

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

Children's behavior is influenced by their process on copying what they see in their environment. The older they get, the more they observe thoroughly. Thus, not only making their parents as their role model, but other people as their role models as well. According to psychologist, Rosdiana Setyaningrum, as much as the child's parents attempt to teach what would be best for them, the child would still turn to their social environments as their role model in behaving. What they would learn eventually varies from social learning to other observations, one of these observations include how children would pay attention to their physical features to match some certain culture's beauty standard (Setyaningrum, 2018).

In the words of a child psychologist, Ratih Ibrahim, through parenting.co.id in 2016, children tend to develop their awareness on how they view their physical features, as early as ranging from 2,5 to 3,5 years old. This awareness in children is affected by their increasing skills in communicating and their ability to shape themselves to match with what they observe. The said observation includes physical features that are shown in medias the most. In the opinion of academician, Muyazin Nazaruddin (2007), he stated, that according to media, an individual that can be assessed as attractive, are the ones with an ideal skin-like body weight, fair-skinned, and straight-haired. Thus, making public figures/characters shown in the media with said physical features.

Though the idea of beauty portrayed in the media is more inclusive nowadays (Givhan, 2020), only a small percentage of media for children that represent these inclusivity in their stories, by only having 13% of them in the last 24 years (CCBC, 2018). Same goes to the embracement of the movement where people celebrate each other for having their natural hair texture that is relatively new in Indonesia (Indriani, 2020). Although the audience proclaimed that currently nowadays they feel more appreciated by having their natural hair due to the wide expansion of numerous beauty campaigns and beauty influencers celebrating their natural hair in social media and other platforms, children may not be affected with the movement due to the differences of techniques on how to deliver the movement to them (Indriani, 2020).

Different from the inclusivity of beauty campaigns nowadays, most family rated media still use stereotypes of a certain trait when it comes to portraying the characters. The stereotypes of other features vary, one of them include the stereotype of people with textured hair, such as curly hair, where curly haired people is perceived as messy, sluggish/lazy, rough, and old-fashioned (retrieved from fimela.com, 2018, accessed in August, 27th 2020).

This dissatisfaction from children towards their physical features is affected by their social environment saying so, that also include the lack of visual representation in a positive manner that children see in media (Carmelita, W., 2019). From that statement, it is needed for children in Indonesia to have representation of physical traits outside Indonesia's beauty standard, in this case highly textured hair. Therefore, it is needed to design an information media that are

easy for children to understand in order to represent curly hair in a positive manner to continue the existing movement of embracing natural hair.

The said media information that children would need that can be solved through visual communications design is to create an illustrated book for children, in which, according to Yaniar (2020), an effective medium for children to learn something new, and although the rank of where Indonesia is currently standing when it comes to literature is really low, being placed the 60th out of 61 (UNSECO, 2017). When viewed from the inside of the big picture, a data retrieved from Komite Buku Nasional, out of 34,7 million books sold in Indonesia in 2018, 4,4 million of them are children's book, sitting right below fiction who ranked first by selling 6,4 million of books.

1.2. Problems

From the identification of the background mentioned above, the problem of the research mentioned is:

1. How to construct a picture book as a representation for curly haired children?

1.3. Problem Limitations

To avoid getting off topic from the research, the focus will limit to:

1. Demography:

1. Age : 6-9 years

Children at this age tend to start joining primary school, and as their network expands, so does their mindset and how they would view themselves.

2. Language : Indonesia

3. Religion : All religions & beliefs

4. Geography : Jakarta Area

The reason why the writer chose Jakarta Area as her target geography, is from a statement given by Gracia Indriani, the writer's interviewee, that representation in curly hair in Jakarta is increasing for millennials and the first lines of Gen Z, but not to children.

5. Education : 1st – 3rd year of primary school

The reason why the writer chose this level of study, is how primary school is more advanced than kindergarten, and how primary schoolers have wider networks and more people to look up to, that include friends, upperclassmen, public figures, the writer got this statement from an article published by psychologist, Rajab C. Lestari through Rumah Kandara in 2019, stating that children should enroll in kindergarten first before enrolling in primary school to help develop social skills, and concentrations needed to be able to enroll in primary school.

6. SES : B-A – Aspirator Parents

According to Yuswohady, the author of 'Millennials KILL Everything' (2019), someone with a social economy status of an aspirator, may already have a steady income and is quite settled with their status. These people with aspirator as their social economy status tend to have more open mind to several social issues due to the feeling of being settled from their job and their status.

2. Psychography:
 - a. Children with different types of curly hair. Vary from wavy to coily.
 - b. Children that already have the capability to judge their own appearances.
 - c. Children that already have the capability to comment and/or complain about the dissatisfaction of their physical appearances.

1.4. Objectives

The purpose of this research is to be able to construct and design a picture book as a representation for curly haired children.

1.5. Research Benefits

1. For the Writer

The writer would gain and implement what the writer has learned in making a design, specifically in designing an information media.

2. For the Target Audience

The benefits gained for the target audience are being able to help curly haired children feel embraced by the existing movement.

3. For the Institute

The institute would be benefitted with the writer's journal, as a new reference for Visual Communications Design's student in Universitas Multimedia Nusantara in constructing and designing an information media.