The criticism of child sponsorship:

A way to preoccupy the minds of academics or a concern for the future of development?

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Abstract

This research provides an overview of some of the frequently occurring themes in discussion of academic criticism toward child sponsorship with Swedish sponsorship staff. The study aims to provide a deeper understanding of child sponsorship, their purpose, and critique, than the one that can be draw from the existing literature which remains largely detached to the perspectives of the people on the ground. This thesis will work as a bridge between academia and civil society organisations in the discussion of child sponsorship programmes. This is an exploratory researched using the qualitative method of semi-structured and structured interviews with six different Swedish organisations that are currently working, or previously has worked, with child sponsorship. The study is informed by the most commonly occurring theories in the critical literature of child sponsorship: neo-colonialism, neoliberalism, and post-humanitarianism. The result of this study shows that organisations engaged more with the older critique of child sponsorship and less with the most modern stands of critique. How organisation engaged with the critique depend on their definitions of poverty. The greatest strength of child sponsorship, according to informants, is their ability to generate solidarity between people, something the literature does not address.

Key words: *Child sponsorship programs, poverty, neocolonialism, neoliberalism, post-humanitarianism, staff interviews, depoliticization*
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1. Introduction

Child sponsorship (CS) has been subjected to a lot of controversies during the last five decades. Child sponsorship is a type of fundraising that connects a child from a poor community with a sponsor (typically in a Western country). The sponsor sponsors this child through monthly donations and commonly also keeps in contact with the child through letter writing. Initially CS was based on individual direct donation to one child or family, today most (although not all) organizations instead work with community-based CS. The difference is that the sponsor's donations do not go directly to one child but to a collective fund in a community that helps fund necessities for all children in that community. When it first emerged, child sponsorship programmes were an incredibly innovative fundraising strategy of its time. As the development paradigm evolved, new perspectives and voices began to question the motives, efficiency, and the consequences of the programmes. Child sponsorship programmes (CSP) has for the last decades been accused of - among other things - portraying poverty in simplistic ways, creating dependency rather than development, exploiting the need of children to attract donors and reinforcing colonial and cultural stereotypes of the West as superior (Ove 2013).

Although the glory days of child sponsorships may be over, the strategy continues to be popular among sponsors and organisations. CS are superiorly efficient in raising funds from private individuals compared to other development marketing practices (Wydick et al 2013). Based on 2013 estimates 9 million children are being sponsored worldwide and CS organisations annually raise more than USD 3.3 billion in funds from sponsors (Ibid.).

1.1 Significance

As stated, CS continues to be a popular and widespread fundraising and development strategy, while also being one of the most debated development activities. This could make one ask why organisations continue using CS despite all the criticism that they have been targeted with. The issue with the academic debate around CS is that it is very theoretical, and it does not fully interact with the perspectives of the people working on the ground. Therefore, the criticism is often poorly understood and brushed away with arguments that do not take it fully seriously. Meanwhile, the criticism continues to be highly theoretical and criticising without offering many solutions to the problems they propose. Isn't CS better than doing nothing? This puzzle

is what inspired this thesis, and which will work as a bridge between academia and civil society organisations.

The widespread popularity of CS combined with the harsh criticism aimed at them makes the issues of understanding CS for what they are very important. The critical arguments around CS are at times harsh and, irrespective of whether they are justified or not, it is important that they are being addressed. If we do not fully understand CS, we can risk either disregarding its potential or overlooking its problems. Furthermore, after we understand their consequences and benefits, we are able to do a fairer assessment of whether or not we want to use them.

1.2 Research aim and question

The aim of this thesis is to provide a deeper understanding of child sponsorships, their function, why they are used, and why they are criticised, than the one that can be drawn from the existing literature. I will do this by comparing the most critical theories of the literature with perspective and reflections for people that are working in the sector.

The research question of this study is:

- How do Swedish NGOs working with child sponsorship programs engage with academic criticism towards them?

1.3 Delimitations

This is a descriptive study that does not aim to answer any normative questions of CSP. Rather the aim of this study is to contribute to the empirical and theoretical debate which can be used as a foundation for answering such questions in future research.

This study will also limit itself to only deal with contemporary arguments and theories of CS. The field of development is constantly changing and since the practice of CS is almost 100 years old the literature and theories concerned with CS are many, some are outdated and no longer relevant for the modern reality of CS.

2. Background

CSP has a long history reaching at least one hundred years back in time. Although the exact origin of CS remains unknown. Some of the earliest evidence of CSP was found in the aftermath of the First World War, when organisations such as the Save the Children fund (Save the children) and Society of Friends were founded. After the First World War, these organisations began to help disadvantaged children in several European countries through sponsorships. (Watson & Clarke 2014). Sometime after the Second World War, as European countries began to recover, the necessity for sponsoring European children decreased. About the same time, the big Western development project took off, and therefore the successful European sponsor strategy would be employed to the Southern part of the world (Ibid.). CS were now working in a new context, no longer sponsoring disadvantaged orphans but children living in poverty far away. This new setting that CS found itself in would pose new difficulties such as colonial ties between the new sponsor-children and the sponsors, cultural differences that made meaningful communication difficult and increased transaction costs (Ibid.). people were now beginning to question CSP which led to many changes within the programs and organisations. Today most CSP operate very differently than when they were first established, but still much critique persists. The critics are many and supporters too, and a common ground is yet to be found.

3. Literature review & Theoretical framework

This literature review introduces the most common point of critique discussed within the academic debate around CSP. These points of critique are presented within their theoretical frameworks resulting in three different strands of theoretical literature being the basis for this academic debate. The stands include the neo-colonial, the neo-liberal critique, and the post humanitarian school of thought. Although presented separately, they are largely influenced by each other, hence they will be presented in chronological order, with neocolonail theory first and the post-humanitarian theory which is highly influenced by the neo-colonial and critical neoliberal understanding of CS.

These three theories will also lay out the theoretical framework for this study.

3.1 Neo-colonialism

One of the most common and oldest critiques of CS is that they reinforce stereotypes of the superior Western saviour and nurturing the "tale of the three worlds". Hallett (2016) argues that CS reinforces the stereotypes of the helpless others through the narratives of salvation upon which it rests. These beliefs, which already permeates much of Western societies, are strengthened by charity marketing that plays on them (Neilson & Mittelman 2012). The effectiveness of CS as a marketing strategy lies in its use of children – especially Southern children (Ove 2013). Turning to white adults to convince them that they are needed by black children makes for effortless persuasion considering the already existing power relation between them in terms of age and "race" (Ibid.). This use of essentialized categories, rather than poverty pornographic representation is argued to be what makes CS especially problematic (Ibid.). Critics claim that this relationship reproduces cultural stereotypes, Western hegemony and paternalistic attitudes (Neilson & Mittelman 2012; Watson & Clarke 2014; Noh 2019).

The paternalistic critique towards CS argues that by presenting children as helpless and in need of other adults also shows an incapability of its relatives to provide that child with help (Burman, 1994). Is not unusual that CS organisations use words like "parent" or "family" for describing the sponsorship activity (Noh, 2019). It is argued that the sponsor-children's parents become disenfranchised by the type of paternalistic "extra parent" attitudes, that asks other people to take on the financial support of a child that normally is the responsible of its actual parents (Burman, 1994; 1996). Burman (1994) argues that this relationship is disturbingly similar to that of colonial paternalism, where the aid givers – or colonizers – are acting in loco parentis on the behalf of the aid recipients – or colonized. Due to the discussion above, scholars have questioned the use of children to market charity. Burman (1996) points out, as a reason for this, that *"It is through being infantilized by sharing the position of their children that [adults] gain legitimate access to 'our help.'"* (Ibid.).

Zarzycka (2016) unpacks the practice of marketing charity around and highlights how the financial bound between children and sponsors are arranged as an affective rather than economic relationship in order to appeal to sponsors desire for gratitude and self-contentment. Through the direct-communication between the sponsor and sponsor-child, sponsors track their donations and the difference they make. This is argued to be the reason CS is such a

popular donation alternative - it allows donors to engage in charity and flatters their egos at the same time. (Watson & Clarke 2014; Hallett 2016)

The reason donors are portrayed as generous and compassionate is that poverty is presented as something that occurs in isolation from the West, hence questions of political responsibility and power structures are not acknowledged (Ove, 2013). By solely focusing on the generosity of donors, CS advertisement disregards the historical ties between the North and South with its origin in the colonial period, a relationship characterised by domination and exploitation of the latter by the former for centuries before this *generous help* (Ibid.). Rabbitts (2013) argues that this romanticized relationship between sponsors and sponsored are prohibiting deeper discussions of the meaning of solidarity and root causes of poverty. This de-historicization and depoliticization is the main concern of the neoliberal critique towards CS.

3.2 Neoliberalism

The major points made by critical scholars that focus on the politics and depoliticization of CS are that they depoliticize charity and present charity as a matter of ethics and care rather than politics and justice (Rabbitts 2013), neglects the importance of development education (Watson & Clarke 2014; Zarzycka 2016) and are uppermost designed to be appealing to donors (Watson & Clarke 2014). This critique concerns the depoliticization of poverty through CS both within their operation and marketing.

CS as a development operation, does not possess the ability to eliminate poverty because its depoliticized nature does not allow it to operate outside the frames of the current status-quo therefore it cannot address the structures of poverty (Ove 2013). While CS as a marketing technique, is argued to simplify poverty by suggesting that sponsoring individual children as a solution to poverty and thereby individualising poverty, putting agency at individuals, making it harder to trace structural causes of poverty (Rabbitts 2013).

This depoliticization of charity and poverty has been argued to be the reason why CS organisations design their marketing to attract donors. When charity is presented as devoid of politics there are no arguments to connect possible donors to beneficiaries and organizations must turn to the self-benefits and noble generosity to motivate donors (Rabbitts, 2013). An

example of this is the way in which many organisations often exaggerate the impact of sponsors' relatively small donations in their marketing material by using words such as "saving" or "changing" the children's lives. Sponsors are thus invited to "save" Southern lives for a minimal effort. Such a portrayal offers a distorted and depoliticized image of reality and contributes to reinforcing Western hegemony (Ove, 2013).

This trend of depoliticization and responsibility shifting is exactly what concerns the critics. That organisations, at first hand, design their operations on being appealing to donors rather than on their own expertise becomes problematic if this compromises long-term goals for effective fundraising (Zarzycka, 2016).

Watson and Clarke (2014) argue that how development organisations choose to market their operations can have significant consequences for development education, at its worst it can hollow out the public understanding of poverty and development. They stress the necessity of CS organisations to consider what messages they transmit while marketing and if these encourage effective citizenship or not. The theory of post-humanitarianism indeed questions the notion of effective citizenship in regard to modern humanitarianism and states that it is no longer the main focus of charity.

3.3 Post-humanitarianism

Post-humanitarianism is a relatively new theory that is concerned with the modern way in which humanitarianism manifests itself. The essence of this critique is that modern (post-) humanitarianism has transformed into something that tries to solve the problems of the disempowered without questioning the status quo that has led to this injustice (Mellado Dominguez, 2020). Chouliaraki (2010) argues that post-humanitarianism characterizes itself through a *"short-term and low-intensity form of agency, which is no longer inspired by an intellectual agenda but momentarily engages us in practices of playful consumerism."*.

Chouliaraki (2013) continues to argue that much of the modern solidarity within charity today is less about engaging with the injustice of the world and more about our own identity formation and self-fulfilment. Its marketing and persuasion are dependent on "things that sell" to feed the Western appetite for the spectacular, creating an environment of charity marketing that must

first share spectacular images or anecdotes, attaining a certain entertainment value, to reach out to the masses (Bajde 2009). Hence, any deeper discussions of poverty and the underlying power structures of the world order are avoided through this new form of solidarity.

The main reason behind the development of post-humanitarianism is argued to be an increased neoliberal hegemony within the development sector which creates increased privatization and competition within the humanitarian sector, forcing NGOs to undertake more aggressive marketing strategies (Chouliaraki 2013).

3.4 Theoretical framework & Previous research

There is to my knowledge no previous studies like this one. A few somewhat similar studies have been done of interviewing CSP staff (Ove 2013; Watson & Clarke 2014). However, these studies have not engaged the sponsors staff with the criticism and nor offered any deeper discussions on how sponsorship staff argue around their work.

Since there has not been much previous research, no specified theories on how CS staff argue around these issues are available in the literature. Therefore, this study will build on the theories from the critical literature on CS presented above and compare these with the arguments and perspectives of CS staff. Accordingly, the theories of neo-colonialism, critical neo-liberalism and post-humanitarianism will together make up the theoretical framework of this research.

4. Methodology

In this section the motivations for using interviews for this exploratory study will be described, as well as how these where planned and conducted. Secondly, I will address my method of data analysis and lastly some ethical and medical considerations to this study will be discussed.

4.1 Research method

To get a better understanding of the motivations for working with child sponsorships and explore how people working with them engage with the criticism around them the interviews with sponsorship staff were conducted.

Qualitative interviews are suitable for exploratory research and handle questions of knowledge that may not be readily articulated or are subjected to a lot of conflicting perspectives from individuals or groups that are involved in the phenomenon (Gubrium et.al. 2012). Hence, qualitative interviews were necessary to grasp the complexity of the different perspectives in this study.

Semi-structured interviews are appropriate to use when the researcher knows enough about a certain topic to construct relevant questions to ask but not enough to foresee the answers of the participants (Gubrium et.al. 2012). Hence, a semi-structured form was used to ask general questions of procedures and opinions of the organisations and informants. However, to engage the informants with academic criticism and learn how they argued around the topic, a more structured form of interviewing was adopted at the second half of the interview to not influence the answer in the first part. Staff from organisations who either work with CS (CS organisation) or have previously worked with CS (former CS organisations) were invited for the interview.

For this study, only the more established organisations were used. I was familiar with all the organizations prior to interviewing them. The first criteria when selecting participating organisations was that they must be certified with a "90-account" by the Swedish Fundraising Control. The 90-account is a standard *"that the fundraising operation is being managed in an ethical and responsible way and the money goes to the intended purpose without excessive costs"* (Svensk insamlingskontroll n.d.). The 90-account is preferable since there are no Swedish laws that regulate how fundraising is carried out. Four out of the organisations that have 90-accounts, work with CSP, and whose revenues for 2019 were at least 15 million SEK participated. In addition, two organisations are not currently working with CSP, but have a long history of doing so, also were included; both organisations are among the absolute largest in Sweden. All the organisations that participated are either Swedish organisations or Swedish branches of international organisations.

Out of the ten contacted organisations six agreed to be interviewed, three declined and one did not respond. A total of six interviews were conducted. One staff member for each organisation was contacted by email, this staff member was chosen because they were perceived to be most eligible based on job-title. Sometimes the contacted staff member chose to participate in the interview, other times I was redirected to another staff member that they thought would be more suitable to answer my question. One or, in some cases, two staff members from each organisation were interviewed (according to informants' preferences). The staff members had titles such as Secretary general, Policy adviser, Fundraising manager, and Business developer etc. In the letter of invitation (see appendix) the following information was included:

- The aim and purpose of my thesis as well as the interviews.
- A short presentation of myself.
- Why I was interested in the perspective from the organisation in question.
- Promised anonymity, consent and informed that interviews would be recorded.
- Example interview questions.

The example questions were not the same questions used in the interviews, but gave an insight to the interview's focus, so that the organisations could determine the most suitable participant as well as to get a better picture of what they are agreeing to.

Due to conditions caused by the ongoing global pandemic, no interviews were conducted in person. Interviewees could choose between video, telephone, or email interviews. Four informants chose video interviews and two chose telephone interviews. Thanks to the digital interviews informants from all over Sweden could be interviewed which would not have been possible with physical interviews.

The organisations will remain anonymous in this study. Since the aim of this study is not to pinpoint specific organisations' opinions, therefore the particular answers connected to the organisations will not be relevant (Gubrium et.al. 2012). The nature of the organisation - whether it was an organization that previously or currently worked with CS and whether it used individual or community-based CS - sometimes had a significance for their answers. Where such a distinction is relevant it is provided.

Both the choice to keep organisations anonymous and give them alternative interview formats was made to enhance my chances of recruiting voluntary participants. As well as to make

participants as comfortable as possible, so that they could express themselves freely, the importance of which will be addressed in the following section.

4.2 Data collection

The interviews lasted between 30-60 minutes. They started with welcoming the participants and a few icebreakers. Then the purpose of the interview and my research and conditions such as promised anonymity, opportunity to cancel participation, and recording were repeated.

The interview consisted of two parts. The first part followed a semi structured form with questions about why the organisation had chosen to (not) work with CSP, how their work has changed throughout the years, and what they considered to be the greatest pros and cons of CSP (See appendix question 1-7). The questions were designed to capture the organisation's perception of CS and compare with the one that is presented in the literature.

The second part of the interview followed a more structured form but with space to freely motivate the answers. This part was built on eight statements (see appendix statement a-h). These statements were designed to capture the most common arguments made around CS within the critical literature (see literature review). Each of the statements are related to at least one of the three biggest critical theories within CS. Table 1 shows which statements were meant to target which theoretical strands of criticism. The participant was asked to respond to each statement with one of the following options:

1. Agree,
2. Somewhat/partly agree,
1. Disagree,

   and motivate their answers.

Table 1.

Statement:	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Neo-colonialism		■	■			■		
Neoliberalism	■			■	■		■	■
Post-humanitarianism						■	■	

At the end of the interview the informants were asked if they had additional comments and thanked for their participation.

In an interview it is important that the interviewer is flexible, allowing informants to take unexpected turns or diverge somewhat for the initial conversation, this can often provide productive information (Gubrium et.al. 2012). At the same time, the interviewer should not lose control over the interview and be able to return to its anticipated course when necessary (Ibid.). An interview guide was followed, but if an unexpected turn did occur, this was welcomed, and the interview structure became flexible.

Gubrium et.al (2012) emphasises the importance of trust between interviewer and interviewees. According to Gubrium et.al. (2012) impersonality and neutrality are not realistic for qualitative interviewing, they make trust building hard. This is especially true when the topic of the interview is sensitive. The more sensitive topic, the more trust is needed between the interviewer and informants (Ibid.). The topic of this research is not necessarily sensitive, since informants are not required to display any personal information, but to answer as a representative for their organisation. However, many informants combine their own opinions with those of their organisations, and certain aspects when discussing criticism can be viewed as sensitive by some, not least within the frames of neo-colonial critique. Therefore, it was important that informants felt that they were in a friendly environment, free to speak their mind. This was done through encouraging participants, emphasising the importance of their perspective, and expressing gratefulness for their participation. And also by approaching criticism through statements taken from the literature instead of packaging the criticism in questions about their organisation that can be mistaken for the views of the interviewer or perceived as accusatory (Dalen 2015).

4.3 Ethical considerations

This thesis was guided by the *LUMID ethical guidelines for fieldwork* a document based on the *Principles of research ethics for research in the Humanities and social science* (1990). The document states four main guiding principles for conducting research scientifically and ethically:

- Information requirement

The informants were informed of the aim of the study both in the inquiry letter and in the beginning of the interview.

- Consent requirement

The participants have full control and power of their participation. There needs to be voluntary participation in an ethically conducted research, which also includes the right for participants to withdraw from the study at any time without consequences.

- Confidentiality requirement

All information on the participants in the study should be treated with confidentiality. Only the researcher took part of the information of the participants in the study. When information on the nature of a certain organisation is relevant in this study, such information is only provided to the extent that it can still protect confidentiality.

- Use requirement

The data gathered from participants are only used for research purposes.

4.4 Methodical considerations

This section will discuss the methodical consideration and limitations to this study. How these have been addressed, alternatively, how they affect the research.

4.4.1 Reflexivity and transparency

To minimize data contamination that might appear by interviewer bias it is important that the interviewer is reflexive (Gubrium et.al. 2012). The researcher needs to be aware of how they and their approach will affect the research. The reflexive interviewer approaches all steps in the research with a critical self-awareness (Ibid.): before the interviews, the interviewer critically assesses the methods and planned approach by asking questions such as *"What am I trying to do? Why am I carrying out the interview this way? How is my approach affecting the research?"* (Ibid.).

Additionally, since biases often are hard to disclose, especially for those who carry them, transparency is an important component of research to avoid researcher biases (Gubrium et.al. 2012). Therefore, this thesis will try to be as transparent as possible with all the steps of the research by for example motivating the choice of methods, informants etc.

4.4.2 Translation

Since the interviews were done in Swedish but this thesis is written in English translatability poses a limitation to this study. When conducting qualitative research, the data is interpreted and influenced by the researcher, hence some degree of always subjectivity is inevitable, but the additional challenge of translation could further contaminate the data since language seldom can be directly translated and hence further interpretation is needed to keep the same meaning in the translations (Denzin & Lincoln 2011).To avoid the translation bias as much as possible the analysis process - writing transcripts, codes and themes - were conducted in Swedish. Thereafter the themes and some illustrative quotations were translated to English.

4.4.3 Qualitative generalisability

External validity does not mean the same for qualitative research as it does for quantitative research (Creswell & Creswell 2003). The main goal of qualitative research is generally not to ensure generalizability of the results (Ibid.), which is also true for this study. The main purpose of this study is not to generalise the findings to all Swedish CS organisations but to create an overview of some of the frequently occurring themes and perspectives among a share of Swedish CS organisations and their engagement with the critique. Accordingly, six different organisations were interviewed instead of only one. Higher generalisability could be drawn from the findings in this study if other researchers were to replicate it (Ibid.).

4.4.4 Interview skills

The more unstructured an interview is, the more interviewing skills are required (Gubrium 2012). Since I am not an experienced interviewer this is likely to have affected the extent to which meaningful data could be drawn from the participants. For example, my experience in interviewing combined with an inferior position in relation to practical knowledge of CS contributed to that I as a researcher was not fully comfortable with questioning the interviewees

as much. In addition, some of the questions were occasionally misunderstood or ambiguously formulated so that answers drew in another direction than intended.

4.5 Data analysis

Thematic analysis was used to analyse the interview data. Thematic analysis is a method for identifying patterns of meaning across a dataset which enables the researchers to make sense of shared meanings and perspectives between different interviews (Clarke & Braun 2014). The thematic analysis used in this research is a mix between the inductive (First part of the interview – open questions) and the deductive (second part of the interview – theoretical statements) approach.

In inductive data coding, codes and themes derive from the data, while the deductive approach derives from previously stated theories and concepts (Clarke & Braun 2014). That being said, in reality, coding is rarely entirely inductive or deductive. It is impossible to be solely inductive since we as researchers always bring something to the data when we analyse it, and solely deductive because we always must proceed from what is in the data (Ibid.). Hence, the thematic analysis used in this research is a mix between both, leaning toward deductive since the critical theories were in focus while coding.

4.5.1 Internal validity

The greatest strength of qualitative interview research lies in its internal validity, since data collection is freer and findings are often more detailed than in quantitative research. To ensure strong internal validity this research included – as recommended (Creswell & Creswell 2003) - careful assessment of transcripts to avoid mistakes, and constantly going back to the transcripts to compare codes and themes with the raw data to make sure no shift in the meanings between codes/themes and raw data had occurred. To further ensure internal validity quotation was used to present the data which made sure that the data analysis remained directly linked to the raw data, as recommended (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane 2006).

A validity limitation is that only the reasoner had responsibility to ensure the data validity in the results, member checking was not used. This was out of respect for the informant's time

but also because such a method comes with limitations of its own because member checking can become informants' response to the researcher's interpretation rather than the initial question (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane 2006). Instead, the researcher actively listened during the interviews, asked for clarification and follow-up questions if needed.

5. Findings and analysis

In this section, the main arguments put forward by interviewees in relation to the critique of CS and its three main theories will be presented, organized in four themes. The four themes capture the main topic of the data. The two fist themes are mainly related to the neo-colonial perspective while the latter are informed by the critical neoliberal and post-humanitarian theories. However, there are overlap between the theories within all the themes.

5.1 Cultural stereotypes and saviorism

The risk of reinforcing cultural and historical stereotypes through CS was one of the few points of criticism within the neo-colonial field that was explicitly mentioned by one of the informants.

There were two statements in the interview that were directly targeted to address the neo-colonial critique of CS (see figure 1 & appendix). Towards statement B, that was concerned with the way CS tends to reproduce colonial stereotypes, the answers varied. Out of four CS organisations three somewhat agreed and one disagreed. Both former CS organisations agreed, one of them even stated that this was the main reason why they had abandoned CS. The other organisation meant that the Western hegemony that CS risk reinforcing, makes CS difficult to apply in their work: *We are an international organisation with colleges all over the world [...] And we have come a relatively long way in cooperating with people in other countries and then it's not possible to have the attitude that one goes there and knows best what works, it doesn't work like that.*

Similar to the critical literature of CS this quotation illustrated the notion that a hierarchical relationship between the West and the South is built-in to the design of CS.

From the organizations that somewhat agreed with this criticism the interviewees said that there have been internal discussions about this within their organisations. They all agreed that there is a risk that such stereotypes are reinforced with CS but emphasised that it does not necessarily have to be the case, but that it is dependent on how they market their programs. These organisations said that it is important for them not to reinforce these stereotypes: *"We are trying not to fortify these stereotypes. [...] We have a clear picture tonality that is more positive than exploitative. [...] But then of course people's interpretations and their own perceptions are hard to influence."*

Organisations display an awareness of the neo-colonial stereotypes that are at play in CS. The same interview was one of few who brought up this criticism voluntarily when discussing disadvantages with CS:

"It might be the base problem of CS in all its forms that one creates a contact between two people that are not always fully balanced from a power perspective. [...] The power relation is there, and it is inevitable that that's the way it is. But it's also a lot about how to package and communicate it to the donors. You can play on very strong emotions which can become very troublesome."

The interviewee emphasises that there is an uneven power balance in this relationship that is inevitable but also that it can be enhanced or toned down considerably. The interviewees say that they do this by creating a communication and mutual understanding between them. This statement is somewhat ambiguous since it both states that this power relation is inevitable but also that it can be diminished. The literature would argue that such a thing is not possible.

There was some spread in the amount of agency that was placed on donors in this problem, the organisation above places some responsibility on the donors and how they understand their campaigns while the other two organisations who somewhat agreed with this criticism had similar arguments but emphasized their own responsibility to make sure donors understands them:

"That is a very important and very difficult question. That can become the case. But I think that it's a lot about how one presents it, and we must take a huge responsibility in how we present the children and the actors that we work with."

The same interviewee discussed whether showing the reality of their work could reinforce these stereotypes. She rhetorically asked if she, as a white woman, had done anything she should not have by traveling to one of the areas where they were working in, to plan and discuss their operations and then documenting and presenting it. She said: *"We have talked about white saviourism. [...] does the problem lie in what we choose to see?"*

The interviewee that did not agree with this stereotype critique argued along similar lines but with other conclusions. This interviewee said: *"It is about our perception of ourselves and I understand that it's true for many people. I think that is a pretty deplorable formulation. That the rich white man helps the poor black man... Yes, and at the same time that's what we do"*

This interviewee said that this discussion does not lead anywhere and that it is just to occupy academics. The interviewee meant that if we do not view ourselves as superior CS will not be an issue. At the heart of this statement there lies some truth. It is true that the attitude of the West has created these stereotypes and hierarchy in the first place, however today, it's not only about our attitudes. As critics would argue, to say this is to put off both the history and politics of the relationship between the "West and the rest" (Ove 2013). Here responsibility is put on the prejudices of the individuals rather than on the postcolonial structures that keeps them alive. CS is a top-down operation, designed by Westerners and applied to the Southern countries.

However, starting at the other end, one could argue that all contact between the West and the South would be problematic because of this. As one informant described the line between doing development and doing saviourism is sometimes unclear. Indeed, the post-development school would argue that there is no such division. While it is important to acknowledge the underlying power structures of both CS and development, arguing that there can be no balanced contact between the two may to some extent lie in "what we chose to see".

The other main neo-colonial critique towards CS that was discussed in interviews was the risk of reproducing patronising attitudes between the north and the South. Statement C brought

attention to this risk: *CS risks undermining the parental role of the child's parents since donors take economic responsibility for the children'.*

No organisations agreed with this statement except for one that had abandoned CS and *guessed* that this could be true.

Most organisations said that in their case this was not true but could be true for other CSP. One interviewee said: *"In our case I don't agree. We are not trying to cover up for parents' responsibilities, our work is carried through in the whole community."* And when asked if the interviewee thought that it would be different if they worked with individual CS the interviewee said that they thought so.

The organization that worked with individual CS said that this was not true and that they "*help both the child and the parents together".*

Only one organisation expanded on the patronizing built in CS by problematizing the Swedish word for "sponsor": "fadder", which in Swedish is a synonym to godparent and commonly used when referring to someone who takes on a moral responsibility for another person. The interviewee argued that the word "fadder" unlike the word "sponsor" emphasises the hierarchical relationship between sponsor and sponsored. This feature is unique for Swedish CS that fortifies the "extra parent" mentality of CS and risks involving donors too much in the children's lives.

The scarce engagement with the paternalistic critique is surprising considering the strong engagement with the neo-colonial stereotypes critique. One possible reason for this could be that statement C was not as well formulated as statement B, hence did not properly invite the interviewees to discuss paternalism within CS.

5.2 CS as a relationship

The third part of the neo-colonial critique addresses the relationship between sponsors and sponsored and how CSP which is criticised for only functioning for the benefit one the donors.

Most of the interviewees described the personal relationship between sponsor and sponsor-child as positive, either for the child, the sponsor, or both. When explicitly asked – with statement F – three of the organizations that currently work with CS agreed and one somewhat agreed.

The organisations that agreed emphasized both that the child often benefits and are empowered from knowing that someone cares about them and is interested in their life. From the sponsor perspective, it is argued that this relationship both provides the feel-good experience of knowing that one has done something good and is an interesting way to gain more knowledge of the life situations of others.

The organisations that somewhat agreed said that they believed that it is positive for the sponsored children, but they emphasized that it is very individual and that they cannot say that sponsored children generally benefit from that relationship. However, they mention several ways in how it benefits the sponsor, the same as mentioned by other organisations:
"Child sponsorship creates a closeness to our activities for the donors. Through the possibility of mail correspondence with the child you get an insight into that child's life and what it is like to live in that area. As well as the possibility to see how one's donations makes a difference over time."

Additionally, they stated that the response from a child and emotional connection is important for many donors.

Most of the informants opposed the claim made in the literature that this relationship is only for the self-fulfilling benefit of the donors, some by saying that the child also benefits and

other by questioning how much the child really benefits but still emphasizing the educational aspects of the relationship as beneficial for awareness of poverty.

The relationship between children and sponsors as a way of raising awareness in the north and gaining insights to the realities of poverty was underlined by almost all of the organisations as one of the biggest strengths of CS. Even one of the organizations that had abandoned CS mentioned the ability of CS to create bounds of understanding and solidarity between peoples as something we can learn from CS.

One of the organizations expanded on CS as a tool to increase Western understanding of poverty even further by suggesting that the relationship between sponsors and sponsor-child is not only a recreation of a hierarchical relationship between north and South but can, on the contrary, be used as a tool to shatter colonial stereotypes: *"The relationship that child sponsorships are creating makes it possible to communicate beyond those stereotypes and to nuance it, due to a more long-term and coherent communication."*

Along the lines of these arguments CS would be one of the better strategies when it comes to stereotype-free fundraising. This feature of CS is not discussed in the literature.

A few of the CS organizations acknowledged, in different ways, some of the potential risks of this relationship described in the critical literature. One informant argued that if this relationship becomes too tight it can contribute to jealousy among the sponsor-children because one child may have a sponsor that is very engaged, and another child's sponsor might not be. Another concern that was raised was the "ownership"-attitude that could blossom from these relationships, that some sponsors developed a feeling of entitlement toward the child that they sponsor. This interviewee argued that it is important that donors know that just because they get a name, pictures, and "access" to a child it does not mean that they have the right to anything other than to sponsor the child, and that donors need to know that they are just a part of a group that contributes to change the situation for a community of which "my" sponsor-child acts as a representative. The interviewee mentioned that educating donors is of great importance to avoid attitudes like these:

"Should one work with child sponsorship one must be clear about what it means, and what it absolutely does not mean. We who are working with the concept of child sponsorship have a responsibility to educate donors about what it actually entails."

The same interviewee stated that child sponsorship is an obsolete concept and that their organisation is in the process of trying to replace child sponsors (faddrar) with monthly givers.

5.3 CS as a development strategy

This section will address the discussions and critique that targets the development activities of CS, in distinction with the marketing activities of CS. This theme will not be elaborated as much as the others considering there are not many organisations that use CS as a development strategy today. Still, the theme is worth including both because the distinction between CS as a development strategy and CS as a marketing technique is important to understand. But also, because many organisations that did not use CS as a development strategy brushed off much of the criticisms by redirecting it to organisations that use this type of CS.

Statement E in the interviews were specifically designed to target the neoliberal critique of CS as an activity of development addressing the inability of CS to generate sustainable development and to eradicate poverty. All the CS organisations disagreed. However, it should be noted that only one of them works with the classical type of CS as a complete development activity.

One informant separated their community-based sponsorship to other individual (classical) sponsorship and argued that their own CS could generate real development while individual CS might be liable for only "relieving the symptoms'' of poverty.

However, in this discussion it is easy to be confused. Most CSP today, as previously stated, barely affects the activities on the ground but are only used for marketing, and sponsors are more like monthly donors with a different name. Therefore, in most CSP it is hard to know what is caused by the CS and what could have been even if sponsors were exchanged to monthly givers. One of the organizations who answered, "not agree", and stated that their CS

could create long-term development, was also very active with political work. Thus, if their success in generating development was created thanks to or despite CS might not be easy to say. This became evident in another interviewee's response: *"Child sponsorship programs in itself does not do anything, but the way we work with it can generate development."*

The interview describes that CS, because it is used here only as a marketing tool, does not impact their development operation and its effects, implying that development was rather created despite CS than thanks to it.

The organization that did work with individual sponsor-children argued that the ability of CS to create long-term development lies not in its design but in the volume.
"It's an enormous power in this small child sponsorship for the families and their environment. And if we had enough sponsors, we could have changed not only families but villages, regions and eventually nations."

One of the former CS organisations answered with *"Yes and no. It does not focus on the primary causes of poverty. [....] But if many families get some support then of course it becomes like a micro-movement. So, change on a small scale can be generated but there will be no big push."*

The latter argument is similar to the former, the difference is that the quotation from the individual CS organisation relies on a 100% agentic definition of poverty while the latter rather treats poverty as a mix between agentic and structural factors. The former quotation is not compatible with the arguments made in the literature which state that the depoliticised nature of CS only allows them to work against poverty within the very controlled and narrow walls and not challenge the status quo, so that no matter the amount of money put in, real development cannot happen. The second quotation is more similar to the argument made in the literature.

The other former CS organization was the only organisation that fully agreed with this statement. The interviewee from this organization even argued that CS – at least individual – could complicate the local cooperation and mobilization necessary to create long-term development. Similar to scholars who argue that it takes focus away from the root causes of poverty.

A few organisations acknowledge a benefit with CS that are not mentioned in the literature. These organisations argued that CS provides an opportunity to build strong bonds of trust with the communities that participate and thus makes it possible to work with tougher and stigmatized issues in a community such as female genital mutilation. Combating harmful and deeply rooted customs is something that can contribute to long-term development in a community. Could this be done just as well without CS or is it a particular ability of CS? This is worth further attention than what is room for in this paper.

5.4 CS as a marketing strategy

This theme was created to combine all the activities, arguments and critique that is related to the relative modern activity of CS as a marketing technique. As stated earlier, this division is important because much of the critique of CS is directed to CS as a development activity rather than a marketing technique and thus are not applicable to most modern CS organisations. The critique that concerns itself with CS as a marketing technique is a mix between the post-humanitarian and modern neo-liberal school.

That CS for many organizations is a marketing technique designed around the preferences of donors is not a controversial claim for most CS staff (Ove 2013) which is also evident in this data. Seven out of eight interviewed organizations agreed with the statement that CS is better described as an elaborate fundraising technique than a comprehensive development strategy. The organization that did not agree worked with individual CS, which is a development strategy.

Neoliberal critique has accused CS of simplifying poverty in a way that could counteract consciousness of the structural root causes of poverty. This was discussed with statement H (see appendix). Three organisations somewhat agreed, two agreed and one said that even if that is the case it is not important.

Interviewees that somewhat agreed said that this can be adjusted with the way they communicate, in the same way as with neo-colonial stereotypes:

"There lies truth in that. But it's not black or white. Here, again, it comes down to how you communicate."

And another interviewee:
"I somewhat agree. Individual CS may do that. [...] I think that we are clear towards the sponsors that it's not only about one individual."

These organisations meant that there is room to communicate a more complex picture within the framework of CS, and by being clear that donations go to a community and not individuals they do not portray an individualised image of poverty. Much of the criticism does not make the same distinction between community-based CS and individual CS that many of the interviewees made. This can make it tricky to know which critique belongs where even in community-based CS who make it clear that they work collectively, one child is still used to represent the poverty of that community - something critics would argue is still individualising poverty in a simplistic way. The informants on the other hand, meant that the concretization is necessary to engage donors:
"In a way you simplify it through personalizing it, but it's also a way of getting people to understand it. For us it's important to get people to listen"

Another informant took this argument further by stating:" *Compare awareness in the West with food on the table in poor countries and you have your answer around there somewhere"*. According to this interview," awareness" in the West risks taking priority over saving lives in the South. This again, is an agentic view of poverty. However, structural change takes time, and so will eliminating poverty. This dilemma of saving lives here and now versus creating development for future generations is not always acknowledged in the literature but is constant for people working in the sector.

To some of the informants, there is a trade-off between not depoliticizing poverty and helping people quickly and effectively. The explanation for this might lie in the perception organizations have of their donors.

Statement G claimed that organisations working with poverty should present more alternatives for people to engage, besides just donating money. Similarly, the neo-liberal

critique argues that charity through CS is depoliticized and presented as a matter of ethics and care rather than politics and justice (Rabbitts 2013).

All of the interviewees said that they agreed with statement G. One interviewee addressed the concerns that the neoliberal critique raises:
"To change the world is about so much more, it's about politics, about companies. A commitment to these questions is crucial".

The commitment to also work politically was especially strong within two CS organisations. At the same time, both organisations emphasised the difficulty with involving donors in the political engagement. Organisations describe that they did not think that the public had a mutual interest for this: *"Among many organisations there is knowledge and a desire to change our way of working, but the public have another wish: to engage here and now, donate their money and be done with it".*
And organisation two: *"People listen for 10 seconds".*

These quotations demonstrate the issue with designing marketing campaigns around the perceived preferences of the donors. The organizations in the quotations do not get to use their full expertise within their marketing but are constrained to what they think donors find interesting. Hence the organization lays the responsibility on the donors, with what they convey to them, at the same time donors who only listen a few seconds are likely not interested in demanding anything different.

Dissimilar from the idea that giving money could be a way to excuse oneself for not engaging in other ways one interviewee argued that other engagements is good, but should not allow people to escape their economic commitments because: *"It's the poor who have to give way every time we want to have a think tank".*

Although the arguments vary in their formulations, if they were dismantled to their core one would see that they are largely based on the definition of poverty that the organisation has: agentic, structural or a combination, and what goal the organisation has: to change the world or ease the lives of individuals. In relation to the critique, the last quotation could either be justified by an agentic explanation of poverty or by an organisation that does not work with development but poverty alleviation.

5.4.1 Donor designed marketing

Irrespective of the goals of the organisations, the way that they market their activities matter. Critics argue that poverty is marketed as having big importance for development education (Zarzycka 2016). A donor's focus was very evident throughout most of the interviews. Especially in the motivation as to why the organisation had chosen to work with CS. Hence, the interviews confirmed the claim that CS is used because it attracts donors. When asked if CS was the most effective way to fight poverty, one organisation said:

"Absolutely not. But it's a nice way of getting donors to stay. That's the truth."

Since organizations are dependent on money to survive it is logical that they want to be attractive to donors. At the same time, the donor focus arguably becomes problematic once it is the donors' preferences rather than the expertise and values of the organization that guides their work.

Even though other benefits of CS were highlighted, all the organisations that used CS as a marketing technique emphasized the dedicated donors as one of the absolute biggest benefits with CS.

The organisations that did not use CS also described this as a disadvantage:

"The disadvantage with not having CS as well as the challenge for us is to get people to engage [...] An individual child that you can follow is much more interesting than to talk about all children's universal rights".

Two organisation discussed the problem of emphasising donors noble generosity and exaggerating the impact that the contribution of the donor have on the child's life: *"To keep on saying that thanks to you and me we are changing the world is ridiculous. Instead, we can be a part of a process and create opportunities"*. Besides these discussions, the depoliticization and de-historization of CS that enables the generous donor narrative was not addressed in the interviews.

6. Summative discussion:

Most organisations were well aware of the neo-colonial critique of CS. This is not surprising since the neo-colonial criticism of CS and development in general has been present since the 1950s.

6.1 Neo-colonial stereotypes

There was a clear agreement among interviewees that CS could be used to reinforce colonial stereotypes and Western hegemony, if this feature of CS were inherent in its ground or only one way of many to operate CS remains unclear. There was an ambivalence demonstrated in the informant arguments stating both that the power relations in CS is inevitable and that it is possible to communicate beyond them and even contradict them with CS. The discussion about colonial stereotypes and CS surrounded the problems with poverty pornographic representation and not so much the issues with using essentialized categories. The latter was by *some* informants depoliticised and the problematic not identified, through the discussion about Western self-perception.

6.2 CS as a relationship

The benefits that the sponsors had from this relationship were acknowledged in the interviews. But dissimilar to the literature, this was not presented as the main motivation for this relationship. Interviewees opposes that notion that this relationship solely exist for the benefit of the sponsor. The affective connection between sponsor and sponsored, some of the informants exist mainly as a tool to create deeper understanding for poverty. Here the sponsored children work as educators for the global north. Furthermore, in stark contrast to the postcolonial literature of CS it was also argued that CS instead of reproducing cultural stereotypes, gives an opportunity to communicate beyond these and maybe overcome them in the process. The importance of creating relationships between people around the world to produce a global understanding and more solidaric world was also brought up by one of the former CS organisations, although this informant did not suggest that such a relationship should

necessarily be between a child and an adult. Indeed, this is an interesting feature of CS that could be more investigated in another study since these interviews did not really touch upon the reasons for creating an awareness raising bond between child and adult vs adult and adult. If this relationship exists for educational reasons, a connection between two adults would arguably make for more meaningful and insightful communication and hence better understanding and awareness raising. The value of these types of cross-border relationship are not really discussed within the critical literature of CS.

6.3 CS as a development activity

CS is criticized for not generating long-term development or having the ability to challenge the status quo that reproduced poverty. However, structural change takes time, and so will eliminating poverty. The dilemma of saving lives here and now versus creating development for future generations is not always acknowledged in the literature but is constant for people working in the sector.

The individual CS organisation was the only organisation that described poverty in this fully agentic way. If the relationship between the definition of poverty and choice of activities has a correlation or is a coincidence is hard to tell by judging from only one example. It would need further research to be confirmed, but a hypothesis about this correlation could be made.

6.4 CS as a marketing strategy

A gap seems to exist between the operations and the marketing of CSP and between the knowledge of the staff and what is presented in campaigns. So why do organisations continue to hold on so tight to this marketing technique that concentrate so persistently on individual children and their poverty even after abandoning the operations of that type of CS and instead working with development operations that have more in common with just regular development work that do not incorporate child sponsors? Many of the organizations all struggled with some part of CS and in some cases even described the possible drawbacks of CS as inevitable and that they worked to tone down these as much as they could. Organizations are dependent on donors which was evident in these interviews with the strong

donor emphasis. Could it be that what donors want and what really works is not the same? Is this why CS, as Ove (2013) put it "is marketed on false grounds"? Could this donor's dependability be a reason why organisations stick with a marketing strategy that they struggled with. If that is the case, this begs the question of who is responsible for the messages presented in the marketing campaigns of CS, and why people only listen for 10 seconds? Are organisations responsible for having simplified poverty and inflating the public understanding of poverty? Or are the public unaware and not interested or capable of comprehending the knowledge of the organisations? What came first, the chicken or the egg?

7.Conclusion

The organizations who have participated in this study engaged the most with the neo-colonial critique of CS, less with the neoliberal and least with the post-humanitarian. This is understandable since the neo-colonial perspective has been discussed since the 1950s while post-humanitarianism is a considerably more modern concept. The point of critique that informants what the most concerned with was the risk of CS reinforcing neo-colonial stereotypes. And the critique of how CS is designed to attract donors can be validated through the discussion presented in this paper. Additionally, this study found a strength of CS that is not acknowledged in the CS literature; that CS are good at creating strong connections between people that can be positive for creating an understanding and solidarity between people. This paper also found a dilemma that concerns the people working with poverty, to save lives now or generate sustainable development. Feeding poor people is not bad, it is good, but it is not the same as alleviating poverty. Maybe the fault of child sponsorship is not that it cannot achieve development but simply that it claims to do it.

7.1 Further research

The second proposal is to research more about the donor perspective. To find out what donors think of CS and what they value in an organisation when they make a donation. If they are aware of the academic critique and if they are willing to listen to more than ten seconds.

Furthermore, this discussion, as many other academic conversations is largely held without the voices of those it concerns, the sponsored.

Another interesting theme deserving of more intention is how the relationship between people - which has been emphasised as its biggest strength - could be used in other ways to avoid the cons of CS. For example, to investigate the possibility for a model of sponsorship programmes for adults and their families instead of children.

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Appendix

Interview guides

- For CS organizations:

Intervjuguide

Del 1.

Inledning

1. Hur skulle ni definiera fattigdom?

    - Vad är huvudorsakerna till fattigdom?

2. Hur skulle ni beskriva den typ av bistånd som ni jobbar med?

Arbetssätt

3. Varför har ni valt att arbeta med fadderbarn?

4. Har erat arbetssätt med fadderbarn ändrats genom året? Hur, Varför?

5. Vilka skulle du säga är de största fördelarna med fadderbarnsprojekt?

6. Vilka skulle du säga är nackdelarna?

7. Vilken typ kritik kring fadderbarnsprogram har du stött på?

Del 2.

Reflektioner utifrån litteraturen

a. Fadderbarnsprogram kan bättre beskrivas som en komplex insamlingsteknik än som en komplett utvecklingsstrategi.
b. Symboliken i att en västerländsk vuxen sponsrar ett fattigt barn i Syd tenderar att förstärka en traditionell bild av den rika världen som överlägsen och den fattiga som oförmögen.

c. Fadderbarnsprogram riskerar att undergräva föräldrarnas roll genom att faddrar får ta ekonomiskt ansvar för barnen.

d. Fadderbarnsprogram är det effektivaste sättet att bekämpa fattigdom.

e. Fadderbarnsprogam kan förbättra den ekonomiska livssituationen för individer men fokuserar inte på grundorsakerna till fattigdom och kan därför inte skapa långsiktig utveckling i ett samhälle.

f. En personlig relation mellan fadder och fadderbarn är positiv eftersom båda har fördelar av det.

g. Organisationer som jobbar mot fattigdom borde uppmärksamma fler alternativ för människor att engagera sig mot globala orättvisor än att enbart skänka pengar.

h. Fadderbarnsprogram förenklar fattigdom genom att individualisera den vilket motarbetar möjligheten att öka medvetenhet kring fattigdomen strukturella grundorsaker.

- For former CS organizations:

Intervjuguide 2

Del 1.

Inledning

1. Hur skulle ni definiera fattigdom?

    - Vad är huvudorsakerna till fattigdom?

2. Hur skulle ni beskriva den typ av bistånd som ni jobbar med?

Arbetssätt

3. Varför arbetade ni med fadderbarn tidigare?

4. Varför valde ni att avsluta ert arbete med fadderbarnsprogram?

5. Vilka typer av aktiviteter ersatte fadderbarnprogrammen?

6. Vad skulle du säga är de största skillnaderna mellan dessa och fadderbarnsprogram?

7. Vilka skulle du säga är de största för- och nackdelarna med fadderbarnsprogram?

Del 2.

Reflektioner utifrån litteraturen

i. Fadderbarnsprogram kan bättre beskrivas som en komplex insamlingsteknik än som en komplett utvecklingsstrategi.

j. Symboliken i att en västerländsk vuxen sponsrar ett fattigt barn i Syd tenderar att förstärka en traditionell bild av den rika världen som överlägsen och den fattiga som oförmögen.

k. Fadderbarnsprogram riskerar att undergräva föräldrarnas roll genom att faddrar får ta ekonomiskt ansvar för barnen.

l. Fadderbarnsprogram är det effektivaste sättet att bekämpa fattigdom.

m. Fadderbarnsprogam kan förbättra den ekonomiska livssituationen för individer men fokuserar inte på grundorsakerna till fattigdom och kan därför inte skapa långsiktig utveckling i ett samhälle.

n. En personlig relation mellan fadder och fadderbarn är positiv eftersom båda har fördelar av det.

o. Organisationer som jobbar mot fattigdom borde uppmärksamma fler alternativ för människor att engagera sig mot globala orättvisor än att enbart skänka pengar.

p. Fadderbarnsprogram förenklar fattigdom genom att individualisera den vilket motarbetar möjligheten att öka medvetenhet kring fattigdomen strukturella grundorsaker.

Letters of invitation

- For CS organizations:

Hej!

Jag söker svar på frågan: Hur arbetar och resonerar svenska biståndsorganisationer kring fadderbarnsprogram.

Fadderbarnsprogram har fått stort genomslag i utvecklingsbranschen och de utgör en betydande del inom många organisationer internationellt såväl som i Sverige samt har samlat in otroligt mycket pengar till olika utvecklingsprojekt under årtionden. Och som ni säkert redan vet har faderbarnsprogram mötts av både kritik och beröm genom åren. Dessa program engagerar många sponsorer och är mycket effektiva när det gäller att samla in medel. Inom den akademiska världen betraktas fadderbarns program av ömsom tveksamhet, ömsom entusiasm. Väldigt lite litteratur finns som förenar ett kritiskt perspektiv med de faktiska fördelar som finns i arbetet med modern fadderbarnsverksamhet. Detta kan skapa förvirring avseende vad fadderbarnsprogram verkligen är vilka möjligheter respektive problem det kan innebära.

Mitt namn är Clara Åkesson. Jag studerar just nu mitt sista år på ett program i globala utvecklingsstudier vid Lunds universitet och ska skriva en kandidatuppsats om fadderbarnsprojekt. Det vore mycket värdefullt att få höra om era erfarenheter och reflektioner i detta ämne. Har någon i er organisation möjlighet och lust att delta i en kort intervju angående hur ni arbetar med, och tänker om just detta? Jag skulle väldigt gärna vilja ha med ert perspektiv *X Specifikt om organisationen X.*

Det jag söker är ett brett överblickande branschperspektiv. Resultatet kommer därför att presenteras på aggregerad nivå och kommer ej gå att härledas till enskild organisation. Det kommer därför inte heller gå att kunna koppla citat eller utsagor till enskilda personer eller organisationer i min uppsats.

Jag är väldigt tacksam ifall du eller någon av dina kollegor skulle ha lust att delta i en intervju. Intervjuns format och längd går att anpassa till det som passar bäst. Även kortare intervjuer är av stor hjälp för mig. Intervjun kan ske både skriftligt, på videomöte eller via telefon beroende på vad ni föredrar. Det går självklart att avbryta sin medverkan när som helst under studiens gång. Intervjuerna kommer att spelas in med ljud för att underlätta det praktiska för mig. Dessa inspelningar kommer endast vara till för mig och de kommer raderas direkt efter att jag lämnat in mitt arbete. Tveka inte att kontakta mig vid eventuella frågor så kan jag berätta mer. Jag skulle vara otroligt tacksam ifall ni har lust att dela i denna studie. Återkoppla gärna vilken dag och tid som passar bäst för intervju, alternativt om ni inte har möjlighet att delta.

Tack på förhand! Jag önskar dig en trevlig måndag!

Hälsningar Clara

Exempel på frågeställningar:

- Varför har ni valt att arbeta med fadderbarn?
- Vad skiljer eran fadderbarnsverksamhet från andra organisationers?
- Har eran inriktning/arbetssätt med fadderbarn ändrats genom året? Hur, Varför?
- Hur förhåller ni er till de olika kritiska synpunkter som ibland riktas mot fadderbarnsverksamhet?

- For former CS organizations:

Hej!

X Specifikt om organisationen X. Ni arbetar inte idag inte med fadderbarnsprogram vilket länge varit och fortsätter att vara en mycket populär strategi bland biståndsorganisationer som fokuserad på barn. Dessa program engagerar många sponsorer och är mycket effektiva när det gäller att samla in medel. Inom den akademiska världen betraktas fadderbarnsprogram av ömsom tveksamhet, ömsom entusiasm. Väldigt lite litteratur finns som förenar ett kritiskt perspektiv med fördelar som finns i arbetet med fadderbarnsverksamhet, speciellt med utgångspunkt i praktiken. Detta kan skapa förvirring avseende vad fadderbarnsprogram verkligen är vilka möjligheter respektive problem det kan innebära.

Mitt namn är Clara Åkesson. Jag studerar just nu mitt sista år på ett program i globala utvecklingsstudier vid Lunds universitet och ska skriva en kandidatuppsats om fadderbarnsprojekt. Det vore mycket värdefullt att få höra om era erfarenheter och reflektioner i detta ämne. Har någon i er organisation möjlighet och lust att delta i en kort intervju angående varför ni valt att inte arbeta med just detta? Jag skulle väldigt gärna vilja ha med ert perspektiv *X Specifikt om organisationen X.*

Det jag söker är ett brett överblickande branschperspektiv. Resultatet kommer därför att presenteras på aggregerad nivå och kommer ej gå att härledas till enskild organisation. Det kommer därför inte heller gå att kunna koppla citat eller utsagor till enskilda personer eller organisationer i min uppsats.

Jag är väldigt tacksam ifall du eller någon av dina kollegor skulle ha lust att delta i en intervju. Intervjuns format och längd går att anpassa till det som passar bäst. Även kortare intervjuer är av stor hjälp för mig. Intervjun kan ske både skriftligt, på videomöte eller via telefon beroende på vad ni föredrar. Det går självklart att avbryta sin medverkan när som helst under studiens gång. Intervjuerna kommer att spelas in med ljud för att underlätta det praktiska för mig. Dessa inspelningar kommer endast vara till för mig och de kommer raderas direkt efter att jag lämnat in mitt arbete. Tveka inte att kontakta mig vid eventuella frågor så kan jag berätta mer. Jag skulle vara otroligt tacksam ifall ni har lust att dela i denna studie. Återkoppla gärna vilken dag och tid som passar bäst för intervju, alternativt om ni inte har möjlighet att delta.

Tack på förhand! Jag önskar dig en trevlig måndag!

Hälsningar Clara

Exempel på frågeställningar:

- Varför har ni valt att inte arbeta med fadderbarn?
- Har ni arbetat med fadderbarn tidigare? I så fall vad fick er att ändra riktning?
- Hur resonerar ni kring de olika kritiska synpunkter som riktas mot fadderbarnsverksamhet?