HOW TO CARRY THE VOICES OF CHILDREN FROM THE GRASSROOTS TO GLOBAL GOVERNANCE THROUGH NEIGHBOURHOOD-BASED CHILDREN'S PARLIAMENTS USING SOCIOCRACY

by

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Introduction

This paper recommends as to how children can gain direct participation in global governance from the grassroots. I have written the paper because in global governance children lack the means to participate directly and their voices are suppressed. Children's

voices are not directly getting involved because of the power structure that is present in global governance. (Hinton, 2008) and (Fayoyin, 2016) This power structure exists in global governance due to the societal notions related to the superiority of adults in diverse parts of the world, for example: children must obey adults, prevailing in the African countries; children are wrong and must listen to the adults and learn from them, which is commonly in the western scientific tradition; children are born good or bad in the eastern tradition, and so on. (Hinton, 2008 and Fayoyin, 2016). Because of this power structure, the voices of children are not heard in global governance directly.

Due to the absence of the voices of children and child agents from direct presence in the power of global governance, the voices of marginalized and vulnerable children may have higher risk of getting excluded from global governance. For global governance to be just, these marginalized and vulnerable voices must not be excluded (Grugel & Uhlin, 2012 and Warming, 2006). Therefore, the global governance power system could be improved if it included the voices of all children, even the marginalized voices.

Children's lack of influence exists despite the UNCRC that establishes in Articles 12, 13, and 15 the rights of children to have their voices heard in the world's political process. I emphasize the rights of children to be heard in the political process of the world through UNCRC because, the UNCRC is one of the common conventions that exists among the public and private actors and is also adopted by United Nations, which is one of the global institutions. In other words, there is a legal basis for children to have direct influence in the global governance system. Therefore, the problem is that the global political power structure reinforces adult superiority and thereby suppresses children' voices and not the legal body. (Hinton, 2008) In addition to the power structure academic literature and the cultural stereotypes further reinforce adult superiority.

According to Rachel Hinton, children constitute 34% of the world's citizens. (2008). Yet the theoretical framework of academics has failed to address the direct participation of children. (Hinton, 2008). In the real world, children indirectly participate internationally through transnational civil societies such as UNICEF, Save The Children, and others. Although the UNCRC has emphasized the right to direct participation of children in politics and the judiciary, the participation of children is not ensured in many countries, nor globally due to various factors (Fayoyin, 2016 and Hinton, 2008). These include cultural traditions that appear to justify adult superiority, lack of structure in the participatory forums created for children, and most significantly the lack of franchise rights to children in most of the countries. (Fayoyin, 2016 and Hinton 2008). Because of the lack of participation of children in politics, judiciary and policymaking, their voices are not heard globally. We next consider how this problem of suppressed children's voices can be solved.

If the voices of children are to be heard in the process of politics and their rights to be exercised, a formal institution must be in place to ensure the participation of children,

connect them with the political system, and lift children's voices to global governance. (Grugel & Uhlin, 2012) This paper examines institutions and governance methods that could carry children's voices into the existing system of global governance institutions. After weighing pros and cons of various approaches, it recommends an institution that reconfigures the global power system from the grassroots level – a federated system that uses sociocracy. Before we focus on sociocracy we look in more detail at other institutions that are considered.

To address the challenge of empowering children's voices, some governance systems have emerged that can provide transformative and synergistic learning for children. They avoid the superiority of adults, provide communication techniques to break the cultural stereotypes, and encourage breakthrough thinking, equal participation of children, and a governance system to make decisions with everybody's acceptance. Some of the systems also provide an election process by which the children can select each other to perform any type of role, self-organize to fulfill their own needs, and to function independently and inclusively and without competition. All these characteristics are needed to enfranchise the disenfranchised voices of children, and only a few of these governance methods for children might unite all of these aspects in one specific and structured system, the one I am familiar with through my experience and research is sociocracy and that will be a focus of this paper. There are two other focuses: a federated system and the example of children' parliaments. Together these three concepts can provide the system that constitutes the institution required to solve the challenge of enfranchising children's voices in global governance power structure. Next I will briefly introduce each concept beginning with sociocracy.

Sociocracy is a governance method identified by August Comte during mid 1800s and developed by Keyes Boeke, Gerard Endenburg, and John Buck. It assures the above-mentioned qualities and characteristics in one structured system for children to adopt. (Buck & Villines, 2017; Buck and Owen, 2020; and Endenburg, 1998). Sociocracy can link both power and the voices of children by promoting transformative and synergistic learning and decision-making among children and adults. It reconfigures the system of power in a way that leads to the diminution of the adults' superiority and thus could address the gap that the current power structure creates. (Hinton, 2008, Fayoyin, 2016, and Buck & Owen, 2020). The next area of focus is children's parliaments.

There needs to be a formal institution to ensure the genuine participation of all children's voices at the global level. (Parks, 2008). And to ensure the participation of children at the global level, this institution must involve children in politics and the processes of policymaking. The formal institution that has the potential to involve children in the global political system and policymaking processes is a system typically called Children's Parliaments. Children's Parliaments provide a formal platform for children to participate in the political system and as well as provide a way for their voices to be heard. (Parks 2008,

Tisdall and Davis 2004, Crowley 2015 and Fayoyin 2016). The third area of focus is a federated system.

There are groups in many countries called Children's Parliaments that are not connected with each other in a structured way from the grassroots level (Parks, 2008; Tisdall & Davis, 2004; Warming, 2006; and Crowley, 2015). If there is to be participation of all children inclusively at the global level through political system and policymaking processes, there must be an organized hierarchical system that establishes a connection between the bottom most level, that is the grassroots level, and the top most level that is the global level. To establish the connection between grassroots level and the global level with that organized hierarchical system, a bottom-up multi-tier federated structure is needed. This federated structure should begin at the lowest possible grassroots level in the informal political system that is neighborhoods. Thus, to ensure the genuine participation of all children inclusively, children's parliaments that are formed at the neighborhood level and federated up to the global level have to be established. Establishing such a system will mean addressing the challenges of the cultural stereotypes associated with adults. It will also mean teaching skills of self-organization and innovation. It will also mean helping both children who are skillful and those who are slow learners to coordinate with each other using a governance method like sociocracy in these neighbourhood based Children's parliaments. Having introduced these three concepts, I next address the outline of this paper, beginning with my research methods and then the structure of the paper.

The question that arises out of this discussion is how could the voices and participation of children be taken to a global governance system using sociocracy and Neighbourhood-based Children's Parliaments as a bottom-up, federated structure. To explore this question, I will be researching literature on sociocracy, a governance method, and children's parliaments as one of the child institutions or agents. Then, combining the ideas derived from both these literatures, I will talk about my own experience as a child actor present in children's parliaments that have been using sociocracy. I will explore how the establishment of Neighbourhood-based Children's Parliaments using sociocracy could enfranchise the voices of children and make them echo in the global level.

I will divide my paper into 3 chapters. In the first chapter, I will discuss what sociocracy is and how it works. Then, I will continue the chapter by discussing the abilities and limitations of sociocracy followed by the different governance methods that prevail around it and have objectives similar to sociocracy. Then I will conclude that chapter with a discussion on sociocracy as an excellent governance method for children to adopt and to challenge the power structure in global governance. In the second chapter, drawing on my own experience as a child actor in the institution of neighbourhood-based children's parliaments that use sociocracy, I will talk about the literatures that back up my arguments and experiences. I will use autoethnography or reflexive positional writing as a research method. I will also use the

literatures of sociocracy and the literatures prevailing around Children's Parliaments and child participation in politics and policymaking process. And in the third chapter, I will discuss why children's parliaments are considered a formal institution in bringing the voices of children to global governance and how these children's parliaments could function around the world to ensure the participation of all children from the grassroots level to the global level by adopting the neighbourhood-based structure and sociocracy. I will then conclude my dissertation by saying that sociocracy is the governance method that could be used with the neighbourhood based federated Children's Parliaments to provide a structure from grassroots level to the global level and thus ensure the participation of all children addressing the power structure.

Chapter 1 – Sociocracy As a Governance Method

This chapter focuses on the theory of sociocracy and its significance as a governance method that can reach the now unreached voices of children. Sociocracy is a significant method because it connects these unreached voices to the power of global governance. In the discipline of international relations, realists argue that power is an important element in any governance system. When this power turns into dominance, it creates issues like superiority over the weak, including the disenfranchised voices of children. (Hinton, 2008) Majority voting is one tool for creating power dominance because it does not listen to minorities and excludes some citizens from voting, particularly children. Let's look in more detail at the effects of the voting exclusions.

People under 18 are defined as children according to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). This convention also asserts in Articles 12, 13, and 15 that children have the right to free expression of their political views. But, in all countries and at the global level children do not have the right to vote below a specified age ranging from 16 to 25. (Omondi, 2017) Thus, every country in the world disenfranchises children, who have the right under the UNCRC to participate in governance at any level. Sociocracy offers a way around these voting age barriers. It is an established system of governance that does not require majority voting because it uses an alternative decision-making process called consent, which I shall explain in detail when I talk about the principles of sociocracy. Sociocracy also addresses other sources of power dominance.

For example, as mentioned in the introduction, yet another factor that creates adult superiority is culture. Sociocracy addresses this factor by creating a transformative and synergistic partnership between adults and children in governance systems. The concept of sociocratic circles brings a balance that addresses the issue of adults' superiority through transformative learning and breakthrough thinking. (Owen & Buck, 2020). I shall also explain the circle principle in detail when I talk about the theory and principles of sociocracy.

In explaining the theory of sociocracy I will rely primarily on authors Endenburg, Buck, Romme, and Owen. (1998, 2017 and 2020, 2004 and 2006, 2020). Citing several other authors, I will define governance and look at alternatives to sociocracy. I will talk about how the theory of sociocracy relates to global governance in bringing the voices of children from the grassroots level. Finally, I will address criticisms of children's participation in political systems by Kallio and Häkli which signposts my third chapter. Analyzing different governance

methods along with sociocracy will support the research question of my thesis: to identify a governance method that suits children and to address the gap of dominance in power with the same. Talking about the principles of sociocracy and its relevance to global governance will also help me address the question of how to bring the voices of children to the global governance level from the grassroots level. I will talk about sociocracy under five subheadings, the theory and principles of sociocracy, relevance of sociocracy to global governance, governance methods similar to sociocracy, limitations and challenges, and the indispensability of sociocracy for the bottom-up approach in bringing in the voices of children.

Theory and principles of sociocracy

This theory was first applied by Kees Boeke in his school after the second world war. Since Boeke believed in Quaker's principles of equality and integrity in a community, he proposed a system of self-governance organised of the community by the community itself. (Buck & Villines, 2017). Boeke believed in reaching decisions based on everybody's acceptance. (Boeke, 1945). This development of sociocracy shows that, after the second world war, there was a need for a governance that creates a balance of power and a world without competition at the global level. Making decisions based on everybody's acceptance was one of the ways to promote equality and reduce competition among people. But, how to organise people to make decisions based on everybody's acceptance is a question for which the governance method of sociocracy provided the answer of self-organisation, that is, helping people to organise by themselves. When people organise themselves and have a system for themselves to reach decisions based on everybody's acceptance, power in global governance is balanced due to the lack of competition and equality present in the self-organising governance methods.

The implementation of the theory of sociocracy inherited by Endenburg from Boeke was steeped in Quaker principles of general consensus to accomplish peace and non-violence. Turning to cybernetics and systems theory, Gerard replaced consensus for sociocracy with consent. (Endenburg, 1998). Consent means 'no reasoned and paramount objection'. Whereas, consensus is a general agreement to a proposed decision. Decisions based on Endenburg's concept of consent were nevertheless congruent with the Quaker's principles of equality and stewardship. Endenburg applied mainly the feedback loop of cybernetics (also called a steering loop) to sociocracy. That is, information and directions initiated by traditional managers, are processed and circulated in the group. In sociocracy, feedback, that is, information about the effects of these managers' orders, goes back to the managers in a form that they cannot ignore. For example, managers can ignore opinions workers express in an employee survey. With sociocracy, special group meetings, called circles, enable workers to express opinions about policies that managers must address. Thus, it

establishes a complete feedback loop. The concept of consent decision-making is very important because it provides an effective alternative to majority vote and thus addresses the problems of majority vote mentioned above. Consent-based decision making helps to include the voices of everybody, leaving no voice behind. I will later explain the support that sociocracy could offer when it is implemented in global governance while talking about the relevance of sociocracy to global governance. Now, I would like to continue talking about the development of sociocracy further to understand that how the development of sociocracy is connected to children.

Endenburg sequences the evolution of sociocracy under the theory of Triad, where he proposes that supremacy is granted to one or very few of individuals in autocracy, to majorities in democracy and to argument by all in sociocracy. By "argument" he means decisions are made by consent in specially designed meetings that follow egalitarian governance methods. (Endenburg, 1998). The theory of triad that he proposes helps us to understand the need for the emergence of different governances to ensure the participation of everybody and to balance the power structure at the top level. Endenburg proposed three principles (Buck & Endenburg, 2010), (Eckstein & Buck 2020), (Romme, Broekgaarden, Huijzer, Reijmer & van der Eyden, 2016). The basic principles are: principle of consent with corollary of elections conducted by consent, principle of circles, and principle of double linking for connection between circles. These principles are relevant to bringing the voices of children to global governance because each principle provides flexibility and choice in structure and transformative learning that enables children to participate more freely than other approaches.

Father Edwin John of India recognized the value of these principles and applied the decision-making part of Endenburg's system to the children's parliaments. (John et al, 2018). For instance, he introduced sociocracy among children by organising them as parliaments and used sociocracy in the election process by selecting people to roles based on everybody's consent rather than majority vote. (John et al, 2018). This application of sociocracy helped the children to be inclusive, introducing the iterative structure of sociocracy through organising these parliaments in federation and so on. As mentioned above, I will demonstrate in the case study of Rainbow Community School how children are able to acquire transformative learning through sociocracy and participate freely within a structure using the sociocracy principles. Now I will explain each of Endenburg's principles in detail.

Principle of consent with corollary of principle of election by consent
According to this principle, no policy decisions are made in a sociocratic organisation or election process without considering heavy objections of any of its members. People are selected to major roles, positions, and accountabilities by consent. This principle helps to

instil individual and self-responsibility in each of its members, personally and emotionally. Thus, sociocracy is expected to enhance the function of any organisation. The term "heavy" is important because consent asks participants to check with the feelings in their body as well as with their logic. Concepts of blind spots, both/and thinking, and rapid prototyping assist participants in developing innovative solutions and courses of action that they can accept.

Principle of circles
Endenburg rejected majority vote democracy because of its linear majority hierarchy. He proposed 'circles' through which he meant that everybody in an organisation would be connected and nobody will be left alone. (Endenburg, 1998). Circles can be overlaid on any level of the hierarchy both in the organisations and in the political governance system.

Principle of double linking
This principle is relevant to the previously explained principle of circles where the representatives of these circles get elected to the next level of federation. The representatives to circle A come from different circles of the lower B level like, B, B1, B2 and so on, whether in neighbourhoods or organizations. The down link is the operational supervisor, the representatives are the uplinks. Thus, information flows from Circle A to B and from B to A, which means ideas of grassroots level people can reach the top-level hierarchy. (Romme, Broekgaarden, Huijzer, Reijmer & van der Eyden, 2016) Double linking is important because it creates a link between one structure of a federated body and another structure of the federated body and thus helps to carry the voices from the bottom most level to the topmost level. This federated structure makes it possible to carry children's voices from the grassroots level to the global governance level.

While implementing these principles with governance of children, John expanded and supplemented them. According to John, for a successful implementation of sociocracy in society, there are five structural principles that supplement the circles and double linking principles. The principles are uniformity in circle size, no more than 30 people in a circle, immediate recall of any representative without waiting for a term to end, issues are pushed to the lowest level, and no parallel structure outside of the federated "governance from below" structure. (John et al, 2018) These principles are the modus operandi of the neighbourhood parliament system functioning in India that I will be explaining in the later part of this chapter and in detailed in the second chapter while sharing my own experience as a child actor in these Neighbourhood Parliaments of Children. These principles are important because they provide a simple, iterative structure for governance that is basically the same from the grassroot to global level and therefore facilitate children's participation. (John et al, 2018).

In a manner similar to John's approach of using sociocracy to supplement existing governments, the federated implementation of sociocracy has been tested successfully in a Dutch municipal government. (Romme, Broekgaarden, Huijzer, Reijmer & van der Eyden, 2016) Romme's paper supports my thesis because it provides proof that sociocracy works as a real-world method of governance which I am demonstrating in the following case study of a Dutch Municipal City. This same federated structure that was followed in the Neighbourhood children's Parliaments of India ensured the participation and inclusive voice of more or less all the children from the grassroots level and carried them to the politically federated structure and further to the global level, which I will be explaining in Chapter 2 drawing on my own experience.

Relevance of sociocracy to global governance

When we explore the theory of Sociocracy as a governance method in its relation to global governance, the definition of the term 'governance' needs to be analysed from the definitions provided by various authors previously in the literature. This analysis is necessary because it will provide a framework for comparing a range of governance systems with sociocracy in an unbiased way. Ansell and Gash summarize different definitions of governance by various authors like, Lynn, Heinrich, Hill, Stoker, and so on. (Ansell & Gash, 2007).

On one side, authors like Heinrich and Hill argue for a definition of governance as a set of rules and regulations defined through law to connect both public and private sectors together. Whereas, Stoker proposes a definition of governance similar to Lin, incorporating the term 'collective decision making.' (Ansell & Gash, 2007). A third way to define governance is provided by the Commission on Global Governance defines governance as "Governance is the sum of the many ways individuals and institutions, public and private, manage their common affairs. It is a continuing process through which conflicting or diverse interests may be accommodated and co-operative action may be taken. It includes formal institutions and regimes empowered to enforce compliance, as well as informal arrangements that people and institutions either have agreed to or perceive to be in their interest." (Weiss 2000) Weiss points out that the Tokyo Institute of Technology provides yet another definition of governance as, "The concept of governance refers to the complex set of values, norms, processes and institutions by which society manages its development and resolves conflict, formally and informally." (Weiss 2000). These four definitions of governance have in common a concern with rules and creation of policies that meet collective interests. With this understanding we next consider Finkelstein's definition of global governance as governing without sovereignty and relationships transcending nations. (Finkelstein, 1995). With these definitions as a foundation, I define the term global governance as, "the mutual networking and collaboration between public and private

sectors beyond countries to attain certain common goals and objectives that enhance the wellbeing of the world with the commonly accepted and defined rules, norms and regulations." This definition is important for including children's voices because it pinpoints where the power dominance occurs that affects children, viz, public-private sector collaboration. Power dominance over children occurs when the collaboration fails to include everyone's voice, that is, when the voices of children are not included as actors (Hinton, 2008). Next let's explore how sociocracy with its principles address this weakness.

If a set of rules, norms and regulations are to be defined among public and private actors, there should be a decision-making system that includes everybody's voices. Sociocracy provides that effective decision-making system through its principle of consent-based decision making and circles. As discussed above, by giving importance to everybody's logic as well as emotions through circles and consent based decision making, consent creates a bonding, transformative learning and collaborative approach among people that can transcend age differences. This ability to help people talk deeply circumvents the preconceived notions of superiority of adults and thus helps children bring their voices to global governance. Next let's look at the implications of the structural part of my definition of global governance.

Sociocracy relates to the structure of global governance. When power and communication are exchanged interchangeably between one another among the circles, it helps the global community to effectively address the challenges in the transnational community. (Romme et al 2018) Since the circular organisation and the ground rules were designed from practical science of engineering and cybernetics, it follows that we can apply sociocracy in global governance to resolve the above-mentioned transnational issues. (Romme & Endenburg, 2006)

Another reason that sociocracy is fit to be implemented in global governance is its nature of uncovering the power structure. By uncovering the existing power structure, sociocracy helps NGOs to collaborate with other organisations beyond their boundaries. (Romme et al 2018). Romme et al, propose a set of principles corollary to the sociocratic principles that could be helpful in global governance. Value based structure, collaborative governance, autonomy of a community, heterogeneity, geographical distribution, making decisions in a way it binds everybody in the group without paramount objections and so on. (Romme et al 2018). This model is bottom up because it begins at the household. Representatives will be elected for each house hold from 30 families and will gather as a neighbourhood group in a neighbourhood. Representatives from 30 of such neighbourhoods will formulate a village space or parliament. 30 of such units will elect the representatives for a district or to the next level hierarchy. And this goes through block, subdistrict, district, state and nation up to worldwide using the sociocratic principles and structure of circles. (John et al, 2018). The

writings of Romme et al and John support my thesis because they provide a well-thought through design for a system of global governance for adults. This system can also be used by children because it does not depend on majority vote. According to Romme et al, if we make the global governance commence from the local level incorporated with the possible modifications using the above sociocratic principles, transnational issues like AIDS, fishing, ozone, and human rights violations could be alleviated. As I will demonstrate in Chapter 2 using my own experience, children are also able to address such issues. Therefore, the direct participation of children can be ensured in the global governance using sociocracy not only to hear their voices advocating for transnational issues and human rights violations but also to hear their voices advocating for themselves.

Governance methods similar to sociocracy

In this section, I will explore other governance methods that, like sociocracy, do not rely on majority voting. It is necessary to my thesis to look at these methods so that I can demonstrate sociocracy is the most viable option for children to use.

Sociocracy is a deep democracy. Democracy includes the majority, but sociocracy goes deeper by including minority voices in decision making. I mention deeper democracy because Hennig states that the fundamental ideology of deeper democracy is decisions based on acceptance. (Hennig, 2016). This selection is called in different ways as acceptance, agreement, consensus and consent. (Hennig, 2016) and (Romme, 2004). Different governance forms that look similar to sociocracy tend to flow the nuance of these words used to define them. For example, though the words 'consent' and 'consensus' sound similar, the nuance between general agreement (consensus) and agreement without paramount objections (consent), distinguishes sociocracy from other governance methods or theories.

For instance, authors like Ansell and Gash propose a model of collaborative governance based on consensus in decision making where they claim that, a commitment, co-operation and shared understanding which are necessary for an organisation could be fulfilled by decision making based on consensus. (Ansell & Gash 2007). Collaborative governance operates primarily within public sectors but can promote collaboration between public and private sectors. (Ansell & Gash, 2007)

An interesting fact about collaborative governance is that it emerged even before sociocracy and had similar decision-making objectives. However, since it had a weak feedback loop, there is an unaddressed possibility that hierarchical power could ignore the consensus of the stakeholders. Further, collaborative governance proposes collective decision making but does not provide a tool to define the amount of collectiveness. That is, if a decision has to be

reached collectively based on everybody's agreement in an organisation, then there is always going to be opposition which had not been addressed. (Ansell & Gash, 2007).

In contrast, sociocracy, which provides a strong feedback loop through consent, provides a way to address this challenge. The case study conducted in the Dutch municipal system is the best example. The study was conducted in one of the Dutch municipal systems; Utrechtse Heuvelrug, that consists of 50,000 citizens. It is located in the middle of Netherlands. When a high level of distrust grew among the citizens of municipal system on the political and civic authorities, the civic authorities of that city decided to address the gap. The bureaucrats and the politicians, with the aim of bringing the town together, invited the citizens of that municipality to participate in a citizen-government conference. The result was the selection of 15 citizens and government participants who were called "Bridge Builders". (Romme, Broekgaarden, Huijzer, Reijmer & van der Eyden, 2016)

The bridge builders consisting of citizens, civil servants and other political authorities, with the support of experts, came up with the conclusion that they needed a governance system involving everybody's consent in the city's decision-making processes. And as a result, a project group was formed organised in sociocratic circles. This group remained as a second circle and formulated a first circle with the city councillors that was double-linked to the second circle. This arrangement helped the city councillors reduce the gap between citizens and the civic authorities. Therefore, the gap noted in collaborative governance that might allow the government to ignore the people's opinions in this governance method was addressed by sociocracy due to its additional tools of double linking and the strong feedback loop of consent-based decision making. (Romme, Broekgaarden, Huijzer, Reijmer & van der Eyden, 2016) Romme's findings demonstrate that sociocracy address the weaknesses of collaborative governance that is the weak feedback loop and thus support my thesis.

There are other governance methods developed by many authors to attain the objectives similar to sociocracy. But, as far as I have researched, they either faced the challenge of not having effective tools to attain those objectives or the challenge of having no opportunities to develop the proposed governance method further. For instance, Rensis Likert's 'System 5' concept in 1976 came close to the sociocracy double-linking concept. (Wilson, 2010). But, unfortunately, Likert died before he could expand on this concept, and subsequent articles around System-5 theory were not able to develop the concept substantially. (Wilson, 2010).

Another method known as the co-operative governance method also shares some of the objectives to sociocracy and makes extensive promises about lubricating social friction by increasing trust and reducing transaction costs thereby enhancing distribution of socio-economic resources. (Keith Taylor P3 2015). Cooperative governance is based on the principle that every individual is an owner. But, although, cooperative governance has

objectives and principles grounded in giving voice equally to every individual by making them as owners, there is the risk of individuals working for decisions without shared understanding or inability to arrive at collective decisions due to the complete autonomy granted by this method. The governance method of sociocracy differs from cooperatives by providing tools like making decisions in a circle with reflexive inquiry, arriving at a decision with everybody's consent, and so on. These tools help to address the challenge and risk of individuals working without shared understanding and any potential inability to arrive at a collective decision around complex matters. (Stacey & Ralph, 2012)

In this section we have discussed other governance methods that, like sociocracy, do not rely on majority voting or address cultural tendencies to suppress children. The goal has been to demonstrate that sociocracy is uniquely capable of addressing these issues because of the tools it brings. The other governance methods include collaborative governance, System 5, and cooperative governance. Collaborative governance lacks sociocracy's strong feedback loop, System 5 has some similarities to sociocracy but was never fully developed, and cooperative governance lacks the ability to support people in arriving at decisions based on shared understanding. A strong feedback loop and effective decision making based on shared understanding, as discussed in the previous section, are critical to incorporating children's voices in governance. Thus, as far as I have researched, sociocracy stands unique from the other governance methods I have discussed in the principles and tools it has to offer. I will use this insight when I talk further about children's voices in Chapter 3. In the next section, I will consider other approaches that are derived from sociocracy and talk about its limitations and challenges.

Limitations and Challenges
There are theories like adhocracy, holacracy and others in the literature that are derived from sociocracy and have a number of similarities to the structure of sociocracy. Exploring their limitations and challenges and considering the advantages and disadvantages of similar theories may highlight potential improvements in sociocracy and as well as to identify sociocracy's limitations. Adhocracy, which sounds similar to Sociocracy, has aspects of bureaucracy, meritocracy and sociocracy. Adhocracy was introduced as an alternative to bureaucracy. The difference between meritocracy, bureaucracy and adhocracy is clearly explained by Julian Birkinshaw and Jonas Ridderstråle. Although Adhocracy's system of providing feedback and equal opportunities to everyone and so on, sounds similar to the principles of sociocracy, it is limited to being an alternative to bureaucracy and as such, seems to be tailored for people with high intellectual or epistemological capacity. (Birkinshaw & Ridderstråle, 2015) Sociocracy, in contrast, includes everybody's voice in decision making without preference for seniority or intellectuality.

Holacracy, on the other hand, differs from sociocracy by creating a more autocratic decision-making atmosphere focused on the individuals more than the entire group. (Bernstein, Bunch, Canner, Lee, 2016) Another difference between holacracy and sociocracy is that, holacracy is organised based on units or roles (Bernstein, Bunch, Canner, Lee, 2016). In contrast, sociocracy is organised based on individual consents to arrive at a collective decision making. Holacracy and sociocracy are similar in their use of the circular organisation method. Sociocracy has basic foundation principles, which implies it could be easily adapted and modified according to the needs of any children that adopt this system. It grants a collective autonomy rather than granting power to one individual or a facilitator as holocracy does. That said, holacracy's strength is that it focuses on individual roles, responsibilities, and accountabilities which are critical concepts for getting things done. (Bernstein, Bunch, Canner, Lee, 2016). Sociocracy focuses primarily on the collective aim and does not emphasize the duties of the individual to the same degree. This focus on the collective aim can lower the efficiency of sociocracy. In summary holacracy emphasizes roles and accountabilities. Sociocracy focuses on creating a collective of living individuals. Although holacracy is similar to sociocracy in its use of consent and circles, its approach might be challenging for children to adopt because of its abstractness. However, sociocracy might be improved for children's if it incorporates holacracy's focus on individual roles and accountabilities to give children more defined responsibilities.

Now, after looking at the difference and similarities between various governance methods and sociocracy, if we look at sociocracy, we see it has two potential limitations and challenges. However, they are not significant enough to invalidate my thesis. I will describe these limitations and challenges and then show why they are not significant. First, sociocracy is more general and can be incorporated into any kind of system. This means that it provides more choice than rigid structure, but groups adopting it could revamp the theory and make adaptations in a way that would actually abrogate it. Second, when the total system of sociocracy was assessed by Lectica, an academic and managerial skills testing organization, it was rated as highly advanced. Lectica uses a scale based on research from the Mind, Brain, and Education program at Harvard Graduate School of Education, and the work of Kurt Fischer. This scale shows the advanced epistemological development of sociocracy theory. This means that the advanced aspects of sociocracy are not easy to assimilate and implement by the people who are in the grassroots, unless they have a leader or coach to guide them in deploying the sociocracy method. (Owen & Buck, 2020) However, these two limitations do not seem in practice significant enough to invalidate my thesis that children can use sociocracy. This conclusion is further reinforced by a study by Heijne and Buck on sociocracy in Steiner schools. (Heijne & Buck, 2013) The first limitation, the general nature of sociocracy's concepts, is not significant because sociocracy's feedback loops create a self-teaching process. For example, the format of circle meetings always includes a recorded evaluation of the meeting process at the end of the meeting. Thus, if the children start to

drift away from recommended meeting formats, their reflections at the end of each meeting help them learn more effective ways of running their meetings. The second limitation, the sophistication of sociocratic concepts is not significant because the basics are easy enough for children to pick up quickly and the advanced aspects are not needed for children's purposes. For example, children do not need to know the advanced concept of how to design the legal constitution of a for-profit organization to make consent rather than total stockholder control the legal basis of decision-making. In conclusion, though sociocracy has its limitations, they are not significant enough to invalidate my thesis that sociocracy can be used by children to have a voice in global governance.

Indispensability of sociocracy for the bottom-up approach in bringing the voices of children

In this section, I will demonstrate the importance of sociocracy's bottom up approach. A bottom up approach facilitates children's participation in the governance system. It lets them rise from grassroots to global through a series of connections.

To bring a bottom-up approach into global governance, the network of sociocratic circles must begin at the very grassroots level, which could include even the unreached, voices. The voices of the unreached go unheard due to those voices getting disenfranchised. And as mentioned above, children can be considered a large disenfranchised population. Therefore, if sociocratic circles are created among children who are the present citizens, they could build global governance through these self-organising circles and make their voices echo in the global governance system. To show how children can build governance systems and enfranchise their voices on their own with minimum support of adults, we will look at the case studies of the Children's Parliament system functioning in India and the case study of implementing sociocracy in the Rainbow Community School.

In the case of children's parliaments, sociocratic circles are called as children's parliaments and are functioning as one of the largest organisations in India, advocating various child rights issues. (John et al, 2018) These parliaments help children to be included, effectively advocate to the government, and participate in public policy. (John et al, 2018). All voices are heard and opposing ideas are incorporated in the Indian children's parliaments which follow the neighbourhood-based structure. (Anne Crowley, 2015) Thus, sociocracy followed in neighbourhood-based structured parliaments could enable children to develop local parliament systems by themselves with minimal adult support that include every voice.

Along with the case study of Indian Children's Parliaments, the transformative learning acquired by the Rainbow Community School (RCS) in Asheville, North Carolina, USA, using the organisation method of sociocracy is yet another example of not only improving the

child advocacy, but also enhancing the thinking of children. Rainbow is a private kindergarten through 8th grade school that prides itself on serving students from a full socio-economic range. The unique synergistic approach developed by the RCS, through sociocracy, built a culture of team work among students and staff members of that school. (Owen & Buck, 2020).

For instance, the children as young as first graders, propose agenda items for the weekly meetings conducted equally between staff and students using a sociocracy format. And children who were not top performers academically often provide the most creative ideas in these meetings. In a case study, the school had measurements done of their 4th graders and 8th graders skills in reflective judgement by an organization called Lectica. As a group, the scores were dramatically better than the 25,000 other children who had taken the assessment. The 8th graders' skill matched or bettered the skills of many adults. (Owen & Buck, 2020).

I have presented these two cases to demonstrate that sociocracy has different tools for different situations involving children and amplifying their voices. Thus, the children's parliaments in India indicate that sociocracy implemented in neighbourhood parliaments using a federation structure offers a powerful platform for children make their voices heard. In Rainbow Community School we see that it supports even young children in being innovative by getting recognition and equal respect for their voices. It also helps children grow their mental capacities well beyond their peers.

Before concluding this chapter, it is important to note the views presented by authors like Kallio and Häkli that assert that because the maturity of children is not as much as adults, it would not be fair to involve them in politics. (Kallio & Häkli, 2011) Moreover, they say that the thinking of children slows down the decision-making process and cannot be inclusive due to the varied difference of interests that every child possesses. However, the UNCRC, Article 12 does not support denial of child involvement in politics. Parks also supports the view that immaturity should not eliminate children's voices. Sociocracy offers the perspective that we must approach governance from a systems basis. (Endenburg, 1998) That is, all parts of a system must be considered for it to function. Thus, we must listen to even inanimate parts of a system as we do, for example, with questions concerning the natural environment. The sociocratic circle methods make it possible for children and adults to work together even though they have different levels of maturity. Furthermore, the experiences we discussed in India and Rainbow Community School do not support Kallio & Häkli. Rather, they demonstrate that it is possible to support even young children's voices in decision-making. In other words, the UNCRC, Parks, sociocracy, cybernetics, and actual experience all support the notion that involving children's voices in existing institutions is practicable.

Conclusion

This paper notes that children lack the means to participate directly in global governance and suggests how they can gain such direct participation. In Chapter 1 we have shown that sociocracy helps children take part directly in global governance through the principles and tools that sociocracy offers. We first introduced the principles and basic methods of sociocracy. Then we defined governance and showed how sociocracy can ensure children's voices are heard directly in global governance. We next validated this conclusion by looking at alternatives to sociocracy and potential limitations of sociocracy. We ended by showing the importance of sociocracy's bottom up approach. With these arguments we have shown how sociocracy egalitarian tools address such challenges of power as adult superiority and balances it, which we will further discuss in chapters two and three. We will proceed to establish in Chapter 2 that a federated system is the best institution to hold sociocracy. In Chapter 3, we can then confidently examine how existing children's organization could adopt federated sociocracy.

Chapter 2 – My Experience As A Child Actor in Children's Parliaments

In Chapter 1, we explored how sociocracy as a governance method could be effective in bringing diverse voices of children from the grassroots level to global governance. It is important to include grassroots level voices because there needs to be a connection between the bottom-most and top-most level. Unless we include the grassroots level, local concerns might not be resolved and have to be addressed needlessly at higher levels. We concluded the chapter by saying "sociocracy could be effective if it is implemented amidst children using a structured and federated forum like children's parliaments." In this chapter, I will explore further the concept of a federated structure like that provided by the formal institution of Children's Parliament. To bring children's voices to the global level, there must be a connection between grassroots and the top. I will talk in Chapter 3 about the role of children's parliaments as formal institutions in bringing children's voices to politics and policy making all the way to the global level.

To explore the use the importance of a federated structure in bringing the voices of every child from the grassroots to the global level through children's parliaments, I will use the research methodology of reflexive positional writing or autoethnography, that is, writing the situatedness of the author in the field. (Ackerly & True, 2008). This type of writing is widely used by the scholars of feminist arguments in international relations. (Ackerly & True, 2008). But reflexive positional writing is sometimes criticised by authors like Hamati-Ataya who say it fails to address empirical concerns. (Hamati-Ataya, 2019). However, reflexive positional writing helps to analyse the world of politics in a different way when the author presents their own situation addressing the epistemological concerns. (Brigg & Bleiker, 2010) These views about epistemology are important to my research because my research requires both the addressing of epistemology from multiple audiences as well as deriving the knowledge from my own experience using autoethnography. I will, therefore, cite the experiences of multiple groups per Hamati-Ataya as well as using my own experience as advocated by Ackerly & True and Brigg & Bleiker's. In this way I will be able to use the strengths of both approaches. I will particularly use autoethnography to discuss how sociocracy helped the Neighbourhood based Children's Parliaments functioning in India to create a federated structure. I will draw on my own experience as a child actor in those parliaments.

I will divide this chapter into three sections. In the first section, I will introduce the methodology and present different discourses prevailing around it. In the second section, drawing on the literatures of Sociocracy and Children's Parliaments, I will talk about my own experience as a child actor in the case study of the Indian Children's Parliament functioning on the neighbourhood basis implementing the method of sociocracy. And in the final section, I will conclude with the discussion on how Children's Parliaments functioning in different parts of the world could bring a structure and methodology by using the neighbourhood based federated structure and sociocratic governance method deployed by the children's parliaments of India.

Reflexive positional writing as a research methodology

This section looks in depth at the research methods of this chapter to ensure the validity of the research findings and conclusions. The reflexive positional writing, which is also known as auto ethnography, is a research methodology used in the various streams of international relations such as feminist research, security studies and so on. (Ackerly & True, 2008), (Booth 1994) and (Hamati-Ataya, 2019). The methodology of reflexive writing corresponds with the normative and post positivist approach. (Ackerly & True, 2008). However, reflexive writing fails to address empirical or praxiological concerns. (Hamati-Ataya, 2019). The challenge of addressing epistemological concerns could be addressed with the implementation of research ethics in the reflexive writing according to (Ackerly &True, 2008).

Both the authors Ackerly and True suggest that, there are four commitments that are to be addressed by the authors and scholars who use the method of reflexive writing (2008). They are, epistemology that is considering the semiotic and praxiological importance attached to the research, boundaries like silence, absence, marginalisation, and so on, relationships that is the relationship between the researcher and the audience and the situatedness of the researcher that is the field where the author is positioned. (Ackerly & True, 2008).

In contrast, authors like Brigg and Bleiker argue for knowledge free value. (Brigg & Bleiker, 2010) That is, the research presented by the autoethnographic authors should not be required to have academic rigor. Rather, it should provide a way for the researchers to present themselves, and the epistemology should be derived from the author's own self-presentation. (2010). Though both the authors contradict each other in terms of addressing the epistemological concern and knowledge free value, in my research I think both are really important. When I talk about carrying the voices of children to the system of global governance, voices which are suppressed, the data should be derived from the experience of children whose voices are suppressed with no franchise rights. This approach reflects Brigg and Bleiker. However, when I discuss world politics and how global governance and transnational civil society view children, I will present data from multiple audiences without relying on my own experience. This approach aligns with Ackerly & True's

methodology because it reduces the chances for bias due to author's emotions and epistemological framework.

Unfortunately, there is ongoing controversy concerning autoethnography. For example, in contrast with Hamati-Ataya and Ackerly and True, Dauphinee, another autoethnographic researcher, agrees with the views of Brigg and Bleiker, suggesting that scholarly writing could lead to suppressing the emotions. (Dauphinee, 2010). Though responsibility, ethics and emotions are separate from one another, autoethnography combines them together and presents it in the contemporary scholarly writing in the discipline of International Relations. (Dauphinee, 2010). And therefore, Dauphinee suggests that, the autoethnography is yet another individual choice of method which shouldn't involve the academic writing that suppresses the emotions. (Dauphinee, 2010). Thus, the views of (Brigg & Bleiker, 2010) and (Dauphinee, 2010) that the emotional circumstance should be at the forefront in the autoethnography strongly contradict the views of (Ackerly and True, 2008) and Hamati-Ataya (2019) that the researcher needs to address the epistemological concerns, situatedness, boundaries and relationships to respect the ethical standards of research.

Interestingly, Neumann offers a way out of this dilemma. He says the autoethnography which involves the situatedness of the author's own self could lead to the emotional association to the circumstance of the author while reflecting themselves. (Neumann, 2010). That is, when we use the reflective practice in the research, we might fall into the trap of relying too much on the emotions that we have had to overcome while confronting that circumstance which will make the research prejudiced. (Neumann, 2010). When the scholar presents his or her own perception based on their own emotional circumstance, that scholar might possess the assumptions based on the circumstance confronted. (Neumann, 2010). But Neumann also provides a suggestion for how to deal with his criticism. He suggests to only reflect on one's own without creating assumptions about the world. This suggestion is very helpful. In my research when I present my experiences as a child actor, I will avoid or identify and dismiss any assumptions about the world.

I specifically choose this method for my research because presenting my own situatedness could help the audience understand the political situation that prevailed during the time of my association with the Children's Parliaments. Another reason is that although sociocracy and the institutions of children's parliaments already exist only as two separate entities, they haven't been combined together in the academic literature. Therefore, if I, as a child actor in the children's Parliaments adopted sociocracy for its functioning, present my own experience drawing on the literatures of the two separate entities of sociocracy and Children's Parliaments, I will be able to make a beginning in the academic world combining the system of governance which is sociocracy and a structured institution of neighbourhood based children's Parliaments together to bring the voices of children to global governance.

My experience as a child actor in the Neighbourhood based Children's Parliaments

I am specifically choosing to talk about children's parliaments because, Children's parliaments are the formal institutions to help carry the voices of the children to the political system and further to Global Governance.

Parkes, Tisdall and Davis argue that, children's parliaments are the formal institutions to bring the voices of children to politics and policy making ensuring the active participation of children. Whereas, the other institutions named as debate clubs, councils and other NGOs functioning for children could be movements and not movements that ensure the participation of children in politics and the policymaking process and further to global governance. (2008) and (2004) This observation indicates that the genuine participation of children in the system of politics and policymaking process can be ensured only through the institution of Children's Parliaments. (Parkes, 2008) and (Tisdall and Davis, 2004).

However, this has the challenge of considering the name 'Children's Parliaments' as a movement that creates a threat to the existing political system and to the parents of the children who are willing to participate which in turn would restrict or affect the participation of children. In my experience as a child actor in the Children's Parliaments organised and based on sociocratic method, when I went to get my parents' consent to get into one of these Children's Parliaments, they feared to let me participate, due to their presumption of all parliaments having opposition parties, functioning against the existing political system and political engagements. I was able to explain to them that children's Parliaments are established based on sociocracy to entrench the real meaning of the word "parliament." It is derived from the Anglo Norman and old and middle French word "PARLER" which dates back between 11th and 14th century, meaning "to talk." Supported by consent decision making (rather than majority vote) a parliament is a forum to discuss, negotiate, speak and meet. Along with this, I also explained the sociocratic process in which these Children's Parliaments are organised. With these explanations I was able to get their consent.

Therefore, to avoid the risk of considering the Children's Parliaments as threatening movements, the parliamentary system must exist without challenging the existing power structure. As discussed in chapter 1, sociocracy itself has the quality of developing team work, innovative ideas, communication, inclusion and transformative learning among children. (Owen and Buck, 2020). The circle decision making process followed in sociocracy brings in everybody's voices. For example, the children in the Rainbow Community School (RCS) in Asheville, North Carolina, USA are organised in circles and the children holding roles like facilitator, secretary and so on. To illustrate the kind of structure sociocracy process offers I will offer some detail about the election process. In the first round, the children put their nominations on slips of paper and hand them to a facilitator. The facilitator asks the rationale for each nomination so that everybody can hear peer reasoning. A second round gives the children a chance to change their nomination. The facilitator then proposes

someone for the role based on the strengths of the arguments presented and asks each person in a round if they consent to the proposal. The facilitator leads resolution of any objections. (Owen and Buck 2020) A related process is used for other types of decisions. Using this method, the children at RCS children developed the skill of transformative learning and team work. (Owen & Buck, 2020) This decision-making process is easily replicated. It is the same process we used in our children's parliaments in India. It does not conflict with the existing power structure of RCS and at the same time it does not support adult superiority.

Reducing adult superiority is not easy as is illustrated in the case study of South African and South Indian Children Parliaments by Fayoyin and Crowley. They point out that children's parliaments could not only be a strong institution, but also could ensure the participation of children in both politics and policymaking process. (2016 and 2015). But, in both the case studies, the authors present the challenge of adults being superior to children due to the traditional and cultural practices and influencing the participation of children. This is a hinderance to ensuring participation of children in global governance. (Crowley 2015 and Fayoyin, 2016). They also state that, communication and a formal institution are really significant to break the barriers of adults' superiority and traditional cultural practices associated with that and ensure the participation of children. (Crowley, 2015) and (Fayoyin, 2016)

In my own experience, I also saw how an institution could reduce adult superiority over time. I initially encountered adult superiority when neighbourhood-based parliaments were established in my school. I felt that my voice, along with my peer's voices, were subordinated by my teachers. For example, my portfolio as a communication minister was itself decided by my class teacher. The weekly meetings, which were supposed to be organised and led by the children were presided over by my class teacher in the name of guidance and respect of tradition and culture. But, in the following years, my peers and I managed to overcome this challenge with the help of sociocracy. The more we started engaging and making decisions through consent-based decision-making in our parliament, the lesser the participation of teachers became. Also, the communication between students and teachers began to develop in my school. As a result, I was elected as a representative to the federal state level with everybody's consent including my teachers. This experience supports my thesis that using sociocracy in children's parliaments can carry the voices of children to global governance. It also shows that these parliaments should be organised with a structure that reduces adult superiority at the grassroots level. (Fayoyin, 2016).

The federated structure envisioned by Fayoyin is also described by the founder of Inclusive Neighbourhood Parliaments, Father Edwin John. It corresponds very closely to the structure Endenburg separately developed for sociocracy. (Endenburg, 1998 and John et al, 2018). I mention this coincidence because my thesis is that a global level governance should be a

combination of Endenburg's work and John's work. Their commonality supports my thesis in showing that how closely this combination of sociocracy and the federated structure of children's parliament relate to each other. Because of that close relationship we can be more confident that the two systems will work well together in helping children bring their voices to global governance.

Next I relate my successful experience with this federated system in more detail to show that it works in day-to-day reality. This experience refutes Kallio and Häkli's contention, mentioned in Chapter 1, that children cannot handle political matters well. At each level, I, along with other elected representatives was present to resolve various issues. For example, in this federated system, I was elected as a Communication Minister at the school level, Finance Minister, Prime Minister and Law Minister at the federal state level and as the Prime Minister at the national level. When I was a Finance Minister at the federal state level, I addressed such issues as ensuring the annual budget of the INCP and gave press interviews regarding the funding of the INCPs. As a Prime Minister of the federal state I addressed the Planning Commission of India, which is a statutory body of the nation that launches long term goals for once in 5 years. Similarly, I addressed the State Child Rights Protection Commission to represent children's voices on such issues as child marriages, child labour practices, lack of schools in certain villages, changes needed in school curriculums to enable inclusive participation of persons with disabilities, special policies needed to protect children from different vulnerable backgrounds, and so on. At the national level, I represented the children of India in the upper house of the parliament. And at the international level, I represented children in the United Nations at least four times to submit the recommendations of children to the Women's Commission, formulation of MDGs, SDGs and Universal Periodic Review, which is conducted across nations by UNICEF once in 4 and half years. I handled all these duties between ages 13 to 17. Thus, my experience shows that a child can handle politics, and directly refutes Kallio and Häkli's opinions to the contrary. But the question remains as to whether children can actually make a substantive contribution to global level issues. The following example will show how children can actually make a difference at a global level

This example from my experience also shows how important it is to resolve issues at an appropriate subsidiary level, which is a strength of the proposed federated structure. When I was 17, I along with my peers, met a member of the Human Rights Council at her office in Geneva. We were there to provide recommendations to pre-review sessions of the UN's Universal Periodic Review (UPR). The UPR assesses the human rights situation in every country every 4-1/2 years. We said we felt that India was failing to deal with issues that children face regarding clean water and sanitation and failing to allocate the promised 9% of revenue to children's education and health. When we presented these issues, she asked at what level we had started advocating, indicating that she would not look at our recommendations if we had not advocated about our concerns at appropriate levels in the

Indian government system. I spoke up and said whatever I remembered in regard to our federal, state and local advocacies. For example, I said that we met the chairperson of an Indian state and then we spoke to the national level child rights protection commission and advocated about these issues. But they seemed to be unresponsive, which made us bring the issue to the global level. This convinced her to look at the issue and consider it. Also, we talked with ambassadors of several countries. In the end, our comments were included in the report. Thus, we children had an actual impact on global governance. We had the impact because we did not take the issues directly to the global level. We tried unsuccessfully at many lower levels. This example demonstrates that there is a need for a system that enables the voices of children to resolve issues at subsidiary levels, from the grassroots upwards. I, along with my peers, was able to conduct the advocacy at several levels because of the training and experience we had in the neighbourhood-based children's parliament system in raising issues with officials at appropriate levels. If the children's parliament system was not federated at every level, we wouldn't have had the platform from which to meet with the various levels of officials. That would have meant that we would have tried to escalate our issues to the global level without knowing the possibility of resolving them at intermediate levels.

These experiences indicate that when the issues are resolved at the appropriate federal level by children through transformative and synergistic learning ascribed by sociocracy and the federal structure by the INCPs, the participation of children can supplement the current political system and their voices can echo in the global governance. My experience indicates that when a bottom up structure is provided from the grassroots level and initiates the connectivity through the upward federated structure, it is able to have the connectivity with each structure and supplement the political system and reach the global governance. Also, these Inclusive Neighbourhood Children's Parliaments (INCPs) in India functioning with sociocracy address the challenges presented by Fayoyin, Crowley and Parks. (Crowley, 2015), (Fayoyin, 2016) and (Parks, 2008) They assert that development and implementation of communication methods among children ensures the genuine participation of children without creating threats to the political system, ensures the participation of all voices of children from the grassroots level to the global level through a federated structure, and creates the transformative and synergistic learning between adults and children. This synergy reduces the superiority of adults over children due to traditional practices. Both my experience and the observations of Fayoyin, Crowley, and Parks support my thesis that it is possible to construct a system connected fully from grassroots to global level governance.

However, there remains a question of children's age. How young a child can be allowed to speak the global level? We know the case study of Rainbow Community School experience cited in Chapter 1 (Owen & Buck, 2020) that first graders can participate in sociocracy meetings. So far, we have seen that in theory the INCPs with the help of sociocracy and strong federated structure could help children reach global governance and ensure the

participation of all children who are as young as 6 years of age. But in my experience, I found the mindset of the adults even at the global level was stuck in the idea that children below the age of 13 are capable of only building or implementing the ideas provided by youths and adults. The UNCRC agrees that persons below the age of 18 are children. But, the UN imposes strong constraints on children below the age of 13 presenting at the UN. In my experience, when I went to UN for the first time at the age of 12, I was cross questioned about the organizational aspects of INCP. After the selection panel was satisfied, I was specially provided with a child pass, while children above 13 were allowed in easily with another type of pass into the UN. This experience shows that the abilities of children below the age of 13 is undermined even at the global level due to cultural stereotypes that promote adult superiority and remains as a challenge to be addressed by an appropriate institutional structure. I will address the question of children's age again in Chapter 3.

Conclusion

The goal of this chapter was to demonstrate the feasibility and desirability of a federated structure that would connect grassroots children's voices with global governance. Rationale was provided by citation of some source materials which were strongly supported by means of autoethnography. This autoethnography carefully followed the methodological suggestions by Neumann (Neumann, 2010) to address various academic concerns about the validity of autoethnographic research. This research showed that by implementing sociocracy in a federated structure like INCPs, children can organise themselves and as a result, will be able to function with a minimal support and guidance of adults and create a transformative and synergistic learning. Local issues can be resolved locally leaving the global level free to address global issues. This federated structure would make the political structure feel less threatened and eventually, the INCPs functioning with sociocracy, by supplementing the current political system, could help children reach global governance.

The next question to be addressed is how we can make children from grassroots levels aware of their rights under the UNCRC and help them participate in a federated system. As we will see in more detail in Chapter 3, this question has started to be address in scattered locations around the world. (Tisdall & Davis, 2004).

Chapter 3: Voices of Children in Children's Parliament

This chapter will focus on the strategy of structured forums. If a system of structured forums can be established, it may well be able to influence establishment of voting rights in the future. This last chapter of this paper identifies children's parliaments that are functioning around the world as child agents could be the formal and structured institution that ensures the participation of children at the global level. In talking about my own experience in the INCPs in India as a child actor, I described the model of Children's Parliaments functioning in India. But, in this chapter, I will talk about the children's parliaments around the world functioning as child agents to ensure the participation of children and the challenges faced by those institutions while trying to do so.

I explore the existence and functioning of these parliaments drawing from the literatures prevailing around them because, identifying different child parliaments functioning as child agents would support my thesis to differentiate the model of INCPs in India. Furthermore, though most of the institutions that are functioning under the same name 'Children's Parliaments', their objectives and the ways of functioning are different from one another. Therefore, in this paper it is significant to know how these formal institutions could ensure the participation of children and how they could adopt a structure that would enable them to function more effectively to bring the voices of children to global governance.

Attempts are made to establish forums among children in the form of institutions such as Children's Parliaments, Debate clubs, Youth Councils, NGOs and so on. Though these forums are established to hear the voices of children, there still remains the unaddressed question of whether these voices of children are truly heard or not. And also, how these children's views are considered in the political and governance matters that affect them according to the UNCRC. To address these questions, I will talk in this chapter about the voices of children in political matters and their freedom of expression through the forum of children's parliaments as a structured institution. I specifically choose Children's Parliaments as a forum that has the ability to provide a structure to talk about the voices of children in political matters because, the debate clubs, councils for children and other forums created for their participation are sometimes compared or misconstrued as children's parliaments which are bringing the voices of children to the political platforms or policies related to them. (Parkes, 2008). Also, the term "Children's Parliaments" is sometimes termed as either "mock Parliament" or "junior Parliament" which is derogatory and leads to the suppression of the voices of children. (Fayoyin, 2016).

Therefore, in the three main sections of this chapter, I will first discuss the voices of children in political matters. Next, I will explore how children's parliaments can serve as child agents. Third, I will differentiate between children's parliaments and other forums established for children. The conclusion will emphasize the significance of children's parliaments as a forum to bring the voices of children to governance at the global scale.

Voices of children in political matters

This section focuses on the participation of children in the system of politics and the process of policymaking. The voices of children should first echo in the system of politics and the process of policymaking before echoing in the global governance because, the system of politics has the ability and space to reach the global governance as I have already mentioned in the introduction. Therefore, if the voices of children reach the system of politics and the process of policymaking, children could present their views and perceptions in the process of making policies, and if they participate in the system of politics, their voices would be powerful enough to reach the global governance due to its association with the political system.

As such, in this section, I'm exploring the participation of children in the system of politics and policymaking. The topic of the voices of children in political matters has many facets. For instance, the participation of children in framing or designing a country's policy could involve children through various platforms such as children's parliaments, NGOs, schools and other educational institutions. But which platform best supports the children to bring out their voices in the policy making of a nation is an important question.

For example, in the case of Finland, the early Childhood, Education and Care took the initiative to develop individual education plans for early childhood education and care. (Alasuutari & Karila, 2009) The schools provided survey forms to the parents to ask them about their children. This program demonstrates that grassroots information about children can provide input to national policy. However, the children's opinions are not gathered and there is no direct participation by children in the process. Since they do not have the opportunity to fill out these forms, or to do the same activity with some training or by discussing with their peers, their voices are easily suppressed. Although Finland might one day recommend their policies at the global level, the voices of the children will not be included. (Alasuutari & Karila, 2009) Also, when we consider persons who are below the age of 18 as children, not only the children who are in their early childhood must be considered but, also, the children of all ages starting from 0 to 18 years of age must be considered together. When this togetherness is there, even the voices of the children which are thought to have faced the suppression, could also be taken up to the global level by ensuring the inclusive participation of the children of all ages. To bring this inclusive approach to children,

there should be a structured forum formally established to organize children by themselves. These structured forums are children's parliaments which have the ability to bring out the voices of even the vulnerable children through inclusion. (Warming, 2006) If it is possible for these parliaments to bring out the voices of the vulnerable children by making connections through inclusion, then it could also include the voices of children as young as age six in accordance with the case study of RCS discussed in Chapters 1 and 2.

For example, Warming finds that children who are vulnerable and are exposed to the danger of silence, especially foster children, are ostracized in participation in policy making and social life. (Warming, 2006) She further states in her research that some children might want to have a forum to bring out their voices. But some might really need a forum just to express themselves as they themselves would be capable of expatiating their experience of vulnerability. In the case of foster children, Warming did research in Denmark during 2006 where she found that establishing children's parliaments helps to bring out the voices of foster children and their vulnerabilities to the political arena of the country and can results in changes in policy making. The author conducted research in the project entitled "Børnetinget", the word for Children's Parliaments in Denmark. (Warming, 2006). This aims to bring out the voices of foster children and their association to their parents or guardians and a knowledge about this to the politicians to influence democracy. (Warming, 2006). "Børnetinget" is a participatory forum established with 15 children aged between 10 and 13. (Warming, 2006). This participatory forum, according to Warming, ensures the participation, even of vulnerable children in political activism.

However, Warming notes that some social activists have different views, they might influence children by making the children become very much prejudiced only to the perception that the social activist whom the children rely on possess. Yet, despite these challenges, when the children's parliament was established in Denmark, it actively participated in the policy making consultations conducted by the Danish government through their parliament. In fact, their voices were brought out through these parliaments despite their vulnerability. For instance, one of the children was able to bring the question to the author that, "if you are not a foster child, then how can you understand our rights?" (Warming, 2006). This story shows us that when we adopt children's parliaments, the children can develop their ability to express themselves. They typically learn by imitating the more articulate children and receiving the encouragement of their peers. But, despite implementing these kinds of parliaments as structured forums to bring out the voices of children, they do not ensure the participation of each and every voice, to the last child.

Through this research, Warming expands the theory of participation by including the matters of everyday life, intimate relationships along with other personal, social and political matters concerning children to the table. (Warming, 2006). That is, the concern for the everyday life

of foster children, their social relationship with the adults, their relationship with the foster parents or caregivers and their peers were brought to the table. Apart from this, though there are challenges in bringing the everyday life of children into participation, it would provide a greater understanding for the parents, social activists, friends and peers of the foster children and the politicians which could result in adapting better and suitable policies for children by taking these vulnerable children into consideration as in correspondence with the research made by Karila who suggested that parents' and adults' influence in the participation of children enhances the policy making process in politics.

Thus, in summary, the authors Karila and Warming suggest two things to us. First, children's participation is necessary along with the adults, caregivers and the parents to formulate the policies related to the children at the national level. Though, the authors say just the national level, we could even apply this to the global level as it is the next immediate level up in the federation to the national level. Secondly, Children's Parliaments are the forums that can help children bring their voices actively to the existing political system.

But there are authors who contradict these two points. For instance, Kallio and Häkli argue that the participation of children in politics and judicial matters would not be as effective as the participation of adults in politics since they might not have enough maturity to present their views, and the interests of each child would vary from one another. (Kallio & Häkli, 2011). Kallio and Häkli researched recent legislation made due to the influence of children and children's parliaments. In discussing child agents like children's parliaments, they point to the different child parliamentary systems functioning in Palestine, India and Ireland. They point out that children could even become involved in the dangerous politics armed conflict. (Kallio & Häkli, 2011) Moreover, since all the children might not have the maturity to take part as adults do, it would not be fair to involve them in politics. To involve children in politics, they assert that it would be important to develop a new method. (Kallio & Häkli, 2011) They do not specify the method. (Kallio & Häkli 2011). The authors' conclusions do support my thesis in two ways. First, there is a very limited participation of children in politics and governance. Second, there is still no methodology to include numerous children participating coequally to adults because children are believed to possess less understanding of politics compared to adults.

In summary, this section on children's voices has demonstrated that children can make meaningful contributions to the political system starting as young as six years of age. Further, to reduce children's vulnerability, it is important that our institutions at all levels be adjusted to make sure that they are open to hearing those voices.

Children's Parliaments As Child Agents

In this section we explore the key question of how Children's Parliaments can be effective agents for children. Children's parliaments of South Africa have played a major role in bringing the voices of the marginalized children (Fayoyin, 2016). The children have also managed to make some recommendations and changes in the political level, such as making recommendations in the social policies, establishing an ombudsman for children and so on. Children with disabilities were elected in the major parliamentary positions. (Fayoyin, 2016). Similarly, in the case study conducted by Anne Crowley on the children's parliaments functioning in Tamil Nadu, which is in the southern part of India, and Wales, which is in the United Kingdom, it has been proven that even children living in rural areas have the potential to enhance themselves and influence policymaking. (Crowley, 2015). Also, Crowley has compared the parliaments or children's forums functioning in these two places and suggested that the bottom up approach adopted in the rural villages of Tamil Nadu was more effective in terms of influencing the public policy compared to Wales. (Crowley, 2015).

Crowley states that the children's parliaments or other children's participatory forums in schools in Wales have more understanding of policy making in theory. But the parliaments established by children themselves with the support of adults in the rural villages of Tamil Nadu, have much understanding of how to influence reality. (Crowley, 2015) For instance, in the case study of Tamil Nadu, the children were able to bring changes in the quality of teaching, replacement of roads and so on due to the existence of the children's parliaments. functioning from the neighbourhood basis and the training provided by adults to children after making them assume different ministerial portfolios. (Crowley, 2015) The children of Tamil Nadu NCPs are encouraged by adults and are supported to meet the local civic authorities to resolve the issues. The quality of these children's parliaments is compared favourably with the quality and standard of International Save the Children Alliance's practice standards. (Crowley, 2015). However, challenges like the tradition of adults being superior to children are common in the parliamentary structures of both Wales and Tamil Nadu. (Crowley, 2015) Apart from these challenges, Crowley concludes that establishing children's parliaments would not only help to enrich public policies but also help to enable children to organize themselves.

From the research of Karila, Warming, Crowley and Fayoyin we understand that, children's parliament is a structured and significant forum to bring out the voices of children. However, there are different challenges which need to be addressed. First, as Kallio and Häkli point out, the participation of children is limited because of not having a structure or methodology in place in the institutions developed for them. Second, the participation of children in politics cannot be considered serious as adults' involvement because the children might not have any previous experience in taking part in politics or advocating for themselves. Third, despite the presence of Children Parliaments, only some voices are included, but not all voices. Fourth, as Fayoyin and Crowley point out, including adults might

suppress the voices of children due to cultural factors. Thus, when establishing Children Parliaments, we might have to consider the diversity of culture.

Finally, Children's Parliaments must be established in a way that they are not in danger of becoming mock parliaments or junior parliaments. To address these challenges, the method of sociocracy can be implemented in children's parliaments. The inclusion of the practice of sociocracy in these children's parliaments would dramatically address the challenges of including all the children, ensuring the participation of children and adults together despite cultural practices, address the communication gap between children and adults, coordination between fast learners and slow learners, coordination between children possessing literary or debate skills and children who don't possess these skills but might be skilful in some other domain, children from vulnerable backgrounds mixed with children from secure backgrounds and so on.

To summarize this section, children's parliaments can serve as child agents so long as they use sociocracy. In the setting of a child parliament employing sociocracy, children's thinking can be the same or better than the thinking of adults, which would enable them to take part in politics breaking even cultural barriers through transformative and synergistic learning. This conclusion is reinforced by the examples such as RCS that demonstrates transformative and synergistic learning, the Lectica study that proves the ability of children to do reflective thinking, (Owen & Buck, 2020) the example the Dutch city which shows that consent decision-making can be used in an entire town, and the study of the INCP federated structure that can successfully carry children's voices to global governance.

Difference between Children's Parliaments and other Forums for Children

In this section, I will discuss the difference between the term 'children's parliaments' and other forums like children's clubs, children's councils and so on. Understanding this difference is important to my research because, clarifying the terminology would ensure the genuine participation of children. (Parks 2008). Earlier we mentioned that the term children's parliament is sometimes confused with the other terminologies such as debate clubs, children's councils and so on. This confusion leads to the mis-categorization of children's parliaments, which are evolving into real political activities, with debate clubs and other participatory forums that are not involved in the real politics. When this happens, the participation of children in politics through children's parliaments is not considered seriously by the political system and policymaking bodies. To understand this challenge, I would like to explore the difference between the term Children's Parliaments and other terms like children's councils and debate clubs.

The case study of Crowley in regard to the Neighbourhood Children's Parliaments in Tamil Nadu and Wales generalizes the term 'Children's Parliaments' by applying it to other forums like youth forums, children's debate clubs, councils and so on. This generalization contradicts the recommendation of Parkes not to use the term Children's Parliaments for those other forums. This suppresses the political participation of the children or the challenges faced by them in expressing themselves to the adults in a traditional society. (Parkes, 2008). Similar to Parkes's discourse on confusing the term Children's Parliament with Debate Clubs and other children's forums, but as an in depth analytical perception, Tisdall and Davis argue that, though the participation of children is wider in U.K, the government authorities and the adults involved in policy making, cluster all the activities of children under "participation". These two analyses show that the participation of children in political and policymaking processes has the danger of labelling any kind of activities performed by children under any forums as participation and the data will indiscriminately be collected from those forums to draft the policies related to children. (Parkes, 2008) and (Tisdall & Davis, 2004). Tisdall and Davis attempted to clarify this confusion by making a distinction between Children's Parliaments and Children Clubs.

Children's Parliaments are forums created for children to involve them in public advocacy. The participation of children in this forum will not only develop them, but will also enhance the policy making. In contrast, the Children's Clubs typically focus only on the children in the club itself and don't provide opportunities for actual political participation. (Tisdall & Davis, 2004) Though these participatory forums are established for children to be involved in public advocacy, Tisdall and Davis claim that there is little participation by children in policy making because of selective participation of children and lack of grassroots level participation. That is, the children who take part in these parliamentary forums are selected by the adults. (Tisdall & Davis, 2004) And the grassroots level representation according to the local demography is not at all considered in these forums. Even if the children's participation is ensured in the policy making, there is a criticism of children and young people, not receiving any feedback for their participation in the policy making process in regard to the views presented or even sometimes the views are not considered. (Tisdall & Davis, 2004). But, these challenges, according to these two authors, could be overcome through the strategies proposed and adapted by the policymaking body. Also, influential resources like the media could help to have exchanges between children and adults to accept the views of children in the policymaking body. (Tisdall & Davis, 2004). However, the process of making policies involving children and young people with disabilities can be challenging. For example, sign language might be needed to communicate with deaf children. The case study of the Civil Servants in Scottish Executive demonstrated that alternative means of communication can be found for all children. (Tisdall & Davis, 2004)

The project of the Scottish Executive also proposed legislation to establish Co-ordinated Support Plans (CSP). This CSP would make sure that there is a child representative in policy making meetings related to children. Also, it would ensure the participation of children along with a chaperone for support and safety reasons. All these recommendations made for children by the Scottish Executive consisting of Civil servants with the aim of including their views in the public policymaking, shows that the adults and the government officials are really intending to ensure children's participation in the policymaking related to children. But the criticism is that there is no organised system to ensure the participation of every local or grassroots level voice. Also, as mentioned by Tisdall and Davis, the participation of children is selectively made. That is, children are chosen based on recommendations, skills, parents' background and so on. To avoid this unfair practice of selecting children and young people to be involved in policy making and politics, there must be an organised system where these children get training to participate in these governmental bodies, for their voices to be heard and as well as to enrich themselves. If this inclusive and diverse participation of children in politics through a structured system from grassroots level to the global level is established, then children could certainly establish governance at the global level, ensuring the strong participation of the grassroots level voices by themselves.

To fulfil the need of a structured governance method and to include every child's voice, as we have discussed previously, the methods of sociocracy are available. And to provide us a structured and formal institution to ensure the political participation of children, from the arguments of various authors, we have arrived at the conclusion that children's parliaments are the right institution. Therefore, if the children's parliaments are established with sociocracy as a governance method, children could establish a global level governance with strong grassroots level voices and the participation of every child.

Conclusion

For children to have real voice in public policy matters and political matters as promised in the UNCRC, they must have a global system of governance from the grassroots level. Grugel & Uhlin support this conclusion because they argue that to build a global governance system with justice, a governance system must be organized from below. (Grugel & Uhlin, 2012) They further state that a global governance system can be built with justice only when we include marginalized voices. Some of the instruments for including those voices at the global level include human rights legislation, human rights institutions, and transnational civil societies. The authors conclude that marginalized voices are not only lacking in global governance, but also in transnational civil society. (Grugel & Uhlin, 2012). This conclusion shows us that global governance with justice requires a strong governance from below structure that includes the marginalized voices.

As we discussed in the introduction and in the previous chapters, since the voices of children are disenfranchised, they should be considered marginalized voices. Therefore, unless and until there is a forum for children especially for marginalized and vulnerable children, children with additional needs, and others, their voices might not be heard. Also, since the authors talk about the justice of including the marginalized voices, it is really significant to include the unheard voices of children in global governance. Due to challenges like the cultural difference between adults and children, the consecration of the privileges gained by children, the consideration of both children's parliament, and other children's participatory forums as one in policy making, the voices of children are not heard. Also, due to these challenges, the children are not able to organize themselves.

When we look at these challenges from the perspective of global governance, due to the power structure, the lack of organisation from below and the lack of proper platforms, the voices of children are still unheard. But with the above research, and in spite of the limitations and challenges in the institution of children's parliaments, this chapter has demonstrated that sociocracy operating in a federated structure working from the bottom up can support children's parliaments as the basis of a bottom-up governance system. It can develop transformative and synergistic learning, strengthen the relationship between children and adults, and address such challenges as treating children who rise in the children's parliament system as elites. Sociocracy can be used as a platform to help children to organize themselves and make their voices heard in politics and public policymaking, leaving no voice behind. Using sociocracy in children's parliaments, we can achieve a global governance system that makes the unheard voices of children audible and, as well, address global problems using new and different perceptions brought by children.

Conclusion

In three different chapters, I have explored how sociocracy, as a governance method, can be used along with the federated and structured model of INCP functioning in India to implement an institution of children's parliaments functioning around the world. In the first chapter, I described sociocracy and its potentials and limitations. I concluded that chapter by presenting the argument that sociocracy is an excellent and unique governance method which could be used to address the power structure in global governance and as well as among children. Subsequently, in the second chapter, I presented my own experience as a child actor in the Inclusive Neighbourhood Children's Parliaments functioning in India and backed up the same with the literatures drawn from both sociocracy and children's parliaments as child agents. I described how sociocracy was implemented in the federated structure of INCPs and how much that it benefitted the children and franchised their voices.

In the third chapter, using the sociocratic governance method implemented in the INCPs model, I explained how children's parliaments other than INCP functioning around the world could establish direct participation of children in politics and global governance. In this chapter, I emphasized the importance of children's parliaments as the only formal institution that could achieve direct political participation in global governance.

Based on my research in these three chapters, my overall conclusion is that sociocracy has the principles needed to genuinely enfranchise the voices of children around the world. The principles are: consent based decision making, electing a person to perform a role in a group only with everybody's consent, the circle principle which allows everybody to form as circles, and double linking where two members of one circle are elected to serve as a representatives from one level of federation to the another level of federation. These principles create an inclusive, egalitarian, upward federated hierarchy. If adopted as a governance method in the various children's parliaments around the world now functioning only as participatory movements, the voices of children will be enfranchised.

When sociocracy is implemented in a politically federated bottom up structure such as provided by the INCPs of India, it establishes a connection between the lowest possible grassroots level and the highest possible global level. This connection is established through a bottom up structure in the existing political system. Despite the challenges and limitations present in both sociocracy and the institution of children's parliaments, the voices of all children could echo in global governance. The sociocracy principles are compatible with the five principles of neighbourhood-based children's parliaments proposed by Father Edwin. Those five principles are: uniformity, small in size, method of recall when needed, subsidiarity, and convergence. This synthesis of sociocratic principles with the principles of federated structure of Father Edwin John create an excellent governance method. It could enable children to participate and bring their voices to global governance. This structure

could be an example of real leadership by children. A global children's parliament system could serve as a test of Romme's United People Council proposal and thereby be an example for politicians and adults to emulate globally. (Romme, 2018)

Grugel & Uhlin said that it is not justice when the voices of the marginalized, adults or children, are not heard in global governance. (2012) They also stated that these injustices could be combated through collective action. (Grugel & Uhlin, 2012) Corresponding to Grugel and Uhlin's observation, Warming states that foster children are one of the most vulnerable of the marginalized populations, and nobody can express their vulnerability except them because they are the ones who experience it. (Warming 2006). Since the voices of children are already disenfranchised, the marginalized voices of children are especially suppressed and have no way to reach global governance, which according to Grugel and Uhlin is injustice. This injustice could be fought through a collective action undertaken by children themselves through the implementation of sociocracy in the federated bottom up structure of INCP model.

According to Romme et al, a United People's Council could be established at the global level organised with 22 members who come as representatives from each of five to seven geographic, self-organised multinational units and three to five thematic councils self-organized by major NGOs on global issues or themes such as global health or global peace and justice. (Romme et al, 2018) Those self-organised units will be connected to the lowest possible level. In this level, the people are elected based on moral principles. (Romme et al, 2018). Romme advocates for small parliamentary assemblies rather than large ones because "a large parliamentary assembly tends to cripple responsive decision-making." (p2, 2018) When the local units are organised as smaller units and get federated at various levels of the hierarchy of the political system, it could establish a connection between the local level and the global level. (Romme et al, 2018). This model is a general model that corresponds to the specific federated and structured model of the INCP global political system.

Therefore, in summary, despite the limitations and challenges in the institution of children's parliaments, this paper has demonstrated that a combination of (1) sociocracy, (2) a federated structure working from the bottom up, and (3) effectively structured children's parliaments institutions inviting children's participation in policy making and political matters can give children voice in global governance. It can enfranchise them from the grassroots to global governance. This system would finally realize the vision of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

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