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CREATING AWARENESS OF CHILDREN'S PROTECTION RIGHTS THROUGH PROCESS DRAMA: A CASE STUDY OF GRADE 7 STUDENTS AT ST THERESA'S CONVENT SCHOOL

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Dramatic Art

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STATEMENT OF ORIGINALITY

This is a true originality of work which has not been submitted for a degree or diploma qualification at any tertiary institution. To the best of my knowledge, this research work contains no material previously published or written by any another person except where referencing has been made in the report which has been duly recognized..

Signed……

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To my fellow Drama for Life Program scholars, I say thanks for your inspiration. Not forgetting the taste of diversity I have experienced with you. My final acknowledgment goes to my entire family for their prayers and support throughout my academic career with special appreciation to my Mum

DEDICATION

I dedicate this research work to my mother who has been my backbone in life. Mum, I say your prayers and hard work have not been in vain and I will always love you for the role you have played in my life. I also dedicate this work to my brother and sister Wahab and Jennifer Laryea.

ABSTRACT

This study explored how process drama can be used as a medium for creating awareness on children's protection rights. The study was an enquiry on how the interplay between the dramatic world and the real world can bring about change in learners' understanding and perception of their protection rights.

The study employed a case study approach coupled with a participatory action research methodology. This integrated methodology helped to bring concepts of children's protection rights to participants' level of understanding.

Through a combination of these methods and process drama techniques, emerging issues involving children's protection rights were unpacked, analyzed and reflected upon by learners in a bid to turn them into responsible future citizens. .

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 AREA OF STUDY

This research explored children's protection rights and how process drama can be used as a medium to educate children on their protection rights. The research targeted children between the ages of 11 to 13 years studying in grade 7 at St Theresa's Convent School. St Theresa's Convent School is a Roman Catholic School located at Coronationville, Johannesburg in South Africa. According to the vision of the school, they aim at helping children become responsible adults which is one of the things that motivated me to choose this school. However, I believe that children will be in a better position to become responsible adults if they are aware of rights that protect them as children. In this regard, UNICEF-CFC (2012) notes that children are particularly vulnerable, therefore they need to have particular rights that recognize their special need for protection. Thus, these protection rights, in addition to their academic and moral training will guide their journey to adulthood.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child defines a child as someone below the age of eighteen years (Detrick 1999). It classifies children rights in three categories namely protection rights, provision rights and participation rights. Among these three categories, this research focused only on the first category; children's protection rights. Children's protection rights consist of policies and conventions formed to protect children from any form of abuse, neglect and maltreatment that puts their existence at risk.

Taking a critical look at the constitution of South Africa, it is well structured and seems to be one of the best in terms of content and structure. For instance, Chapter 2, clause 1 of the constitution of South Africa refers to the Bill of Rights which has been described as the cornerstone of democracy in South Africa. It is said to enshrine the rights of everyone in the country and affirms the democratic value of human dignity, equity and freedom.

In the case of children, section 28 of the constitution lists a number of rights intended for children. These rights relate to the welfare of children in situations involving family issues, child labor, education, imprisonment and armed conflict. It states that a child's best interest is of paramount importance in every matter concerning the child. This principle conforms with the principle of the Children’s Rights of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), which states that in providing human rights, the rights of children should be given special attention, especially their right to protection (Detrick 1999).

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) states that its mission is to advocate for the protection of children’s rights, to help meet their basic needs and to expand their opportunities to reach their full potential (Detrick 1999). They are guided in doing this by the provisions and principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). The Convention on the Rights of the Child is the first legally binding international instrument to incorporate

the full range of human rights such as civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights (Detrick 1999).

In terms of treaty obligations under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, South Africa has to report on the country's implementation of these treaties. This serves as an important monitoring function by the treaty bodies and for South Africa to measure its failures and successes in realising children's rights.

According to The Community Law Centre (2012), South Africa ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) in 1995 and has reported only once to the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child, thus not complying with the dates for submission of two subsequent reports. Since the ratification of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC) in 2000, South Africa has not yet submitted any report to the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, as indicated by The Community Law Centre (2012). This information shows that children's protection rights in South Africa have not been handled with the seriousness they deserve.

Therefore educating children on their protection rights will enable them to exercise the rights in their own individual ways without relying on the state. In view of this, this study employed process drama, which is a more experiential and participant centered approach, to educate grade 7 students of St

Theresa's Convent School about their protection rights as opposed to the conventional approach of learning where the teacher imparts knowledge to the students. I chose to use process drama as opposed to the conventional method of teaching because of the non-participatory nature of the conventional method. The latter gives more power to the teacher at the expense of the students who are the key players in the learning process. Process drama on the other hand has an empowering quality that enables students to interact, collaborate and be actively involved in the learning process (O'Neill 1995).

The research investigated how the empowering qualities of process drama can be used to enable students to learn about children's rights. According to Ebersohn and Elof (2003), learner-centered methods are gradually replacing conventional teacher-centered modes of teaching. I have to mention that process drama is one of these student-centered approaches of learning; hence this research employed it to engage the students in the learning process

Existing literature on drama suggests that drama offers several opportunities for educators to promote learning and development. It allows participants to be engaged, motivated, empowered, and also be active agents of learning (Heathcote 1984; Wagner 1999; Warner 1995). Similarly, Styslinger (2000) contends that when drama is interwoven with education, it promotes multiple interpretations, problem solving and collaboration among students. Heathcote (1981) also observes that process drama allows the new learning

to be connected to previous knowledge. It provides teachers with opportunities to promote children's interests and to facilitate further learning. Through these qualities of process drama, the study created a learning space to help children learn about their rights to protection.

Although the literature about the effectiveness of drama on young children has grown steadily (Johnson and O'Neill 1984; Wagner 1998), there is little attention on the use of drama as a possible mainstream pedagogy of teaching. In this regard, Griggs (2001) observes that in most educational systems, drama has been scarcely used in implementing teaching education programs.

Considering that drama and the arts in general have found little recognition in preparing pre-service teachers for their future profession, I have witnessed the scanty use of drama in schools where drama is being taught as a separate subject by teachers without the necessary professional background. Therefore, one may ask the following question 'What would it be like if teachers utilize drama in their classroom and integrate it into their teaching repertoire'? As a possible answer to such a question, Griggs (2001) indicates that drama can help teachers increase self awareness, understand the classroom environment and the needs of their children better. Therefore, this study examined how these qualities promoted the creation of awareness on children's protection rights.

1.2 RESEARCH QUESTION

The central research focused on using process drama as a medium for learning children's protection rights. The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. How can process drama enable children to learn their protection rights?
2. How effective are process drama techniques in facilitating children's protection rights?

1.3 RATIONALE

Working with the Ghana National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE) has stimulated my interest in constitutional issues. During this period of working with the Ghana National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE), I realized that the majority of people in Ghana, especially the youth, do not know their rights as citizens, which calls for constitutional education among the youth. During this period, we organized talks and forums in schools, social clubs and churches to sensitize people about their constitutional rights. At these places most of our target members were youth, especially children. One observation I made was that the youth had not seen the constitution and do not even know what their rights are.

Similarly, I encountered the same experience in my exposure to children in South Africa during my Practice as Research project. In this project, I employed a process drama technique called hot seating to explore peer pressure. During this process, I discovered that most children were exposed to drugs in one way or the other. I realized that most of them may have been

living with or around people who use drugs. Like the children I had come into contact with in Ghana, the students at St Theresa's Convent School were oblivious of the rights that protect them. Apart from the fact that my Practice as Research project revealed how children are exposed to drugs, one problem that was left hanging was the need to educate them about rights that were meant to protect them.

I conducted this research because my Practice as Research left some questions that need to be answered. Questions such as: Do these children know that they are exposed to drugs that are harmful to their life and development? Are they aware that they have rights that protect them against such conditions? This study sought to explore these questions in order to help educate learners about their protection rights. In view of this, I argue that if children do not know their rights they may not be able to claim them, and their rights may be violated or they may end up violating other people's rights. In this context, Carrim (2006) argues that where there is violence, oppression and harassment, it becomes necessary for learners to learn their rights through empowering ways.

Another issue that inspired me to research on children protection rights is the statement in section 28 of the constitution of South Africa which states that, "The child's best interest is of paramount importance in every matter concerning the child".(The Community Law Centre 2012). Based on this statement and my background as a civic education worker, I became worried about my Practice as Research findings at St Theresa's Convent. As already

stated in this chapter, it was revealed how children were exposed to drugs which were a violation of their protection rights as children. The United Nation Convention on the Rights of a child (UNCRC) states that, “in providing human rights, the rights of children should be given special attention” (Detrick 1999). I believe that educating children about their protection rights will help fulfill my obligation as a civic education worker.

Children need to be aware of their constitutional rights. Save the Child (UK) asserted that children’s protection rights demand serious attention in most parts of the world (Alderson 2000). In view of this, I felt it was important to sensitize children by engaging them on constitutional issues that concern them especially their protection rights. This research was a quest to look for ways to engage learners on their protection rights through a practical and experiential approach.

1.4 BACKGROUND TO ST THERESA’S CONVENT SCHOOL

St Theresa's Convent School is a Roman Catholic School that was established by the Holy Family Sisters in 1947: It is located in Johannesburg, South Africa. It started as a girls’ school, but enrolled boys later.

As mentioned in the area of study, the school was established with the vision of developing and accompanying children on their journey to responsible adulthood. It also endeavors to inculcate Christian values and to create a pleasant learning environment in which to develop children holistically.

In 1949, the school was moved to Coronationville where it is currently located. Coronationville is a place with drug related problems. It's one of the communities that held a protest march against drugs under the auspices of the Johannesburg West Community Action Group (JWCAG). This followed the increase in teenage suicides and other drug-related crimes in the area (Clifford 2010). This confirmed the findings of my Practice as Research project that children in Coronationville community are exposed to drugs (Laryea 2012).

During my Practice as Research project with the children of St Theresa, I realized that the school does not have drama as a separate subject instead it has been made part of another subject called Arts and Culture. This project demonstrated the potential of drama in education as a separate approach of teaching. As a case study, drama was used to educate the grade 7 students of St Theresa's Convent School about their protection rights in order to enabled them to know how to protect themselves against things that are harmful to their lives.

1.5 LITERATURE REVIEW

In my interaction with schools in South Africa, I observed that they have subjects like Life Orientation, Guidance and Counseling and Life Skills. While there is focus on these subjects, not much seems to have been done on children's protection rights as a life skill for children. In this regard, children's protection rights have minimal importance or less attention in the curriculum (Reinner 2004).

In addition, the United Nations Human Rights Division (2004) that focuses on monitoring human rights offers practical advice to teachers and other educators who want to foster human rights awareness among primary and secondary school children. It argues that arts such as stories and poetry, graphic arts, sculpture, drama, song and dance can help to make concepts more concrete, personalize abstractions and affect attitudes by involving emotional as well as intellectual responses to human rights. Furthermore, it argues that teachers need not to be artists to do this, but to set engaging tasks and provide a way for students to share their creativity. Just like United Nation Human Rights Division (2004), this study used the artistic medium of drama to affect children's attitudes by involving their emotional as well as intellectual responses to human rights, specifically to children's protection rights.

In the same vein, The Human Rights Educators Network-HREN (2012) conducted a project called "Responding to hate-learning to protect human rights online". This project comes in two phases: the first phase involves educating people about their human rights online while the second phase is a public consultation organized by the European Commission for European Union citizens dubbed "Your rights, your future".

The aim of this project is to help the Commission to find out obstacles that people are facing in their daily lives as European Citizens living within the EU, and to hear ideas from citizens about how to remove these obstacles

and further develop EU citizenship. The HREN project (2012) and this study share the same interest, which is to protect human rights and create awareness on human rights, but also vary in terms of approach. While HREN (2012) used the social media and counseling as their medium for imparting human rights education, this study employed process drama to create awareness on children's protection rights.

In her Masters Research Report, Mtukwa (2010) examined how process drama can be used as a medium for educating junior school learners of Supreme College in Johannesburg about their rights. Mtukwa (2010)'s research and this study share the same interest of working with children and focusing on their welfare in terms of their rights.

However, this study focused on older children aged between 11 and 13 and studying in Grade 7 unlike Mtukwa's (2010) who focused on younger children whose age range from 8 to 10 and studying in Grade 3. I believe that children in Grade 7 compared to their younger colleagues are matured, exposed and more experienced as such they can make more informed and better decisions. Mersch (2012) argues that at a more senior stage, children develop skills necessary for the general work force. During this period, they develop the ability to absorb and analyze information. This research also narrowed its focus on one type of children's rights which is children's protection rights, unlike Mtukwa's (2010) study which touched on the general issue of children's rights.

1.6 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study applied process drama theory which is also known as Drama in Education theory as advocated by Bolton (1979). He observes that process drama should aim for internal actions that have significance for change in understanding. In this model, the drama teacher builds the drama using what children already know and using dramatic elements to suit the learners' needs. Bolton (1979) further asserts that make-believe play is a fundamental characteristic of process drama. The make-believe play is informed by the children's real world. As children are engaged in the internal activities of the drama, new insights are being created. This happens when the children reflect on their actions and relate the outcome of their reflections to outside realities for further understanding.

Process drama is an experience that creates an environment for learners to have practical engagement with knowledge. In this study, process drama was treated both as theory and as practice. It brought change in understanding through make-belief. Role-playing becomes central to the process of drama. Process drama cannot happen without role-play, which is a central element in process drama (O'Toole, 1992; O'Neill, 1995).

Process drama elements such as teacher-in-role, mantle of the expert, and hot seating all require role for them to take place. In this case, to explore the issue of children's protection rights, learners assumed different roles that enable them have concrete experience of the dramatic world those roles portray. This exploration was done through process drama techniques.

Bolton (1979) contends that for learning to be effective, it must be felt. He further argues that knowledge should be connected emotionally for it to bring about a change in attitudes and a shift in values.

In this regard, children assumed a set of attitudes from a distanced point of view for them to be able to reflect back and to find the meaning behind the roles and attitudes. Wikinson (1980) states that, role encourages the development of flexibility, concentration and brings about appropriate responses. It enables other elements of process drama such as focus, irony, place, mood, gesture, language and space to be realized practically (O'Toole and Haseman, 1989)

These characteristics of process drama are to encourage children to reflect on their protection rights as they play. This is because process drama enables the learner to interact, collaborate and be actively engaged in the learning process (O'Neill, 1995). It also deals with the question of power dynamics in a learning space so that decision making is not solely in the hands of the teacher-facilitator, but learners have the opportunity to make their own informed decisions based on their own understanding of the issue at stake. In this study, learners had the opportunity to own the process, engaged with the issues of children's protection rights and made their own informed decision

1.7 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research falls within the domain of participatory action research. Action research methodology emphasizes the importance of reflective learning (Kemmis and MacTaggart, 1998). This methodology required participants to reflect on their actions and the researcher/ practitioner to examine his/her own practice. Action and reflection played a paramount role in this research as it enabled both participants and the researcher to experience, reflect and learn from the process. In this case, I observed the impact of process drama in facilitating children's protection rights and how it affected learners' understanding of their rights. I examined what worked and what did not in order to re-plan for subsequent actions.

Participatory action research involves planning and action, then acting upon those plans and observing the effects. In applying this model, I planned and conducted series of process drama workshops with learners in the classroom. During these workshops, I observed to see if the plan is working and how it affected learners in learning their protection rights. This observation was based on data collected during the process. The data collection first of all was be done by an observer, a colleague of mine who observed and recorded the process, using a video camera. I also collect data through reflective writing and journaling. I then reflected on my findings made corrections on errors and re-plan. This improved the subsequent workshops and made the whole experience conducive for learning for both participants and me as a researcher. The data collection was therefore done through the research methods described below.

1.7.1 Participant Observation

Participant observation refers to the gaining of understanding of participants through firsthand observation of their activities. This is characterized by actions such as having an open and non-judgmental attitude, being interested in learning more about others. It also involves being aware of the tendency of being upset by sensitive issues and making mistakes, being a careful observer and a good listener, and being open to the unexpected. (Bernard 1994).

This study used this method to gather subjective and in-depth data on participants. As a facilitator, I observed how participants engaged with their learning and examined the level at which they grappled with the knowledge of children's protection rights. This provided the opportunity for each student to build on their learning through questioning. It also improved their level of understanding of children's protection rights. The information gathered was considered in making necessary adaptations to subsequent workshops, based on the needs of participants as informed by the action research methodology (Kemmis and MacTaggart 1998).

Participant observation involves a subtle detachment and yet a highly alert observation on the part of the researcher. In the case of this study, my observation was based on the level of learners' understanding of their protection rights. This helpd me to detach myself from the action during the data collection process and to observe how learners react and interpret

issues of children's protection rights. Detaching myself from the action enabled me get a clear view and analysis of learners' engagement and understanding of their protection rights.

1.7.2 Reflective Writing

This is a writing process done by participants as a way of reflecting on their experiences on the process when they are out of role. According to Neelands (2004), during the drama, children turn abstract ideas into concrete representations. Therefore, this research employed reflective writing to help participants translate meaningful lived experiences in relation to children's protection rights. This helped participants to deepen their understanding of children's protection rights derived from the drama they engaged in.

Reflective writing created an opportunity for me to gauge learners' understanding in relation to children's protection rights. The learners' writings provided information that reflected their needs as far as children's protection rights are concerned. The information derived from this process was then used to frame the follow-up sessions that helped generate deeper engagement on children's protection rights.

1.7.3 Research Journal

To develop my practice as a researcher, I made use of a journaling. This was to improve sessions by reflecting on vital incidents that emerged from the process. It enabled effective recording and reflections on learners' understandings and feelings about children's protection rights. The journal

also served as a support for future plans, actions and reflections in order to improve the learners' experiences in matters pertaining to their protection rights in subsequent sessions. Data collected through the journal was useful during this research period in terms of referencing and data analysis after the workshops. It also helped in recording, questioning the practice, and served as a means of reflecting on challenging sessions for the benefit of subsequent sessions with learners.

1.7.4 Hot Seating

This is a technique in process drama where a participant is questioned by the rest of the group whilst in character. Characters may also be hot seated in pairs or in groups. In this research, hot-seating was used as a data gathering method. It served as an interview technique to gauge the levels of individual participants' understanding with regards to children's protection rights.

The process involved engaging a participant seating in an aesthetic space whilst in character to answer questions from others. During this process, data was gathered by recording and reflecting the answers that emerged from the questioning process. Hot seating was applied throughout this process drama workshop to find out if there has been a shift in participants' perceptions on children's protection rights. The aim is to know if learners experience in the drama has caused a shift in their understanding. This method gave learners a deeply felt experience, what Bolton (1979) refers to as being there in the presence and present. The next chapter focuses on an overview of children's protection rights in South Africa.

CHAPTER TWO

OVERVIEW OF CHILDREN'S PROTECTION RIGHTS

2.1 Introduction

Children's protection rights in South Africa have gone through different periods and have experienced different changes but the problem of children's rights violation has remained the same. From the period of apartheid, children have been victims of human rights violations of various forms. The violation of children's rights has been an issue confronting South African families, schools and the political arena for a long time.

This chapter will examine the trends in children's protection rights in South Africa and the importance of creating awareness through process drama as an interactive approach to learning. It will examine the changing trends in children's rights and contextualize them from a South African historical perspective. It will also reflect on international principles that affect children's rights worldwide and will analyze how they affect children's protection rights in South Africa. The historical development of children's protection rights in South Africa will be examined according to two distinctive phases, namely the apartheid era and the post-apartheid era.

2.2 VIOLATION OF CHILDREN'S PROTECTION RIGHTS DURING APARTHEID

In Africa, it is believed that when a child is born, he/she belongs to the whole society. Therefore, it is the duty of the adults of the society to protect that

child. Ngor (2006) notes that an African child must learn to count to the last ancestor starting from his own name because those are the people that protect him/her and they are the people he/she must give respect. According to Erdmute et al. (2010), in most African societies, children do not always grow up with their biological parents, but with relatives such as grandparents, aunts or uncles. This is a firmly anchored feature of family practice that gives a wide range of protection to the child. Such a practice places children in a position where they have to respect the power and authority of adults because it is accepted that they know more.

Child protection has always been seen as a responsibility of parents or guardians. For a child to feel safe in an environment, he/she must be under the protection of parents or guardians. This situation was the same in South Africa before and during the apartheid era. During this period, the children's protection rights were embedded in parental responsibilities. These were stated in the common law and relevant statutes such as the Divorce Act 70 of 1979, the Matrimonial Affairs Act 37 of 1953, the Child Care Act 74 of 1983 and the Guardianship Act 192 of 1993.

Historically, the relationship between parents and children in South Africa has been distinctly paternalistic. Children were expected to respect the authority of their parents because it was accepted that parents knew what was best for their children. From the common law point of view, the relationship between parents and children expressed itself primarily in parental authority over a minor child and in the mutual duty of parental support. This also included the

right of parents to demand obedience from their children and to punish them in a reasonable manner. The idea of parental authority entailed that parents had complete control over their children. In this case, the rights of the children were limited. Children made no contribution to decision making when it came to their protection or other things that concern them.

Politically, this period also witnessed a gross violation of children's right. There were laws like the pass laws and the segregatory education system that discriminated against black children in particular (Mtukwa 2010). This was a violation of the South African Child Care Act of 1983 which prohibits the maltreatment and neglect of children. This era also saw the flouting of children's protection laws in instances where children as young as nine were imprisoned under the apartheid system. Children were put in prison cells without any legal representation or an adult accompanying them (Brittain and Minty 1988). During the Harare conference on Children's Rights in September 1987, Lang noted that "a society is being created whose children have become brutalized […] by inhuman laws" (Brittain and Minty 1988).

The apartheid period saw the Soweto massacre where black children became the targets of violence and state brutality. This happened on 16 June 1976 when high-school students in Soweto started protesting for better education. Police responded with teargas and live bullets (Alistair, 2001). This marked a serious violation of the rights of vulnerable children. Such a violation motivated the formation of the children's rights movement in the 1980's by the United Nations (UN) together with other organizations and non-

governmental organizations that advocate for the rights of children (Mtukwa, 2010).

2.3 CHILDREN'S PROTECTION RIGHTS DURING THE POST-APARTHEID ERA

The post-apartheid era in South Africa was marked by the government's attempt to redress the rights of children in South Africa, as well as laws that helped to control the violation of children's rights which started in the pre-apartheid era. This development inspired the formation of an office of the United Nations (UN) in South Africa after the 1994 democratic election.

According to Bekink (2012), South Africa experienced certain changes with regards to children's protection rights after the apartheid period. For instance, there was the introduction of new democratic laws in 1996. These changed South Africa's legal system drastically, from the previous system of parliamentary sovereignty to the one of constitutional democracy. Apart from developments in the new Constitution, a comprehensive Bill of Rights was also introduced as part of the Constitution. This Bill places a range of obligations on the state with regards to the promotion, protection and realization of children's rights. From this point, children became entitled to protection rights in accordance with the Bill of Rights including, inter alia, the right to equality, dignity, life, freedom, security, housing, health care and education (Bekink 2012).

Coetzee and Streak (2004) argue that during the post-apartheid period, there were positive developments in the realization of children's rights in South Africa. One of these developments was the organization of the national children's rights committee which was held in Kempton Park in Gauteng Province in 1995. Children's representatives from all over South Africa came to discuss their rights and responsibilities. These discussions were used to update the South African Children's Charter of 1992.

Still in the quest to overcome social in-justice like violence, exploitation and abuse, there was partnership between South Africa and international stakeholders. For instance, the Department of Social Development (DSD), the European Union (EU) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) worked together in protecting vulnerable groups, including children, from violence, exploitation and abuse. The partnership, through the EU-funded R210 million support to South Africa's Victim Empowerment Programme (VEP), aimed at curbing and reversing the trend of violent crime against women and children.

However, despite these progressive legislations and efforts to improve the protection of children, much remains to be done. There are still reports of violence, exploitation and abuse of children. For instance, the South African Police Service (SAPS) reports that of the 55,000 reported rape cases in 2005/2006, 40% were against children – which points to more than 60 child rape cases per day. Savage (2001) also reported that there are extremely high levels of violence and abuse of children in schools, especially against

girls. This violence and abuse exists between teachers and students as well as between students themselves.

Children are still experiencing the consequences of apartheid. After years of constitutional democracy, gross inequalities and poverty still persist, fuelled by high unemployment rates and poor access to resources for the marginalized. In 2003, an assessment conducted on the situation of children in South Africa revealed that major role players in the child rights arena recognized that poverty, child abuse and violence, HIV/AIDS, and lack of access to resources are the most significant challenges facing children (Berry 2009).Berry (2009) maintains that available statistics on children shows the bad conditions in which children live, learn, and socialize. Of the 18 million children living in South African households, 19% have been orphaned, and 0.7% live in child-headed households.

In the same context, The *Mail and Guardian* (2012) reported of a case where a non-governmental organization (NGO) known as '*Section 27*' has filed papers at the North Gauteng High Court after discovering that hundreds of Limpopo pupils were learning without textbooks. These Limpopo schools had been without books since the beginning of the school year.

2.4 CHILDREN'S PROTECTION RIGHTS IN SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOLS

In the apartheid era, the education system in South Africa was influenced by the 'Bantu Education' and 'Christian National Education' systems. The Bantu Education Act, 1953 and The Black Education Act 1953 were segregatory

laws which legalized the apartheid education system. Their major provision was to enforce racially segregated educational facilities. The legislations were intended to separate black South Africans from the comparatively well-resourced white education system. Even universities were made ‘tribal’ and some missionary schools chose to close down because the government retracted support for their schools. Few local authorities continued using their own finances to support education for ‘native’ Africans. Tshiwula (2011) asserts that The Bantu Education Act 47 of 1953 classified and separated education according to races. It was categorized according to White, Indian, Coloured and Africans.

Segregatory laws propped up the apartheid system by making black children passive citizens who were expected to accept authority, social injustice, and inequality unquestioningly. During this period, educators were allowed to beat up children as a means of punishment. Vally (2012) argues that violence still remains a regular part of school experience where corporal punishment is sometimes used to punish children for poor academic performance. He further asserts that in some cases, authorities do not intervene when children are subjected to violent acts. This not only denies learners their rights to protection but also their ability to enjoy their educational experience and achieve academic success. In certain cases, educators and parents have replaced physical punishment with emotional humiliation. This affects the self-esteem of the children. Young people who have been subjected to physical abuse or emotional humiliation may become violent, withdrawn or unable to achieve academically (Vally 2012) .

The Soweto uprising of 1976 marked the beginning of the demise of apartheid. This brought about the recognition of children's education as a basic right for all children.

Yet years into democracy, the right to education remains on paper, not fully enjoyed by all children. In practice, the right to basic education is dependent on one's social class and the ability to pay tuition fees. Vally and Ramadiro (2012) argue that the cost of education is a common problem for vulnerable children. The right of poor people to basic education and equality is being violated in different ways.

Vally and Ramadiro (2012) further explain that students are still being excluded from school or victimized because they cannot afford the costs. Illegal measures such as the withholding of school reports, learning materials, and the insistence by some schools to produce fees upfront for the following year still occurs in many schools.

The issue of abuse and violation of children's protection rights in South African schools does not only affect vulnerable citizens but also foreign children who attend South African schools. South Africa is a country hosting foreigners from various parts of Africa. From my observation of schools in South Africa, I realized that there are foreigners studying in those schools who need to be protected by the laws of the country. According to Crush (2012), despite the claim by the Constitution, as well as various international human rights conventions that children born outside the country have the

right to an education in South Africa, there are issues of abuse of children of foreign nationalities in South Africa.

Although the Department of Social Development argues that there was no need to have special protection for migrant children, the Children's Act applies to all children,
regardless of origin or nationality. Research by the Southern African Migration Programme shows a regular violation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, the African Charter on the Rights of the Child and the Bill of Rights. An investigation of discrimination in South African schools reflects the persistence of xenophobia (Crush 2012). More recently, there were case studies carried out on the experiences of foreign children in South African schools. One study of five schools in Johannesburg's inner city found that migrant children were subjected to verbal abuse and name-calling by their South African school mates. In some cases refugee children talked about taunts by teachers in the classroom and by pupils in the playground. Others harass them by asking what they are doing in South Africa and when they are going back to their countries of origin (Crush 2012). In view of this, creating awareness about children's protection rights will put them in a better position to claim their rights when necessary.

2.5 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I examined and analyzed the situation of children's protection rights from apartheid era to the present. The period before and during

apartheid experienced the violation of children's protection rights where adult authority over minor children was prioritized without considering the rights of the children. This was reflected in the Bantu education system which politicized education to make children passive citizens who accepted authority, social injustice and inequality unquestioningly.

These violations were also reflected in the political arena where pass laws reinforced the segregatory education system to discriminate against black children. This system also saw children's protection rights being violated by putting children in prison without legal representation.

Even if laws, legislations and conventions have been formed by successive governments of South Africa after apartheid, the issue of violation of children's rights still perisists. In schools, children are still experiencing abuse from teachers and their colleagues. In some schools, children are made to learn without text books.

The precarious nature of children's protection rights in South Africa calls for more concerted efforts to make children aware of their rights. The next chapter focuses on parental negligence as a violation of children's protection rights and how process drama can be employed to enable children to learn their rights.

CHAPTER 3

PARENTAL NEGLIGENCE

3.1 Introduction

This chapter examines how process drama was used to explore the problem of parental negligence. The exploration of this theme was inspired by my previous project undertaken at the same school, where it emerged that parental negligence is a contributing factor to the violation of children's rights.

After the fall of apartheid, South Africa signed and rectified numerous Human Rights Conventions and Protocols. These conventions and protocols inspired the Bill of Rights (van Niekerk 2012). This conforms to the United Nations Commission on the Rights of Children (UNCRC) Article 19.1 which asserts that:

> *"States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child" (UNCRC 1989 section 19.1).*

Section 28 of the Bill of Rights also argues that every child has the right to family care or parental care, or to appropriate alternative care when removed from the family environment. Such legislations and conventions manifest efforts that were made to ensure effective protection of children in South

Africa. However, the violation of children's rights through parental negligence still exists. According to Berry and Guthrie
(2003), the violation of children's rights resulting from parental negligence remains unreported. van Niekerk *(2012)* argues that during the apartheid era, the majority of South African youth grew up in communities in which family and community life were disrupted by the mobility restrictions of pass laws. Parents were separated from children because a mother or a father who found a job in the city was unlikely to move with the family. In such instances, such abandoned children became prey to drug addicts and victims of child prostitution.

3.2 Narrative as Pre-text

In order to explore the violation of children's protection rights through parental negligence, students were made to participate in a process drama workshop. This workshop employed a story as the pre-text. The same story would also serve as a pre-text for other subsequent process drama workshops. The pre-text plays an important role by setting the premises of the workshop. It creates a clear purpose and task for the participants to explore and enables them to create a dramatic world (Taylor, 2000). According to O'Neil (1995:38), the dramatic world can be derived from a word, a gesture, an action, a location, a story, an idea, an object or an image. In this regard, as a workshop facilitator, I began the story as follows:

Once upon a time, in the thickest part of the forest was a village called 'strange world'. In this village lives a bear called 'why me' and his sister

called 'Me Too'. They live with their mother who is hardly at home. She leaves home every evening and comes home the next day early in the morning to prepare them for school. During some days she comes home late; so late that it is too late for them to go to school.

"Why Me" and "Me too" have never seen their father, hence they do not know who their father is. One day, just like any other day, their mother is late but this time they wait and wait and wait the whole day but there is no sign of their mother coming home. They become so hungry and search everywhere. Morever there is no food in the house. They have no one to go to because their mother has told them not to talk to strangers and they do not know any relative. As night draws nearer, they become more hungry and worried about their mother's whereabouts, so they decide to go out and look for their mother.

They walk and walk and walk. Still they could not find their mother. They become so weak and tired that they could not walk anymore. Suddenly it begins to rain. It is so cold that they decide to take shelter under a cave. They sleep there till the next day and it is a very cold night.

3.3 Workshop analyses

O'Neil (1995) argues that, when the drama is generated from the pre-text it creates room for participants to interrogate, confront and transform the text. The narrative of *"Why Me" and "Me Too"* provided the framework for

participants to create their own dramatic world from which issues of children's protection rights emerged.

As a facilitator, I instructed participants to create frozen pictures/images that would enable them to explore the story's relationship with parental negligence. The frozen pictures/images represented larger themes, thoughts and emotions that were to be further investigated by participants during the workshop (Messer 2007).

In their different groups, participants presented the frozen pictures created from the narrative for interrogation and reflection. This confirms Hadaway and McKenna's (2007) assertion that process drama gives participants the chance to respond from the edge of the text by creating the implied text and thinking beyond the text. This starting point of the drama provided the background to sub-themes that emerged during the workshop. The sub-themes were then unpacked to enable children to learn about their protection rights.

3.3.1 Lack of parental attention

In a reflexive exercise with participants on the frozen pictures, one issue that came out from participants was lack of attention from parents. This was reflected in the images formed by participants. They presented images that reflected moments in the narrative that spoke to parental negligence. In one group, some of the members formed an image of a house with two children 'Me Too' and 'Why Me'. One child was holding the stomach as a sign of

hunger and the other was looking desperately for their mother. Outside the house, their mother was sitting with her back turned towards the house and engaged in a telephone conversation. The image reflected a scenario of child neglect.

Boal (2006:175) points out that an image is a language; and the use of images in contrast to words brings about a learning process that involves the body as well as the mind. He urges participants not to try to understand the precise meaning of each image, but rather to feel the image and to let their memories and imagination wander. Perry (2012) also contends that in images, the meaning is extracted not from telling or explaining stories, but from the collective establishment and analysis of themes that are agreed on by a group of learners. This means that images do not merely represent language, but rather they are the language.

The image presented by this group shows how parents prioritize their own interest at the expense of their children. According to Shakhmatova (2012), some parents believe that their interests are more important in comparison to those of their children. She further argues that some parents only show interest out of a sense of obligation.

In another group, participants showed a cave in the forest. In the cave were the two children ‘Why Me’ and ‘Me Too’ shivering with cold. The image showed no parent but only the two children in the cold cave. Shakhmatova (2012) notes that persistent lack of attention and support from parents may lead to a state of isolation and alienation in children. This may subsequently

lead to a long-term state of depression, which can affect children's ability to build social relationships.

Both images showed children in an alienated state and seeking for attention. Such children have an increased risk of alcohol and drug addiction, physical illness, and even suicide. These symptoms may persist throughout adulthood (Shakhmatova 2012).

The frozen picture/image technique also helped in evaluating and understanding the theme of the story. The understanding of these images was easy for participants because they were based on signs and gestures that constitute their daily experiences. According to Boal (2006), these daily practices are expressed through ritual gestures and signs which he explains as follows:

> *When a social code does not answer the needs and desires of the people to whom it is addressed, and thus those people see themselves as being forced to do things which run counter to their desires, or obliged to abstain from doing things which they want to do, then we can say that the social code has turned into a ritual. A ritual is therefore a code which imprisons, which constrains, which is authoritarian, …(and becomes).. the vehicle for some form of oppression. (Boal 2006:195)*

In the case of this workshop, the images served as a collation of individual participants' ideas into one whole idea. This is what Boal (1995) describes as an "image of the images". Boal (1995) argues that images can enable the

periodic evaluation of a group. He further asserts that images also help in establishing a relationship between individuals, and collective problems that a group may be experiencing. This experience is what enables participants to determine the outcome of the process through which alternative solutions to their problems are explored.

Perry (2012) claims that images may offer a creative structure for learning against the grain of social convention by examining alternatives to hegemonic practices through identity formation and personal and social re-invention.

According to Brauer (2002), one unique feature of process drama is the tension it brings when participants are required to determine the outcome. Taylor and Warner (2006) assert that the pre-text in process drama may generate a number of themes. In analyzing and reflecting on lack of parental attention as a theme that was derived from the frozen pictures by the participants, other themes also emerged.

3.3.2 Substance abuse

Substance abuse was another sub-theme that emerged when we were reflecting and interrogating the images that had been formed by participants. This theme came out specifically when we were exploring the first image where there were two children in the house with their mother outside the house. Her back was turned towards the house. During interrogation, I asked the mother the reason why she has neglected her children? Her first answer was that she has no children. In a further interrogation, I asked her if she

knew these two children. She said they are her children and that she is out to work to be able to take care of them. Her answer attracted much reactions from the other participants who had observed the image. In reflecting on the image, participants explained that the mother was under some drug influence and that may be the cause of her inability to remember her own children.

Much as those reactions and observations from participants were their own perceptions about the image, I believe that they are sentiments and emotions evoked by the image. In exploring the image, Boal (1995) notes that there is a difference between the observation of "I see this or that" (things everybody can see) and "it appears to me…" type. Boal's (1995) advice to directors and facilitators is that, reactions of participants based on the "it appears to me" type of observation should not be taken as definitive interpretations. While I agree with Boal (1995) on his assertion, I also believe that those observations can trigger a dialogue on important issues if explored and analyzed in relation to prevailing issues. As Farmer (2012) observes, images enable learners to explore their external and internal feelings and experiences. Storey (2004) also argues that images present a way of exploring issues from multiple perspectives and embrace different interpretations.

Based on these assertions, I decided to explore further the character of the mother in the image and her initial claim that she does not know her children. This exploration was motivated by participants' reaction that her action is influenced by drugs. In asking why they think so, they revealed that it is a

common thing in their communities where parents ignore their children due to drug influence.

Children of substance abusing parents are more likely to experience abuse than children with non-substance abusing parents. This indicates that there is a link between substance abuse and the violation of children's rights.

While estimates vary, studies show that one-third to two-thirds of child violation cases are influenced by substance abuse. This shows the complexity of co-occurring family problems and the impact of substance abuse on child abuse (Child Welfare Information, 2012).

In the same context, Tlhoaele (2003) argues that one of the factors that contribute to juvenile delinquency in South Africa is substance abuse. She explains that nearly all juvenile offenders were exposed to the effect of substance abuse in their family of origin. This exposure is a violation of the Convention on the Rights of Children (CRC) and the Bill of Rights which focus on protecting children from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury, abuse, neglect and maltreatment. Indeed, workshop participants cited examples of children who have become school drop-outs because their parents have become alcoholics and have no time for them.

In the reflections, participants were relating the dramatic world to prevailing issues in the real world. O'Toole (1976) argues that a strong storyline is important for maintaining focus for learners in process drama. The unfolding

of the learning in this case was generated by the pre-text. The image technique enabled participants to learn about children's protection rights from the dramatic world by viewing it from multiple perspectives (Schneider 2006).

3.3.3 Misplaced discipline

Misplaced discipline is when a parent or a caregiver exerts punishment that is physically or mentally harmful to the child. According to the Keeping Children and Families Safe Act of 2003, child abuse can be defined as an act by an adult, which results in emotional or physical harm to the child. By comparison, child neglect is when parents and caregivers fail to do what is expected for the welfare of a child which puts the child at risk of serious harm. Therefore, failure to give a child the right punishment or in other words giving the wrong punishment to a child can be considered as misplaced punishment.

The second image presented by participants triggered serious and critical dialogue among participants. This was the image that showed two children hiding in a cave. This image was motivated by the part of the narrative where "Me Too" and "Why me" ignored their mother's instruction that they should not go out of the house. They went out to look for their mother because they were hungry and there was no food in the house. They ended up taking shelter in a cave because it was raining heavily and they were feeling cold. The image represented the part of the narrative where the children are in the cave and shivering from cold. Unlike the first image where the mother was

represented, this image reflected only the two children's conditions in the cave feeling abandoned.

In the reflexive exercise, participants thought the mother was careless and had left the children to suffer. The other participants argued that the children had disobeyed their mother's instructions and were being punished for that. The latter participants claimed that if the children had stayed in the house as their mother had instructed them, she could have come home to attend to them. But their disobedience had attracted their mother's anger and she decided to punish them by neglecting them.

The second group of participants based their claims on instances in society where guardians and parents often discipline children to serve as an example for other children. However, when discipline becomes harmful to the child, it constitutes child abuse and a violation of children's rights.

Lion (2010) notes that most of the cases of child abuse occur within the home. Children are more likely to be abused by someone they know. The workshop demonstrates that while children need discipline to enable them to learn acceptable standards of behavior; to experience the consequences of unbecoming behavior; and to act responsibly, misplaced discipline may put them in physical and emotional traumatic situations that can cause them to be either rebellious or withdrawn.

Participants explained that such misplaced discipline comes in the form of negative criticism, name-calling and physical punishment for a wrong doing which sometimes result in poor academic performance. Participants also revealed that in school environments where physical punishments were not allowed, teachers substitute physical punishment with emotional humiliation. Lion (2010) argues that disciplinary strategies that are based on humiliation can cause damage to a child's self-esteem.

She further explains that children who have been subjected to physical or emotional humiliation may become violent and withdrawn, and as a result, are unable to achieve academically.

Thus, even if the images created by participants, did not show the nature of misplaced punishment directly, the sub-theme emerged as another instance of parental negligence. The children were able to relate the images of the fictional world to prevailing issues in the real world. Baim et al. (2002) described this as the beauty of frozen pictures in process drama, their ability to create infinite possibilities for participants.

Schneider, *et al* (2006) claim that images/frozen pictures used in process drama give participants the opportunity to respond to the fictional world. The frozen pictures created significant moments that invited questions and comments from participants. They also gave participants the chance to interrogate actions in the narrative that were captured by the frozen pictures. For instance, participants questioned the character of the mother. They interpreted her behavior as an act of negligence and carelessness.

The exploration of misplaced punishment also led participants to consider it as a problem related to child abuse. They began to discuss why it happens; its effects and what they think can be done to stop it. This was done during the reflection process. Participants claimed that some parents or guardians punish their children to serve as a corrective measure and as an example for other children.

They also claimed that some punishments are aimed at showing adult authority over a perceived stubborn child.

children who go through these traumatic experiences often suffer internalized injuries and become scared of their parents or guardians. Also children who suffer from excessive punishment often become rebellious. They tend to stay away from home to avoid contact with abusive parents or guardians. They will either move out to live with friends, or live on the streets.

In terms of solution, participants presented an image reflecting an abusive parent in the grips of the police. The image suggested that parents and guardians who inflict misplaced punishment should be arrested by the police and be punished to serve as an example to other parents.

3.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter has demonstrated how process drama techniques such as pre-text and frozen pictures /images were used to help students learn about parental negligence as a violation of children‘s protection rights. Participants

were able to create a fictional world that empowered them to explore issues that are relevant to their lives.

The chapter also revealed how process drama gave participants the opportunity to determine the themes that were explored in the workshop. They had control over the process and to some extent, determined which direction the workshop should go.

It was therefore possible for participants to explore different sub-themes relating to parental negligence such as lack of parental attention, substance abuse and misplaced punishment. The next chapter will focus on how process drama enabled participants to explore child labour as another issue affecting children's protection rights.

CHAPTER 4

CHILD LABOUR

4.1 Introduction

This chapter shows how process drama was employed to make participants become aware of child labour as a violation of children's rights. Child labour is one of the problems confronting South Africa. In her keynote address during the National Day against Child Labour held on the 19th of July. 2012 in Tzaneen, Limpopo, the Minister of Labour, Mildred Oliphant revealed that thousands of South African children were still being used for child labour. She indicated that a total of 121 000 children were engaged in child labour in 2010. The minister added that 59 000 of these children were absent from school because they were engaged in activities associated with child labour (News 24, 2012). In this regard, there is the need for children to be educated on child labour as an abuse of their rights. This chapter reveals how process drama was used in this workshop to that effect.

The Employment Act (1997) of the constitution of South Africa states that it is a criminal offence to employ a child who is less than 15 years of age or who is under the minimum school-leaving age. It also prohibits the employment of children through forced labour. This means that children under the age of 18 have the right to be protected from work that is exploitative, hazardous, inappropriate for their age, and detrimental to their social, physical, mental, spiritual and moral development. It also implies that children aged 15 to 18 may not be employed to do work that places

them at risk. This can also be found in section 28 of the Constitution of South Africa which states that: "*Every child has the right to be protected from exploitative labour practices….. Children should not be required to work or provide services that place the child's well-being, education, physical, mental or spiritual, health, moral or social development at risk".* (The South African Constitution 1996).

4.2 Narrative Pre-text

This workshop continues the story from the previous workshop as discussed in chapter 3. In my role as storyteller, I started the story as follows:

In the cold dark and scary cave, 'Why Me' wakes his sister up to continue with their journey. After some few metres they see an apple tree from which they pick up some apples and eat to fill their empty stomachs. They eat as much as they could until they begin to feel thirsty. They then start walking in search of water until they come to a nearby river. In the river they see mother duck and her children swimming and playing in the river. They stand and watch them for a while and feel pity for themselves. They wish their mother had been around to play with them just like this.

They realize they have come too far, so they decide to return home. "By now our mother would have returned home!" Me Too says. Unfortunately, they do not know where they are now. They are lost. They walk and walk and walk till they see smoke coming from somewhere. They walk closer and finally they come to a house. They draw closer and out comes Miss Tigress.

Miss Tigress*: What are you tinny little children doing out here in my house?*

Me Too: *We are looking for our mother.*

Miss Tigress*: Kikikikikiki! (Miss Tigress laughed) Do I look like your mother?*

Why Me*: Please we are hungry. Can we get some food to eat?*

Miss Tigress*: Well, nothing comes for free; you will have to work for it.*

Me Too: *We will do anything you want, just give us some food to eat.*

Miss Tigress gives them some food to eat and lots and lots of work to do. They fetch water, scrub the bath room and wash plates. They work till they become tired and decide to rest. Miss Tigress comes to see them resting and she beats them and locks them up in a room.

"Why me" and "Me too" stay in the dark room till they fall asleep. The next day Miss Tigress wakes them up early in the morning without giving them food, takes them to her farm.

Miss Tigress*: You lazy bones, you wasted my food yesterday; you ate my food and went to sleep. This time you will have to work before I give you food.*

She makes them work the whole day. While they are busy working on the farm, Antelope, a hunter on his hunting expedition sees them very tired and struggling to work. Antelope comes from the village called "strange world" where "Why Me" and "Me Too" come from. On seeing the children he realizes that they are familiar faces from his village so he tries to get closer. But he sees Miss Tigress shouting at them and pushing them to hurry up. Immediately Antelope senses danger, he rushes back to the village of "strange world" to tell the people what he just saw.

4.3 Workshop analysis

This narrative pre-text served as a basis for exploring issues of child labour, what Winston (1998) refers to as effective framing of participants. The pre-text positions participants into the context of the theme to be explored. It provides the dramatic context that enables participants to create their fictional world. Role-on-the-wall was employed as a process drama technique to ensure the creation of the fictional world from which participants explored and learnt issues of child labour.

After narrating the story of “Why Me” and “Me Too”, using teacher-in-role technique, I stepped out of the role of storyteller and returned to my position as a facilitator to enable me to use the role-on-the-wall technique. I divided participants into groups and instructed them to draw an outline of bodies of characters in the narrative story that they wish to talk about. I then asked them to write words or phrases on any part of the drawings describing how they feel or what they think about the character(s). They did this in their various groups after which they presented to the whole group.

Role-on-the-wall is a technique where the outline of a body is drawn on a large sheet of paper and stuck on the wall. Words or phrases describing the character(s) are then written directly on the drawing. In this technique, participants can write facts of the character such as physical appearance, age, gender, location and occupation, as well as subjective ideas such as likes/dislikes, attitudes, motivations, secrets and dreams. I used the role-on-

the-wall technique to allow the group to reflect on the character(s) in question, their experiences during the story telling process and examine how they can relate that to child labour. It was also a means of exploring Neelands's (2004) assertion that during process drama, children turn abstract ideas into concrete representations. Reed (2005) also argues that role-on-the-wall deepens participants' understanding. To bring out sub-themes that will be explored in the process, I employed the role play technique.

4.3.1 Lack of social responsibility

I tasked participants to create their own story from the outcome of their role-on-the-wall exercise. I then asked them to assume the roles in their stories and enact them to the whole group. Farmer (2012) argues that role play deals with the ability to suspend disbelief by stepping into another character's shoes. In this regard, one person in each group assumes the role of the storyteller as the rest enact what was being narrated by the storyteller.

The first group presented two scenes: the first scene was the scene where the two children "Me Too" and "Why Me" were hungry and looking for food and then found apples and ate them to satisfy their hunger. The second scene was the scene of Mother Duck and her children swimming in the river. These two juxtaposed scenes reflect two contrasting situations that children find themselves in. The first scene represented unfavourable conditions where there is no parent or guardian to protect and provide for children, which is a violation on their protection rights. The second scene represented a condition where children have a good environment for survival.

The first situation reflects the consequence of parents and guardians not living up to

their social responsibilities just as in the narrative pre-text the behavior of “Me Too” and “Why Me’s mother led them to look for food to satisfy their hunger. van Ments points out that in applied drama participants provide the human element in the phenomenon being studied and their reactions to situations is determined by how they see their relative positions, motivations and attitudes (1983:15).

The attitudes and motivations regarding this theme were first revealed through the role-on-the-wall process. In the role-on-the-wall, the images of the two children had descriptions like: victims of bad parents, hungry and sad, among others while images of mother Duck and her children had descriptions such as good environment for children and happy family, among others. These descriptions from the role-on-the-wall exercise inspired the role play presented by participants.

The use of the role-on-the-wall technique enabled me to access participants understanding of child labour, in particular the lack of social responsibilities as a violation of children’s rights. O’Neil (1994) refers to this as alternative versions of humanity that may be hard to access except through story. Applied drama practitioners such as Nicholson (2005), and Prentki (2009) assert that embodying the position of an imagined other has a reassuring sense of selfhood or self affirmation. In as much as this situation does not

directly reflect child labour it is a cause of child labour since children involved in such situations have to find their own means of survival.

The presentation from the second group was a narration and enactment of scenes of Miss Tigress forcing “Me Too and “Why Me” to do domestic chores. She also took them to the farm to work before she gave them food to eat. According to Gaura (2012), the term "work" in the case of child labour is not limited to economic activities or paid employment, but includes chores or household activities such as collecting wood for fuel, cleaning and others where such work is exploitative, hazardous, inappropriate for their age, or detrimental to their development. The focus of the discussion in this group presentation was Miss Tigress asking the two children to work in exchange for food, a reflection of an apartheid practice known as the “dop system” where people work for others who pay them in kind rather than money. (Kouvelakis 2005).

Before the role play, participants reflected this form of child labour by presenting their observations and feelings about the character of Miss Tigress through the role-on-the-wall technique. On their role-on-the-wall paper, they had the image of Miss Tigress with inscriptions such as wicked woman and children abuser. This technique presented to participants a distanced but reflective way of understanding the role of Miss Tigress and how she portrayed the ‘dop system’ as a form of child labour. Neelands (1990) observes that role-on-the-wall helps in building a complex character from scratch, gives an alternative portrayal of the role and serves as a means

of exploring human characteristics and behavior. The exploration of the character of Miss Tigress by this group reflects lack of social responsibility on the part of some adults who are not the parents of children who become victims of child labour.

These adults, in the disguise of helping children, use them for their own selfish gain which amounts to the violation of the rights of those children.

This situation was demonstrated and explored further through role play. van Ments (1983:18) argues that, role playing derives from everyday life where a person reflects a set of behaviors considered appropriate to a particular role. This leads to experiencing an unfamiliar set of constraints so that one's own ideas may emerge and increase understanding. O'Toole (1992) also observes that, in role play the participants express their relationships to each other and to the situation through their behavior.

He further argues that, in real life these behaviors are not random but rather the outcome of tasks and constraints imposed by the situation. In all these, van Ments (1983) further argues that, the role player aims at feeling, reacting, and behaving as closely as possible as someone in that particular situation would do. Participants' enactment of Miss Tigress and the situation she imposed on the two children was a way of stepping into the shoes of people in real life who are facing situations in which there is lack of social responsibilities.

4.3.2 Poverty

In the quest of exploring and experiencing the situation of 'Why Me' and 'Me Too' through role-on-the-wall, other descriptions given to them were homeless children, 11 and 9 year old children, hungry and begging for food. This technique enabled participants to get into the minds of the characters and to deconstruct the elements that constitute their behaviors which may have led to child labour (Owen and Barber 2001).

In the deconstruction, one element that linked all the descriptions was poverty. Based on this sub-theme of poverty, participants created a drama that was demonstrated through role play. According to Owen and Barber (2001), when participants are invited to enact various parts of a character's mind, the conflict within the mind is deconstructed and the various elements within it are identified.

In the role play, the group presented the two children, poor, hungry and tired, who knocked at Miss Tigress's door and begged for food. Miss Tigress made them work the whole day without rest and put them to other forms of maltreatment. As a result of poverty, these children have been exposed to child labour and their rights were violated . This shows how poverty can lead to child labour. At this point, Bowman's (2010) assertion that role playing assists students to develop greater intuition, straight reasoning and understanding of the subject matter became prevalent. van Ments (1983:18) also contends that, role playing is a serious matter and most of our social life consists of such activity. O'Toole (1992) concludes that the role behavior of an individual is influenced by his or her circumstances or surroundings,

hence participants' portrayal of poverty as a factor that leads children into child labour where their protection rights are violated.

4.3.3 Cultural pressure

The built up from the ideas, negotiations and responses of participants in the workshop process saw them analyzing and relating the emerging issues of child labour to the violation of children's rights (Kao and O'Neill, 1998). In the course of analyzing these issues, another dominant theme that came out was cultural pressure.

This involves traditions, beliefs and norms of society that influence the behaviors of people. This emerged as a result of exploring and reflecting on the presentation by the second group where Miss Tigress forced "Why Me" and "Me Too" into child labour. In this role play, the character of Miss Tigress insisted that, before she gives the two stranded children food or allows them to stay in her house they will have to work for it. This reflects a culture where children have to live up to specific tasks before they are considered part of society. Keita (2010) confirms this by contending that, in rural societies especially farming communities, there is a strong belief that children have to work in order to be properly integrated. Accordingly, many children of farmers are actually forced to abandon school and learn farming so as to become farmers. Such practices no matter how integral they are in society are infringements on the protection rights of the children involved. This role play is also a reflection of how some societal practices become systems of oppression. O'Toole (1992) reveals that role play demonstrates prevailing

social positions and ways of expressing group norms and the social pressure acting on an individual or group of people.

In generating and exploring the feedbacks from the role play, I employed questioning as a process drama technique. According to Jossart and Courtney (1998) questioning generates varied responses and encourages participants to be more responsive. This happened immediately after the role play when participants had the chance to express their feelings, experiences and reflections. Many questions arose among participants and myself. In this case, one significant question I posed to participants was the relevance of the issue of child labour in their communities.

The application of questioning as a technique brought out participants' contribution from different perspectives. One perspective from which participants explored child labour is the impact of cultural pressure on girls. In exploring the role play, it was observed that cultural pressure makes girls become victims of child labour. In some communities, girls are regarded as domestic commodities. They believe that women are reserved for house activities, such as becoming house wives who take care of their husbands and children. Therefore, instead of going to school, girls are made to stay in the house to learn house hold chores so as to become good house wives. Consequently, engaging these girls in hazardous household chores that are inappropriate to their age, and detrimental to their development, amounts to the violation of their rights (Gaura 2012).

4.4 CONCLUSION

The chapter revealed how role-on-the-wall was used by participants to examine the behaviors of the characters in the narrative pre-text. In order to interrogate emerging issues of children's rights violation, participants were made to create their own stories. The stories were then presented and explored through role play which enabled them to embody and understand issues regarding child labour.

Role-on-the-wall and role play encouraged participants to draw out and examine sub-themes such as lack of social responsibility, poverty and cultural pressure. This enabled participants to gain control of the process and created a safe space for them to express themselves.

It also created an opportunity for them to share and examine their own experiences in relation to child labour.

CHAPTER 5

EXPOSURE TO DANGEROUS WEAPONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter examines how process drama techniques were used to explore the issue of exposure of children to dangerous weapons. According to the South African Police Services (2012), children often fall prey to danger in and around their places of residence. One of these dangers is the exposure of children to dangerous weapons. Children need special protection because they are among the most vulnerable members of society. I believe the first step in protecting them is to make them aware of their protection.

Children mostly depend on their parents, families and the state for care and protection. As a result, the drafters of the South African Constitution have come out with the rights to protect children in such situations. Among these rights, are children's rights to be protected against dangerous weapons. This is embedded in Section 28 of the Bill of Rights which outlines that children should not be used directly in armed conflict, and should be protected in times of armed conflict. In effect, this law protects children from exposure to dangerous weapons or situations of armed conflicts.

The South African Police Services (SAPS) (2012) defines such exposure as violence against children. The SAPS notes that exposure of children to dangerous weapons is one of the biggest challenges that South Africa is currently battling with. Many children injure or fatally wound others or themselves with firearms that are left unattended.

In most instances, the offender is related to the victim. In addition to the Bill of Rights, Government and the South African Police Services (SAPS) have put in more effort to eliminate violence against children through the Domestic Violence Act of 1998 (Act No 116 of 1998) and the Firearms Control Act of 2000 (Act No 60 of 2000) (SAPS Journal online 2013). In spite of all these acts children are still being exposed to dangerous weapons in South Africa.

5.2 Narrative Pre-text

To further create awareness on children's protections rights, we continued with the narrative pre-text of 'Why Me' and 'Me Too'. As already stated in this study, the use of a developing story is to affirm Taylor's (2000) assertion that pre-text is not an isolated activity but an integral part of the process that creates possibilities of exploring a particular course. To introduce participants into the process as the facilitator, I narrated the story as follows:

Antelope rushes to the village of "Strange World" and reports the issue to one of the community leaders in the village. Immediately, the community leader also rushes to the king to tell him about the issue. After his meeting with the king, the king delegated some people including the police officer, the security and some few members of the village led by the antelope "the hunter" to go and rescue the children.

On their way to that village, just some few kilometers to the village they meet rabbit running and panting breathlessly. They stop him and ask him what is pursuing him to be

running like that. He tells them that their village has been invaded by people from the other village. Men and women have been killed, children have been taken and given guns and are being used to commit crimes like robbery and murder. Some are even being asked to kill their families and other people's families. *On hearing this, the delegation returned to the village to report to the king.*

5.3 Workshop analyses

At this point as the facilitator, I decided to interrogate the issue further by making participants explore what had just emerged from the narrative pre-text. In doing this, I employed the interview technique, a technique which allowed students to act as Newspaper / TV reporters finding out information about a story, Policemen investigating a case or Insurance inspectors filling in forms or finding out information about events (Hillyard 2011).

The interrogation of the pre-text through the interview technique generated themes that needed further exploration. At that point the mantle of the expert technique became handy in examining emerging issues. I employed this technique in this part of the process because the emerging issues required decision making from participants (Hillyard 2011).

According to Farmer (2009), Mantle of the Expert is based on the principle that makes children feel like responsible experts and enhances their engagement and confidence. My role as a teacher was to guide the drama.

As a facilitator, I was involved in stepping in and out of role as required by the situation and giving encouragement and motivation to the experts.
In this case, I let participants pick up the roles of opinion leaders and decision makers do discussing the emerging issues in a community meeting. In this process, the purpose was for participants to learn and discover together in an interactive and proactive way. Bowell and Heap (2001) contend that Mantle of the Expert encourages creativity, improves teamwork, communication skills, critical thought and decision-making. The use of these techniques enabled participants to explore sub-themes relating to the exposure of children to dangerous weapons.

Culture of Violence

One sub-theme that emerged during the process is Culture of Violence. Through the application of the interview technique Newspaper / TV reporters (learners) began to find out information about issues that emerged from the narrative. They investigated how children have been taken and given guns by invaders from the other village who are using children to commit crimes like robbery and murder. The task of the reporters was to find out how the villagers feel or react to the exposure of children in their village to dangerous weapons.

I then divided participants into two groups; one group acting as Newspaper / TV reporters seeking information from the village and the other group acting as villagers going about their daily business. The villagers assumed roles like sellers, drivers and pedestrians going about their daily activities as the

reporters tried to get information about children being exposed to dangerous weapons in their village. As the facilitator I employed the teacher in role technique by stepping into the role of an editor and called all the reporters to come and give me feedback on the information they had gathered immediately after the interview.

According to Owen and Barber (2001), teacher in role enables participants to build the context through different perspectives. This observation was revealed in the feedback given to me by the reporters which indicates that the villagers reacted differently to the interview. Their report was that most of the villagers refused to grant the interview to the reporters because they believe the use of children to commit violent crime was not new to them in the community. The villagers argued that such situations had been part of them for a long time and they have become used to it. Therefore talking about it to reporter will not change the situation

The observation from this group of participants is a reflection of the reaction of the South African Pagan Council (SAPC) when they submitted an objection letter in response to the Drafted Bill of Dangerous Weapons (2011). According to the SAPC (2011), it is part of their culture to possess and carry dangerous weapons such as spears and other weapons. In view of this, they believe the introduction of the dangerous weapons bill is an infringement on their religious rights. The characters involved in these two instances (the real world and the fictional world) were therefore exhibiting similar reactions towards exposure to dangerous weapons.

The interactive nature of process drama attempts to hold two worlds simultaneously namely the world of real life and the fictional world (Carroll, 2003). [1]According to the Queensland Studies Authority

> *Drama explores and celebrates the human presence within a real, imagined and mediated world. It connects students to their own creative process and provides opportunities for them to imagine themselves as others exploring beliefs, feelings, behaviors and relationships across diverse situations (2007:1)*:.

In effect, the interview technique employed at this point enabled participants to be creative in exploring the issue of exposure of children to dangerous weapons as part of the culture of violence. This provided the opportunity for them to express the beliefs and feelings of people in real life situations. Schneider, et al (2006) describe this as entering the world of others through process drama. This observation was explored further during reflection when participants were out of role. It emerged that, the culture of violence is a violation on the rights of children since it exposes them to dangerous weapons therefore such issues need to be taken seriously.

[1] The Queensland Studies Authority (QSA) is a statutory body of the Queensland Government that provides Preparatory Year to Year 12 syllabuses, assessment, testing, accreditation and certification service for Queensland schools.

5.3.2 Social negligence

Chapter 3 revealed how process drama was used to explore negligence in parenting. In this chapter, a different kind of negligence where people ignore certain societal problems because they do not affect them directly is explored.

This is a situation where observers of such problems feel they would rather mind their own business than interfere with issues that do not concern them. This was manifested in the interview process where participants playing the roles of villagers refused to be interviewed. During the interview process, apart from those who refused to be interviewed because the issue at stake was not new to them, another group of villagers also refused to be interviewed because the issues did not affect them. During the interviews the latter group of villagers refused to cooperate because the children being exposed to dangerous weapons were not their children therefore the issue did not concern them. They rather focused on their businesses and did not give the reporters the chance to interview them.

Hogan (2008) argues that *process drama* assists participants to show and *reflect* on key aspects of society. This observation reinforces the aspect of society where people neglect social problems because they do not affect them. According to Burton (2008), the most common form of violence in South African schools involves children acting violently towards other learners. Burton (2008) emphasizes that in most violence cases, fellow peers

or classmates are often aware of the situation but refuse to report until it gets out of hand.

In as much as participants in this drama were acting the roles of characters in the fictional world, their actions were influenced by their experiences from the real world. In other words, the spontaneous behavior of characters during the interview process was motivated by what they had seen, heard or experienced in the real world.

In the reflection participants admitted that sometimes at school or at home they see their colleagues in possession of dangerous weapons or bullying others but they ignore it because it is not happening to them. O'Toole and Donelan point out that, 'the medium of drama is available for discovering and articulating ideas, feelings and attitudes and shaping these private understandings into a public form' (1996: 117). I believe that the more such social negligence continues the more children will be exposed to dangerous weapons which violates their protection rights.

5.3.3 Questionable parenting

Chapter 3 examined how parents violate the protection rights of their children by abandoning or neglecting them. This chapter explores a situation where parents do not abandon their children but their way of parenting exposes children to dangerous weapons. This emerged during the use of mantle of the expert technique.

The use of mantle of the expert technique became necessary due to observations from some participants in the interview process. During the interviews, some of the villagers refused to be interviewed, whiles some granted the interviews and expressed their disgust at the way children have been exposed to dangerous weapons and were being used to commit crime. The reporters discovered through the interviews that some children have already been exposed to weapons by their own parents.
That made it easier for invaders to use them to commit crime using those dangerous weapons. This observation motivated further interrogation of the issue by letting participants play the roles of decision makers such as queen, king, teacher, political leader, parents, head teacher, priest, head of community security service, police officer, and an old woman.

During this process I assumed the role of an anxious community leader worried about news coming from the neighboring village that two children from our village are among children who have been abducted by invaders from that village. The invaders are using them to commit crime with dangerous weapons. I reported the news to the king who invited opinion leaders for their advice on the issue.

At this point the opinion leaders became aware of their status and their responsibilities without any direction from me. The King took control of the meeting and called on the leaders to give their advice regarding the issue. This indicates that mantle of the expert requires participants to understand the requirements of their roles. If participants are not conversant with the

requirements of their roles the purpose of role playing will be defeated. According to Mtukwa (2010) if participants are not aware of their role as experts, role-playing may function to confuse them and deter them from engaging in the learning process. The role of these opinion leaders was to discuss solutions to the issue. As we were deliberating on this issue, emerging opinions and advice pointed to the fact that protection of children first and foremost comes from parents. If that protection is not there it will be easy for outsiders to exploit children and expose them to dangerous weapons like what was happening in the neighboring village.

For instance, ***Parent of Two*** asserted that if parents were to be with their children and provide their needs, they will not go seeking help from people who will expose them to such a situation. According to her, she would have felt guilty if she were a culprit of such a circumstance. The ***Old woman*** also argued that parents of today are lazy and careless. She goes on to say that those parents are not taking care of the children who, according to her, are the future. She advised those parents to let their children know that guns are dangerous and are not like the ones they see in movies and games.

Some of the leaders were very forward in pronouncing punishments for parents whose questionable character causes their children to be exposed to dangerous weapons. For example the **political leader** said, parents who do not protect their children must be punished. The **teacher** was so direct in suggesting an amount of R150 as a penalty for parents who are culprits of such acts. As for the **King,** his suggestion was that police officers must watch

every house for irresponsible parents and illegal gun owners and arrest them and let them cook for orphans in orphanages. He argued that those irresponsible parents, as he called them, must be made to serve orphans because some of them were made orphans by questionable actions of parents. In addition to the **old woman'**s advice that parents should tell their children that guns are dangerous and are not like the ones they see in movies and games.

The **queen** added that parents who own weapons must watch and keep their children away from them and have time for their children.

The **king** asked the **head of community security service** what is happening to the protection of the community. He explained to the king that the community is not co-operating in protecting children in this community and there are not enough security men in the community. His advice was that, there must be enough security men all over the community to look out for suspicious people who expose children to dangerous weapons or get them to use such weapons.

At this moment I felt the sense of shared power running through the space as I was no longer in sole control of what was happening in the space. Participants were empowered by the mantle of the expert technique and were making decisions regarding children being exposed to dangerous weapons. Neelands (1990) points out that, in mantle of the experts, there is a movement of power and responsibility from teacher to participants. This creates a situation where learners feel respected by having expert status. He

further argues that this situation creates the chance for exploring and understanding different expects occupations. Owens and Barber (2001) assert that, the mantle of the expert technique encourages a build up on commitment and belief in participants. Going by Owens and Barber (2001)s assertion, I strongly argue that participants' ability to explore the issue of exposing children to dangerous weapons and suggesting solutions to them was motivated by the mantle of the expert technique.

5.4 CONCLUSIONS

In this chapter, process drama techniques such as interviews and mantle of the expert were employed to enable participants to explore issues of exposure of children to dangerous weapons as an abuse of their protection rights. These issues emerged from the pre-text and generated sub-themes that were explored further in the process.

This chapter has also shown how these techniques encouraged participants to express their opinions on the theme. In this case, participants were empowered to feel like responsible people making decisions on such an important issue. The chapter demonstrated how the techniques enabled participants to discover solutions together in a proactive approach. The next chapter will summarize the findings of this study and provide a general conclusion to all the chapters.

CHAPTER 6

6.1 GENERAL CONCLUSION

This study dealt with how process drama operates as a medium for creating awareness on children's protection rights. It focused on how process drama techniques can be employed to enable children to learn about their protection rights. In this chapter, I conclude by briefly summarizing the findings that emerged from the study. The chapter also discusses the implications and possibilities that arose from the research.

Through the use of process drama techniques, the study demonstrated how participants were able to create a fictional word that enabled them to generate sub-themes that were explored to help them understand their protection rights. The explorations created significant moments which encouraged participants to question, comment and interrogate the characters involved and learn from their actions. The use of the hot-seating technique suited this process as it reflected different opinions of people involved in parental negligence; Participants acting as victims and culprits were hot-seated by me as facilitator and other participants who represent observers of parental negligence in society. This helped to bring out different opinions from different sides of the issue.

In exploring issues through embodiment and reflection, participants were able to learn and understand how parents violate the protection rights of children by neglecting them, subjecting them to misplaced punishment and to situations of substance abuse. Learners were able to realize how, parents,

Caregivers and other adults subject children through child labour for their own self gain. This does not only puts children into situations that are hazardous and detrimental but also violates their protection rights. No technique could have been more suited for this situation than role play as the make-belief it created established change in understanding. This indicates that role play is central to process drama.

Through the use of mantle of the expert and the interview techniques participants also explored how children's protection rights were violated by exposing them to dangerous
weapons. The study showed how learners can be empowered to make decisions and find solutions to the emerging issues of children's protection rights. Process drama enabled children to take control of the learning process and created a safe space for them to express themselves without the fear of being criticized, ridiculed or punished.

6.2 Implications and Possibilities

The findings from this study point to an urgent call to create awareness on children's protection rights not only in schools but also homes and communities in South Africa. As I have already mentioned, South Africa has one of the most comprehensive constitutions in the world which is yet to be reflected on the ground. This calls for human rights education in communities so that parents and guardians can be made aware of the implications of children's protection rights.

The realization of children's protection rights is a step towards curbing the violation of human rights as a whole. If children are aware of how their rights can be

protected, it offers them the chance to observe them and to be in a better position to know when their rights are being violated. Children who are aware of their protection rights stand a better chance of becoming responsible adults. Such children have the opportunity to become responsible citizens now and in the future.

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APPENDIX A: Participant Information Sheet

I am **AZIZ ADJEI LARYEA**, a researcher/student at the University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. I would like to invite you to participate in a study on **Creating Awareness of Children's Protection Rights through Process Drama: A Case Study of Grade 7 Students of St Theresa's Convent School.** If you decide to participate in this study, you will required to be part of series of workshop

It is important for you to know that your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You may redraw from the study at any stage and you can choose not to answer any question if you decide to participate. In order to ensure your anonymity, your identity will never be disclosed to any third party. Moreover, any information collected during this study will be kept at the Drama for Life office for academic reference. I will submit a report to St Theresa's Convent school for the benefit of all Participants and Guardians.

If you are interested in this study, below are my contact details please contact me for further clarification;

Name of Researcher: Aziz Adjei Laryea
Researcher's Email: aziz.laryea@gmail.com
Researcher's Cell Number: 0721110674

Am looking forward to hear from you soon.

AZIZ ADJEI LARYEA

APPENDIX: Informant Consent Form

AZIZ ADJEI LARYEA is conducting a study on **Creating Awareness of Children's Protection Rights through Process Drama: A Case Study of Grade 7 Students of St Theresa's Convent School.** I, the Participant and my guardian have read the Participant Information Sheet. I understand that strict confidentiality will be observed to protect any personal information. I know that no information will be published without my permission or my guardian's permission. I am aware that I can withdraw from this study at any stage. I know that I am free to ask any questions during the drama workshops and I can choose not to answer any question when I feel like.

By signing this form, I certify that **AZIZ ADJEI LARYEA** has explained the research project and I consent to participate in it under the conditions described above.

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Name of Participant ……..

Date …….

Name of guardian ……..

Date ……..

APPENDIX: Participant Video Information Sheet

I am **AZIZ ADJEI LARYEA** a researcher/student at the University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. I would like to invite you to participate in a study on **Creating Awareness of Children's Protection Rights through Process Drama: A Case Study of Grade 7 Students of St Theresa's Convent School.** If you decide to participate in this study, you will required to be part of series of workshop

I wish to inform you that, there will be a video recording during the research process, your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You may redraw from the study at any stage and you can choose not to answer any question if you decide to participate. Moreover, any information collected during this study will be kept at the Drama for Life office for academic reference. I will submit a copy to St Theresa's Convent school for the benefit of all Participants and Guardians.

If you are interested in this study, below are my contact details please contact me for further clarification;

Name of Researcher: Aziz Adjei Laryea
Researcher's Email: aziz.laryea@gmail.com
Researcher's Cell Number: 0721110674

Am looking forward to hear from you soon

AZIZ ADJEI LARYEA