Children and Youths in Dharavi’s rise to Empowerment

- from a NGO perspective

Sandra Svensson

Bachelor dissertation 15 HP

Halmstad 2014-06-15
Abstract

**Title:** The children and youths in Dharavi’s rise to empowerment – from a NGO perspective

**Author:** Sandra Svensson

**Keywords:** Social work, slum, children, youths, Dharavi, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), empowerment, social development, India, Mumbai.

This dissertation view a sample of projects conducted by two different non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Dharavi, a slum-area in Mumbai, India, and examines how they contribute to children and youth’s social development and empowerment. Due to the large global population of children and youths, as well as that a large percentage of the world’s inhabitants reside in slum-areas, it is considered of importance to gain information regarding the social work that is being conducted with the focus. The field work is carried out through interviews and observations in the area. The focus is five different projects that are conducted by two different NGOs in Mumbai. This dissertation display how the two theories, empowerment and social development, are connected to each other as well as the positive impact the NGOs have on the participating children and youths. The findings of the field work lead to an understanding in which ways NGOs can help children and youths to reach empowerment and how they contribute to the social development of the participants. The research shows the impact the organizations activities have on the children and youths lives.

Denna uppsats granskar ett urval av projekt som genomförs av två olika icke-statliga organisationer i Dharavi, ett slumområde i Mumbai, Indien, och undersöker hur de bidrar till barn och ungdomars sociala utveckling och empowerment. Då en stor del av världens befolkning består av barn och ungdomar, samt att en stor del av den globala populationen lever i slumområden, anses det viktigt att inhämta information gällande det sociala arbetet som bedrivs i dessa områden. Data till uppsatsen har inhämtats genom intervjuer och observationer från två icke-statliga organisationer i det valda området. Uppsatsen visar hur de två teorierna, empowerment och social utveckling, är kopplade till varandra och påvisar även det positiva inflytande de icke-statliga organisationerna har på sina deltagare. Resultaten av fältarbetet leder till en förståelse för på vilket sätt de enskilda organisationer kan bidra till att barn och ungdomar uppnår empowerment samt hur de bidrar till deltagarnas sociala utveckling. Forskningen visar den effekt organisationerna har på barnen och ungdomarnas liv.
Acknowledgements

I am grateful for the opportunity to do this dissertation and would like to express my deepest appreciation to the participating non-governmental organizations and the people that work with the projects studied as well as the children and youths participating in them. Everyone involved in the fieldwork have been nothing but welcoming and helpful towards me and it is thanks to these people that I have been able to go through with the dissertation and gain an understanding for the reality of the residents in an underprivileged area.

Furthermore, I want to specially thank my mentor, Carin Staland Nyman, who has been invaluable in advising and guiding me through my work and at the same time encouraging me to explore and follow my own voice.

For me, the work with this dissertation has been educational and interesting as well as I enjoyed viewing the projects and meeting the people involved in them. There have been more people involved in this dissertation then I first anticipated and I would like to send a special thank you to everyone who made this possible and who have helped me and been there for me along the way.
# Contents

Abstract ............................................................................................................... 1  
Acknowledgements ............................................................................................ 2  
Introduction ........................................................................................................ 5  
Objective ............................................................................................................. 6  
Background ......................................................................................................... 8  
  Definition of slum .............................................................................................. 8  
  Dharavi & Mumbai ............................................................................................ 9  
  NGOs .................................................................................................................. 10  
  Reality Gives ..................................................................................................... 11  
  Dharavi Rocks ................................................................................................ 12  
  Previous research ............................................................................................. 12  
Theory ................................................................................................................ 14  
  Empowerment .................................................................................................. 14  
  Social development ........................................................................................... 16  
Method ............................................................................................................... 19  
  A qualitative case study .................................................................................. 19  
  Selection .......................................................................................................... 21  
  Collection of data and analysis ...................................................................... 21  
  Ethical considerations ....................................................................................... 24  
Results ............................................................................................................... 25  
  Dharavi ............................................................................................................ 25  
  Project Front Foot ............................................................................................ 26  
  Youth Empowerment Program ...................................................................... 27  
  Local School Support Program ....................................................................... 28  
  Girls Football Program .................................................................................. 30  
  Dharavi Rocks ................................................................................................. 31  
Discussion ......................................................................................................... 33  
  Discussion of results ....................................................................................... 33  
  Empowerment .................................................................................................. 33  
  Social development .......................................................................................... 37  
  Empowerment and social development ......................................................... 39  
  Discussion of method ...................................................................................... 41
Sandra Svensson

Conclusion .................................................................................................................. 44
References ................................................................................................................... 46

*Personal communication* ..................................................................................... 50

**Attachments:**

Interview Guide
Introduction

A firm belief of the author is that it all comes down to being seen; to being noticed. If no one sees you, you do not exist, and if you do not exist, it does not matter what you do. If someone pays attention to you, suddenly things matters. It matters who you are and what you do. The belief is; that if you are noticed, if you are given a chance when you have nothing – your life can change and you can change as a person. This belief is the reason for doing a study in an underprivileged area; for believing that everyone deserves a chance, for thinking that the most beautiful thing in the world is when people choose to spend their time doing something for others.

Approximately one billion, or 32%, of the world’s populations live in slum areas. The majority reside in development countries (Nijman, 2008, Taubenböck & Kraff, 2014). As a result of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) the issues regarding the living conditions for slum dwellers have assumed a global status. The aim of MDG 8 is to create a significant improvement to the lives of a minimum of 100 million slum dwellers (UN, 2000). Even if the issue is part of the global agenda Nijman (2008) argues that there is a shift of responsibility from the state government to the local governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the market. In addition, Nijman (2009) find that due to the rapid urbanization in developing countries are the substandard living conditions likely to be the biggest challenge for human development during the coming decades.

This dissertation is a case study; with focus on projects carried out by NGOs that include children and youths in Dharavi. Theories such as empowerment and social development will during the discussion be interconnected with data attained from the field.

The reason for choosing the slum area called Dharavi is partly due to a book by G. D. Roberts; Shantaram. The book took place in a slum in Mumbai. While reading it an urge to see it in real life arose. For the author, there has always been an aspiration to explore the life of people whose realities are far from one’s own as well as to gain an understanding of their way of living.

While researching the underprivileged areas in Mumbai; to choose an area for the field study, Dharavi caught the interest of the author. The descriptions told a story of a high density area with living conditions that ticked the boxes for the definitions of slum used in this study. It also describes Dharavi as an extraordinary conundrum, a joyful and blossoming place, an inspiring place filled with hope and happiness, and a place where the habitants reside in conditions that are below standard; but also a place with a strong sense of community (Patel, 2010).
The information attained regarding Dharavi made it an easy decision to use the area as base for the dissertation. A purpose for the study was being drafted and a project plan was created. The original objective of the study was to research the types of projects that are carried out in Dharavi on three levels; by the habitants themselves, NGOs and the state government, which result in local capacity building and empowerment.

As more information were obtained, the realization that the question was too broad to be able to do a thorough study in the period of time available for the project dawned and the objective was delineated. Before the distinctions were made, contact had already been established with two NGOs and therefor, instead of doing a study consisting of three levels, the objective was limited to cover only NGOs. Furthermore, a decision was made to focus only on children and youths instead of the whole community.

Bartlett (2010) states that the current global population is the youngest in history; half of the population is under 25 years of age, and one of four of the world´s inhabitants is between 15 and 24. The number of children and youths is higher in development countries, particularly in urban areas. Children and adolescents are the most vulnerable in any society and they are especially vulnerable to the negative effects that poverty and inequality expresses itself in (UNICEF, 2012). Furthermore, UNICEF´s Slum Report, from 2012, states that more research is needed to gain “deeper insights into the reality of urban life for children” (UNICEF, 2012, s. 68). The children are our future and it is of importance to see to their development and wellbeing. By examine if, and how, the NGOs contribute to children and youths empowerment and social development; the hope is that this study can make a useful contribution to this field of study. It should be noted that in this dissertation have no distinction been made as to when a child becomes a youth. Whether child or youth is used as a definition comes down to the definition used by the interviewees. Therefor can the term child/children also refer to individuals or groups of children up to 18 years of age.

Objective

The question of the study derives from information collected regarding Dharavi. Two different NGOs have been chosen for the study. The author of the study major in Social Work and the question is connected to that field of work. Due to that the researcher´s understanding for the term social work has a Swedish origin is a global definition required to account for the connection between the research question and the social work concept as well as to clarify the view of social work for the dissertation. The definition used has been drafted by the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW). They define social work as a profession which work for social change, solve problems in human relationships and work towards empowerment and liberation for individuals; to increase wellbeing. The definition also emphasizes human rights and social justice (IFSW, 2014). Even though the target of the definition is professionals; this study also views non-professionals, which works with the same matters, as social workers.

The objective of the dissertation is:

What projects are being conducted in Dharavi by the chosen NGOs and how do they contribute to the children and youths social development and empowerment?
It will be displayed in the dissertation how the NGOs work within the social work area in ways as how they work towards change in the social structures of the society, how they work to create new social interactions as to overcome obstacles and differences between people as well as how they wish to achieve empowerment and liberation for individuals to provide them with a chance to create better lives for themselves.
Background

In this part of the dissertation background information is presented. The information aims to give a deeper understanding of the community in which the NGOs function and the children and youths live in. The background also contains universal data regarding slum areas as to clarify what defines a slum. Furthermore, some general information regarding NGOs is presented, as well as specific information regarding the NGOs included in the study. The intention with the Background is to provide the reader with a knowledge that will result in a better understanding for the result and discussion.

Definition of slum

More than 200 years ago, when the era of industrialization began, people started to relocate to cities, carrying with them hopes and dreams of a better life. Since then, the urbanization continued and spread from developed countries to the developing. The urbanization in the developing countries was not, as in the developed, associated with high economic growth rates. Instead it took the expression of urban poverty, low to medium growth rates and the expanding slums. In 2005, one third of the world’s urban population resided in slum areas (Sheuya, 2008). Kofi Annan, UNs former secretary-general, warned in 2003 that if serious action is not to be taken the number of slum dwellers will, within the next 30 years, double from one to two billion (Nijman, 2008).

Slums vary in several ways; population, location, size, economic capacity, history, culture etc. It also differs in the way the community themselves, as well as outsiders, perceive the area. It is, due to these factors problematic to establish a globally accepted definition of what is a slum (Taubenböck & Kraff, 2014). Globalis (2014) states that slum as an indicator is hard to measure; since there are so many conditions included in the concept. Nonetheless, they characterize slum as a coherent settlement where the inhabitants live in inadequate conditions. Inadequate living conditions means a low access to clean water and sanitation facilities, deficient living area, poor quality of housing and/or insecure occupations. UNICEF (2012) uses the same definition except that they also highlight a vulnerability to different diseases, lack of access to basic services; such as health care and basic education, as well as a heightened risk for malnutrition. India defines slum areas according to Slum Areas Improvement and Clearance Act from 1956, carried out by the central government, which states that slum is a region that contains households that are considered to be unfit for human occupancy because of decay, overcrowding and faulty arrangements, but also due to the structures of the buildings or the surroundings. Accommodations are furthermore considered unfit if they lack sanitary facilities, ventilation and light. (Taubenböck & Kraff, 2014).
**Dharavi & Mumbai**

Mumbai is located in Maharashtra; the second most populous state in India (Chandramouli, 2011). In 1951, Mumbai’s population was an estimate of three million residents. The city has since then grown in size and population (Taubenböck & Kraff, 2014). Statistics from *Census of India* indicate that 12 million people lived in Mumbai 2011 (Deol, 2011).

Mumbai became a metropolitan during the second half of the 19th century and has since had a shortage of accommodation as well as problems with bad quality of housing. In 1992, an estimate of 37 % of Mumbai’s population was residing in slum areas (Nijman, 2008). According to Hindustan Times (2010) this percentage have rose to 62 %, although it should be noted that it is difficult to derive a precise number due to that all residents are not likely to be registered. In absolute terms, and as a percentage of the total population, are there more slum dwellers in Mumbai than in any other city in the world. Because of these high figures, activist Sheela Patel renamed the city to Slumbai (Dyson, 2012).

In the 90’s, Mumbai experienced an increase of foreign company’s which contributed to an extraordinary escalation of the lands value. During a period of time; Mumbai was the most expensive city in the world. The metropolis is still considered to be expensive to live in (Nijman, 2009). Even living in a slum is not as inexpensive as to be expected (Nijman, 2008). Nijman (2008) states that a plot in an established slum, that is big enough for a normal-sized tent, cost an average of 10 000 USD, – which is twice the average annual household income in Mumbai.

Until about 1900, the city was restricted to the southern parts of today’s Mumbai. Dharavi went under another name, Koliwadas, and belonged to the Koli fishermen; who are the native residents of Mumbai. In the end of 19th century; unsanitary conditions plagued the city. A bubonic plague spread through the city and continued to spread across the subcontinent. Nearly 200 000 died from the plague in Mumbai and around eight million passed away in all over India. A decision was made to move the polluting industries, which had slowly been expanding, away from the city. They were moved up north, to a tannery-town that came to be known as Dharavi (Nijman, 2009).

The city of Mumbai continued moving industries to Dharavi, and the area became a place where people combined living and working. During the years; Dharavi continued to grow in numbers of residents and manufacturing-units. The city of Mumbai was also expanding rapidly. Dharavi, which was once up north from the city, is now located in the center of Mumbai (Njiman, 2009). Dharavi is positioned close to Bandra Kurla Complex; a business center with some of the highest real estate prices in the world (Patel & Arputham, 2007). Dharavi is 2,5km². It has, due to the physical shape of the area and it´s economic significance (- which will be addressed in the next paragraph), been given the name the heart of Mumbai. Dharavi is also often called the largest slum in Asia, as well as the city within a city (Dyson, 2012).

Seeing how Dharavi relates to being defined as a slum is not as straightforward as it might appear. The Indian government recognize Dharavi as a slum wherein the area is under the jurisdiction of the Slum Rehabilitation Authority (Dharavi is targeted by the state-governments redevelopment plans, but that won’t be further discussed in this dissertation due to restrictions of the study). Dharavi also qualifies as a slum according to the definitions of
slum areas previously mentioned. However, from an economic perspective the area is unquestionably extraordinary. Dharavi has an annual turnover of an estimate of 665 million USD; generated by the 10 000 different manufacturing units in the area; which employs 70-80 % of the residents. In other slums in Mumbai; only 10-15 % of the residents work within the slum-area itself (Dyson, 2012, Nijman, 2009). Dharavi is a central part of Mumbai´s economy due to the thriving manufacturing units (Patel & Arputham, 2007).

Dharavi consist of approximately 67 slum communities. The habitants originate from all across India. The two largest groups are people from Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra. Other inhabitants originate from states such as Utter Pradesh, Kerala, Karnataka and Gujarat. There are 27 temples, 11 mosques and six churches in Dharavi. In the area there are also restaurants, food stands, hotels, taxis, schools, community centers etc. (Nijman, 2009). Nijman (2009) state, that while walking on one of the main streets in Dharavi one might not realize that it is a slum area.

Due to Dharavi´s long history, many of the residents are born and raised in the area (Patel & Arputham, 2007). In Dharavi is the line of work often based on the origin of the resident. The Koli´s are fishermen, the tanners from Tamil, the potters from Gujarat and so on. There is also a spatial integration among the residents. The integration displays itself in that the slum determines who they are, whom they know and what they do (Nijman, 2009). The high density of the area, with approximate 400 000 people per km2, might be one explanation to the spatial integration (Dyson, 2012).

It is difficult to determine how many dwellers reside in Dharavi as the figures vary from 300 000 to one million (Dyson, 2012, Taubenböck & Kraff, 2014, Nijman, 2009). According to Times of India (2009) is the average family income in Dharavi between 13 000 – 15 000 Rs a month (approx. 165 – 190 euro). Although seeing to other sources, such as Market Watch (2007) that states that the average income is around 7 euros a month, is it hard to give a number on the average income.

**NGOs**

In Mumbai, a shift is to be noticed; from the government to NGOs; from the state to the civil society. This shift is due to former successful development strategies that have demanded active participation from the local communities, as well as the resident’s local knowledge. Furthermore, democratic ideals demand for participation on a local level. In the reformed development agenda are empowerment and self-help two main concepts that have emerged. The results took expression as an explosive increase of community organizations, including NGOs (Nijman, 2008). Another reason for the growth of NGOs might be the globalization, which generates new geographic of governance. This lead to a change in the national state as well as it increases privatization in different areas. These elements, including phenomena`s as the World Bank and the Bretton Wood system among others, might be factors that have led to the massive increase of NGOs on a worldwide basis (Appadurai, 2001).

A complete list of the NGOs in Mumbai, or Dharavi, has not been obtained but Desai´s (1999) compilation of 67 NGOs in Mumbai from 1999 might provide an indication of the variety of organizations. Of the 67 NGOs that were part of the study have 34 of them had education-oriented activities, 18 had childcare and crèches and nine had youth programs. For
NGOs in Mumbai, it is common to have an average of three or four different activities per NGO. Many of the NGOs who target children are involved in non-formal education and childcare. According to Desai (1999) a trend amongst NGOs has arisen since the end of the 80s, and the concentration has changed to the *people* instead of *projects*.

Desai (1999) also examined the organizations relations towards the government and detected that many NGOs had connections with municipal departments but that the relations with the state-government were less frequent. The state government is often perceived by the organizations as to be indifferent to the needs of the residents in underprivileged areas. The NGOs can concentrate their resources in areas and regions that are not prioritized by the state-government.

**Reality Gives**

In 2005, Chris Way and Krishna Pujari created Reality Tours & Travel; an ethically run tour company. Reality Tours wanted to show the positive sides of slum areas and break down the negative stereotypes that exist in reference to the residents (Reality Gives, 2014). According to Dyson (2012), who did a field study involving Reality Tours; the slum tours alter the negative perceptions regarding the slum and its residents.

Reality Tours expanded rapidly. In 2009, Way and Pujari decide to expand in their area of social work; and Reality Gives was born. Based on discussions with residents in Dharavi concerning their needs was the aim in the beginning to offer quality education to underprivileged children. As time passed, Way and Pujari realized that they could do more to assist the community and Reality Gives started cooperating with other organizations in the fields of educations, health, environment and livelihood (Reality Gives, 2014).

Reality Gives (2014) operates mostly in Dharavi, but they have recently started to expand towards other underprivileged areas. They do, except for a range of activities, also raise funds for projects operated by themselves or their partners. 80% of Reality Tours profits are used as funding for Reality Gives.

Reality Gives carries out and support several projects addressed to children and youths. In this study, four of their projects have been chosen in agreement with Reality Gives Executive Director.

The projects that are included in this study are (Reality Gives, 2014):

- **Project Front Foot.** The project collects equipment for cricket as well as coach children in the sport.
- **Youth Empowerment Program.** Provides local teenagers and youths between 16 and 30 years old with tools that can help them improve their quality of life either by returning to education or enabling them to search for better jobs.
- **Local School Support Program.** An English-education program for kids between three and five years old. The program focus on teaching children to make decisions as well as it raises awareness of the impact family and community has for the child’s development.
- **Girls Football Program.** A program that wish to empower girls through sport in order for them to take control of their own lives and future.
**Dharavi Rocks**

In 2010, an NGO named Acorn Foundation, who works for the welfare of slum-children and rag-pickers, teamed up with blueFROG, which is an Indian music project, and the result was Dharavi Rocks; an educational music and dance project for children from the slum (Dharavi Rocks, 2014).

Acorn Foundation works with children from underprivileged areas, low-income tenements and child rag-pickers in Mumbai. Their focus is reduce, recycle, reuse and respect. The aspects of recycling and reusing expresses itself in Dharavi Rocks, whereas the children use waste material to create their instruments. Dharavi Rocks wish to allow the children to discover the joy of music and hope to bring positive energy into their lives. The music classes help the children to increase their coordination, concentration and enables team work as well as it involves the discipline of learning. Dharavi Rocks also organizes workshops for the kids with different subjects, such as themes with different music and dance techniques. The concept allows the children to create a positive outlook on their future (Essar, 2012).

Dharavi Rocks was created since providing education for the children were not considered enough. Many children joined educational classes for a few days and then dropped out. The music classes is a way to create an interest of learning for the children, and since they enjoy the classes they keep coming back (Times of India, 2012).

Other schools in Mumbai have been inspired by the project and started their own *junk bands*. More than that, the band has had several performances and the children have collaborated with Indian as well as international musicians (The Hindu, 2013).

**Previous research**

Through investigating previous studies that has been carried out in the field, have the researcher gained information of what is already known and, more importantly, not known in the area, as well as which theories and methods have previously been used for research in the field (Bryman, 2011).

For this dissertation, research involving children and youths in Dharavi with focus on empowerment and social development was sought. The research did not result in much of interest. The search was extended to cover children in slum areas all over the world, with the same focus. Still, there where little to be found; which can be interpreted as an indicator to that research in this area is needed. A considerable amount of research has been carried out with an empowerment perspective, but the focus is mainly on women. The reason that the main focus for empowerment is perceived to be on women can be that women’s empowerment is considered to lead positive effects for children’s well-being and development (Vijayanthi, 2002, UNICEF, 2006, TeachUNICEF, 2008, Daily Development, 2014).

A recent case study in Dharavi, which target a project that aims to engage children and youths in sport activities, noticed that girls started drop out from the project after they turned 12. The study discovered that old stereotypes are prominent in the slums and that the parents rather saw that their daughters stayed at home learning household chores for the day when the where to be married (Srivastava & Sumrani, 2012).

Former studies has proven that projects with a focus on empowerment and development have had positive impact when it comes to empowering individuals and groups as well as they
enable people to improve the life of others around them (Smith, Khan, Frankenberger & Wadud, 2013). Renblad (2003) argues that communication and social interaction allows for people to progress. A network that is caring and understanding enables a person to develop individual strengths and capacities. A study, which focuses on adolescents with disabilities in India, came to the conclusion that recognition enhances the feeling of self-worth. Group activities lead to positive internalization of their feelings. External support should be ongoing since the feeling of being empowered or disempowered may shift in periods (Gulati, Paterson, Medves & Luce-Kapler, 2011). Even though the last mentioned study focus on children with disabilities can parallels be drawn to children in slum areas seeing that they are both excluded from parts of society.

Staff at different NGOs in Kenya, noticed an increase of self-confidence and self-esteem in the children who participated in the NGOs project’s. The children also developed a desire to excel in life. The staff at the NGOs in Kenya became role models for the children participating in the projects. The same study also claims that the action of the individual is shaped by society and it’s structures. NGOs can through participating in the structural society contribute to positive transformations for groups and individuals (Ferguson & Heidemann, 2009).

Another study, involving an organization that promotes children’s education and women’s rights, displays how the NGO had to overcome the community’s resistance towards them to be successful. The differences between the staff and the habitants in the community were an obstacle for participation and communication. The NGO needed to create personal, trustworthy relationships with the residents to be allowed to offer support. The study argues that the best way to succeed is by working with the residents and creating solutions together (Bháird, 2013).
Theory

In this section the theories chosen for the dissertation are presented.

Empowerment is a concept, which importance for fieldwork in the slum areas has been detected while reviewing literature in the field of NGOs. Based on this, as well as that it is a concept well known in the area of social work-studies, was empowerment an obvious choice as theory for the study. By analyzing the results through an empowerment-perspective will it be revealed how the NGOs work with the concept, and also how the results are consistent with the intentions.

While reviewing an earlier mentioned case study, carried out by Srivastava and Sumrani (2012), with a gender perspective regarding a sports project for children and youths in Dharavi; did one of the theories they used spark an interest. After reading up on the author in question and his theories was Vygotsky’s take on social development considered to be well suited for the study, seeing that it scrutinize the impact projects have on children. Regarding the presentation of Vygotsky’s social development theory have Vygotsky been used both as a first hand source and through the interpretation of other authors as to further explain his theories in this dissertation. It is the perception that the second hand sources have interpreted him correctly based from the authors at hand’s understanding, however, they created a deeper understanding for the implementation of the theory.

Empowerment and social development as theories for the study, are considered to be of relevance since the author believes that these theories could compose as fundamental tools to evaluate the work conducted by the NGOs, as well that they sum up the impact the projects have on the children and youths. Previous studies have shown that projects with a focus on empowerment and development have had a positive influence on individuals, as well as groups, in regards to that it leads to empowerment (Smith, Khan, Frankenberger & Wadud, 2013).

By including both the empowerment concept and Vygotsky’s social development theory, it will be revealed the importance of the projects for the children and youths as well as how the two theories intertwine with one another.

Empowerment

The term empowerment has become very popular. Empowerment includes the word power; which refers to strength, power and force (Askheim, Starrin & Winqvist, 2007). Empowerment theory has a connection to critical, feministic and anti-discriminating theories, but it origins from the social-democratic practice. The purpose of the theory is to enable people to overcome obstacles so that they can achieve their goals in life and get access to social ser-
Sandra Svensson

vices. The concept aims to help clients gain power over decisions as well as freedom to act by reducing the effects of personal and social barriers, which in turn enables them to exercise the power existing within (Payne, 2008).

In United Nations Department of Economics and Social Affairs (UN DESA, 2013) booklet *Empowerment: What does it mean to you?* is the theory considered as a process of enabling people to increase control over their lives, to gain control over the factors and decisions that shape their lives, to increase recourses and qualities and to build capacities to gain access, partners, networks, a voice, in order to gain control. (UN DESA, 2013, s. 5)

For empowerment, the goal is to increase the ability and self-confidence when it comes to clients using their own power (Payne, 2008). The term emphasizes the importance of supporting people who are in vulnerable situations. Empowerment has also become an alternative for people who feel that the state and public sector don’t give vulnerable people the help that they need (Askheim, Starrin & Winqvist, 2007). Empowerment emphasizes every person’s right and ability to participate in different contexts, such as social and political (Renblad, 2003). Empowerment can be seen as a target, but also as the mean to reach a goal (Askheim, Starrin & Winqvist, 2007).

One perspective of empowerment is as a tool to help the individual, or group, to establish power. The perspective emphasizes the relationship between the individual’s life-situation and social and structural conditions. Strengthening individuals and groups, is a way to give them power so that they, themselves, can change conditions that they are not content with. This can be done through different processes such as activities that enhance the individual’s self-control and results in an increase of self-confidence, a more positive self-image and greater knowledge and skills, as well as it may change the expectations of life (Payne, 2008).

The social structure is seen as created by the people perceiving it. These social structures determine the degree of power and control a person has over his, or her, own life. But seeing as the structures are created by people, they can also be changed by the people. By creating an awareness of the structures amongst the public it also enables people to gain power to, through mobilization, counter the forces that hold them back and thereby obtain an increased influence over their own lives (Askheim, Starrin & Winqvist, 2007). Empowerment allows power to be something positive that is available for the citizens. It should be noted that empowerment has been criticized for helping people understand the structural explanations for repression but not how to act upon these. The practice is also criticized for not being able to handle the people who are unable to achieve power and gain control over their lives (Payne, 2008).

Empowerment is related to self-help and participation for groups and individuals. Power is something that you can’t give to people but people can be given the tools to be able to pursue it themselves. There is evidence that group-oriented empowerment-work with residents from deprived areas can lead to an active citizenship in the future (Payne, 2008). Empowerment is associated with growth and development. Furthermore, social interaction is considered to be the basis of development (Renblad, 2003).

The process of empowerment can express itself as one person’s contribution to another individual’s development of power. The process can also be viewed as enabling experiences
and collaboration that leads to a more positive self-image and a stronger belief in one’s own abilities and capacities (Renblad, 2003).

The empowerment perspective can be summarized as a questioning of oppression. It enables people to take control of factors that influence them. It allows for people to discover their own needs and enables them to make their voice heard. Empowerment strengthens the individual’s personal resources, which enable them to gain power in their own life and develop confidence and self-esteem (Payne, 2008).

While going through literature regarding empowerment, it became obvious that there are, even if it is a well-recognized practice, different perceptions of the parts that empowerment include. The approach that this study focus on was selected upon the premises that it do include the people’s right to define their own needs, it questions oppression and enables people to take control over their own lives, including it focuses on peoples individual strengths. This approach was considered to be most suited for the study at hand due to that its focus on the development for the individual being. As to be seen, the NGOs work with their participants on an individual level as well as on a group level. The empowerment theory allows for evaluation of the NGOs work towards children and youths. Seeing how empowerment theory and former definition of the term social work both are seeking similar results, such as enabling changes of the social structures and interactions, as well as striving for empowerment and liberation as means reach a goal, is the theory well suited as to assess how the NGOs work relates to social work in terms of results or as a mean to reach a goal.

The philosophy of self-control, personal responsibility and self-fulfillment through empowerment is associated with cognitive theories that emphasize the client’s awareness when it comes to developing skills and strengths (Payne, 2008). The next theory is an example of one of those cognitive theories.

Social development

The human development is a lifelong process. Development is about systematic and more or less rational changes towards a definite goal. Some of these changes are controlled by legacy, some by learning and others by the interaction of genetics and environment. The development is affected by the environment, as well as the social milieu and culture that the individual functions in (Hwang & Nilsson, 2003).

Lev Vygotsky (1896-1934), from former Soviet Union, made great contributions to social constructivism theories (Tetzchner, 2005). His theories are accounted for in the field of cognitive theories. The cognitive theories focus on how the human process of thought is structured and developed, how it affects the perception and understanding of the outside world and how this in turn affects the behavior (Hwang & Nilsson, 2003).

Vygotsky (1994) argued that children are part of a social and cultural context. A child’s development depends on the cultural situation in which the child grows up in; development is culture-specific. Children’s development is viewed as a result of the individual’s social interaction with family, siblings and teachers among others. Their insights and cognition is shaped by the interaction with other people and the internalization of cultural tools as a way of thinking. By internalization means that the external processes, like dialogues, becomes internal as a part of the child’s mind and psyche (Tetzchner, 2005). Hence the child’s reality is created
through social interaction and the cultural context. Vygotsky (1994) stated that the same environment could influence individuals in different ways depending various aspects such as at what age certain situations happen, personal characteristics, understanding of the situation etc. Although, it is recognized that the child is born with biological equipment, which also determines the early cognitive development.

To handle problems that we encounter, as well as to interpret and manage our surroundings, we develop psychological tools; as our language. The language helps children to free themselves from the immediate situation and instead turn the attention towards the future and also to some extent being able to affect it (Vygotsky, 1978). More than that, language makes it possible for the child to engage in social interactions, both in terms of conversations with others but also as internal dialogues. The ability to reason with one-self develops the thinking process (Hwang & Nilsson, 2003).

Vygotsky (1978) argued that education and development is dependent on each other. It is therefore important the way that a teacher, or parent, relate to the child´s learning and development. Vygotsky spoke of the zone of proximal development; through using a learning or teaching approach that is a step ahead, but not too far ahead, from the child´s current point of development the child can reach a level of potential development the child wouldn´t have reached on its own (Hwang & Nilsson, 2003). The zone of proximal development is a stage of development the child can reach through adult guidance or collaboration with peers that are more capable of solving the problem (Vygotsky, 1978). The child should be allowed to face demands and challenges that he or she is able to handle by their own effort or through support from a more experienced person. The grown-up should be there to support the child. The demands on the child should not be too great (Hwang & Nilsson, 2003). Through proximal development the child will, according to Vygotsky (1978), be able to learn things that the child would not have learned on its own, or if so, it would took a longer amount of time and more effort. This guidance is also a way to create and sustain an interest for learning. Giving feedback to the child can generate in a technique for the child to explore the personal thinking process. The proximal development intends to focus on the knowledge that the child already has - not emphasize the lack of it. Both formal and informal education, as well as social interaction with parents, teachers or other adults is important for the child´s social and cultural development. Furthermore, through proximal development, a child´s self-image and self-esteem might improve; since the child gain a confidence in its own abilities (Hwang & Nilsson, 2003).

Vygotsky (1994) claims, in the terms of cultural aspect and the social environments significance for the child, that they have a vast impact on the child´s development. Both informal interaction and formal education have a strong influence on a child. The child´s cognition changes as a result of activities and social interaction, in which the child is included. Something as simple as playing is example of such an activity or interaction (Tetzchner, 2005). Playing is a social process which liberates the child from the present and requires certain intellectual skills. Children get to practice social rolls, rule applications and their perception of reality through playing. Normally, cultural aspects manifest themselves in children´s games (Hwang & Nilsson, 2003).
It will be displayed during the discussion how social development, as a theory, is linked to empowerment. The results of the theories in relation to the data were not evident upon choosing them. Social development was considered to be suited for the dissertation due to its focus on development as a mean to reach a goal. The theory sees to the impact the social milieu, the environment as well as education, has for children. The importance of these three parameters, in relation to the work of the NGOs, is to be reviewed in the discussion as well as to how it relates to empowerment-theory, - which has already been linked to the term social work.

Vygotsky’s theories have been criticized for putting too much emphasis on cultural and social contexts without a deeper explanation in regards to how the child functions in this context. Also the proximal development theory is criticized for being too vague and therefor hard to measure (Hwang & Nilsson, 2003). Critics argue that Vygotsky put too much emphasize on the transfer of knowledge between children and adults, or older children, and omits knowledge that is transmitted between peers. Moreover it should be noted that Vygotsky rarely speaks of children under the age of four (Tetzchner, 2005).
Method

Upon deciding to carry out a field study in an underprivileged area was existing literature, as well as previous research in the field, retrieved. It was obvious that there were areas in the field that had not been previously covered. Based on attained information, a purpose for the study drafted and more data was gathered.

A project plan was completed in the end of the summer 2013, but it was not until early 2014 that the work with the dissertation properly began. As mentioned earlier; when getting deeper involved in the subject, as well as creating a detailed time plan, it became clear that the study planned would be better suited as a larger project. To be able to do more than a shallow outlining of the subject; distinctions needed to be made. As stated in the introduction the distinction where made to cover only NGOs, children and youths.

Some of the data collected for the study, before the distinctions where made, was still considered to be of relevance, although further theoretical data needed to be gathered. Due to suggestions from a mentor; further distinctions were made to no longer include the effect the re-developing plans for Dharavi have for the NGOs. It should be noted that the first drafted purpose is still considered to be of importance and would be relevant for further studies in the field. After the limitations were made, the purpose represented a better fit for the degree of study.

The research method for the study is hermeneutic. Hermeneutic is an interpreting-doctrine and a scientific direction in which we study, interpret and try to understand basic conditions of human existence. Hermeneutics believe that it is possible to understand other people’s situation by interpreting how human life is expressed through the spoken and written language as well as in people’s actions (Patel & Davidsson, 2011). By using hermeneutic as a base for the studies research method, is it possible to gain an understanding for the children and youth’s reality in an underprivileged area. To understand people’s situation is considered to be of importance for the dissertation when it comes to connecting the empirical data with the theoretical. When viewing the empirical data, is a different understanding for the material gained through interpreting the reality of the residents in Dharavi. By trying to create an understanding for their lives, is more relevant information likely to be obtained from the data.

In this chapter the research methods, sampling, the data collection and analysis and more is presented.

A qualitative case study

Within the field of social sciences is the main focus the people in the community. Many of the researchers in this field strive to attain a deeper insight in causes and contexts, perhaps as
a mean to control the development in a certain direction. Another reason for research in the field is to get an overview of the activities in a limited area (Boolsen, 2007). This study includes both of those aims.

The study at hand is a qualitative case study. Meaning the information for the study is collected through qualitative methods, with case study as a course of action.

Qualitative data is often referred to as “soft” data. Soft data can be a text, interviews, conversations, books, newspapers, pictures, observations, sounds etc. In social science, qualitative methods are useful to study phenomenon that are perceived through our senses and to capture the empirical (i.e. experience-based) disciplines (Boolsen, 2007). Qualitative methods focus on how individuals perceive and interpret their social reality. It shows a picture of the social world as a constantly changing property that belongs to the individual’s creative and constructing skills (Bryman, 2011).

Quantitative methods, which is referred to as “hard” data, measures statistical and quantifiable results. By using quantitative methods the researcher wants to investigate the objective reality to attain statistical truths about it. Since it is easier to measure the validity, reliability, accuracy and objectivity of the quantitative results than the qualitative, are the methods seen as more reliable. The qualitative method is debated since it is considered to be too subjective, hard to reduplicate, not representative and also that it at times is hard to understand what actually have been researched (Boolsen, 2007). In qualitative methods are the researcher considered to have more influence over the study and the methods used. It is hard to say, due to its nature, if the qualitative study is a reflection of the researcher’s reality or the social reality studied (Bryman, 2011).

In this dissertation is the qualitative method considered to provide answers that the quantitative can’t. The world is not just black and white; in some cases the qualitative methods can illuminate the grey areas that require the independent assessments and analyzing qualitative methods allows for. No matter which method used, the results will always be debated (Boolsen, 2007).

The research design establishes a structure that directs and guides how to concretely use a particular method, as well as to analyze the data gathered. The research design that is used in this dissertation is the case study. The case study is a detailed and thorough study of a single case. Most commonly, the term case is associated with a certain location such as a residential area, a small community or an organization. The emphasis tends to be on an intensive study of the environment or on a certain situation. Case study often refers to a qualitative study; although this is not entirely true. The design works well with participatory observations and unstructured interviews, since they are perceived to allow for an intense and detailed examination of a case (Bryman, 2011).

Case study is often used as a mean to explain the reality through different methods (Boolsen, 2007). Even though this study don’t target one particular organization, or case, does it have one specific focus which is on a certain situation; how children and youths from one underprivileged area gain empowerment and develops through non-governmental organizations. The study’s focus is to explore the objective of the research and explain the reality for exposed children and youths in a specific community through an explicit line of organizations. The case study, which allows for the use of different methods to do a detailed
and thorough study in the specific situation which these children and youths find themselves in, is well suited for this dissertation.

Selection

Different techniques can be used for the selection process to decide which entities should be included in the study. For this dissertation, a so called targeting selection method was used. The researcher chose the participants in a strategic way so that the sampled projects where relevant to the purpose of the study (Bryman, 2011). The individual characteristics of the projects carried out by NGOs are of importance since they are to represent a sample of the different projects in the area. Before the change of purpose, five NGOs in the Dharavi-area where contacted. Out of these five had contact been established with two NGOs, Reality Gives was one of them. Both of the NGOs had projects that focus solely on children, and they made a good base for the study. Unfortunately upon arrival to Mumbai the researcher was informed that the other NGO would not be able to participate in the study due to the children’s summer-break. It is the opinion that Reality Gives, when seeing to their wide range of projects, by themselves represent a great deal of the activities for children and youths carried out by NGOs in the area. Although, another NGO, or project, was wanted with a different aim, to complete the sampling, and through a contact in Mumbai Dharavi Rocks was found. When they agreed to be part of the study; a sample of the projects representing the variety of activities carried out in the area had been complete. The diversity in the operations of the chosen projects, as well as the size of them, and the range of the areas in which they function, made them a good sample to represent the projects towards adolescents carried out by NGOs in Dharavi. Furthermore, the generalizability of the study strengthens through the involvement of more than one NGO.

Collection of data and analysis

The approach of the study is abductive. Qualitative research is mostly inductive, meaning it generates in a theory (Bryman, 2011). When using an inductive approach the researcher work solely with empirical data and create a theory from the collected information. A deductive approach means to test an already existing theory on empirical data to either verify or falsify it. In the abductive approach, the inductive and deductive approach is combined. The common procedure, which is the case in this study, is to base the study on data. The data is analyzed inductively; What does the data show?, What does it contain?, and deductively by looking at specific conditions in the material; What do the organizations do that lead to social development and/or empowerment for the children and youths?, Have there been any common dominators among the organizations that leads to the results?. The material is also analyzed with the purpose to see if the material shows anything of importance that might not have been considered before the interviews and observations was carried out. Through this approach is the researcher able to use theories to support the inductive empirical data, but it also enables for discovering new connections and theories in the data which can be substantiated by written sources (Boolsen, 2007). The theories used in this dissertation were selected upon the premises that they would assist as explanatory material to the findings.
Empirical data was collected through observations and interviews. Using more than one method to collect data regarding the same matter is a way to ensure and increase the validity of the result. The downside is that it might not lead to as profound research as one method would. On the other hand will the increased amount of empirical data improve the quality of the study (Denscombe, 2012).

Using observations in the study allows for a different way of perceiving reality as people are viewed in their natural environment. There are different techniques of how to do observations. The observations that took place in this study were carried out without any participation in the projects, although it should be noted that some interaction with the individual’s observed occurred. Information gained through conversation with children and youths won’t be used in this dissertation due to focus on the NGO’s. Observations was carried out to gain a deeper understanding for the environment as well as to create a greater knowledge for the information attained during interviews. One downside of not acting as a participating observer can be lack of understanding for the social environment and the individuals, but due to the focus on the NGOs as well as that the study also contain interviews, is this not considered to affect the study in a negative way (Bryman, 2011).

Observations took place in all of the including projects, except for the Local School Support Program due to the children’s summer-break. That the children had summer-break during the estimated time for the field work was not previously known and the timing was unfortunate. The decision to still include Royal City School in the dissertation was made after consideration; it is believed that the study would not make a full representation without the project. The absence of the observation might lead to a less profound picture of the project, but by viewing the premises and meeting the teachers at the school, as well as a in depth interview, it is believed that this to some degree make up for the loss of observation. In the other projects observations took place during approximately two hours in each program. The observations were carried out with an open mind of the researcher. No chart was used during the observations; although due to the focus of the dissertation did the researcher observe the situations through the perspectives of empowerment and social development. The researcher sought to see the impact the projects might have on the children and youth’s, as well as to how the interaction with teachers, peers and environment might relate to the theories used in the dissertation. By not looking for certain traits in the situation and instead focus on what in the situations might lead to certain aspects of the theories used, it is the researcher’s opinion that data have been gathered that mirrors the reality more accurately. During the observations were small notes made regularly to serve as reminders. The observations were summarized after each occasion.

Besides observing the projects, visits have also been made to communities in Dharavi. The researcher has through visits to the area gained an understanding for the environment, as well as for the area that the children and youths of the study live in. By seeing the surroundings in which the organizations functions have the researcher attained a greater understanding for the data collected (Bryman, 2011).

Before the interviews were conducted had an interview-guide been drafted and tested on a colleague to ensure that the questions where to be interpreted as intended. A few modifications were made in regards to the questions before carrying out the interviews due to that they
would be carried out on project basis instead of with the NGOs as first intended. The purpose for the interviews was to discover the interviewee’s personal perceptions and perspectives as well as they were representatives for their projects. There are different types of interview methods. In this study was a semi-structured interview technique used. A semi-structured interview has a list of relatively specific themes to be touched, but it also allows for freedom in regards to how the interviewee answers, the order of the questions and also the opportunity to ask further questions if needed (Bryman, 2011). This was considered to be the form of interview best suited to allow the interviewee to elaborate on what they considered to be of importance regarding the project, while at the same time attaining basic information about the projects. Interviews were carried out for each project with the manager for the program in question. Project Front Foot and Girls Football Program both have the same manager which means that those interviews have been conducted with the same person. In total, four interviews were conducted. The length on the interviews varies between 13 to 39 minutes depending in the interviewee. Same guide was used in all interviews, with few additional questions depending on the interview at hand. All of the interviews included questions as to how long the interviewee had been involved with the organization, as well as their position. More than that was the interviewees asked questions in regards to basic information about the project and it’s structure, the aim of the project, if they noticed any short- or long-term results in regards to the project and if they wanted to add something that they deemed to be of importance for the study. The lengths of the interviews vary depending on the interviewee. The interviews were recorded as well as notes were taken to complement the recording. After the interviews the conversations where transcribed.

During the observations did occasions arise where information was obtained through non-recorded conversations. Some of this information, which has been considered of importance for the study, has been used in the dissertation. To ensure the quality of this information, notes have been made during the conversations.

All the material, including the theoretical data, has been reviewed several times, where relevant and important parts have been selected and divided into different groups depending on the content of the material. During the reviews has the material been encoded, first through an open coding and then through inductive and deductive perspectives. Boolsen (2007) argues that starting the review with an open coding process is beneficial since it allows for an open mind in regards to the material. The empirical data has been waged towards the theoretical theories to ensure the relevance for the subject as well as to see connections between the theoretical and the empirical data. The empirical data was first studied on its own to get an overview of what it contains. In the result, it is to be noticed that after the open coding process have parts that is to be considered of importance for the study been selected and summarized which in the discussion have been connected to the theories. Data has also been measured and compared with previous studies on the subject to see if it differs, as well as to get a sense for the generalizability of the study. Through analyzing the material by itself, and also through connecting empirical and theoretical data, it enables for finding the relevance of the data for the objective of the study. By critically analyzing the data, new connections can be found between the already existing theories as well as to strengthen parts of the dissertation (Bryman, 2011).
Ethical considerations

There are fundamental ethical issues that relates to the participants of every study; such as their integrity, volunteerism, confidentiality and anonymity. According to Swedish ethical guidelines, the researcher should inform the participants of the purpose of the study, that participating is voluntary and that they at any point can choose not to be a part of the study. The data should be treated as to ensure confidentiality and anonymity for the participants and the collected data should only be used for the stated purpose. Also before the study is implemented, considerations should be made whether the study in any way could be harmful for the participants (Bryman, 2011, Vetenskapsrådet, 2011). It is of importance for the study’s ethical aspects that the participants of the study agree to be a part of it. Neither should the study in any way cause harm to the participants (Vetenskapsrådet, 2011).

In terms of the ethical issues for the study at hand was the first consideration regarding having adolescents as a focus in the study. If the study involves participants under the age of 18 should the parent’s consent be retrieved (Bryman, 2011). Through focusing on the NGOs and their projects with children and youths is the study considered to be more ethically appropriate. The organizations have given their consent to be a part of the study. Even if adolescents have been present and a part of the observations is the main focus on the NGOs. To further protect the children, youths and also the other participants of the study has precaution been taken so that nothing in this study will reveal anyone’s identity, unless the individual adult participant have given consent to do so. It could furthermore be considered to be good ethics to shed light on the children’s situation as a way of positive reinforcement. Neither the field work of the study nor the content of the report is considered to cause, or have caused, the participant’s any harm.
Results

In this part of the dissertation, results of the observations and interviews are presented. The chapter starts with a short review of how the author perceived Dharavi; after which the results from the five projects that have been studied will be presented. The author’s perception of Dharavi is viewed to be important from a hermeneutic approach; due to it promotes for deeper understanding of the empirical data gathered. Since the observations regarding Dharavi are not further discussed, some connections between the literature and observations have been made already in this chapter.

Project Front Foot, Youth Empowerment Program, Local School Support Program and the Girls Football Program are projects conducted by Reality Gives. Dharavi Rocks is a project created through collaboration between the NGO Acorn Foundation and the music project blueFROG. Additional information regarding the Girls Football Program has been attained through non-recorded conversation, which some is used here due to its relevance for the dissertation.

Dharavi

During the time of the study, several observations have been carried out in the Dharavi-area and one of the slum tours, by Reality Tours, has been attended. Most of the observations, as well as the slum tour, took place in the Kumbharwada community, which is the area where most of the projects in this paper have their base.

The observations confirmed the former mentioned descriptions of Dharavi as a place filled with hope and happiness. The standard of living in the area is deficient in several aspects and, from observations as well as conversations with residents, among others, and interviews carried out for the dissertation, it is clear that the area qualifies as a slum in terms of earlier mentioned definitions. More than that, Dharavi is a place filled with life. Many of the residents have lived in Dharavi for generations; they built their lives there, created their businesses and raised their children in the community.

As well as seeing the area for what it is, regarding the living conditions, is the spirit of the place more overwhelming and outshines the fact that it is considered to be a slum. Men, and also a few of the women and children, are working to make ends meet. Girls, wearing school-uniforms, are walking past boys playing cricket in the streets. Goats, hens, cats and dogs are peacefully strolling around in the area, successfully avoiding getting run over by one of the many cars, bicycle and lorry’s that pass on the street.
In the area, many businesses deal with recycling plastic, other make clothes, some pottery, and in the midst of it all is bakery’s to be found, as well as women sitting on the ground making chapatti’s (-a type of Indian bread) which are left to dry in the sun.

Whilst seeing to the good parts of the area, the lesser should not be forgotten. During conversations it has been gathered that many of the people in the area live in extreme poverty when dividing their presumed income on the number of family members (-extreme poverty is defined as living on less than 1,25 USD/day (Gordon et al., 2003.)). It should be noted that this fact is word of mouth; although considering earlier stated average household income in Dharavi it is likely to be the case. Nonetheless, the living conditions have been observed and many of the residents live in inadequate conditions, such as poor access to water and sanitation facilities, as well as that some of the accommodations viewed houses five to six people on 10 square meters. Most of the residents seen appear to care for their outer appearance. They are welcoming and helpful towards strangers and most people met are smiling. It should be noted that during conversations with Indians, it has been gathered that a person with a different culture and color of skin is treated differently. Based in this, the author’s perception of Dharavi may vary from an Indian person’s since their experience would differ from the one of the author. This said, any persons experience would be different depending on persona, preconceptions etc.

Project Front Foot

Project Front Foot is a cricket program for boys. Information has been obtained through observations and an interview with Reality Gives Director of Sport Program, Peter. Peter has been with Reality Gives since august 2013 and he has since been working to improve the structure and content of all the sport programs run by Reality Gives. Furthermore, he wishes to increase the amount of children in the programs.

Project Front Foot was initiated by Vic Mills, from UK. After visiting Dharavi through Reality Tours, Mills got in contact with Reality Gives co-founder Chris Way and pitched the idea of a cricket program. He has since then provided the program with cricket-kits, and a court for practices.

At the moment there are 60 boys involved in Project Front Foot. Most of the boys are from the community Khumberwada in Dharavi. The program consists of three age groups; boys under the age of 14, under 16 and under 18. Each age group practices three times a week. The project has two coaches who work with the teams. The program is now on its 5th season. The season starts in October and last until May. Peter introduced a membership fee for the program to give the boys a stronger feeling of belonging to the project.

On top of the training sessions each week, the boys also play matches against other teams once a month. Fitness tests are being held in the start and end of the season to evaluate how the boys have enhanced, as well as to see if the program has had any impact on their health. In the midst of the season the boys complete a self-evaluation assessment of their cricket-skills which afterwards are discussed on an individual basis with the coaches.

Peter tell that he is passionate about sport, especially since he sees the impact it has on the kid’s; he particularly noticed the impact sport have had on the children in Reality Gives sport programs. When speaking to Peter is it notable that he cares for the children in the sport pro-
projects he manages. The interaction between him and the children indicates that the children are fond of him as well as that they respect him. The coaches as well as Peter appear to have a relaxed and friendly relationship to the children. The children are serious about their cricket sessions and even when the coaches are absent for a short period of time during the training the kids continue their practice.

Peter wants to through Project Front Foot provide a good field and location for the boys to play cricket as well as to provide them professional training. During their time in the project, the boys will develop as cricket-players, as well as that they will learn other aspects such as health and hygiene. The aim is that the children should be able to play for the Indian Gymkhana team where they will meet other team members from different backgrounds as well as that they may get the possibility to play at a higher level. Peter also tries to encourage the boys to get involved in coaching; where the boys get to coach a younger age group in the program. Peter believes that it might lead to a long-term commitment of coaching cricket. Some of the boys naturally take on the role as leaders or coaches.

The program aims to add a little bit of structure to the boy’s lives. Peter considers another positive aspect to be that the boys collaborate with other boys in the team and make new acquaintances. He mentions that he find it interesting to see how the boy’s dynamic as a team has changed during the season. He states that they have developed from individual players to a team that is aware of their strengths and weaknesses. This progression is something that the boys have achieved among themselves as a team without Peter or the coaches interference.

**Youth Empowerment Program**

The observations took place in Ashayen Community Center in Dharavi during the youth’s English lesson. Afterward, an interview was conducted with Jyoti, who have the role of Community Centre Manager & Soft Skill Teacher.

Jyoti joined Reality Gives two and a half year ago as a soft skill teacher. Half a year back she got offered her current position and is now responsible for all the programs and activities that take place in the community center; whereas Youth Empowerment program is one of them.

Jyoti explain how several of the youths in Dharavi drop out of school early and that many of the youths in the community are uncertain of what to make of life. Youth Empowerment Project was created as an answer to the communities needs for young people. Youth Empowerment Program reaches out to youths between 17-35 years of age that wish to gain knowledge and skills so that they can go back to college or search for better jobs. Jyoti says that the program aims to empower youths as well as to help them create better opportunities for themselves.

The Youth Empowerment Program consists of English, computer skills and soft skills. Soft skills include positive thinking, perception of the self-image, decision making, how to face criticism, stress management, interview skills and presentation skills. The English module used in the program, is developed by *Times of India* and Jyoti consider it to work well. She noticed a change in the students after the programs finished and considers it to be a great achievement that the students have a good knowledge and understanding of English after they graduate. During the observation it was noticed that the students held a good level of English.
and that they were happy to practice it. The students seemed pleased to be in the class and they appeared to seize the opportunity they are given to learn and practice English. The class contained several practical exercises for the students. The teacher held a short lecture and then encouraged the students to think and practice for themselves while she made sure that they understood what to do. She listened as they spoke to each other as well as helped them when needed. Boys and girls, as well as religions and ages, where mixed and appeared to be comfortable in each-others company. There appeared to be a friendly vibe amongst the students. Even if the students at times got a bit excited in terms of joking and talking to each-other, was it overall to be noticed their good-manners, willingness to learn as well as their respect for the teacher and not to forget their smiles and spirits.

The program last for three months. Every three months; two batches are selected with 15 students in each. The classes are from Monday to Saturday. To recruit new students the center go out in the community and talk to people; on the streets and through visits to residential houses, they distribute pamphlets and try to encourage girls to apply for the program. Jyoti explain that there are at times 50-70 candidates for the 30 available spaces in the program. The candidates are interviewed as part of the selection process. To be able to enroll in the program the applicant are acquired to hold a certain degree of verbal and written English. For those who do not hold the level of English required is assistance offered as to how they can learn the language. Once they improved their English, they can once again apply to the program. The project also has a mobile English program, where the students gain access to English software through their phones, which help them with their studies in the English language. If an individual don’t have access to a mobile-phone can they borrow one from the center during the duration of their course.

The majority of the students are girls. Jyoti say that the batches in general consist of 60 to 70 % girls. She is unsure of the reason but hope that it might be an indication to that the girls feel secure to come to the center.

After the program, the center contact the students after six months have passed. By this time, an estimate of 70% of the graduates has found employment. A large number of the percentage that don’t have jobs are girls from Islam communities. The girls attend the program to gain knowledge and skills but their family’s don’t agree with them working outside the own household. Nonetheless, Jyoti consider it to be positive that the girls have the opportunity to gain knowledge for themselves and for their own self-worth.

Youth Empowerment Program wants to build confidence to practices the subjects the program involves. Jyoti believe that these skills are an essential part in today’s world and by mastering these skills the youths can create better opportunities for themselves. She is pleased with the program and the impact it has on the youths.

**Local School Support Program**

To attain information regarding the Local School Support Program at Royal City School in Dharavi an interview has been carried out with Lakshmi, who is the Educational Programs Director. Here role is to train teachers, conduct workshops, make sure that what is being planned is also implemented in the classrooms, observe classroom transactions and whenever necessary do interventions. She has been involved with Reality Gives for four years.
was prior to Reality Gives involved with another NGO named Muktangan, which developed the teaching methods that are used in the Local School Support Program.

The Local School Support Program are supporting close to 250 students. Each class consists of 15 students and three teachers. Since it is a private school, the students have to make an on-time payment for admission. The program support English Medium Kindergarten, which involves children the age of three to five, and First Grade, children at the age of five.

The program has a focus on the children’s interest; to allow for the child’s creativity to express itself. The program includes subjects as active learning through singing, dancing, role plays and other different development activities. Furthermore, the program include subjects as English, math, environmental science, the local state language Marathi, arts and crafts, physical development, as well as it makes time for games and play. The teachers plan all lessons in advance through interaction with Lakshmi and the other teachers to ensure the quality. The program uses different ways to ensure the quality of the program and that the quality in various projects is not compromised due to external circumstances. The project is still developing, and even if they have come a long way towards their goal there is still a strong focus on further development and growth.

Due to that the layup includes the creative activities mentioned, the project have faced some resistance from the parents of the children. The parents want their children to learn practical skills and disagree to the involvement of these other subjects. They have struggled to see what the children gain from the creative activities. Lakshmi wish to create a good partnership with the parents and to have them onboard with the program. There have been several meetings with the parents to create understanding for the learning module.

Lakshmi believes that preschool should be a pleasurable experience for the children and that they through active and creative learning develop as individuals as well as it promotes the practical learning. Nevertheless, she sees the parents concern regarding the children’s education as positive and believes that they together with the parents can create a good education for the children. Lakshmi wants the school to be a place where both the children and teachers are happy to come and learn or teach.

The Local School Support Program aims to provide the children with skills that prepare them for the future as well as skills that they can implement in their lives. Lakshmi wish each and every child to be become a productive member of society and wants them to develop as confident individuals that can make choices for themselves and pursue their own goals. The program is trying to achieve this through channeling the child’s interest as well to involve the parents. The child should be allowed to choose already at an early age what they want to learn. Lakshmi also consider it to be important to create an open environment where the children feel that they can express themselves, their feelings and their questions. She believes in the capability of every child.

Some of the children have previously been in environments where they have been exposed to corporal punishment; which is something Lakshmi would never allow in this program. She can tell that the children are opening up and thriving in the environment Royal City School provides. Many of the children have expressed their wish to keep attending the school, which Lakshmi sees as a great compliment to the program. Furthermore, she considers it to be positive that the children feel comfortable to share their personal problems with their teachers.
The program has exerted projects that have shown visible proof of learning; which has delighted the parents, and the children have been proud of themselves for their achievements. Lakshmi mention that one of their biggest achievements have been that the parents have told them that their children speak English in their homes, and furthermore are teaching the parents words and phrases in English.

**Girls Football Program**

The Girls Football Program has been observed during practice and an interview has been carried out with Peter, Director of Sport Programs.

The Girls Football Program started originally in 2012, but under another name. At the moment are there 50 girls registered in the program. During the observation, two more girls came to sign up. The girls are split in two groups, under 14 and under 18 years of age. They practice twice a week. During observation, the girls decide in agreement with Peter to add another weekly practice. Peter asked the girls if they wished to add another practice and the girls talked it over as a group and decided day and time.

The program is still in an early stage and Peter is looking to further develop the project to include more structure as well as more sessions and age-groups. The girls do not have to pay any fee for the football but they have to pay for their own football kit. They can buy this to a reduced cost of from Reality Gives after they have completed 15 training sessions. Peter believes that if they complete 15 practice sessions; that they are invested in the program. Another reason for waiting 15 sessions before the girls can buy the kit is that, even though the price for the kit is reduced, it is still for many of the residents in Dharavi considered to be a high cost which means that the parents come to the center to buy the kit, which also allow them to gain an understanding for the program as well as that they get involved in the girls activity.

In Dharavi it is not very common for girls to play sports. The girls in the program have meet resistance from parents and the community because of their choice to play football. They have felt uncomfortable wearing the football-kit since it is not common for girls in their culture to wear shorts. The Girls Football Program wants to make it acceptable for girls in the community to play sports. Peter noticed a raise in the girl’s confidence since they started playing football. He believes that it might be easier for the girls to start practice at an early age since they then are less aware of the cultural norms.

Nevertheless, many of the girls have continued playing. Most of the girls in the older age group wear their football-kit to practice. The practice is situated in a central part of the Kumbharwada community.

The program wish to encourage the girls mothers to come and see the girls perform and play. There are mothers that are skeptical towards the program, but there are also mothers that show their support and notice the positive change football have brought in their girls.

Peter wishes to play more matches where the girls get to meet other teams and girls from different backgrounds, as well as that they will be exposed to the professional aspect of football.

Peter notice the joy football brings to the girls. He tells how the girls wish to continue their practice. One of the girls that were at first semi-interested in football, is now coaching the younger girls and by doing so pays for her own football-kit. He says that she is a good leader.
and that he is glad that she got the chance to explore this skill. He hopes that the program will contribute to awareness in the girls that might lead to them questioning whether or not they want the social structure in their community to remain the same or if they want parts of it to change. Furthermore, Peter considers that the program in certain aspects lead to empowerment for the girls. They learn how to choose things for themselves, whether or not they want to wear football-shorts, if they want more practices etc. They get to decide for themselves the changes they want to make in their lives.

During the observation, it is apparent that the girls respect Peter and look up to him. When speaking to Peter it is equally clear that he cares for these girls. He is enthusiastic in regards to their well-being and development. During practice are the girls smiling and laughing while training. They appear to be enjoying themselves as well as that they are keen to practice football.

An Indian woman who volunteers for the program explains how some of the girls may experience a lack of attention from home. There are cases where the girl’s fathers are no longer part of the family, which lead to an increased responsibility for the girls in the household since the mother has to work. It is therefore beneficial for them to come and play football; where they can focus on themselves, do something they enjoy and receive attention from Peter and other people involved with Reality Gives.

During the conversation with the volunteer, she mentions how important she finds different education aspects for the girl’s. What they learn creates an awareness of the culture in the community. These girls are the ones who will raise the next generation according to their own beliefs and values. They will create the future.

**Dharavi Rocks**

Dharavi Rocks have been observed during practice sessions as well as during performances. An interview has been carried out with Abhijit, who is volunteering as a music teacher for the project. Abhijit has been involved with Dharavi Rocks for more than two and a half years.

Dharavi Rocks was created almost five years ago. Abhijit sees the project as a way for the children in Dharavi to express their musical talent, as well as to expose the world to these children that otherwise might not have had the chance to explore their musical skills. He considers Mumbai to be a city which is mostly about music, Bollywood and arts, and he sees no reason to why the children in Dharavi shouldn’t have the chance to be a part of it. Dharavi Rocks works as a platform for the children to explore their musical talent and give them the possibility to develop this trait. The project is a way for the children to see that there are different possible future paths for them to choose, whether it is as music artists, actress or something totally different.

Dharavi Rocks involve approximately 40 to 50 children who attend training sessions regularly. The band practices one to two times a week. The project has, during the time Abhijit been with them, had more than 50 performances at different festivals and venues in Mumbai and other areas of India.

Dharavi Rocks consist mostly of boys. This is, according to Abhijit, due to that the practices are in the evening and many of the parents are not comfortable with their girls being out late. Nonetheless, Abhijit is trying to recruit more girls to the band and he is always aiming to
have both genders on stage while performing. The ages of the children involved in the project varies from six to 16. Many of the children used to be rag-pickers; rag-pickers collect waste material which they sell to manufacturers in Dharavi. Some of the children have previously been involved with illegal activities such as drugs and stealing.

Abhijit said that he has seen a big change in the children since they joined the music project. The children are excited to learn and play music; this is also visible during observations. The children are all smiles, both during practice and performances, as well as they are focused on the task at hand. They have developed their musical and communicating skills as well as their ability to work together in teams.

Dharavi Rocks has become a brand that many people know about, and due to their many performances the children have grown accustomed to the exposure that comes with being on stage. Abhijit consider it to be important to keep the children grounded and not let the fame get hold of them. He want them to keep developing as musicians, and believes that if the children are to keep learning they have to believe themselves that there is more to learn. Furthermore, he encourages the children to pursue education through school or Acorn Foundation, who also provides education. He encourages the children to get a basic education since he believes that to be good for their future as well as their values. Dharavi Rocks is an extracurricular activity that aims to give the children a productive way to spend their spare time while it at the same time broadens their horizon.

Dharavi Rocks has, in terms of being a band, reached their short-term goal. The children have learned to perform as professionals, as well as that they marketed themselves as a band and a brand. In the future Dharavi Rocks is looking to further extend collaborations which have already been formed, and to make their own album in cooperation with Indian as well as international music artists.

Abhijit finds that the children have grown in different ways. They have learned how to behave and express themselves when meeting people of different backgrounds and they are not pursuing earlier abusive behaviors.

The children have learned to work as a group, which strengthens their sense of community. They have to perform and practice as a band and not just as individuals. During the observations, the children appear behaved and well-mannered towards each other, as well as towards authorities. It is noticeable that the children care for Abhijit and respect him. It is also clear that they enjoy being a part of the project. When speaking to Abhijit his involvement with the children is noticeable, so is that he cares for the project and the individual child. Even due to difference in gender and age, is there a good atmosphere amongst everyone, both during practice and performance. The children and Abhijit encourages everyone to perform during practice and shows appreciation towards one another. Abhijit pays attention to each and every one as individuals and make sure that everyone receives attention and that no one gets left out.

Abhijit tells that the children are now used to be on stage and that they love performing. The children want to share their energy and happiness, and after seeing they perform, and the response of the crowd, it appears that they do.
Discussion

In this section, the result is discussed and reviewed in relation to empowerment and social development theories. The theories are first discussed on their own, with focus on the results from each individual project. After, it is reviewed how the two theories intertwine with one another. In the discussions regarding the theories and empirical data, previous studies are connected to the conclusions. A discussion regarding the methods used in the dissertation concludes the chapter.

Discussion of results

Empowerment

All the researched projects in the study have in common that they are encouraging children and youths to pursue their goals. The empowerment practice aims to enable individuals and groups to overcome obstacles they are facing and achieve their goals in life (Payne, 2008). The projects are working to achieve this in different ways. The girls in the Football Program are facing obstacles such as the community’s resistance towards girls practicing sports, or that their football-kit is perceived to be unsuitable for them to wear due to structures in society. The girls in the team have been given the opportunity to play, and choose to do so as well as that many of them choose to wear the football-kit. Project Front Foot provides professional cricket training for boys that are interested in developing in the field. In the program are the boys given the opportunity to develop in terms of their cricket skills, coaching younger age groups as well as that they in the future might be able to play cricket for Indian Gymkhana team or on a higher level. The children in Dharavi Rocks are presented with an opportunity to develop as musicians as well as that they are encouraged to acquire a basic education. The Youth Empowerment Program was created to provide youths in the community with skills and tools to help them overcome obstacles that derives from lack of knowledge, so that they can create better lives for themselves. In the Local School Support Program are the children encouraged to follow their interest and discover their own individual strengths. The program obtains a focus on creative learning as a way for the child to explore a range of skills. They are by doing so creating new experiences for the child. One of the perspectives of empowerment is to help groups, or individuals, attain power. This can be done through activities that result in an increase of self-confidence, a more positive self-image and greater knowledge and skills. Through achieving this, a person may alter their expectations of life (Payne, 2008). Based on the data gathered is the conclusion that the activities the projects carry out lead to increased confidence as well as greater knowledge and skills for the individual’s. Further-
more, through gaining knowledge or learning a skill; one’s self-image is likely to become more positive. Even though the projects have different orientations, they are all of them encouraging their participants to explore an interest and by doing so allowing them to pursue their dreams. The projects are showing their participants different possible futures to pursue as well as providing them with the skills, knowledge and confidence that enables them to pursue them. It is to be noticed in all the projects that they are strengthening the individual’s personal resources. According to Payne (2008) is this enabling the children and youths to gain power in their own lives, as well as it develops confidence and self-esteem. When observing Dharavi Rocks is the confidence of the participants obvious. This is also noticed in the other projects. The children and youths are happy to learn and to strengthen their personal resources, as well as they have the confidence to practice what they learn. In the Girls Football Program are the girls encouraged to take place and believe in themselves. They are allowed the time in the program to do something they themselves want to do. The Local School Support Program aims to empower the children so that they can pursue a future based on their own interests. The program wants the students to become productive members of society as well as confident individuals that can make choices for themselves. The soft skills, the Youth Empowerment Program teaches, strengthens several important aspects of the participant’s self-image. The skills that they are learning are applicable in their daily lives. In Project Front Foot the team has become more aware of their strengths and weaknesses through the fitness- and self-evaluation tests, which accounts for a more accurate self-image. By participating in a project that allows one to grow as a person do the individual change the outlook on life as well as on oneself as a person. All the programs allows for the children and youths to dream of a future that would not have been available for them if it were not for these projects. The programs allows for a greater view of the world and the possibilities for them. The children and youths are encouraged to think for themselves and create their own dreams.

The children and youths in the programs are choosing to overcome obstacles simply by participating in the projects. One of the aspects of empowerment is to enable the clients to gain power over their own decisions (Payne, 2008, UN DESA, 2013). Through the children and youths decision to participate in the projects have they already made a first decision, which is made for their own persona and future. Every time they partake in the projects are they making a decision for themselves, as well as that the projects are encouraging them to make their own choices in other areas of their lives. During the observation of the Girls Football Program are the girls asked if they wish another weekly practice. After they discussed it as a group did they quickly reached a decision. It is also noticed in the Local School Support Program how the children are encouraged to make their own choices based on their interests.

All of the interviewees have expressed how they noticed a raise of self-confidence within the participants of the projects. This confidence is also perceptible during the observations. Although, it should be noted that due to the short range of time during which the observations were carried out is it impossible to determine the cause of the confidence. Nevertheless, based on interviews, as well as that the empirical data is sustained by theoretical, it is to be assumed that the programs do lead to increased self-confidence as well as other positive aspects for the individuals that choose to seize the opportunity to develop. An individual person’s self-control and self-confidence is likely to increase through different activities (Payne, 2008). The children and youths are through the projects pursuing different activities that they enjoy as
well as that they are developing through knowledge and skills as individuals. The programs are all enhancing the individual’s self-confidence in different ways. In Dharavi Rocks, the children receive recognition from the public during performances. They are also collaborating with Indian and international artists. This is likely to lead to an increased feeling of self-worth and self-confidence. Also in the sport programs, the children get exposure during matches. The children and youths, in all of the projects, receive recognition from different sources for their participation in the programs. A study, which was earlier mentioned, that focuses on adolescents with disabilities came to the conclusion that recognition enhances the feeling of self-worth (Gulati, Paterson, Medves & Luce-Kapler, 2011). Another study has shown how staff at a NGO in Kenya, who is working with children, noticed an increase of self-confidence and self-esteem in the participants of the projects. They also noted how the children developed a desire to excel in life through their involvement in the program (Ferguson & Heidemann, 2009).

Empowerment wants to allow the client to use his or her own individual strength (Payne, 2008). In the programs are the participants given an opportunity to explore skills that derives from their interest. This is most evident in the Local School Support Program due to their range of activities, as well as that the children are encouraged to already at an early age explore different abilities.

The empowerment theory also put emphasis on the social structures in the community. It is believed that the social structure is created by the people perceiving it, and due to that presumption are the people also the ones with the power to change it. This can be done through creating an awareness of the structures. The social structures can be changed through mobilization (Askheim, Starrin & Winqvist, 2007). The programs are challenging the social structures in different ways. First, one might see to that all the projects consist of groups; who are gaining similar knowledge in each of the projects. This could lead to mobilization if the groups have the urge to change parts of society based on the knowledge they gained. Ferguson and Heidemann (2009) found that NGOs can, through participation in the structural society, contribute to positive transformations for groups as well as individuals. The same study concluded that the structures of society shape the action of the individual. The children and youths in the programs included in this dissertation are becoming more aware of different parts of the social structures depending on the activities of the project. In Dharavi Rocks do the children get to visit different areas of Mumbai and India as well as different social contexts through the project. In Youth Empowerment Program, awareness is created through knowledge. The girls in the football program are challenging the norm by playing a sport and wearing clothes that normally wouldn’t be socially acceptable. The girls are choosing to challenge the social structure and by doing so changing their own way of thinking as well as how they perceive their reality. During a conversation with the volunteer for the football program, did she express how important she finds different educational aspects, since they create awareness of the structures in the community. These girls in the football program will one day be mothers and they are likely to transfer their own beliefs and values to their children. In the Youth Empowerment Program are there girls that only gain skills and knowledge for the own self-worth. Srivastava and Sumrani (2012) also noticed in their study how old stereotypes are prominent in the slums and that the parents of the children in the projects rather saw that their girls stayed at home learning household chores instead of participating in the project. But
even if these skills are not used for labor, will they be visible when the girls share their knowledge with their family and children. Changes are bound to occur in the social structure when the children and youths of today attain knowledge and awareness that they will share with the next generation. In common for all the programs, is that the participants are provided with a platform where they can make new acquaintances, which in turn creates awareness for other cultures and religions.

Social interaction is considered to be the base of development (Renblad, 2003). In the projects are the children and youths meeting people they might not otherwise have meet or interacted with. They meet people of different ages, background, religions and cultures which allows for new understandings and perceptions in a social context. Communication and social interaction allows for people to progress (Renblad, 2003). It is noticeable in the projects that the teachers and volunteers care for the individuals and their development. A network that is caring and understanding enables a person to develop their individual strengths and capacities (Renblad, 2003).

Another perspective of empowerment is as a tool to help individuals or groups to establish power (Payne, 2008). All the projects in the dissertation are providing the participants with practical and creative tools as well as they enhance their self-confidence, self-esteem and self-belief. The individuals obtain tools which enables them to pursue power on an individual basis as well as a group. The tools and knowledge they are gaining can be applied to other areas of life and are not just restricted to the projects per se. In the Youth Empowerment Program the youths learn English. By speaking the English language, the youths remove a language barrier that might enable them to pursue different paths that might not previously been accessible.

The empowerment perspective can be summarized as a questioning of oppression. It enables people to control factors that influence them, discover their own needs and make their voices heard (Payne, 2008, UN DESA, 2013). It has been established that all of the programs teach children and youths to make choices in their lives based on their own needs and wishes as well as that that they are encouraged to pursue their personal goals in life. By being aware of social structures are the participants able to change the factors that affect their lives. Oppression is part of this structure. The children and youths learn to question the reality they live in and based on that are they also in a position to change it. In each program is there a focus on the individual person, which allows the participants to make their voices heard as well as their needs and wishes.

The main focuses of the empowerment perspective is that it allows for people to define their own needs, it questions oppression, it has a focus on the individual person’s strength and it enables people to take control of their lives. All of these aspects have been discussed and it is to be noticed, even due to the different focus of the projects, that they all contain these parts. All of the different aspects of empowerment can be viewed as means to reach a goal (Askeheim, Starrin & Winqvist, 2007). Either the goal is to pursue a certain future or develop a skill and gain knowledge, might it be that the greatest achievement of empowerment is the positive emotions of self-confidence, self-esteem and self-image it brings forth, which allows for the children and youths to believe in themselves and their own abilities. It is the conclusion of the data collected that all of the projects are creating these positive feelings in the child
or youth to different extents. They are by doing so providing a platform from where the children and youths can excel in life.

**Social development**

A person’s development depends on legacy, learning, interaction of genetics, as well as the environment and the social milieu that the individual functions in (Hwang & Nilsson, 2003). A child’s cognition changes depending on which activities and social interactions the child is included in (Tetzchner, 2005). All of the projects included in this dissertation offer the child or youth a change of environment as well as of the social milieu. The children and youths engage in activities and social interactions which, according to Tetzchner (2005), lead to changes in their cognition. All of the interviewees have expressed how they, due to the projects, seen changes in the children or youths in regard to several different aspects. Based on the interviews, which are being supported by the cognitive theories, the projects have an impact on the way the children and youths think, behave and understand their reality as well as how they perceive their future.

No matter which activity the projects involve in, they all strive towards the same target; to infuse the individual with knowledge and skills. The child or youth is through the projects exposed to new environments as well as often a different social and sometimes cultural context; through these projects part of the context in the children’s and youths daily life change. Vygotsky (1994) argued that children are a part of a social and cultural context and that development is culture-specific. By providing different social and cultural context for the child and youth are the NGO’s also providing the children and youths with a new direction for their development. They develop in consensus with the environment.

Tetzchner (2005) states that the development of the child depends on interactions with family, siblings and teachers among others. The children and youths in all the projects interact with people they might not have met if it were not for the program. They interact with other participants of the projects, as well as teachers. The children and youth’s cognition changes through social interactions. The external happenings, like dialogues, becomes internal and a part of the individuals mind and psyche. The child or youth’s reality change through social interaction and the context in which the child or youth reside, as well as the activities they participate in (Tetzchner, 2005). Gulati, Paterson, Medves and Luce-Kapler (2011) also states that group activities lead to positive internalizations of children’s feelings.

To determine the effect something has on an individual being is not as straightforward as it might appear, at least in regards to proximal development. The amount of data needed to establish to which extent the projects use proximal development has not been attained. Although, from the information gathered are the projects using methods that have similar traits to them of proximal development. According to proximal development, the child or youth should be allowed to face challenges that it can handle on its own, or by assistance from someone more experienced. The grown-up should be there to support and guide the child or youth to sustain an interest of learning (Hwang & Nilsson, 2003). There are teachers or coaches in all of the projects whose purpose is to support the child or youth in the learning process as well as to guide them. During the observation, it has been noticed that the participants receive feedback on their performances. Gulati, Paterson, Medves and Luce-Kapler
Sandra Svensson

(2011) found that external support should be ongoing to sustain positive reinforcement. During the observation at the community center did the youth’s English class include several practical exercises. The teacher held a lecture explaining the subject to the youths. After which they had the opportunity to practice and learn for themselves as well as they could develop through practice with each other. The teacher walked around amongst the students, making sure that they understood the task at hand and helping them when needed. The Local School Support Program has 15 students on three teachers. Through small classes are the children more likely to receive individual attention. The program tries to capture the children’s interest and develop their individual strengths, as well as provide them with practical skills which they will be able to implement in their lives and that prepare them for their future. In Dharavi Rocks, Abhijit want the children to understand that there is always more to learn, and he wants them to keep develop as musicians and as a group. He believes that if the children are to keep learning, they need to believe that there is more to learn. During practices does Abhijit encourage every child to participate, he gives everyone individual attention. The children also encourage each other. In the Girls Football Program a girl needed more encouragement than the others. When she received the attention she needed, she also discovered to joy of football and is now coaching the younger girls. By giving feedback to the child, a way for the child to explore the personal thinking process can be created. Proximal development can improve the child’s self-image and self-esteem as well as that the child gain confidence in his or her own abilities (Hwang & Nilsson, 2003).

Youth Empowerment Project and the School Support Program both teach English. English is not the first language for these youths and by learning a new language are they able to express themselves towards more people. Even in the other projects the children get to practice English due to that not all of the people involved in the projects speak Hindi. Vygotsky (1978) sees language as tool which we use to face and manage our surroundings. By being able to speak another language can the children and youths make themselves understood to other groups of people as well as they themselves understand situations which acquires the English language.

Hwang and Nilsson (2003) states that the parent’s relation to the child’s learning is important. This belief is also shared by Lakshmi, from the Local School Support Program. She works hard to get the parents involved in the children’s education. The program have faced some struggles due to that the parents want their children to learn practical skills and fail to see the benefits of including creative skills in the education. To create a better relationship with the parents the school has had several meetings with them. The parents involvement is viewed as valuable, and even if they don’t agree fully with the learning module are they through their concern showing an interest for the child’s education. Lakshmi believes that they can through working together with the parents create a better learning environment for the children in where they also get support from home. Even in the Girls Football Program is Peter striving to get the parent’s involvement through encouraging the parents to come and view the project and practice-sessions. Peter noticed that some mothers are skeptical towards the football but there are mothers who show their support and notice the positive change football has brought in their girls. Bháird (2013) showed in a study how a NGO created a good platform for learning through creating good relationships with the residents of the community and argues that the best way to succeed is by working together with the residents.
**Empowerment and social development**

While reviewing the collected data it became obvious how two theories with different focus can be dependent on one another. Even though one of the theories has empowerment as a mean and/or goal and the other social development, is it interesting how the same factors relate to both of the theories. The theories connect in ways such that social development-theories can be perceived as explaining the practical sense of learning and what aspects that interferes with development. Empowerment on the other hand has a greater focus on the results, which also could be perceived as means to reach empowerment, as to how empowerment creates positive feelings about how people perceive themselves. Through connecting the theories, a greater understanding for the implementation of the projects, as well as the results of them, is possible. The projects in the dissertation work through social development theories that are intertwined with empowerment theories such as social interaction, the influence the environment has on the individual, the focus on the individual and their strengths, proximal development as well as internalization. All of these aspects are to be found in the projects as well as that the theories contemplates each other in regards to the subjects. It was previously stated that empowerment can be viewed as means to reach a goal. In this section it will be discussed how the two theories intertwine with one another, as well see to how social development as a mean can results in empowerment as a goal.

When seeing how the social development theory expresses itself in the projects, is it to be noticed the impact the environment and social milieu has for the children and youths. The meaning of environment for social development is connected with the empowerment perspective. Through the social milieu and the activities the child partakes in changes the child’s cognition (Vygotsky, 1994). Empowerment explores the way environmental and social structures affect the individual (Payne, 2008). More than that is social interaction considered to be the basis of development (Renblad, 2003). Social development theory believes that the environment and social interactions shapes the child’s cognition. Empowerment see the same factors as reason for change as well as it see to the positive outcomes from this change’s such as learning, development, awareness etc. By pursuing different activities, the individual can increase self-confidence, self-image, self-esteem and so on. (Payne, 2008). According to Vygotsky (1994), the individuals mind and psyche change due to internalization of the social interaction and context in which he or she resides in. Meaning that both empowerment- and social development-theories believes in changes due to external circumstances, whether the changes in the persona are positive or negative would depend on the situation and environment. The projects studied have according to information gathered brought changes in the participants lives and the changes is perceived as positive based on the observations.

Both of the theories aim to infuse the child or youth with skills and knowledge. For social development theory can proximal learning be viewed as a mean to reach a goal. For the empowerment theory is the focus on providing individuals with skills and knowledge to bring forth positive emotions regarding the individuals and their abilities. In the projects it is visible how the theories connect with one another due to the focus of proximal learning in the social development theory, which results in improvement of the child’s or youths self-image and self-esteem, which is also parts of what empowerment theories aims to achieve (Hwang & Nilsson, 2003, Payne, 2008).
It was mentioned during the discussion regarding empowerment how the theory can lead to questioning of oppression as well as that it leads to awareness of the social structures. The knowledge and skills that are gained through a social development perspective will ultimately create awareness for the children and youths, as will the change of social milieu and interactions. Both of the theories are bound to, due to their structure in the projects; create future possibilities as well as enabling different outlooks of the participant’s futures.

It was during the interviews expressed the changes noted in the children and youths; how they have grown and developed due to the programs. As an observer during such a short duration of time is it impossible to say the impact the program has had on the children and youths. Nonetheless, it is to be mentioned that after viewing the projects and the participants is it the author’s opinion that the children and youths are pleased to be part of the projects. The children and youths want to learn and develop. They choose themselves to be part of these programs and they do so for a reason. It might be that some of them participate with no further thought than that they enjoy the activity. That reason should not be underestimated. As being stated earlier is even playing seen as a social process that requires certain intellectual skills (Hwang & Nilsson, 2003). Furthermore, stated Smith, Khan, Frankenberger and Wadud (2013) that projects with focus on empowerment as well as development enables people to improve the life of the people around them. This can be noticed in the Local School Support Program where the children teach their parents English. Also, when speaking to the volunteer for the Girls Football Program, she mentions how important she finds different education aspects to be for the girls, since it creates an awareness of the cultural aspects in the community. She believes that the girls will carry on their beliefs and values to the next generation. Vijayanthi (2002), UNICEF (2006), TeachUNICEF (2008) and Daily Development (2014) believes that women’s empowerment leads to positive effects for children’s development and well-being.

The projects are focusing on different areas of the children or youths life. Through the information gathered it is to be believed, that even if the project focuses on a certain area, that the benefits the children and youths gain from the projects, such as self-confidence, a more positive self-image, social development, decision-making etc., influences other parts of their life outside of the project. They develop as human beings and the skills, knowledge and development they attain will be favorable for them in many other aspects of their lives.

After this study it is to be believed that for a person to reach empowerment as well as social development several different aspects have to be included. It is not to be said that these projects by themselves lead to empowerment or social development, although they do to some extent, but if they are to be in association with the individual’s daily life, as well as other activities and projects, the result should be greater. More influences and experiences for the child or youth allow for them to gain greater knowledge and understanding which leads to empowerment and social development. Previous studies have also reached the conclusion that projects that focuses on empowerment and development has positive impact in terms of empowering individuals and groups (Smith, Khan, Frankenberger & Wadud, 2013).

Aspects of empowerment- and social development theories have been criticized in such ways as they lack of information in different areas. The study at hand have researched different parts of the theories as well as how they interfere with each other opposed to the including
projects. The criticism mentioned regarding the theories has not been noticeable in the study or affected the dissertation. Although it is to be considered that if the study would have been more in depth might the weaknesses of the theories been more noticeable. Nevertheless, it is the author’s conclusion, based on the data gathered, that implementing social development theory in practice leads to the positive aspects of the empowerment theory. The opinion, based on theoretical and empirical data, is that through applying social development techniques it is possible to empower individuals.

The conclusions from the discussion can be used in practice in the area of social work when it comes to working with children and youths in underprivileged areas. Even if the study focuses on a particular area can the information to some extent apply to other situations which include children and youths in underprivileged areas. The information in the dissertation can be of use when carrying out social work towards children and youths in underprivileged areas as to gain an understanding of the methods used and how the theories in practice intertwine and allow for achievements in terms of empowerment and social development for the participants.

Discussion of method

A problem often facing researchers is that their own preconceptions might affect the result of the study. Preconceptions is a person’s former experiences and knowledge that shapes the way he or she thinks, feels, understands and interpret a certain situation. With a base in hermeneutic is this dissertation using preconceptions as an advantage. When a hermeneutics researcher approaches the research subject is the preconceptions used as an asset and as a way to interpret and understand the subject (Patel & Davidsson, 2011). Nonetheless, preconceptions shape our way of perceiving the reality more than we often realize. We perceive the world based on our preconceptions (Thurén, 2007). It is possible that the study and it’s result is affected by the author’s preconception, but by constantly being aware of the impact it can have on the study, the impact should be considered as minimal. Furthermore, the impact it still might have had on the study is perceived as to be leading to a different understanding of the reality. No person perceives the reality in the same way, and through a different way of seeing the world or a situation a deeper understanding is gained.

A case study is often questioned when it comes to the external validity and generalizability. A single case is not considered to be representative (Bryman, 2011). It is not believed that this study is to be representative for the work with children and youths in slums in a global perspective. Dharavi is, as shown in Background; Dharavi & Mumbai, chosen because of its uniqueness. Dharavi affects so many people that it on its own should be studied even if it is not representable for other slums, children or youths. Although, seeing to previous research are there parts that can be generalized and used in other areas and situations of the world. This being said; the author, who has an interest in evidence-based practice (EBP), believes that every situation is unique and that every individual should be treated on that basis.

In terms of the methods used for collecting data; by using both interviews and observations are different perceptions of the situations gained which would not have been the case as if only one of the methods where to be used. Also by using different methods to study the same issue increases the validity and quality of the study (Boolsen, 2007). During observations are
people viewed in their natural environment and aspects are noticed that might not have been mentioned in the interviews. Through interviews, on the other hand, is it possible to gain insight to people’s values and opinions regarding different matters, and different information can be obtained than through observations (Bryman, 2011). By combining these methods, both of the realms are covered and together it is believed that they produce a fuller, truer and a more accurate picture of the reality.

During observations is it always a possibility that the people observed behave differently due to the researches presence (Bolsen, 2007). In this study the possible changes in behavior is not believed to have affected the collected data or the result of the study. If the children or youths would have been the main focus for the study the influence of the researcher’s presence might have had a bigger impact on the data.

When the research began, it was planned that one interview with each NGO where to be carried out. During the field work it became evident that it was more suited to make one interview for each project as to gather information straight from the person in charge of the project at hand. Due to the amount of projects, the limited time-span for the dissertation and the unexpected amount of interviews, the observations had to be shorter than first anticipated. Even though the observations were not performed according to the time-span first intended it is the author’s opinion that the information needed was gathered. Even if more time would have been spent for observations, wouldn’t it been possible to do them to the extent of time that would have been needed to see the changes the projects lead to in the individuals.

The choice of methods is likely to have affected the outcome of the study. Although the methods used was chosen out of the belief that they would generate suitable data for the study as well as provide a fair picture of the reality. If the focus would have been on the children and youths instead of the NGOs, it is possible that the study would have attained different data and a different outcome.

The three main criteria for evaluating research in the field of social sciences are reliability, replication and validity. Although these are better suited for quantitative research then qualitative, due to the challenges in repeating the same research with the same results. Qualitative research depends on people and situations, which both changes over time and due to circumstances (Bryman, 2011). Instead of these, different criteria’s better suited for this study is used; generalizability, credibility and confirmability. The study’s generalizability has previously been discussed. Instead of generalizability, transferability could have been used as a measurement. Seeing how generalizability works well with the study at hand in different context the author choose to use the criteria for evaluating the study. Nonetheless, it should be noted that the study also meet the criteria for transferability that aims to how well the study describes the milieu and cultural aspects of the environment in which the study takes place. Through dense and rich descriptions of the social and cultural environment the reader can decide how transferable the results are to other areas and milieus (Bryman, 2011). Confirmability is whether or not the researcher has control over his or hers values so that these do not affect the research (Bryman, 2011). This has also been discussed in the context of preconceptions. Credibility is how likely the outcome of the study is, which is not to be confused with statistical probability (Bryman, 2011). Seeing to the triangulation in regards to the use of
methods, as well as the coding and analyzing of the material, it is the author’s opinion that the credibility of the dissertation maintain a high standard.

Overall, the selection of methods and techniques used in this dissertation is considered appropriate for the study. There will always be question in hindsight as whether different theoretical approaches would have been better suited or if changes in the methods, used for collecting data, could have been executed differently and if that would have led to different results.

The purpose of the study has not been to falsify or prove a thesis. The intention is to show the reality that close to one-third of the world’s population calls their everyday life (Nijman, 2008). The dissertation wishes to demonstrate how individuals are assisted to overcome obstacles through other people and organizations which dedicate their time to the matter.
The importance of the study comes down to that the current global population is the youngest in history (Bartlett, 2010) as well as that one third of the world’s population reside in slum areas (Nijman, 2008). By examine how NGOs in a underprivileged area in Mumbai contribute to children and youth’s social development and empowerment, the author wish to provide an understanding for the importance of the projects as well as how the theories relates to the children and youths development. It is deemed to be of importance for the field of social work to understand the impact of different theories, as well as the realities of children and youths, if they are to be implemented or developed.

It should be noted that there are several aspects of this study that have not been discussed or properly researched that would be suitable for further research. Some of them have previously been mentioned. Other areas that would be of interest for further research is to view the projects through feministic theories, or seeing as most of the projects researched has a base with employees; would it be interesting to examine if the project is affected in regards to if they consist of employees or volunteers.

It should be noted that the field work is rather vast compared to the dissertation at hand. Since the theories of the thesis have been empowerment and social development and how they express themselves in the projects studied are the conclusions mainly of a positive nature. It is also the author’s belief that acknowledging the strengths of the projects will lead to more positive results in regards to the field of study. On the other hand, it is also important to focus on the weaknesses in a project, or in regards to a theory, so to gain knowledge of what not to do in terms of the project. Unfortunately, time-restraint of the study does not allow for further research in regards to that aspect, but it should be considered to be of importance for further studies.

The result of the field study has in the previous chapter been discussed in regards to the theories, as well as previous research, which resulted in conclusions based on the data. In the discussion several conclusions were reached. The main conclusions are that the projects do encourage the participants to pursue their goals as well as that they are allowing the children and youths to pursue different interests and enabling new possible futures. The discussion concludes that the programs lead to increased confidence, greater knowledge and skills, a more positive self-image, a greater feeling of self-worth, increased self-esteem and self-belief, it creates awareness of the social structures and generates a ground for social mobilization and it allows for the individuals to gain control over their own lives. The discussion has shown the impact environment and social milieu has for the individual’s cognition and how new social interactions in the projects allow for social development in the participants. Furthermore have
the discussion shown the importance support and feedback has for the participants in the projects. The findings of the study have been backed up with previous research which strengthens the generalizability aspect of the study. Seeing how the theories intertwine, the conclusion is that the same factors relate to both theories and that they can be viewed as equally dependent on each other in terms of that social development can be seen as a mean to reach empowerment. The main conclusion of the dissertation is that the projects in the aspects of the theories do change the participant’s lives in terms of how they view themselves, how they think as well as perceive their lives and possibilities. All of the projects do to different degrees contribute to positive outcomes of empowerment- and social development theories.

During the discussion, another conclusion was reached that the children and youth’s in the projects are choosing to overcome obstacles simply by participating in the projects. In the introduction of the dissertation the author stated a belief that being noticed and given a chance is of outmost importance when it comes to changing one’s own life. The children and youths in the projects of the dissertation are given a chance to change their lives through gaining skills and knowledge. Furthermore, they receive attention through the projects. Is it possible that the NGOs contribution to the participant’s social development and empowerment derives from that they are providing the tools for children and youths to pursue their goals? The participants choose themselves to take the opportunity to learn and develop and create a change in their lives. The author believes that everyone deserves a chance. The children and youths, in the projects studied, are by the NGOs given this chance. They might not change their lives around but they are changing as individuals and their change of perceptions and knowledge will one day lead to changes in future generations.
References


TeachUNICEF. (2008). Empowering Women: Empowering Children, A Middle and High School Unit, An Introduction to Gender Equality. UNICEF.


UN DESA (Department of Economic and Social Affairs). (2013). Empowerment: What does it mean to you?. United Nations Social Development Network


Personal communication

Abhijit, Music Teacher, Dharavi Rocks, Acorn Foundation/blueFROG. Interview carried out 26th of April, 2014 in Mumbai, India.

Jyoti, Community Centre Manager & Soft Skill Teacher, Youth Empowerment Program, Reality Gives. Interview carried out 8th of April, 2014 in Mumbai, India.

Lakshmi, Educational Programs Director, Local School Support Program, Reality Gives. Interview carried out 15th of April, 2014 in Mumbai, India.

Peter, Director of Sport Programs, Project Front Foot/Girls Football Program, Reality Gives. Interview carried out 10th of April, 2014 in Mumbai, India.
Interview Guide

NGOs

Name of the NGO and project: ____________________________________________

The interviewee:

Name: _______________________________________________________________

Position in organization: _______________________________________________

How long have you been involved with [name of NGO]?

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

Could you give me some basic information regarding [name of the project] (employees/volunteers etc.)?

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

What is the aim of [the project]?

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

Have you noticed any results in relation to the project – long-term/short-term?

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________
Other …

__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________

*After the interview*

How did the interview progress?
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________

Where was the interview performed?
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________

Other experiences or impressions that derive from the interview.
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
Sandra Svensson is keen to explore different cultures and gain new experiences, which is the main reason she chose to carry out her final dissertation in Dharavi. In the future, she wishes to work with development of underprivileged areas and in developing countries.