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Silencing the Subaltern

A Postcolonial Critique of NGO-run Orphanages in Jinja, Uganda



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Abstract

The large number of orphanages in Jinja, Uganda has promoted the widespread institutionalisation of children from poor families. Parents are left disempowered and have very few options but to sign over the rights of their children because NGOs in the region have largely prioritised orphanage care over other services. This paper critically analyses the failure of non-state actors in addressing the underlying causes of poverty and thus failing to empower parents to care for their own children. Through in-depth interviews with Ugandan social workers and NGO staff I have identified the main driving factors that push parents towards institutionalising their children. Using a Postcolonial theoretical framework, I have been able to highlight the structural problems enforced by NGO actors that contribute to the further marginalisation of poor Ugandans. Currently, faith-based organisations are at the forefront of promoting orphanage use in Jinja. Whilst their contribution to development cannot be denied, many of their practices are upholding colonial dependencies and values. The findings of this paper conclude that orphanages are disempowering locals because they fail to address the root causes of poverty.

Keywords: Uganda, NGOs, orphanage, disempowerment, corruption, faith-based organisations, weak states, racism, white privilege, subaltern, postcolonialism

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List of Abbreviations

CBO – Community-based organisation

CDD – Community-driven development

EU – European Union

FBO – Faith-based organisation

IMF – International Monetary Fund

MFS – Minor Field Study

NGO – Non-governmental organisation

OECD - The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

Sida – Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency

UN – United Nations

UNCRC – United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

UNICEF – United Nations Children’s Emergency Fund

USAID – United States Agency for International Development

Oh Uganda, Land of Beauty

Oh Uganda!
May God uphold thee,
We lay our future in thy hand.
United, free,
For liberty
Together we'll always stand.

Oh Uganda!
The land of freedom.
Our love and labour we give,
And with neighbours all
At our country's call
In peace and friendship we'll live.

Oh Uganda!
The land that feeds us
By sun and fertile soil grown.
For our own dear land,
We'll always stand:
The Pearl of Africa's Crown.

- National Anthem of the Republic of Uganda

Music and lyrics by George Wilberforce Kagoma (1962)

Introduction

This research is focused on non-governmental organisations (NGOs) as important actors of political and social change in developing countries, and answers the research question: **how do orphanages disempower local people?** Using Jinja town in Uganda as my case study, this fieldwork aims to look at how the rise in the number of NGO-run orphanage programmes has stimulated an increase in the institutionalisation of “orphans”, whilst ultimately failing to address any underlying causes of poverty.

Using a postcolonial theoretical framework, this study criticises the orphanage model promoted by many international non-state actors, and explores questions of accountability and hidden power structures between civil society and marginalised poor people. This is partly because the postcolonial theory addresses structural issues that are still present in post-colonial countries, but also because many of the current NGO practices in Jinja are maintaining colonial legacies. In this fieldwork I have also included organisations working with alternative solutions to orphan care, in order to demonstrate that there are other methods to promote empowerment and independence amongst vulnerable families. Although my research is of relevance across different academic disciplines (social work, in particular), I am writing from an academic background within Political Science and Development Studies. This means that my primary focus has been studying aspects like power relations, political actors and dominant development practices.

Orphanages in Uganda are run by non-state actors and therefore fall under the category of NGOs, by working on behalf of civil society and providing services that are not sufficiently provided by the state and its institutions. The orphanage model is re-enacting an imperial power dynamic that enhances and promotes a colonial dependency between the marginalised poor and the NGO organisations, whilst their international volunteers, staff and financial backers are reproduced as the “White Saviours”. Their actions also propose the idea that these orphanage solutions are somehow better than ones that include local perspectives, thereby taking for granted that Western power and knowledge is somehow superior to that of the “other”, which ends up reproducing stereotypes of the Orient and the Occident, an “us” versus “them” mentality. A postcolonial solution should therefore see NGOs as agents of change that *empower* Ugandan families and allow them to care for their own children, and should be done by addressing the structural and underlying issues of poverty in the first place.

The beginning of each chapter starts with a quote from *Kisses from Katie* (2012), a New York Times best-selling book detailing the life of a young Christian American and her experience of running a faith-based NGO in Jinja. Davis has been hailed as some sort of hero or saint amongst the Christian community, and

provides inspiration for many other young Americans coming to Jinja in pursuit of helping others. The reason I have included some selected quotes from her work is partly because I find them shocking and mildly racist, but also because they reflect the naivety of many young people coming to Jinja in the name of serving God and the Ugandan people.

This paper has been divided into six main chapters, starting with an outline of my research question in chapter one. Chapter two contextualises and problematises my research topic in a Ugandan setting by looking at NGOs as actors in development, Christianity's role in colonialism, orphanages as a development solution and why empowerment is important for achieving development goals. Chapter three deals with my case study Jinja in particular, and looks at the role of NGO actors operating there. Chapter four is dedicated to outlining the theories and concepts that I am using to frame the arguments in my research, focusing on postcolonialism in particular but also including other relevant ideas and frameworks. My methodology is presented in chapter five and focuses on the data collection techniques in my case study. Finally, the findings of my research are discussed and analysed in detail in my final chapter, results and analysis. My conclusion provides a summary of my findings and suggestions for future recommendations.

Chapter One: Research Question

'People are people. They all need food and water and medicine, but mostly they need love and truth and Jesus'

(Davis, 2012: 95)

This paper is a critique of the over-use of NGO-run orphanages in Jinja, Uganda. Whilst NGOs are seen as important actors in development with the capabilities to empower marginalised people, orphanages have failed to promote sustainable solutions or address the root causes of poverty. In this study, my main research question is:

- *How do orphanages disempower local people?*

In answering this research question I have incorporated several themes into my study, including: racism and white privilege, power relations, the role of different actors, weak states and institutions, corruption, empowerment, accountability and faith-based organisations.

1.1 Project Aim and Significance

The primary objective of this research is to study the role of NGO-orphanages as actors in development, specifically the way that orphanages disempower local people. The simple definition of *disempowerment* is: 'to cause (a person or a group of people) to be less likely than others to succeed: to prevent (a person or group) from having power, authority or influence' (Merriam-Webster, 2016). As such, I aim to critically analyse the development model promoted by orphanages by comparing orphanages to more sustainable NGOs that promote family preservation. Orphanages, I argue, have failed to serve their original purpose in Jinja because many "orphans" have parents, and are there simply because of poverty-related reasons.

I am choosing to focus on the role of non-governmental organisations as agents of change because in a developing country context, state institutions are often weak, lack resources and the capacity to implement change. The idea behind bottom-up grassroots approaches to development are that they allow for changes to occur at a community level, working to find local solutions for the individuals that are most affected.

The discussion surrounding faith-based organisations (FBOs) is particularly important in this fieldwork. North American churches single-handedly provide more orphanage funding than any other actors, but the motives behind their work

are based on Christian values, religious beliefs and self-fulfilment rather than sustainable development goals (Donnelly, 2013). FBOs see development in terms of “what God wants for Africa” but are referred to as “invisible” non-state actors because they have received very little attention in academic research and the development discourse (Freeman, 2012; Hearn, 2002). Their religious approaches to development are made explicit through religious literature, preaching and sermons and their primary goal is to serve in the name of Christianity and God, not development (Hearn, 2002). Many of their practices are unethical, selfish and detrimental for developmental processes.

Through in-depth interviews with Ugandan social workers and NGO and orphanage directors, I have identified the key driving factors of orphanage use and promotion. This has helped to highlight where structural problems lie, illustrating how civil society has failed to work towards alleviating these underlying issues. Using a postcolonial theoretical framework, I am able to analyse the harmful outcomes of Western-led solutions that fail to incorporate the structural problems often faced by the marginalised. It should be noted that this fieldwork does not aim to criticise Uganda’s entire orphan care system, but rather focuses on the role and responsibilities of NGOs in reducing the number of children that end up in orphanage institutions for the wrong reasons. It also aims to highlight the responsibilities of different actors in providing the most appropriate solutions for people living in poverty, which in this case study focuses on the important roles that NGOs can play in advocating and implementing these goals by truly working together with and on behalf of the poor.

Aside from local and international media reports, no academic research has been conducted to understand the root causes of this issue. Orphanages are considered to be a permanent solution for child placement, although media reports suggest that parents are not aware of the full implications of signing over the rights to their children, and many expect financial rewards or that they will get their child back afterwards (Wandawa, 2012; Luzinda, 2015). The significance of this fieldwork lies primarily in the fact that no empirical research of this type has been conducted in Uganda before. In the broader context of the political science discourse and the development field, this research is important because it addresses problems that also affect poor communities and households in other parts of the developing world. I believe that institutionalising children because of poverty should not be a reason to remove children from families, and alternative solutions should not be seen as a Western privilege.

Chapter Two: Contextualising and Problematising

'Her big ears stuck out of her shiny, bald head, and her grin showed perfectly straight little white teeth. She was shy but lovable, giggling when I cupped my white hands under her chin and told her Jesus loved her'

(Davis, 2012: 50)

2.1 NGOs and their Role in Development

The discussions concerning the role of NGOs as civil society actors is important in the field of development, and in the face of globalisation, neoliberal ideologies and changing practices in development aid, they should be seen as fundamental actors for political and social change (Lewis and Kanji, 2009). The non-governmental sector was initially heralded as a solution to problems of development, welfare service delivery and democratisation (Fisher, 1997). The interest in NGOs has been fuelled by an increased global dominance of neoliberal economic policy agendas, whereby NGOs are identified as key pillars in private service delivery systems as part of rolling back the state almost three decades ago (Opoku-Mensah, 2007). The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) have declared that NGOs are 'particularly effective in reaching the poor and socially excluded' and that 'their strength lies in their [...] capacity for innovation' (OECD, 2010: 2)

NGOs often see themselves as 'catalysts for development' (Holmén, 2010: 19). The World Bank defines non-governmental organisations as 'private organisations that pursue activities to relieve the suffering, promote the interests of the poor, protect the environment, provide basic social services, or undertake community development' in developing countries (World Bank, 2002). NGOs are the subset of the broader non-profit sector and focus specifically on international development, but the definition excludes some specific not-for-profit actors like universities and hospitals (Werker and Ahmed, 2008). The developing world in particular has been swept by a non-governmental, "quiet" revolution where NGOs have undertaken an enormously varied range of activities and objectives formerly ignored by governmental agencies (Fisher, 1997). NGOs typically fall within one of two categories: delivering basic services to people in need or organising campaigns for change and policy advocacy, often concentrating on specific issues, problems or services (Lewis and Kanji, 2009).

The term *NGO*, Holmén argues, represents a complicated concept due to its negative term. The term does not reveal what kind of organisation it is, only what

it is not (*non-governmental*) (Holmén, 2010). Despite the vast research conducted on NGOs in Africa, there is still a lack of understanding of the power that they have due to the difficulties in methodologically researching them (Opoku-Menash, 2007). Within the literature on NGOs, there is relatively little empirical material detailing the impact of NGO practices on relations of power among individuals, communities and the state (Fisher, 1997; Opoku-Mensah, 2007). Despite increased interest and investment in NGOs within the global development sector, academic knowledge is comparatively under-developed and infrequent without ‘comprehensive analysis that is informed by history, theory or [...] systematic application of a recognisable research method’ (Opoku-Mensah, 2007:12).

Whilst NGOs should be seen as fundamental actors in development, their position of power should not be undermined in relation to the people they seek to help. Critics of the non-governmental sector focus primarily on the hidden power relations between organisations and the communities they serve. Manji and O’Coill (2002) liken today’s NGO work to a continuation of the missionary and voluntary organisations that cooperated in Europe’s colonial control of Africa. They write that ‘today [NGO] work contributes marginally to the relief of poverty, but significantly to undermining the struggle of African people to emancipate themselves from economic, social and political oppression’ (*Ibid*: 568). All too often, development aid is attached to a power dynamic in which the aid-givers are the ones who set the agenda and the recipients are expected to be grateful (Filipovic, 2013). Oftentimes, NGOs that are seen to be “helping the poor” are in fact victimising them further by providing support that these recipients do not necessarily want (Dearden, 2013). Kilalo and Johnson (1999) found that international NGOs oftentimes struggle to reach the poorest of the poor, meaning that speaking and acting on behalf of the most marginalised is difficult, thereby contradicting the goals that many NGOs aim to accomplish.

Nevertheless, the role of NGOs is becoming increasingly important in compensating for inadequate government provisions for services like education, healthcare and social welfare in countries like Uganda (Cannon, 1996). African governments are generally considered ‘too weak, corrupt or disinterested to take the lead in a development process’ (Holmén, 2010: 11). This means that international institutions and donors have found it necessary to strengthen the role of organisations outside of government, although it should be noted that sub-Saharan Africa is also home to weak civil society actors (*Ibid.*). Opoku-Menash believes that ‘we are still a long way from a comprehensive understanding of how NGOs have affected African development’ (2007: 487), and with the increase of NGOs stepping in to take over the government’s responsibilities, they are also supporting the privatisation and undermining of the state (Cannon, 1996).

2.2 Uganda's Political History

Uganda was a protectorate under British colonial rule until the country's independence in 1962. After independence, Uganda was plagued by Idi Amin's dictatorial regime (1971-1979) in which an estimated 300,000 people were killed in ruthless guerrilla warfare (CIA World Fact Book, 2016). Further human rights abuse and an additional 100,000 deaths were witnessed under rule of Milton Obote (1980-1985) until the current president Yoweri Museveni brought stability to the country in 1986 (*Ibid.*).

Corruption is woven into the social fabric of Uganda's society and institutions, and Transparency International ranks the country 139th in the world on their Corruptions Perceptions Index, giving Uganda a score of 25 out of 100 (with 0 being "highly corrupt" and 100 "very clean") (Transparency International, 2015). The research and advocacy NGO Freedom House has classified Uganda as "not free" due to 'increased violations of individual rights and the freedoms of expression, assembly and association' (Freedom House, 2015). Whilst conducting fieldwork in Jinja my visit coincided with the 2016 national elections. This gave me first-hand insight into the Ugandan electoral process, an experience that is difficult to grasp by reading international newspaper articles or reports from observational committees. The elections themselves were contentious and disorganised, with widespread reports of missing and fake ballot boxes and papers, controversial arrests of political opponents and a heavy police and military presence in larger towns and cities.

2.3 Demographics of Uganda

Uganda has an incredibly young population, with almost 50% of the citizens living there under the age of 14, and a fertility rate of 5.45 children per woman (World Population Review, 2016). The country's population is predominantly rural and 80% of the people are farmers (CIA World Fact Book, 2016). The tropical equatorial climate is incredibly fertile and nutrient-rich, meaning that the country has never experienced famine or severe starvation from food shortages (*Ibid.*). During the 1990s, the country was successful in reducing the number of people living under the poverty line by almost 40 per cent (Mallaby, 2004), and Christianity (comprising of 88% of the population) is the main religion in the country (World Population Review, 2016). These demographic components are important to highlight in my research because it helps to position the context of Uganda's population, constituting them as: young, predominantly Christian and developing at a steady rate of progress.

2.4 Religion and Civil Society

Civil society has its historical roots in Western philosophical thought and surrounding the ideas of the Enlightenment (Berger, 2005). Berger breaks down the definition of civil society into two parts – structural and cultural. Structurally, the term refers to ‘the ensemble of institutions that stand *in between* the private sphere [...] and the macro-institutions of the state and the economy’, whilst culturally, ‘the term refers to those “in-between” institutions that are indeed *civil* – that is, institutions that mitigate conflict and foster social peace’ (*Ibid*: 12). Berger asks his readers to question whether *religion* does or does not contribute to *civility* (as defined in the previous sentence), and concludes that ‘religion, more than not, tends to create conflict both within and between societies’ (*Ibid*: 15). There is, however, still a considerable lack of knowledge, prejudice and misinformation surrounding the role of religion in the field of development (Jakobsson, 2013).

It is important to understand the contexts in which religion and faith are significant for people if we are to make a valuable contribution to politics and development (Nilsson and Moksnes, 2013). A World Bank study, *Voices of the Poor*, found that ‘poor people in developing countries placed greater trust in faith-based institutions and in religious leaders than in state institutions or political leaders’ (Clarke, 2013: 14). *Voices of the Poor* reported that FBOs:

‘emerge frequently in poor people’s lists of important institutions [...] Spiritually, faith in God and connecting to the sacred in nature are an integral part of poor people’s lives in many parts of the world. Religious organisations are also valued for the assistance they provide to poor people’ (Narayan et al, 2000: 222).

Nilsson and Moksnes write that ‘it is time to take religion seriously [...] because religion is part of what influences people, their values, their worldview, and their behaviour’ (2013: 3). In fact, the authors argue, ‘ignoring religion has [...] become a way of showing arrogance towards people for whom religion is important’ (*Ibid*: 4), making it all the more necessary to consider the ways in which faith-based actors are influencing the development processes and political spaces. Some have argued, though, that Western faith-based organisations ‘function as megaphones for Western values into more conservative societies in the South’ (Jakobsson, 2013: 10), so it is important to bring this dialogue into focus when studying religious NGO actors operating in Uganda, and how promoting their faith plays a role in setting their agenda.

2.5 Colonialism and Christianity in Africa

Religion has played a central part in the development of modern forms of racism across the world, and this culture-centred and theological notion of difference is considered to be both an early form of racism and neo-racism (Loomba, 2009). Donnelly writes that, ‘missionaries in the eighteenth, nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were closely tied to colonialists’, the latter robbing the Africans of their independence which allowed the missionaries a ‘new frontier in which to convert Africans to Christianity’ (2012: 32-33). Across the African continent, European colonisers of the past adopted practices and attitudes that are still felt today, whereby ‘brutal power relations existed alongside paternalist feelings of responsibility towards “natives” who needed to be “civilized”’ (Rist, 2008: 47). Grave human rights abuses were permissible by some Christian actors, and neither the Roman Catholic Church nor the Protestant denominations in Europe opposed the slave trade, with some Christian leaders even arguing that ‘the Bible supported it [slavery]’ (Donnelly, 2012: 33).

Whilst colonial administrations provided very little in terms of welfare for natives in the colonies, charities, churches and missionary groups stepped in ‘to exchange their spiritual wares for material support in education, health [and] other social services’ (Manji and O’Coill, 2002: 569). Through the provision of these services, the African population was evangelised and discouraged from what welfare providers perceived as ‘ignorance, idleness and moral degeneracy [...whilst] promoting their own vision of civilisation’ (*Ibid.*). Missionary societies and voluntary organisations can in many ways be seen as the “first” NGOs in Africa, although their philanthropy should not be undermined in light of postcolonial ideologies. Under colonial rule, ‘charity was not only designed to help the poor, it also served to protect the rich [Europeans]’ as a subtle means of controlling the behaviour of Africans through religious conviction, compassion, guilt and fear (*Ibid.*: 570).

2.6 Children’s Rights and the Orphanage-Development Model

The rights of children in the international political system have increased in recent decades, particularly with the signing of the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), which Uganda is a signatory of (Watson, 2006). There are, however, considerable difficulties that children have in ‘making their own claims for recognition of rights as those set down in the UNCRC’, which is why NGO actors working on behalf of vulnerable children are so important in developing country contexts (*Ibid.*: 229). Moran-Ellis and Sünker insist on the ‘acceptance of children as actors in society alongside adults with full entitlements to democratic

participation in the power relations which govern and structure their lives directly and indirectly' (2008: 67).

Weak welfare institutions are common in developing country settings, and orphanages in a Ugandan context provide a welfare service that the state fails to adequately deliver. One of the biggest problems with NGO-run orphanages is that they are hurting the people they aim to help by destroying personal initiatives, creating dependency and ultimately disempowering local people (Lupton, 2011). In 2009, the UN accepted the "Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children", a declaration that stated that 'every child has the right to grow up in a family, and the right to participate in all decisions that affected them' (Bakker, 2016: 1). Better Care Network, a lobby movement founded by Save the Children, UNICEF and USAID, aims to close all orphanages across the world, a scheme that includes both developed and less developed countries (*Ibid.*). It begs to question, therefore, why so many faith-based organisations and other actors are continuing their plight of opening and running orphanages across substantial parts of the developing world, particularly when the solution has been so heavily criticised by experts in the development field. Numerous studies have proven that orphanages "structurally neglect children", and that the vast majority of children living in orphanages have family, and in many cases are able to return to their families (Bakker, 2016).

Donnelly's findings when researching orphanages in Malawi uncovered attitudes by local authorities that conform with the arguments found in my own research. In Donnelly's study, the chief child protection officer, responding to a request about opening a rural orphanage, said that 'the best option [is not] to take the children away from their extended families, but to keep them in those families, keep them in their communities, and educate them so that they [can] build lives of their own' (2012: 60-61). Community-driven development (CDD) is the idea that communities 'are the subjects of change in their own right, and that those making up a community should initiate, design and own any development project implemented in the community' (Holmén, 2010: 21). This also means that local people should mobilise the resources needed to pursue their own development agenda by being empowered to 'decide for themselves the kind of development they are striving for' (Närman, 1995:33). NGO-run orphanages are, as such, *not* an example of CDD, and the problems that arise from this are emphasised in the findings and results of this fieldwork.

In 2010, the Rwandan government took the radical decision to shut down all the country's orphanages, making it the first country in Africa to do so (Bakker, 2016; Tabaro, 2015). The closure decision followed the UN declaration that all children have the right to grow up in a family, with adoption and foster care being promoted as better alternatives (*Ibid.*). Although the circumstantial contexts differ somewhat between Uganda and its neighbouring country (the Rwandan genocide

left tens of thousands of children without caretakers), the orphanages in both countries have similarly been overwhelmingly run by foreign aid organisations and NGO actors (Bakker, 2016). Although Uganda does not have any plans to follow Rwanda's example in shutting down all of its orphanages, many of my research respondents told me that family preservation and alternative care is being promoted more by the Ugandan government (this is covered in more detail in Chapter Six).

Chapter Three: NGO-Orphanages in Jinja

'I realized the only way to really be able to meet all the needs I wanted to meet in this community – to pay for children's school, keep their bellies full, offer medical assistance, and most important teach them about Christ's love for them – would be to start some kind of non-profit organization'

(Davis, 2012: 44)

3.1 Jinja's Orphanages

The decentralised political power in Uganda has resulted in district-level responsibilities in managing and monitoring NGO activity, thus focusing government-NGO relationships at local levels (Cannon, 1996). This means that at the national levels there is a disconnect between rules and regulations for organisations, and how they are enforced lower down at district levels. Some sources have cited that there are roughly 2,000 registered NGOs in Jinja district, although there is no government ministry with a proper database for these figures (Cannon, 1996). This estimated figure is also difficult to verify because organisations are able to function without being registered, and numerous sources have told me about orphanages without names or paperwork.

The number of registered orphanages in Uganda has increased from around two-dozen to over 400 in the past fifteen years (Esslemont and Migiro, 2015). The UN estimates that there are some 2.7 million "orphans" in Uganda (UNICEF, 2013), although this number also includes so-called "social" orphans (as many as 85% of children in some orphanages). The term *social orphan* is used to describe a child 'whose parents might be alive but are no longer fulfilling their parental duties' (World Bank, 2005). Increasingly, the economic burdens of poverty have become a major driving factor for placing children in orphanages, an issue that is prevalent across many regions of the developing world.

Orphanages in Uganda are run by non-state actors and therefore fall under the category of NGOs, by working on behalf of civil society and providing services that are not sufficiently provided by the state and its institutions. A major concern for the management of these orphanages is that non-state actors are more difficult to monitor and hold accountable for their actions, particularly in underdeveloped countries like Uganda (Valadez and Bamberger, 1994). Placing a child in an orphanage only provides a short-term solution to a larger structural problem within society. Children growing up in institutional care are classified as "vulnerable" children, those described as being 'most at risk of facing increased negative outcomes compared with the "average" child in their society' (Subbarao and Coury, 2004). However, unlike the state-run child protection services in the

developed West, orphanages in developing countries are often run by private actors, overseas charities and faith-based organisations. Orphanages are often seen as the best (or only) option for Ugandan families that are unable to take care of their children (frequently related to the financial burdens of high medical costs, large numbers of children in families, high levels of unemployment, expensive school fees, debt or social stigmas surrounding single parenthood). Orphanages, however, divert resources from community and family-based care programmes – alternative approaches to care that are recognised to be far more effective (Gordon et al, 2003). Roby and Shaw (2006) state that placing a child in an institution should only be seen as a last-resort solution, as it fails to address underlying problems or present an African perspective. This also raises a number of political questions, including where development funding should be focused, who can run an NGO, and what options and solutions should be available to poor families.

Although the exact number of orphanages in Jinja is impossible to quantify (many operate without official NGO-registration), estimates centre on the 100-mark for the town and surrounding district. These orphanage institutions house new-borns all the way up to the age of eighteen, although the age of the older children are difficult to determine as many adolescents do not know how old they are (stunted growth from malnutrition can make estimating a child's age particularly difficult). Once a child is old enough to be considered an independent adult (~16-18 years), they will have to leave the orphanage facility and become integrated into Ugandan society, oftentimes without any guidance or direction from the orphanage or other organisations.

A major criticism of NGOs delivering services that the government ought to provide is that the state will not have an incentive to develop these sectors themselves (Cannon, 1996). This creates a reliance on non-state actors to provide healthcare and welfare services, for example, which also means that the quality of these services will ultimately differ in different regions of the country. The vast number of orphanages in Jinja is not due to the fact that Jinja has a uniquely high number of orphans compared to the rest of Uganda, but rather because this is where NGOs have chosen to open their doors and provide their services.

3.2 Faith-Based Organisations

Churches have come to be included as actors in contemporary discussions on civil society in recent years, earning them the title of “invisible NGOs” (Gifford, 1991; Hearn, 2002). They are described as being “invisible” because of their absence as actors in academic literature, but also because they are invisible in discussions on civil society, democratisation, economic liberalisation, sovereignty, conditionality, development and their roles as NGOs in foreign policy debates (Hearn, 2002). One of the biggest problems for African states is that there is a

‘patchwork faith-based quilt of organizations [that are] invisible to government officials’, even though their work is ‘palpably affecting the lives of countless African citizens’ (Donnelly, 2012: 30). Larger and well-established multinational NGOs are easier to track and hold accountable for their actions, whilst smaller ones are largely kept under the radar.

Most of the orphanages in Jinja are funded by US churches and private Christian donors, and many of the orphanages also accept groups of volunteers and missionaries who can come and play, feed and interact with the children in the institutions. Lupton writes that ‘religiously motivated charity is often the most irresponsible’, by providing handouts that increase the dependency in local communities (2011: 4). One of the problems with faith-based organisations is that the overwhelmingly vast majority of participants on missionary trips have no understanding of development processes. The evangelical missionary projects have a global annual income of between two and five billion US dollars, a number that equates to about one fifth of the aid finances distributed by NGOs worldwide (Hearn, 2002; Lupton, 2011).

Whilst North American churches single-handedly provide more orphanage funding than any other donors, the motives behind their work are based on Christian values, religious beliefs and self-fulfilment rather than sustainable development goals (Donnelly, 2013). FBOs see development in terms of “what God wants for Africa” but are referred to as “invisible” non-state actors because they have received very little attention in academic research and the development discourse (Freeman, 2012; Hearn, 2002). Their religious approaches to development are made explicit through religious literature, preaching and sermons, and their primary goal is to serve in the name of Christianity and God, not development (Hearn, 2002). It is, without question, crucial to acknowledge the exceptional influence that the missionary project has, both historically and in present times, as being at the heart of important changes in Africa (*Ibid.*).

Research on the effects of mission trips has found that ‘service projects and mission trips *do not effect lasting change*’ (emphasis in original text), and instead results in: weakening those being served, deepening aid dependencies, fostering dishonest relationships and eroding recipient’s work ethics (Lupton, 2011: 15-16). The majority of work being conducted by missionaries can be done better (at a lower cost and with better results) by local people in the communities, and mission trips should therefore be highly criticised for their grave misappropriation of resources. The main problem in these contexts is that church funding allocated for Christian service trips are destroying local initiatives in exchange for church partnerships consisting of hosting visitors, organising volunteer work and funding programs (Lupton, 2011).

Chapter Four: Theory

'Jesus knows that we are a family, a real family. And he doesn't see the colors of our skin. Besides, in heaven I am going to be black; I have already asked God for it'

(Davis, 2012: 173)

The theory section of this paper outlines and discusses not only the postcolonial theoretical framework that I have chosen as my main method of analysis, but also other relevant theories and concepts that are essential to understanding my research topic. These theoretical tools are inherent in understanding and explaining political structures, power relations and social realities in a Ugandan context, and I have chosen to focus on the theories that I believe are most important to understanding my topic and answering my research question.

4.1 Postcolonial Theory

Postcolonial criticism, Bhabha writes, 'bears witness to the unequal and uneven forces of cultural representation involved in the contest for political and social authority within the modern world order' (1994: 245). Postcolonialism has its roots in anthropology, literary and cultural studies but has in recent years made its presence felt in international relations and development (Chowdhry and Nair, 2002; Sharp and Briggs, 2006). One of the major problems within the social science discipline is that the Eurocentric philosophers and thinkers have produced popular theories in ignorance of the rest of the world (Chakrabarty, 2000). Postcolonialism is therefore a theoretical approach that focuses on how colonial legacies continue to shape global politics, economics and development (Sylvester, 1999; Peacock and Lundgren, 2010). By creating an awareness of history and power relations, postcolonial theory engages in shifting the Western-centred hierarchical power dimensions of the current development paradigm and focuses on incorporating the voices of the marginalised. Subaltern political and social strategies can and should lead to greater democratic dialogue in the developing world, and NGOs are vital in spearheading and facilitating these strategies (Kapoor, 2008).

Edward Said's writing on the Orient has focused primarily on how the Occident (the West) is constructed in its situatedness to the Orient through a Western-dominated system of representation and subjectification. Orientalism is a productive system that produces the Occident; it is about the construction of Europe, which only becomes visible by comparison to the Orient, whereby the West represents the rest of the world in the interest of rule and exploitation. Said (2004) states that the criticism of the backwardness and lack of democracy and

women's rights in non-Western contexts, for example, has been done without remembering that concepts such as modernity, enlightenment and democracy are no simple and agreed-upon concepts around the world. This is particularly problematic when discussing Western development solutions in developing country contexts.

Africa is thought of as the 'one crucial point where postcolonial studies and development studies run into each other' (Sylvester, 1999: 704). During colonial rule in Africa, the goals of social development were defined in the metropolis in order to secure a satisfactory quality of indigenous labour that could guarantee an efficient exploitation of the colony (Manji and O'Coill, 2002). Having said this, Herbst writes that although there is a universal assumption that colonialism "changed everything" in Africa, 'it was impossible for the Europeans to have changed "everything" in the few decades that they ruled Africa' (2000: 4). This, he argues, is because there are significant aspects of the continent's political landscape that colonials were unable or unwilling to change, meaning that one must be careful not to draw sweeping conclusions about how much of today's politics were affected by colonialism (*Ibid.*). What Herbst is suggesting is that although colonial structures and systems are still visible in the post-colonial era, not all issues can be attributed to colonial domination because not all aspects of society were influenced by colonial rule.

The postcolonial theory has been frequently dismissed as being too academic, theoretical, esoteric and focused on textual discourse, making it somehow difficult to apply to contemporary African politics and society (Abrahamsen, 2003). Postcolonialism has furthermore been perceived as a cultural product of the West, and that Third World scholars promoting the theory have been influenced and educated within a Western academic context (*Ibid.*). In addition to this, many critics see postcolonial approaches as being apolitical and unable to address issues of power structures (*Ibid.*). The "post" in postcolonialism 'seems to indicate a chronological periodization and linear progression through the stages of pre-colonialism, colonialism, and finally to the postcolonial present' (*Ibid.*: 192). Abrahamsen adds that postcolonial writers have been critiqued for 'reinforcing the perception that nothing worth recording happened before the arrival of European explorers, traders, missionaries and settlers, [...creating] a void simply waiting to be inscribed with meaning by the European' (*Ibid.*: 193). Terrence Ranger highlights that 'colonial Africa was much more like postcolonial Africa than most of us have hitherto imagined' (1996: 273), allowing us to question whether or not postcolonialism has developed an essentialised and rose-tinted dichotomy between colonialism and postcolonialism (Abrahamsen, 2003).

Despite some of the criticisms of postcolonialism, the theory is nevertheless useful for the analysis of my research topic by highlighting the links between present day Africa and its colonial past. It demonstrates clearly how legacies,

practices and power relations are being maintained and re-enacted through NGO practices that are largely failing to include the voices of the marginalised.

4.2 Postcolonialism in Development Studies

Development is a hotly debated issue, both in terms of defining the concept and also which is the best ways to implement it. Development does not simply mean catching up to Western standards, and for a postcolonial approach it is even more important to ‘move away from taking Europe as the theoretical and normative reference point’ (Power et al, 2006: 231). Many postcolonial scholars find development studies to be stuck in Eurocentric and neo-colonial mind-sets, particularly because of the dominant Western discourse and practical solutions (Sharp and Briggs, 2006). Christine Sylvester notes that ‘development studies does not tend to listen to subalterns, and postcolonial studies does not tend to concern itself with whether the subaltern is eating’ (1999: 703). McFarlane argues that ‘development approaches could benefit from the more expansive notion of agency and power in postcolonial scholarship’, whilst postcolonial approaches would benefit from ‘the greater alertness in development scholarship of the structuring role of resources and institutions in the creation and maintenance of networks’ (2005: 35). Development, it is argued, has maintained a Western power advantage through primarily focusing on economic growth as an agent of change (Sharp and Briggs, 2006). Tandon (2001) summarises an alternative development paradigm as follows:

- Development is to occur at the local level and to be based on local priorities
- Projects are small scale
- Development requires an integrated approach, which looks at the community as a coherent whole where all will benefit from projects implemented
- If development is not built on principles of participation, it fails.
- Projects should emphasise the marginalised sections of society, socioeconomic equality and justice

(As cited in Holmén, 2010: 10)

4.3 Bottom-Up Grassroots Development

The dominant global trend in development has been the promotion of neoliberalism and market deregulation as a strategy for reducing poverty, understood in basic terms as economic “inequality” (Woons, 2013). By the 1990s these top-down strategies of deregulation were complimented with bottom-up approaches that included enhancing local ownership and participation (*Ibid.*).

Borgin and Corbett wrote over thirty years ago that ‘practically all the difficulties Africa is encountering stem from the fact that the Africans have been forced into a development that is not of their own choice’ (1982: 179). Development planning and funding from the top-down has a tendency to negate participation and it is widely accepted that rural development must come from below, from and by the grassroots (Fisher, 1997; Holmén, 2010). The idea behind bottom-up approaches to development is that they allow for changes to occur at a community level, working to find local solutions for those individuals that are most affected. Most NGOs operating in Jinja are therefore part of a grassroots movement that targets individual households and families by providing individual services and support on a case-by-case basis.

4.4 Representing the Subaltern and the Importance of Indigenous Knowledge

A society is comprised on the shared knowledge of its culture, religion, ideology, customs, institutionalised systems and behavioural rules (Hill, 2003). Common understandings and values provide a society with a sameness of meaning within that specific culture (*Ibid.*). Classifying, understanding and comparing the world is seen as one of the most fundamental forms of knowledge production, whereby the discipline of political science has ‘historically claimed [to] address the “global”’ (Loomba, 2009: 501). Who decides what counts as categories, how categories are constructed and the distinctive lines between them has largely been taken for granted and naturalised through power exertion and social construction (*Ibid.*). Watson criticises the dominant Western international relations theorists, who ‘often envision an international system that is very different from that envisioned by many non-Western leaders and analysts’ (2006: 235). This is because historically, narratives have been written both from the perspectives and assumptions of the West or colonising powers without any counter-narratives or discussions around the ambivalence of these representations (Young, 1990: 159). In the past, imperialism was ‘a way to establish the universal normativity’ but paradoxically; ignoring the subaltern in the present is ‘to continue the imperialist project’ (Spivak, 1988: 123). The politics of knowledge production within the field of development studies has therefore routinely failed to address the ways in which subaltern knowledge is used and translated in development strategies (McFarlane, 2005).

One of the biggest problems with replicating Western solutions in developing countries is that the contexts are vastly different. For example, ‘the view of the child currently held within the Western liberal legal traditions leads to too narrow a focus’ for it to be translated into the realities of children’s experiences in the global South. (Watson, 2006: 231). This, Watson argues, is a fundamental flaw in

the UNCRC and international legal frameworks that focus on inherently Western views of childhood (*Ibid.*). Reynolds notes that ‘the source of our knowledge about childhood is deeply embedded in the myths and socio-political structures of particular societies’ (2000: 146).

Feminist postcolonial writer Chandra Mohanty is extremely critical of the Western domination of knowledge, discourse and power over the so-called “third world”, asking ‘who produces knowledge about colonised people and from what space/location?’ (2003: 45). Historically-rooted distinctions and boundaries are difficult to shift in both discourse and practice, and Mohanty states that ‘racial, sexual, national, economic, and cultural borders are difficult to demarcate, shaped politically as they are in individual and collective practice’ (2003: 47). Escobar (1995) writes about the social constructions of identities and how agents (be it colonisers, missionaries or development practitioners) have a socially constructed view of subjects prior to interacting with them. This means that what is perceived as ideological “knowledge” becomes a part of the social organisation that ‘preserves conceptions and means of description which represents the world as it is for those who rule it, rather than as it is for those who are ruled’ (Escobar, 1995: 108). Hill (2003) believes that changing practices that are deeply embedded in institutions and reinforced by powerful actors is necessary in order to recognise and articulate the *true* interests of those who are oppressed, subordinate or for other reasons lack a voice.

The importance of including the subaltern voices in NGO practices is critical in order to find solutions that not only work, but also empower poor people to become their own agents of developmental change. Orphanages, I argue, fail to provide a local Ugandan solution to the structural problems of poverty. By including the marginalised as participants in discussions to find solutions, power relations and knowledge-sharing can enhance the likelihood of successful NGO programs that truly benefit the subaltern subjects.

4.5 Intersectionality, Constructivism, Power and Knowledge

Intersectionality is ‘grounded in a feminist understanding of power and knowledge production’ (Kaijser and Kronsell, 2014: 418). Through Intersectionality and Constructivism, it is possible to analyse the relationship between colonialism and the resulting outcomes of power structures. Gilbert Rist writes that ‘history requires us to place things in their context [...] to avoid judging the past through the eyes of the present’ (2008: 48), and reflecting on contextualisation is of utmost importance in order to study today’s development issues objectively. Contextualisation is pivotal in understanding the role of NGOs and their impact on political power, and this cannot be achieved until NGO actors

and civil society have been ‘historicised, contextualised and analysed in the light of African experiences’ (Opoku-Menash, 2007: 487).

The core of Intersectional theory recognises individuals as having diverse and plural identities, a mechanism that can reveal how power works in differentiated and uneven ways (Chun et al, 2013). This means that an intersectional analysis ‘illuminates how different individuals and groups relate differently [...] due to their situatedness in power structures based on context-specific and dynamic social categorisations’ (Kaijser and Kronsell, 2014: 417). Relating to the topic of this paper, the histories of religious prejudice cannot be fully connected to that of slavery, colour prejudice or plantation labour and the likes, but it can help us to better understand *why* colonial race ideologies materialised in the way they did, and how they emerged from other forms of global oppression (Loomba, 2009). Edward Said writes that ‘every domain is linked to every other one, and that nothing that goes on in this world has ever been isolated and pure of any outside influence’ (2004: 874). It is important to acknowledge contextual differences and how interlinked colonial legacies are with development solutions in the present day.

Hill writes that ‘the institutional practices of society reproduce and recreate systemic inequalities in power’ (2003: 124). Power structures are expressed in numerous ways, ‘as injustices in material conditions and normative expressions, within social structures and institutions of various kinds, and lived, expressed, and reproduced through social practices’ (Kaijser and Kronsell, 2014: 419). In social science, power is a critical concept that incorporates economic, social, cultural and psychological dimensions (Hill, 2003). Power in this essay is studied by looking at the state and its institutions, as well as the power relations between NGOs and the local people that they work with.

Writing on the subject of power, Michel Foucault distinguishes between three types of struggles: ‘against forms of domination (ethnic, social and religious); against forms of exploitation which separates individuals from what they produce; or against that which ties the individual to himself and submits him to others in this way’ (1982: 781). The postcolonial author Bhabha draws on the Foucauldian power apparatus in describing the colonial discourse through the construction of knowledge by the coloniser (Young, 1990).

At the state level, rules and laws ‘should enhance citizens’ choices and not serve as instruments of arbitrary domination by one group over another’ (Hill, 2003:120). Addressing power in the context of African states, Jeffrey Herbst writes that ‘states are only viable if they are able to control the territory defined by their borders [and] control is assured by developing an infrastructure to broadcast power and by gaining the loyalty of citizens’ (2000: 3). Unfortunately for Ugandans, there was much controversy surrounding the 2016 elections and they

were criticised for lacking transparency and accountability by the EU electoral observation mission, thereby questioning the legitimacy of the election's outcome (EU Electoral Observation Mission, 2016). If the state lacks transparency and accountability, the non-governmental sector is all the more important for citizens of a poor nation. Democratisation processes are needed to seek out the voices of those who are underrepresented and marginalised, in order to build channels through which these groups of people can shape the social institutions and political agendas in regards to the problems that affect them (Hill, 2003).

4.6 Accountability and Development as Empowerment

Individuals should be promoted as active co-participants in shaping their life conditions (Hill, 2003). Empowering the poor allows people to gain greater control over their own development, which can lead to reinforcing greater accountability to government institutions to meet the needs of its people (Combaz and Mcloughlin, 2014). The empowerment and accountability agenda is interrelated and oftentimes these two aspects overlap (*Ibid.*). This integrated view deals with how people 'gain the necessary resources, assets, and capabilities to demand accountability from those who hold power', requiring economic, social and political empowerment to do so (*Ibid.*). In the political context, this would include access to information, free and independent media, citizen engagement and civil and political society (*Ibid.*).

Alan Whites issues warnings over the accountability of NGOs working in weak states. When NGOs take over roles that are traditionally reserved for the government (such as the provision of social welfare services), there is a danger of whom the marginalised poor can hold accountable when services are inefficient. The NGOs become so-called "gap-fillers" when taking over responsibilities that are supposed to be provided by the state (Cannon, 1996). Issues arise when no one is held accountable for addressing issues that affect so many people. Amartya Sen's capability approach is a framework that recognises the impact of social institutions on human welfare capabilities (Hill, 2003). Hill, however, argues that the framework fails to analyse 'the role of institutionalised power in causing or perpetuating inequalities in individual opportunities to achieve' (2003: 117). In *Development as Freedom*, Sen acknowledges the importance of 'a variety of social institutions [...that] contribute to the process of development precisely through their effects on enhancing and sustaining individual freedoms' (1999: 297).

4.7 Theoretical Application

The theories outlined in this chapter help to bridge the gap between the more literarily-centred postcolonial concepts and practical development solutions. Using postcolonialism as an underlying theoretical basis, ideas like indigenous knowledge, empowerment, institutional power and bottom-up development emerge as natural concepts and tools in enhancing these postcolonial views. These theories are used in the Results and Analysis chapter of this paper, focusing on the prominent postcolonial authors that have written about the struggles of subaltern subjects, and the issues surrounding Western-dominated notions of representation, action and development solutions.

Chapter Five: Methodology

'They ask what they are expected to pay. When I respond that this program is free, no strings attached, they fall to their knees in the red dust and fight back tears as they thank me'

(Davis, 2012: 54)

The importance of this fieldwork lies in seeking to empower those who do not have a voice, and thus takes on a critical ethnographic approach to my research topic, focusing particularly on critiquing power relations, challenging oppressive assumptions and shedding light on the hidden agendas of the orphan industry, whilst also investigating better alternative solutions (O'Reilly, 2008). This qualitative fieldwork takes on the structure of a case study, producing context-specific empirical material that will provide a holistic and in-depth investigation into the specific phenomenon of my research field (Feagin et al, 1991).

5.1 Ethics and Informed Consent

Ethical considerations are fundamental when conducting fieldwork, and are included to avoid harm, respect the rights of the participants and in order to address consequential outcomes during all aspects of the research process (O'Reilly, 2009). Due to the ethical implications of including children, all participants included in my research had to be 18 years or older. Before each interview, participants were provided with a fieldwork summary and consent form in print (see Appendix 1 and 2). These documents outlined the purpose of my research, the importance of their contribution to my findings and their right to withdraw at any time. Participants as well as the organisations they represent were guaranteed full anonymity and are not be named and identifiable anywhere in my project (including transcripts and references).

5.2 Case Study

Using a geographically limiting case study has enabled my research to gain an in-depth understanding of the issues and realities of the NGO orphanages operating in Jinja. A case study constructs a case out of 'naturally occurring social situations', allowing for topics to be studied in considerable depth (O'Reilly, 2009: 28). It is important to note that the findings of this research are situated and based on interpretive research between me and the subjects of my study, making my fieldwork inherently subjective by nature (Blommaert and Dong, 2010). I do, however, believe that the findings of my research are applicable to the NGO-

sector on a larger scale, and many of the issues and experiences from Jinja can be related to the way that NGOs operate across much of the developing world.

5.3 Sampling

This fieldwork includes data collected from fifteen participants consisting of nine Ugandans and six expatriates (two planned discussions/focus groups, one group interview with two participants, and seven one-on-one interviews). The sample population of my participants were initially established through my field contact and key informant, and included Ugandan social workers and senior NGO staff. Throughout my sampling process I contacted participants through email, phone calls and physical introductions (the latter being my main preference). Oftentimes, I would use my existing relationships with friends and colleagues to help with introductions, and I was always adamant to meet with potential interview participants at least once before conducting my interviews. This was crucial in creating a relationship with my participants that was less intimidating and made both me and my interviewees feel comfortable. This allowed me to gain a feel for the structure and power relations between my participant and myself as researcher, and also allowed me to distribute my written research summary and prepared me for how to approach each interview or focus group discussion.

5.4 Establishing Rapport

My first few weeks in Jinja I dedicated to establishing relationships with participants I wished to include in my research. A reciprocal relationship in the field should be based on mutual trust and understanding, and can affect the quality and range of access and data collected during interviews (O’Rielly, 2009). Before I conducted any interviews, I had email correspondence with participants and met them beforehand in short meetings so that they were familiar with me prior to my interviews. On one particular occasion, my first introduction was met with great suspicion, hostility and hesitation. By sitting down and discussing the intent of my interview and thesis research I was able to put my participant at ease and gain access to the field site.

For another introduction I spent the whole day with my participant so that we were both able to grow comfortable with each other. This meant that I was able to ask questions and converse in a casual manner about my own life and research topic, whilst my participant shared her experiences of growing up in an orphanage. This quick friendship bond made the interview we later had very open and lengthy, and we discussed issues and questions that I would not have been comfortable asking had I not felt that we could trust each other. I tried to ensure

that my interviewees felt comfortable, and I conducted interviews in familiar settings with all my participants. For most of my encounters I was invited into the homes and office spaces of my participants, and I was often given guided tours of their organisations. I believe that most of my interviewees felt comfortable talking to me and we drank coffee together, smoked cigarettes and one woman even breastfed her child during my interview!

5.5 Interviews

Qualitative interviews provide depth, detail and context in a research area. Participants provide the main source of data and they give in-depth and first hand accounts of experiences that cannot be accessed through other means of data collection. Qualitative interviews are dependent on the interviewees capacities to verbalise, interact, conceptualise and remember (Mason, 2002). The gathered information is generated through questions and does not necessarily represent naturally occurring data, instead conversation is guided by the researcher conducting the interview. Interviews do not capture events, but rather accounts of the event, as interpreted by the participant and then by the researcher. Validity is often higher in in-depth interviews because the interviewer and participants can probe for clarification, by inquiring whether they understand each other correctly (Schalet, 2015).

The interview guide used in this research has been deliberately scaled-down, focusing on general themes relating to my research rather than specific pre-formulated questions. This meant that themes brought up in the conversations with interview participants were emergent rather than forced into the setting (O'Reilly, 2009). This allowed for dialogue and topics to flow more naturally and also made the interview semi-structured. The interview questions were generated from my research question and it was important to ensure that the order of questions were appropriate and progressed naturally. Questions from my guide were deliberately kept open-ended and there were themes and sub-questions provided to help me probe my participants and steer my interview in the right direction for my research topic (see Appendix 3 and 4).

O'Reilly suggests that interviews should be conversations that take place 'within the context of reciprocal relationships, established over time, based on familiarity and trust' (2009: 125). This meant that although I had the opportunity to conduct interviews early on in my fieldwork, I chose to build relationships and gather information from my interviewees and contacts before sitting down for an official interview. This allowed me to engage with my participants on a personal level, and was important because we could discuss questions and experiences more freely. I was also able to share my own insights and opinions on the issues we

discussed which allowed us to elaborate on ideas as well as delimit the power dimensions between myself as a researcher and the participant (Blommaert and Dong, 2010). The information I gathered in this initial stage was written down in the form of field diary entries where I could reflect on our conversations and return back to topics and answers at a later date.

It was also important for me to conduct my interviews with people who were fluent in English. It reduces power structures between me and my participants and I did not have to rely on a translator. If I had more time and resources, I would have liked to spend some time within a community getting to know the language and interacting on a daily basis with poorer families who had first-hand experiences of orphanages.

5.6 Focus Groups and Planned Discussions

O'Reilly (2009) calls focus group discussions using existing groups of people who know each other and have established relations "planned discussions". These discussions take place in a familiar setting (in my case at the social work office where all the participants worked) and also enable the researcher to discuss more sensitive issues that are less likely to be discussed openly amongst participants who do not know each other. My question guide was slightly different to the one that I used for interviews but centred around the same themes (see Appendix 4). Using participants who already knew each other made the discussions more comfortable, open and honest.

5.7 Field Note Diary

Field notes form part of an epistemic journey that researchers can use to reconstruct the trajectory from the field. It was important for me to include memos, observations, feelings and points of analysis from my first impressions and encounters when I met with respondents and received tours of their organisations. I wrote down these feelings, ideas and observations in a physical notebook when I was in the field, and also sat down to write at my computer once I had returned home from my encounters. Although these written accounts were very personal to me and not necessarily intended to be used as empirical material in my research, the richness that these records provided were a great help to me when I sat down and transcribed and analysed each interview. Many practical details and also the topics and anecdotes shared between me and my participants were not captured on my Dictaphone, so had I not written them down in my field notes it would have minimised the impact that many of these encounters had.

For one participant in particular, my field notes were used to remember the things she told me of her own experiences of growing up in an orphanage. I do not feel that these topics would have come up as easily in the intrusive setting of a Dictaphone, but I was able to gain a deeper understanding of her own personal views and experiences. I cannot quote her directly on the things she said, but I did get an understanding of the struggles she faced when she had to leave her orphanage at age 16.

5.8 Transcription

I chose to transcribe my own interview recordings due to the ethical issues surrounding paying someone else to do so. First of all, many of the interviews were conducted with Ugandans (albeit in English), and I needed someone who was familiar with the local accents and expressions without being able to identify the participants I was talking to. Anonymity and full confidentiality was guaranteed to all my participants, and I felt uncomfortable sharing my audio files with anyone else, particularly as many respondents told me stories that they wanted to keep off-record.

When double-checking my transcripts with the audio recordings, it became very clear that the nuances and richness of recordings were not conveyed as easily in my written texts, and it was difficult to capture things like sarcasm, when participants interrupted each other or changes in body language. This very clearly demonstrates how transcripts are ‘never “neutral” and never “complete” [and] there are always things that you will not show in the transcript’ (Blommaert and Dong, 2010: 68). Another issue I was faced with was convincing some participants to let me record their interview, and at times the presence of my Dictaphone was distracting and made the interviews more formal and less comfortable, because participants felt that they needed to be careful with what they were saying and how they worded things. In one interview in particular, I brought up the subject of corruption and bribery and I misheard the response of my participant. The participant answered “corruption in which way?” whilst I was talking at the same time, which meant that I interpreted her response as avoiding the question or denying that she dealt with corruption altogether. This mistake affected the interview material and prevented me from gaining an understanding of how Ugandan-run orphanages deal with corruption in their daily work. This interview in particular was a lot less rich and comfortable than any other other interviews I conducted, and I am disappointed that I influenced the data with my own mistake.

5.9 Interview Coding

Coding of the interviews was done after data collection and transcribing had been completed. The coding was divided into thematic topics based on the themes of my interview guide. O'Reilly writes that "the same data can be coded very differently by different people and for different purposes" (2008: 37), and my approach was to use colour-coding and highlighting to identify and distinguish between different themes and topics. I also chose to highlight interesting and unexpected responses that were relevant to my research. After the coding and analysis parts of all my transcripts was completed, I created a thematic index of my transcript topics for a better overview of the different themes, and to easier locate these quotes in my transcripts (because my transcripts totalled 135 pages and 64,263 words!).

5.10 Research Limitations and Researcher Positionality

The limitations of this research is primarily concerned with the exclusion of some participant groups, particularly Ugandan parents who have placed their children in orphanages and also government officials representing the views of the state. Including them in my research would provide me with an insight into their first-hand experiences of orphanages as a development solution, and I would not have had to rely so heavily on social workers and NGO staff to recount their own experiences of interacting with these groups of people.

Before I can discuss the analytical aspects of my results it is important to acknowledge and address my position as a researcher. Denzin writes that interpretive research 'begins and ends with the biography and self of the researcher' (1986: 12), whilst Sultana claims that 'it is critical to pay attention to positionality, reflexivity, the production of knowledge and the power relations that are inherent in the research process' (2007: 380). Social research can never be completely objective, and qualitative methodology is broadly seen as interpretivist, constructivist and inductivist (Bryman, 2012). My own opinions, experiences, expectations and biases will inadvertently affect the direction, topics and conclusions that I draw from my research findings.

One of the biggest issues I dealt with was interviewing Christian participants who were far more religious than I am. Whilst my own family is Christian, I did not grow up actively practicing religion, and many of the opinions expressed by my participants were difficult for me to relate to in a spiritual or even logical manner. Another issue I was forced to reflect upon was my age, ethnicity and research motives, and my liberal feminist upbringing often clashed with the conservative lifestyles of many of my research participants.

Chapter Six: Research Results and Analysis

'That's when God grabbed my attention. The light came on and I remembered: I never chose these 150 children; God gave them to me. I never planned to send them all to school; He did. It wasn't Katie carrying out Katie's plan; it was the Lord, for whom all things, all things, are possible. I could envision Him chuckling at me, saying: "Oh, you of little faith! Ask anything in my name and it will be given to you"'

(Davis, 2012: 126)

6.1 Driving Factors that Promote Orphanage Use

The purpose of including Ugandan social workers in my research was because they had a combined experience of working on many hundreds of cases, and thus had a thorough understanding of the issues faced by Ugandan families that they have worked with. All the social workers that I spoke to were required to do home visits as part of their job role, and interview their clients about their life situations (this, I was told, was not common practice for most of the badly-run orphanages). From this, I was able to understand the most significant factors that drive parents to placing their children in orphanages, thereby making my data more applicable to the experiences of the general population. The reasons stated were as follows:

- Temporarily wanting a better life for their child (better meals, housing and access to medical care)
- Free and better quality schooling (orphanages often function as a boarding school, with children returning home during the holidays)
- Domestic abuse (often more frequent when the mother or father remarries)
- As a day care facility or school so that parents can work
- For teenage mothers (who want to finish schooling, feel stigmatised or have been abandoned or pressured by their partners or family)
- Single parenthood (mothers have been abandoned or one of the parents has died or is absent for other reasons, like ending up in prison)
- Stigmas surrounding disabilities (disabled children are often abandoned and end up in orphanages because parents cannot care for them or believe that disability is the result of witchcraft or curses)
- Not understanding the implications of placing a child in an orphanage (misunderstandings about legal rights, adoption processes or psychological and developmental impacts on children)

As noted, none of the direct answers were 'poverty' or 'being poor', and one interviewee who had over a decade's worth of experience running an orphanage

told me that they ‘have never had a case of a parent leaving their child there simply because they were poor’. However, many of these issues are the circumstances of a variety of different factors directly linked to poverty. Addressing these structural issues can help to empower a parent to becoming independent and capable of raising their own child. As a suggestion, NGOs might focus on programmes that educate or provide services that directly address the driving factors that push parents to giving up their children (as listed on the previous page).

6.2 Racism, White Privilege and Stereotyping

Racism is a structural problem that a lot of people working in Jinja choose to ignore or disengage from: they deny its existence within their organisation and justify their “anti-racist” stance simply by working in an African context. However, the imperialist notions of exotic othering and racial inferiority is still reflected in the social, cultural, ethnic, economic and political inferiority of the subordinate, and the ignorance of these hierarchical power relations is very much seen as a modern-day problem of racism.

Racism and white privilege came up frequently in my fieldwork, not only in my observations and when visiting organisations, but also in the day-to-day life in Jinja. Westerners run most of the “good” organisations and businesses in town, and there is a tangible division between Ugandan staff and international staff. Office spaces, access to benefits (cars, airfare, housing), wage divisions, levels of education and the things that Western people can “get away with” is very visible in Jinja. Understandably, most expatriate staff would probably not choose to work in Uganda had they not been offered some hardship compensation, and living costs for Ugandans are considerably lower than what is deemed necessary in the West. There were, however, some interview participants that raised concern over the divide between whites and blacks, and they attributed much of the negative stigmas surrounding “Ugandans” to the inequality between expatriates and locals.

What is visible in Jinja is structural racism, and white privilege is the outcome of this racist social structure. Not all white people in Jinja are racist, but they contribute to the racist social features that ultimately benefits those in structural positions of power. Sarah Nuttall writes that “whiteness” is ‘marked through and through by the power of privilege [...and] the cultural semiotics of “whiteness” also reveals its precariousness and point[s] to sites and moments in which its signifying power is unsettled’ (2001: 10). Drawing on Edward Said’s book *Orientalism* (1979): in the creation of the Orient, the Occident becomes visible. This means that when helping to empower the African, the white person is the one who benefits the most (through generous funding, praise from home communities,

lavish lifestyles, travel opportunities and career opportunities). White people (including donors) also, for the most part, only trust other white people running organisations, and funding is predominantly secured through contacts in the West. The reason behind this is often that your local communities, church groups, friends and family back home in the West want to support you "saving the poor Africans". This becomes visible through white privilege and how difficult it is for Ugandans to be owners of their own NGOs and development. One Ugandan woman told me that:

‘what beats my mind is these missionaries who come here, and they think black people we are thieves, but I think, also, they are doing the same thing. Because, if someone can have this posh lifestyle in Jinja, they are driving their car, they are eating out [...] then also if they could pay their workers [...] more money I don’t think they would steal or even think about taking more money than they should from the orphanages’.

Money, it would seem, is tied up in Western philanthropy, and is also distributed through Western channels (individuals and organisations) because this is deemed more “transparent” and “accountable”. What is the difference between a white person earning a good salary with great benefits and a Ugandan person living the same lifestyle? One is corruption and a misallocation of resources, the other is compensation for "living a hard life" in Africa. One participant who works at a Ugandan-run orphanage told me that she wishes that things in Jinja would change, and that:

‘especially for us black people, people say the racism isn’t there, but for me I still believe racism is there. It’s just in a different name, but people think that because you’re black you don’t know what you are doing’.

Some of my Ugandan interview respondents spoke very openly and honestly about their feelings towards Western-led NGOs operating in Jinja. Fundraising is difficult for locals running organisations because foreigners say, ‘never trust Africans because Africans are thieves, they always want money [...] they always want to take something from you’. Many times their donations come with conditions, and the aforementioned respondent told me that ‘the problem we face is like when some funders come and think they know better than the people who started the organisation’. This was seen in the purchase of new land for the orphanage (with an aim to become less donor-dependent through income-generating farming and livestock activities), but the donor in question wanted the newly acquired land to be legally registered in the name of the donor rather than the organisation.

These struggles of legitimacy for locally run orphanages is an issue that Frantz Fanon describes very well as he writes about the ‘black man who through his

intelligence and hard work has hoisted himself to the level of European thought and culture, but is incapable of escaping his race' (1952: 48). Ugandans running NGOs struggle to compete against foreign-run organisations in order to secure funding, receive case referrals or gain respect from other NGOs. Even my Western interview participants told me that having a white person in their leadership position gives their organisation more legitimacy:

'we wouldn't get the funding [...] our referrals would decrease because a lot of our referrals come from organisations run by expats [...] you just don't trust organisations that are Ugandan-run. [...] I don't think donors would want to give [money] if they didn't know that there was an expat accountable this side'.

Western NGOs working within the discourse of development are sometimes seen as continuing the racist ideologies of the past by defining non-Western people in terms of the cultural standards of the West, through reproduced social hierarchies from the colonial period (Manji and O'Coill, 2002). The stereotype of the African as desperate, poor, untrustworthy, deceptive and criminal is extremely detrimental and has become reproduced as a form of knowledge and identification through colonialism's stereotypical discourse in a *process of subjectification* and the *representation of otherness* (Bhabha, 1994). Representation in the postcolonial discourse refers to 'the production of the meaning of the concepts in our minds through language', and it enables us to link concepts and language by referring to either real or imagined worlds of objects, people and events (Hall, 2013: 3). The misrepresentation and stereotyping of the "Other" is extensively discussed by authors like Edward Said, whereby the Western discourse constitutes the "Orient" as a 'unified racial, geographical, political and cultural zone of the world' (1978: 71). The most dangerous misrepresentation of so-called "knowledge" is when it is used 'to dominate for the purposes of control and external domination' instead of 'understanding for [the] purposes of co-existence and humanistic enlargement of horizons' (Said, 2004: 872). This is problematic for development programmes because it fails to include indigenous knowledge and local actors, and instead promotes the solutions proposed by the Western elite (such as orphanages).

In the past, the colonial discourse aimed to establish cultural and racial hierarchy through the articulation and organisation of stereotypes as a social reality (Chakrabarty, 2000). Literature, media and television have also reinforced the so-called Oriental ("subaltern", "third world" or "developing") stereotype and 'forced information into more and more standardized moulds', and this cultural stereotyping has intensified throughout academia, politics and the Western population (Said, 1978: 27). This results in a distorted "Oriental lens" that influences the language, perceptions and encounters between the East (or in this case, Africa) and West (*Ibid*: 59), thereby deepening the racist stereotypes and intellectually subordinating the Orient in relation to the powerful West.

Western NGOs are frequently seen to have legitimacy and authority because there is an overarching notion that these expert organisations “know” the South, making them out to be experts also in the solutions to solving problems (Kaufman and Shewprasad, 2005). Drawing on Marxist ideologies of representations, Mohanty writes that we must ‘move beyond the Marx who found it possible to say: they cannot represent themselves, they must be represented’ (1984: 354), because only from a Western vantage point is it possible to define the “third world” as economically dependent and underdeveloped (*Ibid.*). She compares the ‘average’ Third World Woman (uneducated, traditional, victimised, ignorant, poor and domestic) to the Western Woman (modern, educated, in control, and free), and very clearly highlights the problem with the striking power imbalance of the West representing and acting on behalf of the Third World.

In *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952) Fanon dedicates an entire chapter to the so-called “dependency complex of the colonized”. He writes that ‘every citizen of a nation is responsible for the acts perpetrated in the name of that nation’, including the historical acts of colonial racism (*Ibid.*: 71-2). My interpretation of Fanon’s writing here is that as non-Africans working in an African context, we have a responsibility towards addressing and mitigating the colonial legacies that remain in place. By accepting that white privilege is a reality in daily life, it becomes necessary to break down racial barriers and empower Ugandans to feel competent to take charge of their own development projects. A personal friend of mine, a self-proclaimed “educated angry African”, was open about his irritation over how white people (or foreigners in general) are the ones who own most of the successful businesses and organisations in Uganda, and that he as a Ugandan in his own native country has to work even harder to “prove” his worth amongst Ugandans and expatriates alike.

6.3 International NGO Workers, Missionaries and Volunteers

The first question I asked my participants during my interviews concerned their background, age, and education or qualifications. The majority of Western NGO-founders and directors only held a high school diploma, and many had come to Uganda in their early twenties after completing high school or university. All the non-Ugandans working with children’s organisations also had prior experience of volunteering at orphanages, either individually or as part of a mission trip group. This had inspired my participants to go one of two ways – to run an orphanage themselves or found organisations that worked to tackle the issues that orphanages failed to address. All the Ugandan social workers I interviewed held degrees from Ugandan universities, although many had to be trained in their job roles at NGOs because their directors found that the quality of their educations was not sufficient or not in line with the organisation’s values (this was particularly the case when it

came to organisations promoting family preservation as their main focus or priority). Staff salaries were mentioned as the biggest expense for most of the orphanages, which again raises the question as to why money is not being invested to empower poorer Ugandan families to care for their own children, rather than paying wages to caregivers that raise these children in institutions.

Unqualified Western staff posing as “experts” is not only offensive to local people seeking their help, but also demonstrates how expatriates can hold job positions that they would never be qualified to do in their home countries. When “whiteness” comes to equal “expertise”, colonial legacies are being replicated and the domination of knowledge, power and resources leave locals with very few options and choices. Spivak details the struggles of the Subaltern woman who has been represented, written about, argued about and legislated for by others, but is not allowed a discursive position from which to speak (Pui-Lan, 2002). Therefore, when the subaltern is allowed to speak, ‘the subaltern is not a subaltern anymore’ (Spivak, 1990: 158). Unfortunately, the structure of Western “expertise” in many NGOs also works towards silencing the subaltern voices who are excluded from these positions.

Many of my participants reflected over why they have ended up working in Jinja of all places. Postcolonial author Ann Stoler writes that ‘white women needed to be maintained at elevated standards of living, in insulated social spaces cushioned with the cultural artefacts of “being European”’ (1991: 65). Jinja is situated on the lush banks of Lake Victoria and the Nile river and the town’s run-down colonial architecture has a laid-back atmosphere, buzzing with cafés and restaurants and a vibrant expatriate social scene. Living a high-quality lifestyle is cheap by Western standards, with most foreigners owning businesses, running NGOs or working within the tourism sector. Most expatriates lead exciting and privileged lives in Jinja, occasionally complaining about the “hardships” of living in a developing country. The number of NGOs in this small town has been estimated to be around a couple of hundred registered organisations. This vast number of NGOs begs to question if there is a particularly high need for NGOs in Jinja, or if it is simply an easy place to live and work. More rural and remote communities in other parts of the country have little, if any, access to Western NGO services even though the needs are far greater in these areas.

The number of Christian missionaries in Africa was estimated to include 62,000 individuals by the year 1900 at the height of colonial rule, but by 1994 the number had increased five-fold to 320,000 (Hearn, 2002; Johnstone, 1993). North American Evangelical Protestants make up the largest proportion of these missionaries, and their presence in Africa has been primarily attributed to the evangelisation of the continent’s people, to ‘bring the gospel of Jesus Christ’ to the farthest corners of the world (Hearn, 2002). Evangelicals are characterised by their commitment to ‘personal religion [...], reliance on the Holy Scripture as the

only basis for faith and Christian living, emphasis on preaching and evangelism, and usually conservatism in theology' (Barrett, 1982: 71).

If the purpose of evangelical mission trips is to spread the Gospel to all regions of the world, then this practice in the African context is difficult to dismiss without drawing on similarities between colonialism. Spreading the Christian faith to remote areas of the non-Western world suggests that Christianity is somehow a more superior religion than, for example, traditional belief systems and cultural practices and values. It is, I would argue, a *colonisation of faith*, particularly when FBOs push their values on the local populations. This is seen in Jinja through the practice of mass-baptisms in Lake Victoria or the discrimination against non-Christians (or homosexuals, for example) in some NGOs.

Volunteers are also welcomed to participate in the daily activities of most orphanages in Jinja, and this is common throughout much of the developing world where there are orphanages. This would never be permitted in a Western context and feeds into the debates on reinforcing the so-called White Saviour complex. With a high volunteer turn-over, already vulnerable children are exposed to new interactions with strangers, and one orphanage even told me that:

'we always encourage [the volunteers] to get attached to the children [...] our goals are that all the children's emotional needs can be met, so when the volunteers come we encourage them to try and get involved emotionally'.

What I find most disturbing, and am most critical to when it comes to Western volunteering in countries like Uganda, is the exotification of African children. Byford (2016) asks why people are so willing to accept 'un-vetted individuals into institutions with vulnerable children' through orphanage volunteering, and concludes that 'what is really being commodified, and sold as a fulfilling experience, is a child'. Volunteers offer little in developmental terms to these children, and the person who benefits the most from these visits is ultimately the volunteer who is made to feel special, and that they somehow "made a difference" to the lives of these poor children. Money spent on flying out to volunteer in developing countries would be better spent employing local professionals who know and understand the needs of these institutionalised children. Mark Riley of Alternative Care Initiatives has analysed mission trips to Uganda and found that 150 trips were planned to orphanages in 2016, each group with 12 participants on average and costing about US \$3,000 per person. This totals over 5 million dollars spent on orphanage mission trips to Uganda in this year alone (*Ibid.*).

Children growing up in orphanages also have severe attachment issues and can have problems developing socially, cognitively and emotionally. Sexual and physical abuse in orphanages is gravely under-reported, and when I asked a participant if she thought that other participants would admit to me that they had

experience of it, she told me, ‘no, it’s hidden, it’s swept under the rug like it’s not happening, and it’s rampant’. One-on-one child sponsorship programmes are very common in most of Jinja’s orphanages and this creates a dependency and problematic power relations, despite bringing in a lot of money for organisations. One interview participant told me ‘I don’t agree with it, I think it’s messed up and creates dependency and unhealthy relationships between the donor and the child’, even though her organisation has a sponsorship programme in place. Unfortunately, small and medium-sized NGOs are often faced with the dilemma of needing continuous funding and how to ethically go about securing it.

One interviewee even told me that orphanages are becoming increasingly popular amongst paedophiles who have unrestricted access to children, and that weak legal institutions offer little by means of deterrence if perpetrators are to get caught. In March of this year, a 21-year old American missionary was jailed for 40 years for sexually abusing children in a Kenyan orphanage, and a British Airways pilot took his own life in 2013 after he was convicted of sexually assaulting children whilst volunteering at orphanages in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania (BBC, 2016, The Telegraph, 2016). These two cases received widespread international media attention, but the vast majority of sexual abuse crimes go unreported and are far more common than people realise. I was told that even the best-run orphanages will have experienced at least two or three cases of severe sexual abuse (either by adults or by older children acting out on younger children), but this is information that people do not wish to share openly. This is an example of how orphanages in some cases victimise poor children even further, because children are exposed to people and situations that are difficult to monitor.

6.4 Corruption and Weak Institutions

The biggest theme that emerged during my fieldwork was that of corruption. The implications of corruption are felt in all aspects of Ugandan society, but the NGO world in particular is severely affected, both negatively and positively. Negatively because all organisations are faced with paying bribes for signatures, government approvals and fast-tracking paperwork, but in many instances NGOs can also benefit because bribes allow bad organisations to continue operating. Transparency International (2016) define *corruption* as ‘the abuse of entrusted power for private gain’, and in the colonial system corruption was introduced to Africa through the ‘excessively corrupt colonial government’ which created an ‘absence of loyalty to the state [and its] institutions’ (Ezeanya, 2012). Mulinge and Lesetedi write that corruption is a deeply-rooted social phenomenon resulting from the historical process of colonisation, whereby the practice is ‘a by-product of traits and fraudulent antisocial behaviour derived from [...] colonial rulers’

(1998: 18). Edward Said (1978) discusses how the colonising powers imposed both language and culture across the Orient in the pursuit to dominate, exploit, enlighten, civilise and humanise people there, which includes aspects like corruption which was not nearly as rampant in pre-colonial Africa before the introduction of Western-style institutions and governmental rule (Hamadi, 2014).

Corruption is visible in most aspects of the Ugandan political sphere and in order to get things done, NGO workers are expected to pay “consultation” fees for paperwork, signatures, court dates, adoption fees, and NGO permits and approvals. Local lawyers who know the legal system are able to utilise loopholes and pay bribes in their own favour, all the while benefitting from the high legal fees attained from adoption processes. I was told horror stories of ‘children literally being bought in slums and then [being] sold to an international family’. Someone else told me that she’s witnessed adoption processes where fake death certificates have been produced because the child in question had family members that were still alive, which would have complicated or even halted a legal adoption process. Many of the children living in orphanages who cannot be adopted remain there because they have family members that are still alive, and this raises questions as to why no other options are being promoted to prevent the widespread institutionalisation of children.

Interestingly, I was told by some interview participants that they have never, and would never, pay bribes to get things done, even if it meant that paperwork and adoption processes took longer time to complete. Oftentimes, however, “bribes” are disguised as gifts or payment for additional services. One participant had purchased a second-hand laptop for a government official, whilst another person told me that they use the aforementioned government employee as an “consultant” for advising on legal issues, in order to ‘find a way [to] financially help him that isn’t, you know, paying him to do his job’. These participants both had private friendships with the probation officer in question, meaning that they also had ways of “looking clean” on paper.

So-called “briefcase orphanages” constitute a significant number of Jinja’s badly-run orphanages. They are more or less invisible NGOs and some do not even have names or official registration and documentation. Others register as an “orphanage” and receive funding from overseas, and when donors come for visits they bring in children from the surrounding communities and pretend to run an orphanage establishment, all the while making money from unsuspecting donors. Many of these organisations are not visited by probation officers, and when supervisors and government officials higher up come to inspect the work of local probation officers, they are taken to the orphanages that have reputations of being well-run. Again, money is used to pay off people who might complain about operational standards of orphanages.

Corruption contributes to the disempowerment of poor people because they become further victimised in a society where bribery is common practice. When people cannot afford to pay bribe fees, they are left with very few alternatives and in some instances, bribery clearly benefits those privileged enough to be able to afford to pay. If money speaks and makes things happen (or disappear), then poor people are expected to suffer the worst. Rusciano writes that ‘corruption is the *exclusion and disempowerment* of citizens leading to perceived insufficiencies in provision of public goods by leaders’ (20014: 42, emphasis added).

Related to corruption, the second most frequently cited problem for NGOs was bureaucracy, weak government institutions and strict government rules and expectations. Even though registering an organisation in Uganda is relatively easy (anyone, irrespective of age, qualifications or organisational vision can open an NGO), some respondents had experienced legal grey zones when starting up. One person informed me that ‘when we registered we had to be operating before we could apply, which is technically illegal [...] there’s just so many gaps in the system, and so [...] to do it legally is impossible’.

The probation officer and workers at the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (the department responsible for overseeing work relating to orphans and vulnerable children) were brought up in every interview I conducted, and I probed my participants to describe their relationship to the head probation officer. Many people were frustrated with the inefficiency at this government office but told me that the issue was not the staff there per se, but rather the overwhelming number of cases and work that they were expected to perform. The official duties that the head officer is expected to perform were unrealistic, with too many cases to manage and too many responsibilities. This made their job difficult to perform effectively and allowed for loop holes to be taken advantage of. Most NGO personnel have an understanding for the time it takes to book meetings or approve paperwork, simply because they know how over-worked and inefficiently run the office is. Although I was unable to visit the office myself during my fieldwork, I was sure to question my interview participants thoroughly so that I could get an insight into the importance of establishing good personal relationships with the officers which would be beneficial to getting paperwork and approvals.

Four different interviewees told me that the decentralised power of the Ugandan government is problematic and has resulted in a severe disconnect between decision-makers in Kampala and the people working with local communities at the grassroots. Again, this ties in with the topic of widespread corruption in Uganda, and one respondent told me that there are ‘terrible, terrible orphanages, but they are running. Because they have the money to pay bribes’. On paper, the Ugandan government has institutions in place that are supposed to regulate how NGOs work with orphans and vulnerable children. In reality, however, these institutions are weak and ineffective, and one responded complained to me that:

‘there’s issues with residential care in this country, which is a complete train wreck. There’s so many orphanages [but] so many of them have no regulations. There’s these policies in place that are not being followed, and so it’s frustrating when we’re following them yet the ones that aren’t following these regulations – nothing happens. There’s no consequences’.

When asked why so many orphanages are continuing to open in Uganda, every single participant responded with “money” as the main driving force and incentive. Orphanages are known to be lucrative money-makers and are an easy concept to fundraise for, with donations flooding in from the West. Adoption fees and processes also bring in an absurd amount of money, which is pocketed by government officials, adoption agencies, lawyers and orphanages. A social worker who has experience of working at quite a number of different orphanages around Jinja told me that ‘they get money from the donors or they are just out to get money off of adoption and everything is about them [the organisation], it’s not about the kids’.

Many of my participants complained about the strict and unattainable rules and regulations that the government places on NGOs working with vulnerable children. Whilst they were difficult to follow, most of the NGO workers openly admitted that they do not meet all the government and ministerial requirements and can simply ignore them or pay for the problems to go away. Whilst policies and frameworks do exist, they are difficult to follow and easy to avoid. Whilst this is useful for organisations that are operating within a reasonable standard, it becomes *highly problematic* and worrying for organisations who do not operate with children’s best interests at heart. I am not sure if my participants would agree with me, but stricter and most importantly *enforceable* guidelines are needed, alongside ways to tackle corruption at institutional levels. There is a need for civil society actors and NGOs to be present in decision-making bodies, as representatives of the grassroots organisations that work within the communities. Interestingly, USAID has helped to fund and co-write many of the government’s manuals and frameworks that orphanages are expected to use, but the documents in question are impossible to follow and based on Western expectations and standards of care.

6.5 Christianity and Religion

A recurring theme in my both my own fieldwork research and in literature by people who have founded orphanages is: *the will of God*. In John Donnelly’s book, he interviews someone who exclaims, ‘if God wants me to go to Africa, he will make it happen’ (2012: 21). This same attitude was found amongst all my Western Christian interviewees, the idea that God “brought” them to Uganda, and

that the work they are doing is “God’s will”. What I find most fascinating is that God has shown these NGO workers to the lovely town of Jinja, and not to needier communities in Uganda or indeed neighbouring countries in the region. Jinja, with its hundreds of NGOs and large expatriate community is probably the last place in Uganda that needs more Western-run organisations, but I can appreciate the wonderful lifestyle that Westerners can lead here with coffee shops, restaurants and social activities that niche the white community together.

All but one organisation that I interviewed described themselves as running a faith-based organisation. Although none of the participants I interviewed claimed to discriminate against non-Christians, all of them had pastors on staff and provided Bible studies or religious counselling to the local people they worked with. One young woman told me that ‘we believe that if people love God and know God and accept Christ, crime in the country [...like] the abuse, the stealing, [and] the corruption will be able to end’. Another person also said that ‘someone who has faith in God [will not] initiate corruption or violence’.

Uganda’s population is 88% Christian yet the country scores extremely high on international corruption indices, so I find it difficult to see a valid correlation here that suggests that Christians would somehow not fall guilty to acts of corruption or crime. Many authors argue that poverty and inequality are structural constraints concerning the distribution of power (Hill, 2003), so I must speculate that corruption and crime are linked to poverty rather than religious beliefs. Nancy Folbre (1994) talks about the “structures of collective constraint” and proposes the ‘dismantling of inequitable power structures, [...] particularly those based on gender, race, class, age, sexual orientation or nation’ (Hill, 2003: 123). One of the problems with a heavy NGO presence in a largely poor society is the unequal power distribution that emerges between the so-called “experts” running the NGOs and the people coming for their services. I was told by many participants that poor Ugandans come to NGOs simply because they exist and promise to offer help, training or free services. The vast majority of Western-run NGOs in Jinja are headed by well-meaning individuals, but they have no prior experience to running an organisation, and most of them have no relevant academic degree or training.

Orphanages have become a way of proselytizing the African child. The influential postcolonial writer Ania Loomba (2009) argues that religion plays an undeniable part in “modern” forms of racism and that, linked to the understandings of contemporary racism, similar patterns emerge between the power distinctions of the “metropole” and the “colony”. In medieval England, minority groups, non-Europeans and religious outsiders were ‘routinely described in terms of colour’, whereby ‘blackness was a condition of the lack of Christianity’ (Loomba, 2009: 504). Physical attributes and skin colour (fixed, visible markers) were affiliated with particular faiths and moral qualities (an inner, unseen quality that could be changed), meaning that religious conversion and the subsequent “whitening” of

people could take place (*Ibid.*). This mentality follows the idea that skin colour cannot be changed but beliefs can, and thus if a non-European is considered to equal non-Christian, then being a Christian equates to European values and belief systems. The Christian movement across Africa was historically undertaken in the name of abandoning the native population's traditional views, and the European missionaries were part of God's salvation plans (Loomba, 2009). With this, Loomba very clearly demonstrates how the original Christian missionary movement was ingrained in the colonial legacies of the past.

6.6 International Adoption and “Saving the Brown Child”

One of the direct consequences of a large number of orphanages in Jinja is the large availability of children up for adoption. American adoptive parents spend on average US\$40,000 to adopt a child from Uganda, and many alternative care advocates are concerned about the financial incentives that this adoption market creates (and who receives this money) (International Child Campaign, 2016). A common sight around Jinja town is white couples and young Ugandan children, oftentimes waiting for court dates, adoption paperwork and practical issues to be completed before being allowed to legally remove the child from the country. Some children end up back in orphanages if, for example, parents change their mind or adoptions fall through. A social worker told me that ‘we had maybe three cases of parents who took kids and after some time they returned them [to the orphanage]’ because they were unable to care for the children.

Frantz Fanon's book *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952) details the struggles of acceptance between non-whites and Europeans as a result of colonial domination. His opening chapter references missionaries and colonial governors, where he writes that ‘an individual who loves Blacks is as “sick” as someone who abhors them’ (*Ibid.*: xii). What he is referring to is the fetishisation and objectification of the exotic black body, characterised specifically by the colour of the individual's skin. This “love”, Fanon suggests, is as “sick” (or racist) as someone who hates black people, due to the reduction of a person to a physical trait or characteristic – the colour of their skin.

The belief that the West is somehow responsible for “saving” people in the Third World ties in with Spivak's writing on the subaltern voice. Writing from a feminist standpoint, Spivak criticises the belief that ‘white men are saving brown women from brown men’ (1999: 284), and that the third world woman is unable to represent or act on behalf of herself. Drawing on Spivak's work, Pui-Lan writes that:

‘Stereotypical images of brown women as ignorant, filthy, and poor flooded missionary literature because of their appeal to the sensibilities of middle-class

Christians, who contributed generously to support “women’s work” by missionaries in foreign lands [...] The condescending attitude towards women of other parts of the world and the missionary impulse to save them remains deeply lodged in Western women’s minds even to the present’ (2002: 67).

When white parents adopt African children, they are essentially “saving the brown child from the brown mother”, who is deemed incapable of caring for her own child. Why else is so much time and money being spent on adopting children from distant exotic countries instead of implementing solutions that enable poor people to care for their own children? International adoption is seen as a “civilising” process of the stereotypically poor and victimised African child to become Western, but much like orphanages the underlying structural issues are not being addressed.

On paper, the majority of children living in orphanages are not true orphans, and most of them come from families that are ‘going through small crises and need help’ (up to 85% in some orphanages). The orphanages that are considered “well-run” will receive referrals of children from the police, probation officers, hospitals or other NGOs, but some also ‘go out and look for these kids themselves’ by reaching out to local communities and promising to feed, educate and house them. The worst part about this is realising what message is being sent to poor Ugandans who might be struggling to adequately care for their own children: that orphanages can take better care of these children in an institution than the Ugandans can themselves. It raises the question of *why* more organisations are not working to help families within the community to care for their own children? A common problem for parents is the unawareness of the consequences or outcomes of their children’s future, and I was told that by a social worker who interacts daily with parents that:

‘most of the clients do not understand the implications [...] I know for a fact that most of these parents do not know what they are doing [and] if they were explained to [...] that you are signing off the rights of the children, they will never do it’.

Ugandan women are often the ones who bear the heaviest burden in the context of institutionalising their children, and the female subaltern is perhaps the most marginalised individual in the world (Oyewumi, 1997; Pui-Lan, 2002). Oyewumi (1997) states that African women have suffered a form of “double colonisation”, because first they were dominated, exploited and inferiorised as Africans, and then they were further inferiorised and marginalised as African *women*. Similar to this, Spivak writes that ‘between patriarchy and imperialism, [...] the figure of the woman disappears [...] into a violent shuttling which is the displaced figuration of the “third world woman” caught between tradition and modernization’ (1988: 305). Many of Jinja’s NGOs work with Ugandan women as their overarching

demographic group, but Chandra Mohanty is critical of the way that Western actors represent and work on behalf of women in the developing world. In *Under Western Eyes*, she writes that the Western feminist discourse ‘discursively colonize[s] the material and [...] lives of women in the Third World, [by] producing/representing a composite, singular “Third World Woman”’ (Mohanty, 1984: 334). She even claims that Western feminists appropriate and “colonise” third world women through the construction of the homogenous Third World notion (as if all women in the developing world share the same forms of oppression and marginalisation), which is done from a hegemonic power position of the West.

6.7 Dominant Knowledge Systems and Western-Led Solutions for African Problems

One of the orphanage directors I interviewed complained about how poorly conducted social work is done at most orphanages, telling me that ‘if you emptied 90% of Uganda’s orphanages today, with proper social work, you could probably find each child in that orphanage’s family’. Before I started my fieldwork, I was under the wrongful impression that social work would be a difficult task to conduct in a country like Uganda, which does not have the databases, public records and registration processes that are commonplace in more developed countries. Although slightly more complicated, every single social worker assured me that locating families and getting people to talk is not difficult at all, with some organisations even running radio, television and newspaper advertisements searching for information about abandoned children.

Most of the orphanages I included in my study were run by Western staff in their most senior positions, but one in particular was Ugandan-led and did not promote foster care, adoption or family support. This orphanage received funding from Christian donors and had cared for over 700 institutionalised children over the last four decades. The day I conducted my interview I was told that about 80% of the children were in their home villages visiting family and relatives, the orphanage in effect acting as some sort of boarding school that fed, housed and educated the children for free. Although this paper does not go in to the psychological effects of growing up in such an environment, there is an overwhelming amount of research that has showed the detrimental effects of growing up in institutionalised environments (see for example Maclean, 2003; Miller et al, 2005; Taneja et al, 2002).

This is an all too common money-making scheme that is seen across many orphanages in Uganda, with parents believing that their children will have a better quality upbringing at an orphanage. It also raises serious questions as to why

money is being poured into orphanage organisations that care for children that have parents and relatives, and why more is not being invested in development programmes that empower families to care for their own children. I was told by the people running this particular orphanage that ‘some of these children have been put in the institutions because of poverty and others because of health, ill health’, which again reinforces the idea that structural issues are not being addressed by those responsible for working in the NGO sector.

The concept of orphanages was a Western introduction in Africa, and most of my respondents agreed that the supply of these institutions has sparked a local demand within the communities. Although historically much of Africa has strong cultural ties to extended familial care, the idea of housing children in a single household without any family ties is relatively new. One respondent frustratingly told me that orphanages should not be normalised, stating that ‘it wasn’t okay until the West introduced it, if we never introduced orphanages to Africa they wouldn’t have needed them. That’s just the reality, we made this mess’. According to Ugandan law, most orphanages only allow children to stay until the age of 18. Not only is it difficult to establish the exact age of children who have been abandoned, but reintegrating young adults back into the community is a huge problem that almost no one addresses. Growing up institutionalised prevents people from engaging in greater society, and children without parents struggle to survive alone without the support network that comes with growing up in a family and community. I spoke to two participants who had grown up in an orphanage themselves, and they both told me that they struggled to find independence and support when they left their orphanage.

It must be acknowledged that orphanages, although initially a Western introduction, have been replicated as a model by Ugandans as well. This is an example of how Western knowledge and solutions are being reproduced in a non-Western context and relates to Bhabha’s idea of mimicry, whereby ‘colonial mimicry is the desire for a reformed, recognizable Other, *as a subject of a difference that is almost the same, but not quite*’ (1994: 122, emphasis in original). The Oriental production of the Orient is also a reproduction of the Western system of representation. In postcolonial writings, mimicry refers to the imitations and desires of the colonised to sever ties with their traditional culture in pursuit of moving towards the power of the colonisers (Bhabha, 1994; Kumar, 2011). Drawing on the work of Spivak, Young writes that ‘when subaltern groups participate in the production of knowledge [...] they thereby begin to assume a position of privilege’ (1990: 170). This position of power and privilege becomes visible in the NGO world when Ugandans running orphanages are also seen as professionals or experts in the eyes of poorer Ugandans, who bring their children to orphanages to be institutionalised.

Ugandan social workers told me that they often feel like they have their hands tied when it comes to standing up to their employers and the people who run organisations. One solution that I particularly liked was the way that one organisation decided on the outcome of a case based on a democratic voting system. One social worker told me that ‘after assessments we come together as a team [and] when we are done presenting [the case] the team will vote. After voting when we have all decided, the highest, biggest number wins and the client is admitted’. This approach demonstrates an attempt to eliminate the power imbalance between the social workers and the people higher up in the organisation. Sadly, it also demonstrates how power relations within NGOs can prohibit Ugandan social workers, who know the local cultural contexts, from reuniting children with families when Western orphanage staff do not support these decisions. This refusal to listen to local experts is particularly harrowing, and ties in with postcolonial beliefs of incorporating the subaltern voice and questioning the domination of Western knowledge.

6.8 Maintaining Donor Relations

Every NGO in my study was heavily reliant on donors for the majority, if not all, of their funding (one orphanage was only 75% donor-funded and received the rest of their money from school fees and farming activities). In fact, many smaller NGOs are so reliant on donations as their main source of income that they would ‘immediately collapse without donor support’ (Tvedt, 1998: 29), and I was told in an interview that ‘as long as you can teach the kids to smile when a camera comes out, the money keeps rolling in’. Whilst funding in the form of donations is not problematic in itself, serious issues arise when donors influence the agenda of organisations (by proselytising children, for example). Orphanages are also given a financial incentive to keep children institutionalised instead of resettling them with families because they have ‘marketed to their donors that this is a house full of orphans’, one respondent told me. This is problematic because it promotes the over-use of orphanages as the best solution for Ugandan children, whilst ultimately failing to empower local people.

One participant who was critical towards orphanages told me that because the majority of Jinja’s orphanages are funded by American evangelicals, in order to move away from the orphanage model there is a need to make American churches aware of the problems surrounding these children’s homes. In fact, many Christians that I spoke to told me that supporting orphans is a very “Christian” thing to, so there is an urgent need for more advocacy and awareness amongst the groups of people who support these institutions. Matthews (2008) writes extensively about the role of the privileged in responding to poverty, and that research, teaching, public speaking and advocacy is necessary in Western (or

otherwise privileged) contexts in order to promote sustainable solutions that actually work for the poor.

Chapter Seven: Conclusion

'Everywhere I have looked, raw, filthy, human need and brokenness have been on display, begging for someone to meet them, fix them [...] I wanted to share God's love with people who otherwise might not know it'

(Davis, 2012: 23-24)

7.1 Summary of Findings

The purpose of this research has been to look at how orphanages disempower local people. Orphanages have been over-used in Jinja to cure the symptoms of poverty rather than addressing the underlying causes. In answering my research question, orphanages disempower local people by creating a dependency and quick-fix solution that destroys incentives for local people. Parents often do not understand the implications of signing over the rights of their child, and this misinformation is disempowering and misleading. Moreover, the absence of alternative solutions leaves parents with no other options but to institutionalise their children and leave them in the legal care of strangers.

Because the vast majority of orphanages (and indeed NGOs in Jinja) are funded and run by Christian actors, my research has looked at the influence of faith-based organisations in development work. It is interesting to note orphanages are not promoted as sustainable or appropriate solutions for care of vulnerable children in the West, yet these institutions are considered “good enough” within an African context. A lack of knowledge coupled with a lack of understanding of local culture, history and social circumstances in Uganda has allowed almost anyone with financial resources to run an NGO. Furthermore, the lack of accountability and transparency within the non-governmental sector has been aided by corruption and a weak and decentralised state.

An incredible amount of money and resources are being wasted through the institutionalisation of children, instead of investing in projects and programmes that empower local people to care for their own children themselves. Part of the problem is the increased demand by local families who want to place their children in orphanages, but this is also driven by the large supply of these organisations in the first place. There is nothing wrong with wanting to dedicate a career or financial resources to helping others, but the global community has a responsibility to listen to the needs of local people in order to find sustainable solutions that work.

Using a postcolonial theoretical framework, I have been able to analyse the ways in which structures and widely accepted practices contribute to the

disempowerment and further marginalisation of poor people. Fanon's writing on the struggles for legitimacy by non-whites can clearly be linked to the struggles of Ugandans working within the NGO sector. White privilege is the visible outcome of racist structures that inherently seek to benefit Western people working in Jinja, whilst the focus on promoting Christian values shows little progress from the practices of missionaries in the colonial era. The promotion of orphanages as a development "solution" fails to incorporate the opinions of the marginalised poor, and therefore clear links can be drawn to the postcolonial writings on the Subaltern Voice that has been written about extensively by authors like Gayatri Spivak. The domination of Western knowledge systems and solutions can be seen as a way of replicating colonial power structures that offered little in terms of counter-narratives. Furthermore, a lack of responsibility, education and understanding of local contexts and customs has ensured a rise of White Saviours flocking to Uganda in the name of serving God and helping people in a way that is unsustainable and ethically problematic, as seen through short-term mission trips and volunteering. The power divisions between local and international staff are magnified through the domination of Western knowledge and solutions. Lastly, corruption and weak institutions are allowing bad practices to continue and are contributing to the disempowerment of local people.

Whilst my criticisms might be difficult to generalise to each and every orphanage in Jinja, all of them are guilty of at least some of my critiques. It must also be acknowledged that structural social problems like poverty and corruption are incredibly complex, and there is a real risk of reducing these issues when discussing solutions. For now, some orphanages do have a place in Jinja for the foreseeable future, and they are deemed necessary for some families who are unfit to care for their own children. The problem at large is the excessive over-use and reliance on orphanages as a "quick fix" solution, and these orphanages need to be phased-out responsibly which will take time. Partly, there is need for a cultural change amongst local Ugandans, to understand when orphanages are necessary and what other solutions should be available to them. Cultural attitudes and practices are elastic and will change and adapt over time. The responsibility lies primarily amongst decision-makers to promote alternative care more aggressively, and for civil society and the non-governmental sector to accommodate to these needs and include the marginalised poor as actors in these processes.

Many respondents spoke about positive changes that the government is currently promoting to get organisations on board with family preservation and foster care. The government is trying to steer away from orphanages as a solution, and I was told that a few years ago these conversations about alternative care were virtually unheard of. One woman soberly told me though, that 'talk is talk', and that many NGOs are unwilling to get on board with these grandiose government plans.

7.2 Future Recommendations

Whilst the purpose of this paper is not to make policy recommendations, it must be emphasised that solutions promoted by NGOs should focus on addressing the underlying issues of poverty. Matthews (2008) writes that there is an urgent need to interrogate the ideas and practices that have dominated the development agenda but failed to yield results. It is only once these dominant ideas have been interrogated and thoroughly questioned that we can move towards proposing, analysing and debating other solutions. The responsibility falls not only on decision-makers high up, but also calls for action amongst NGOs and other civil society actors to listen to the true needs of the local communities in finding better solutions. There is also a need for more research to be conducted on the topic of NGO-run orphanages, particularly including vulnerable families and parents of children in orphanages as research participants.

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Appendix 1: Summary of Fieldwork

To Whom It May Concern,

I am a master student in Development Studies from Lund University in Sweden, and I am conducting thesis fieldwork in Jinja between January-March 2016. My fieldwork is fully funded by a Minor Field Study (MFS) research grant awarded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) and Lund University.

You have been asked to participate as an interviewee in my fieldwork. My research aims to answer the question: **how can non-governmental organisations (NGOs) empower local people** and I am focusing on the role of non-state actors in a developing country context. Developing-country governments are often considered to be weak and cannot always provide essential services to their populations, which is why NGOs are crucial actors in development when they step in and provide assistance. I have chosen to focus on NGO-run orphanages as important actors in development as well as alternative solutions to orphan care.

Participants taking part in my research are extremely valuable and the information I receive will make an important contribution to my research. All participants and the organisations that they represent/work for will be guaranteed full anonymity and will not be named anywhere in my project. You will also have the right to withdraw from my research at any point in time if you change your mind about participating, which means that any information you have provided will not be used in my study.

By agreeing to be interviewed you have given me approval to include you in my research. If you have any questions or concerns you can bring them up at any time in the interview or contact me after the interview has been completed using the contact information provided below.

I wish to extend my sincerest gratitude for your participation and I look forward to working with you.

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Appendix 2: NGO Interview Summary

The purpose of my research is to answer the question **how can non-governmental organisations (NGOs) empower local people** and I am focusing on the role of non-state actors in a developing country context. I have chosen to focus on NGO-run orphanages as important actors in development as well as alternative solutions to orphan care.

Below are some of the questions and themes we will be discussing in our interview. The interview is semi-structured and open-ended so other discussions can and will take place naturally.

- 1. Describe yourself and your background**
- 2. Describe the NGO you work for**
- 3. What are the general and specific aims of the organisation?**
- 4. What are some of the problems with running an NGO in Uganda?**
- 5. Has the organisation changed how it works since it started? How and why?**
- 6. What are the biggest issues you/the organisation faces?**
- 7. Do you feel there are any ethical problems in your line of work?**
- 8. What would you change or wish was different about your work or how your NGO works?**
- 9. How important do you think that the work you do is?**

If there are any questions you feel uncomfortable answering or do not know the answer to please say so in the interview.

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Appendix 3: NGO Interview Guide

Main Focus	Probe for	Themes
Describe yourself and your background	Education, nationality, interests, time spent in Jinja, overseas experience, future plans	Qualifications and experience
Describe the NGO you work for	What is your position, how did you get the job, who does the NGO work for/with, how old is the NGO, how is it funded, domestic/international registration, is it faith-based, local vs. international staff members, does it only work in Jinja, does it take volunteers (qualification requirements? what are they allowed to do?), how many children live here (real or social orphans)	Power relations NGO agendas
What are the general and specific aims of the organisation?	What is the organisation striving to accomplish (long-term and short-term), what would be considered “a success story” for the NGO (provide examples?), what framework does the NGO use (FBO or development-based?), whom does the NGO exclude (religion? Gender?)	Empowerment
What are some of the problems with running an NGO in Uganda?	NGO registration, corruption/bribes, employment, funding, work permits, reactions from the local community	Corruption Accountability Government State Agency and power
Has the organisation changed how it works since it started? How and why?	What is the relationship like between ministry and NGO, expat vs. local staff (different salaries/office space/benefits?), have solutions/procedures become more ‘indigenous’ or local?	Power relations
What are the biggest issues you/the organisation faces?	Funding, staff, people you serve	Ethics
Do you feel there are any ethical problems in your line of work?	Have you ever reflected over your position in Africa (race, gender, age)? Do you feel qualified for your job position? Would you be able to do a similar job in your home country? Is it okay to step in and care for other people’s children?	Power relations Ethics
What would you change or wish was different about your line of work or how your NGO works?’	What improvements or changes do you think could be made? Would these changes be possible?	Power relations Agenda Accountability
How important do you think that the work you do is?	Do you believe in what the organisation does? What would you have done differently?	Significance of NGO CDD

Appendix 4: Focus Group Interview Guide

Main Focus	Probe For
Describe a little bit about yourself	Education, time at NGO, experience
Why are orphanages so popular in Africa?	Solutions in the past, supply and demand, money and western interventions
What is good about orphanages? What is bad?	What can be done to improve this
What are some of the problems with running an NGO in Uganda?	NGO registration, corruption/bribes, employment, funding, work permits, reactions from the local community
Who should take care of children when the parents are struggling?	Examples
When should a child be placed in an orphanage? When should it not?	Examples
What other solutions are there instead of orphanages that can work in Uganda?	Alternative care, domestic versus international adoption and foster care
What are some of the bad things that happen when you're working?	Bribes, corruption, abuse, fake stories, lies
If your friend, neighbour or sister wanted to place their child in an orphanage, what advice would you give?	Best solutions, priorities