survey*, 14 (6), pp.509–529. [Online]. Available at: https://www.jstor.org/stable/2642680.