

**ORPHAN VOLUNTEER TOURISM IN THAILAND:
UNDERSTANDING MOTIVATIONS, EXPERIENCES
AND INTERACTIONS**

by

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ABSTRACT

This research investigates volunteer tourists' motivations and on-site experiences, alongside hosts' attitudes towards volunteer tourists at the Home and Life orphanage in Phang Nga province, Thailand. An interpretive paradigm utilising qualitative data collection methods (semi-structured interviews, a focus group, participant observation and diaries) was adopted. The informants included twenty-four volunteer tourists, on a working vacation at the Home and Life orphanage between 1st July and 30th September 2011, and twenty hosts from Thai Muang sub-district.

The findings of the research suggest that the volunteer tourists' motivations and on-site experiences are multidimensional. Five main themes of motivations have been identified: (i) to help the children who were affected by the 2004 Boxing Day tsunami; (ii) to gain personal development and growth; (iii) to gain new experiences; (iv) to learn about/be immersed in local culture; and (v) to meet and

make friends. Amongst these, a desire to help the children was the most dominant motivational factor, which was strongly influenced the 2004 Boxing Day tsunami. In terms of the volunteer tourists' on-site experiences, four experiential dimensions were found: (i) personal development and growth; (ii) social; (iii) cultural; and (iv) feeling. The study suggests that the children had played a significant role in making the volunteer tourists' experience a beneficial one because they were an important source for cultural learning and their lives had taught a number of things to the volunteer tourists.

This research also investigates hosts' attitudes towards the volunteer tourists. It was found that they had very positive attitudes towards the volunteer tourists, based upon two main factors: the volunteer tourists' conduct and performance; and the perceived benefits they gained from the work of these tourists. The opportunity for the children to study English with English native speakers was cited as the most significant benefit. However, the hosts also had concerns about some aspects of the volunteer tourists' behaviour and perceived under-performance, which were found to be mainly the result of cultural differences.

Additionally, interactions and relationships between volunteer tourists and hosts were also examined by using social exchange theory. The study suggests that the interactions were reciprocal, and that both the volunteer tourists and the hosts enjoyed satisfactory benefits from one another: the volunteer tourist had a desired experience, and the hosts gained benefits from the work of the volunteer tourists.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my parents, Boonlert and Ratee Proyrungroj, my husband, Jirapol Paojue, and all my family members, who have supported, inspired, and encouraged me all the way since the beginning of my studies.

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DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is my own unaided work. It is being submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Bedfordshire.

It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University.

Name of candidate: Raweewan Proyrungroj

Signature:

Date: May 2013

Chapter One

Introduction to Study

1.1. Introduction

This chapter introduces the research study commencing with its context, rationale, aims and objectives. The research site of the Home and Life orphanage in the Thai Muang sub-district of Phang Nga province in Thailand is detailed. The study's conceptual and theoretical framework and research methodology are also outlined here. The chapter ends with a summary of the organisation of the thesis.

1.2. The Study Context

Volunteer tourism is a relatively new form of tourism in Thailand. This term appeared in the Tourism Authority of Thailand's (TAT) marketing strategy for the European region for the first time in its 2011 plan (TAT, 2010a) as a potential target market for Thailand's tourism industry. At the time of writing this thesis, there was no evidence as to when international volunteer tourism was first introduced in Thailand. Additionally, there was a lack of data on the number of international volunteer tourists arriving in the country.

Among very few sources on volunteer tourism in Thailand, the study conducted by Callanan and Thomas (2005) points out that there were only three volunteer tourism programmes offered in Thailand in 2003. Other sources, such as United Nations Thailand (2008a), United Nations Environment Programme (2005), Asian Development Bank (2005), van der Meer (2007), and Tomazos and Butler (2009)

similarly note that volunteer tourism in Thailand experienced phenomenal growth in 2005 as a consequence of the 2004 Boxing Day tsunami, which devastated Thailand's south-western coast along the Andaman Sea. Since then, Thailand has become well-known as one of the most popular destinations for volunteer tourism (GoAbroad.com, 2012).

Volunteer tourism activities in Thailand are varied. Among these activities, volunteering at an orphanage or so-called 'orphan volunteer tourism' is one of the most popular activities. This is made evident by the number of volunteer tourism programmes being offered in orphanages, which accounts for 115 out of 259 programmes (GoAbroad.com, 2012).

Despite an increase in the popularity of volunteer tourism in Thailand, especially in the orphan volunteer tourism sector, at the time of writing the thesis there was very limited published research or literature on volunteer tourism in Thailand, none of which studied orphan volunteer tourism. Addressing this gap in the literature, this study was designed to examine the motivations and on-site experiences of volunteer tourists and the hosts' attitudes of towards the volunteer tourists in the context of orphan volunteer tourism in Thailand.

1.3. Research Aims and Objectives

1.3.1. Research aims

The primary aims of this research are to understand: (i) tourists' motivations and their on-site experiences of volunteering to work at the Home and Life orphanage; (ii) hosts' attitudes towards volunteer tourists. Analysis of data relevant to these two aims could also provide the basis for achieving a further aim: (iii) to understand the nature of the interactions and relationships (social exchange) between volunteer tourists and their hosts.

1.3.2. Research objectives

In order to achieve the main aims, four principle objectives were set:

- (i) to analyse the motivational factors driving volunteer tourists to participate in orphan volunteer tourism in Thailand;
- (ii) to investigate the on-site experiences of the volunteer tourists;
- (iii) to critically evaluate the attitudes of the host community towards the volunteer tourists; and
- (iv) to analyse the interactions and relationships between the volunteer tourists and their hosts.

The subsequent key research questions are:

- (i) What motivates individuals to participate in orphan volunteer tourism in Thailand?
- (ii) What types of experiences do volunteer tourists gain through their vacation at the Home and Life orphanage?

(iii) How do the hosts perceive the volunteer tourists?

(iv) What is the nature and character of the interactions and relationships between volunteer tourists and their hosts?

1.4. Rationale for the Research Study

The concept of volunteer tourism is a growing trend in the tourism industry and has caught the interest of researchers and practitioners, who have begun to investigate this niche market (Wearing, 2001). In Thailand, volunteer tourism study is still in its infancy and empirical research in the Thai context remains scant. Existing studies include Broad's (2003) research on volunteer tourism motivations and experiences at the Gibbon Rehabilitation Project in Phuket; van der Meer's (2007) study on volunteer tourists' motivations and experiences in post-tsunami KhaoLak, Thailand; Rattan's (2009) study on the role of volunteer tourism in conservation at the Elephant Nature Park in Chiang Mai; Reed's (2010) study on the information behaviour of volunteer tourists in NongKhai; and Coren and Gray's (2012) study on the commodification of volunteer tourism in Vietnam and Thailand. From the existing literature, it appears that no research has been conducted into orphan volunteer tourism within Thailand.

In addition, most of the published research has been fragmented by centring solely on either the perspectives of volunteer tourists, typically on their motivations and/or experiences (e.g. Broad, 2003; Brown, 2005; Lo and Lee, 2011; Lepp, 2009; Harlow and Pomfret, 2007; Carter, 2008; and Sin, 2009) or on the perspectives of the local communities on volunteer tourism (McGehee and

Andereck, 2009; Sin, 2010). The perspective of the volunteer tourists has received overwhelming interest, compared to the perspectives of the local residents, which is still lacking. At the time of writing the thesis, the studies of McIntosh and Zahra (2007) and Gray and Campbell (2007) were the only ones that examined the phenomenon of volunteer tourism from the perspectives of both the volunteer tourists and the host community. These groups are the key players of the volunteer tourism sector, and understanding the perspectives of both groups is significant for successful development of volunteer tourism.

Apart from the above mentioned reasons, the researcher also believes that Thailand has great potential for the development and promotion of volunteer tourism. As well as its natural beauty and unique culture, there is a great need in terms of assisting orphaned children because there were around 1,400,000 orphans in Thailand in 2009 (the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Thailand, 2012). Although there is not currently a more up-to-date statistic on the number of orphans, the researcher believes that the number of orphan is not significantly lower than it was in 2009.

Moreover, the Thai government has attempted to promote new forms of tourism that can benefit both the host community and the traveller and can minimise the negative impacts caused by mass tourism (Thai Ministry of Tourism and Sport, 2011). The marketing strategy of TAT in 2011 included the aim of promoting volunteer tourism as a new 'promising future niche-market' among students and

retired persons in Europe (TAT, 2010a). The researcher believes that volunteer tourism has the potential to fulfil this aim.

This research aims to contribute to the literature on volunteer tourism, especially in the context of Thailand orphan volunteer tourism, by enhancing the understanding of the volunteer tourists' motivations, their on-site experiences and the hosts' attitudes. At the time of writing the thesis, this research project was the first study of this kind. Moreover, the findings of this study can also help tourism marketers and professionals and potential volunteer tourism organisers such as NGOs and travel agencies to organise volunteer tourism programme that can ensure mutual benefits to both the volunteer tourists and the members of host community.

1.5. Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

This study looks at four main aspects of orphan volunteer tourism, as follows: the volunteer tourists' motivations; the volunteer tourists' on-site experiences; the hosts' attitudes towards the volunteer tourists; and the interactions between volunteer tourists and their hosts. The conceptual and theoretical framework of each of these three aspects is discussed in turn.

In terms of volunteer tourists' motivation, the approach that tourist motivation is a combination of intrinsic motivations, extrinsic motivations, and expectation of potential benefits gained from a particular holiday is used as the conceptual framework of this study. Together with this, the Volunteer Functions Inventory

(VFI) is also used in understanding the volunteer tourists' motivations. These will be discussed and evaluated in detail in Section 3.2.3.

As for the volunteer tourists' on-site experiences, the concept of volunteer tourism as conceptualised by McIntosh and Zahra (2007) is used as a framework. McIntosh and Zahra (ibid.) state that the volunteer tourism experience consists of three main dimensions: (i) the experience of local culture; (ii) the experience relating to volunteer tourists themselves; and (iii) the experience of the interactions and relationships between the volunteer tourists and the local residents. In addition, upon reviewing related literature on volunteer tourism experiences, it was found that the interactions and relationships of the volunteer tourists are not limited to only those with the local residents, but also with other volunteer tourists and people with whom they made the trip. The dimension of the volunteer tourists' feeling is also found to be one of important dimensions of volunteer tourists' on-site experiences. Therefore, these aspects are added as a framework for understanding this topic.

In understanding the hosts' attitudes towards the volunteer tourists, this study uses social exchange theory as a theoretical framework. Social exchange theory is also used to examine the interactions between the volunteer tourists and the hosts. The discussion and evaluation of this framework is discussed in detail in Section 4.5.

1.6. Overview of Methodology

This study employed an interpretive paradigm utilising the qualitative study approach. This approach was determined to be suitable for this study because its primary aim is to gain a rich and in-depth understanding of how the volunteer tourists give meaning to their motivations and on-site experiences, and how the hosts in Thai Muang sub-district perceive the volunteer tourists.

This study drew data from two main groups of respondents: the volunteer tourists and the hosts. The volunteer tourists were selected by purposive sampling, whereas the hosts were selected by snowball sampling. Before undertaking the main fieldwork, a pilot study was conducted for a three-week period between 4th - 24th June 2011 at the Home and Life orphanage. After reflecting on the effectiveness of the approach and revising it, the main study was carried out over a period of three months between 1st July and 30th September 2011.

Data were gathered from forty-four respondents, twenty-four of whom were volunteer tourists and the other twenty hosts. A combination of semi-structured interviews, a focus group, participant observation and diaries was used to collect the data. All the interviews were video-recorded upon getting permission with a consent form from the respondents. All the respondents were ensured of the anonymity and confidentiality of their information by the use of pseudonyms in any written and/or oral presentation. The data were analysed by thematic analysis technique.

1.7. The Study Site

The case study of this research is volunteer tourism undertaken at the Home and Life orphanage in Thai Muang sub-district, Phang Nga province, Thailand. It was selected for a number of reasons:

- (i) Orphanages are one of the researcher's major interests because she has a strong bond with her own parents, and felt very touched by children who have lost their family;
- (ii) It was established as a response to the 2004 Boxing Day tsunami, with the aim of providing a self-reliant home for children affected by this disaster. As mentioned earlier, the growth in volunteer tourism in Thailand was influenced mainly by the events of the 2004 Boxing Day tsunami and there are still a lot of people in the tsunami-affected areas who still need assistance from volunteer tourists, and therefore, the researcher believes that studying volunteer tourism in an area where it plays an important role in the lives of the local community will provide more valuable insights about this phenomenon than researching elsewhere; and
- (iii) The location of the orphanage is another issue that interested the researcher. Although it is located in Phang Nga province, one of the most famous tourist destinations of Thailand, it is situated in a remote area of this province where there are very few attractive tourist sites or facilities for tourists. Therefore, this case can provide an understanding of the phenomenon of volunteer tourism that takes place in a non-touristic destination setting.

The Home and Life orphanage Phang Nga foundation first operated in the form of a small project to provide relief for children who were affected by the 2004 Boxing Day tsunami. On 26th December 2006, two years after the tsunami, the orphanage was registered officially in the form of a foundation under Thai law. It started offering a volunteer tourism programme in mid 2009 (Home and Life orphanage foundation, the, 2012).

At the time of conducting the study, the orphanage offered placements for a maximum of twenty-six children under the care of five adults and one housekeeper. They call themselves a big family, in which the manager of the orphanage is a father and his wife, who is also a staff member of the orphanage and another female member of staff, are mothers to the children. The other staff members act as teachers and siblings to the children. The children range from five to eighteen years old.

In order to maintain a family atmosphere, and concerned with the capacity of the orphanage in accommodating the volunteer tourists, the number of volunteer tourists was limited to a maximum of six people at a time because it has only two rooms for the volunteer tourists, each of which can accommodate up to three persons.

The majority of the volunteer tourists apply for the volunteer tourism programme at the orphanage through Andaman Discoveries or Personal Overseas Development (PoD). The former is based in Phang Nga province, whereas the latter is based in United Kingdom. There are also a few volunteer tourists who apply directly to the orphanage.

Regarding the price for a volunteering placement, the price per person, as stated on the website of the Andaman Discoveries, ranges from approximately 6,000 to 11,900 Baht (around 120 to 238 pounds) per week, depending on the duration of the stay (the longer they stay, the cheaper the price per week is) (Andaman Discoveries, 2012). As for the PoD, the price per person is 495 pounds for the first week, and 95 pounds for each extra week (PoD, 2010). These prices include accommodation, all meals, donations to the orphanage, and supports from the agencies' staff (Andaman Discoveries, *ibid.*; PoD, *ibid.*).

In terms of the qualifications of volunteer tourists, the orphanage does not set specific qualifications for recruiting volunteer tourists in terms of knowledge, skills or experiences. What it needs are only certain positive characteristics; such as being open-minded, proactive, patient, mature, flexible and respectful of different cultures. The volunteer tourists are asked to write a motivation letter which they have to submit together with the application form so that the orphanage has an idea about their motivations for and intentions while doing voluntary work, which helps in planning the programme.

The opportunity for volunteer tourism at the orphanage is available all year round. The typical length of the programme ranges from one to two weeks, normally commencing on either Sunday or Monday. However, longer periods and other starting days are also available on request. The main activity for the volunteer tourists is to take care of the children. This covers a number of activities such as helping the children to take a bath, playing with them, teaching them English, helping them with English homework and ensuring that they brush their teeth before going to bed. On Monday and Tuesday between 12.30pm and 3.30pm, the volunteer tourists go to teach English at the local primary school that the children attend. For the other weekdays, they help the staff members of the orphanage doing housework and other chores such as laundry, cleaning, gardening, cooking and painting T-shirts and shoulder bags etc.

Moreover, at the time of writing the thesis, the orphanage was undergoing a project of the construction of a new building with a bakery and coffee shop sponsored by previous volunteer tourists and the volunteer tourists are also encouraged to help with the construction tasks as well. The staff members assist them throughout their placement.

The volunteer tourists are required to work a minimum of six hours a day (usually between 9.30am to 3.30 pm) five days a week for the orphanage and are free during the weekends. The orphanage also offers sightseeing trips for them to visit nearby tourist attractions such as beaches and waterfall, or to shopping centres, for which they have to pay petrol costs only. Photographs of the Home and Life

orphanage and other places relevant to the study are shown in Appendix 1, and the photographs of volunteer tourists performing various tasks undertaken during their time at the orphanage are shown in Appendix 2.

Figure 1: Map of Thailand showing the location of Thai Muang sub-district, Phang Nga province

(Source: ThaiMuangDotCom, 2012a)

Thai Muang sub-district, where the orphanage is located, is a small sub-district of 68.46 square kilometres (Earthpower, 2002). It is approximately 800 kilometres from Bangkok, the capital city of Thailand (ThaiMuangDotCom, 2012b). It lies

on the western coast of the southern Thailand peninsula between Phuket province and the Takua Pa district of Phang Nga province. Thai Muang is a peaceful and pleasant sub-district with a traditional way of life (ThaiMuangDotCom, *ibid.*).

Originally, Thai Muang was well known for its tin deposits, which attracted people to settle here. The majority of villagers relied on tin foraging by scouring the beaches, where they could find several kilograms of tin per day. Eventually, the tin supply dried up, and the villagers looked for other ways of making a living. Nowadays, most people earn their living from catching fish, crabs and shellfish. Some families also earn their living from the cultivation of crops and rubber plantations (ThaiMuangDotCom, 2012b). The villagers are a mixture of Thai Buddhists and Thai Muslims (ThaiTambon, 2010). There are also Sea Gypsy communities called Moken or Thai Mai (the latter means ‘new Thai people’) settling in this sub-district (ThaiTambon, *ibid.*).

1.8. Organisation of the Thesis

The thesis consists of eight chapters (see Figure 2). Chapter One provides an introduction, including the context of the study, the research aims and objectives, the rationale for the study, the study’s conceptual and theoretical framework, a brief overview of research methodology, and the study site. The organisation of the thesis is also presented.

Chapters Two, Three and Four present the conceptual and theoretical frameworks of the study in detail, as well as the analytical review of relevant literature. Chapter Two focuses on the concepts of volunteer tourism, Chapter Three emphasises volunteer tourists' motivations and on-site experiences, and Chapter Four discusses the local residents' attitudes towards the volunteer tourists.

Chapter Five outlines the methodological approaches taken, including the justification of the use of an interpretive paradigm, samples and sampling techniques, data collection methods, data analysis approach, ethical considerations and ensuring the trustworthiness of the study.

Chapters Six and Seven present the main findings. Chapter Six presents the main themes relating to the volunteer tourists' motivations and on-site experiences, whereas Chapter Seven presents those relating to hosts' attitudes towards the volunteer tourists.

Chapter Eight relates the findings of this study to the theories and the key concepts presented in the literature review (Chapters Two, Three and Four). It also discusses the contribution to knowledge, limitations, potential implications of this study, as well as recommendations for future research. This chapter is followed by references lists and appendices. The organisation of the thesis is presented in Figure 2.

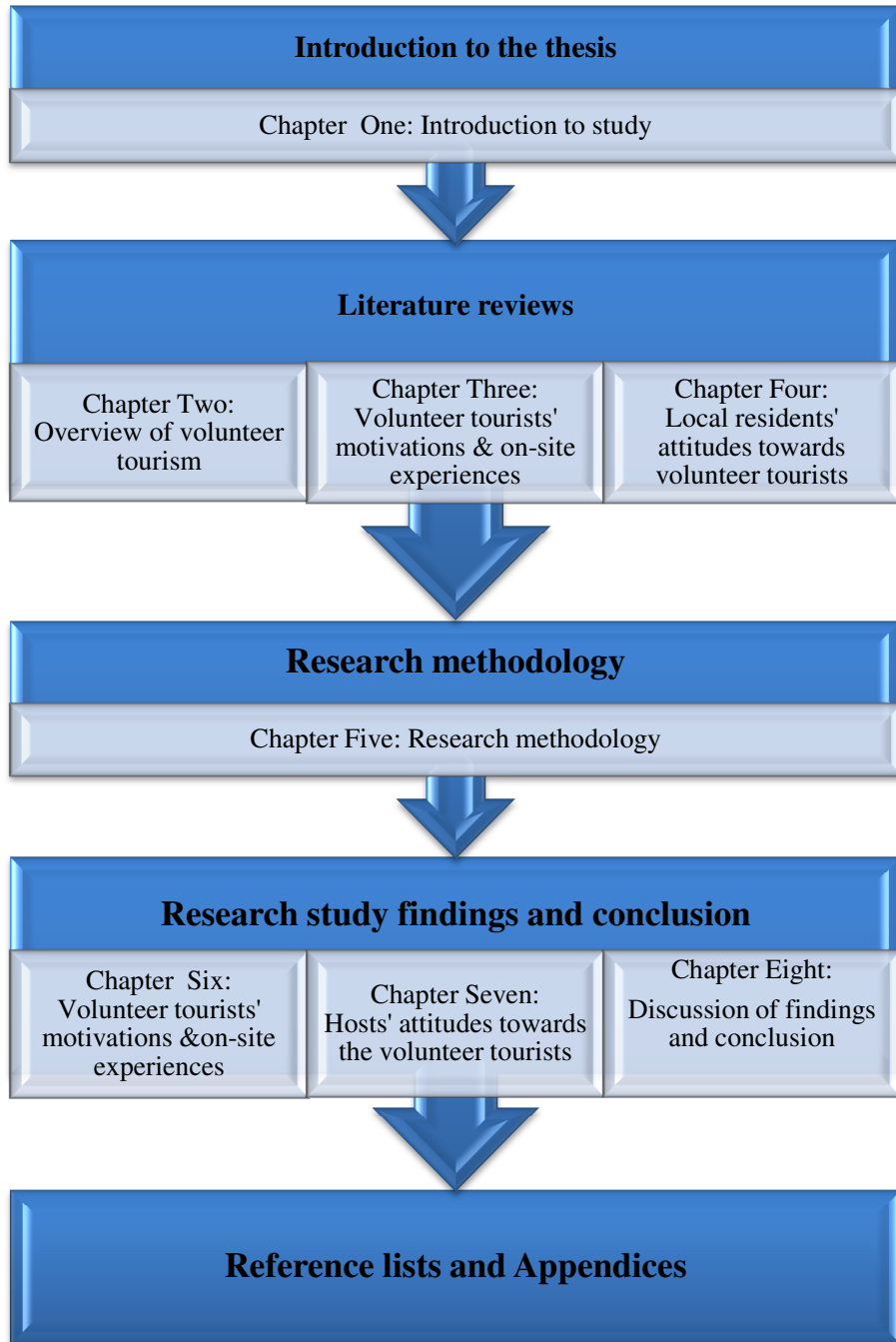


Figure 2: The organisation of the thesis

Chapter Two

Overview of Volunteer Tourism

2.1. Introduction

Following the introduction presented in Chapter One, this chapter aims to critically examine the concept of volunteer tourism. It begins with definitions of volunteer tourism and continues to critically evaluate the main aspects of volunteer tourism. A definition and classifications of volunteer tourists are then discussed. Distinctions between volunteer tourists and traditional volunteers/other types of tourists are also analysed. This chapter also examines orphan volunteer tourism. Reviews of the state of the tourism industry in Thailand, together with volunteer tourism (with a particular interest in orphan volunteer tourism in Thailand) are also presented.

2.2. Definitions of Volunteer Tourism

Volunteer tourism is a relatively new form of tourism (Wearing, 2001; Tomazos and Butler, 2009; Ackerberg and Prapasawudi, 2009). The term ‘volunteer tourism’ has been defined differently by various authors and to date there is no consensus on its definition. The following are examples of the definitions of volunteer tourism that have been cited in existing literature.

At the present time, the most quoted definition of volunteer tourism is that of Wearing (2001, p.1), who defines volunteer tourism as:

those tourists who, for various reasons, volunteer in an organised way to undertake holidays that might involve aiding or alleviating the material poverty of some groups in society, the restoration of certain environments or research into aspects of society or the environment.

This definition highlights the practice of volunteer tourists who engage in voluntary activities that potentially provide benefits to the host community. What is reflected in this definition is that volunteer tourism is a form of holiday or tourism that has a component of volunteering at the community in the destination the tourists visit.

The component of volunteer activity in a holiday is also emphasised in the definition of volunteer tourism given by VolunTourism (2011), a website dedicated to providing resources relating to volunteer tourism. It states that volunteer tourism is:

The *conscious*, seamlessly integrated combination of voluntary service to a destination, along with the best, traditional elements of travel — arts, culture, geography, history *and recreation* — in that destination.

The definitions of volunteer tourism provided by McGehee and Santos (2005) and Corti *et al.* (2010) are similar to Wearing's (2001) definition, in that they highlight the practice of volunteer tourists performing goodwill activities for the benefit of others. McGehee and Santos (2005, p.760) state that volunteer tourism refers to:

utilizing discretionary time and income to go out of the regular sphere of activity to assist others in need.

While Corti *et al.* (2010, p.221) refer to it as:

a kind of tourism based on international, inter social and intercultural cooperation to maximize the common good trying to get a sustainable development. In order to make that possible, volunteers offer their time, knowledge, skills or financial resources to benefit other people or causes that need it.

Brown's (2005, p.480) definition of volunteer tourism, which states that volunteer tourism is a 'type of tourism experience where a tour operator offers travellers an opportunity to participate in an optional excursion that has a volunteer component, as well as cultural exchanges with local people' not only highlights the voluntary component of volunteer tourism, but also emphasises the cultural exchanges between the volunteer tourists and the host community.

From the definitions of volunteer tourism above, it can be seen that although volunteer tourism has been defined differently, two main aspects are common among these definitions. Firstly, volunteer tourism is a type of tourism in which the tourists spend parts of the holiday doing volunteer activities at the destination they visit; and secondly, it involves goodwill practice of the volunteer tourists that potentially benefits other people.

In addition to these two aspects of volunteer tourism, there are others which may not be included in the definitions given by scholars and researchers, but which are often highlighted in relevant literature, as follows:

- (i) volunteer tourism can potentially provide reciprocal benefits to both the volunteer tourists and the host community (e.g. Wearing, 2001; Ooi and Laing, 2010; Raymond and Hall, 2008; Broad, 2003; Brown and Morrison, 2003; Uriely *et al*, 2003; McGehee and Santos, 2005; Lepp, 2009; Sin, 2009; McIntosh and Zahra, 2007);
- (ii) it has a potential to promote cross-cultural exchange between the volunteer tourists and the host community (Jones, 2005; Brown, 2005; McIntosh and Zahra, 2007; Broad, 2003; Zahra and McIntosh, 2007);
and
- (iii) it is generally the practice of Westerners going to assist people in developing countries (Corti *et al.*, 2010; Palacios, 2010; Sin, 2009; Simpson, 2005; Richter and Norman, 2010; Scheyvens, 2002).

All of these five aspects of volunteer tourism are discussed in the next section.

2.3. Main Aspects of Volunteer Tourism

A review of existing literature suggests five main aspects of volunteer tourism: (i) consists of volunteering and travelling components; (ii) involves goodwill practice of the volunteer tourists; (iii) potentially provides reciprocal benefits; (iv) potentially promotes cross-cultural exchange; and (v) generally undertaken by Westerners in developing countries. These five aspects are discussed in turn.

2.3.1. Volunteering and travelling

One of the oldest conceptual definitions of tourism is given by Professor Hunziker and Professor Krapf of Berne University, Switzerland (cited in Vanhove, 2011, p.1), who, in 1941, defined tourism as:

[the] sum of phenomena and relationships arising from the travel and stay of non-residents, in so far as they do not lead to permanent residence and are not connected to any earning activity.

The definition of tourism given by World Tourism Organisation (WTO, 1995) refers to tourism as something which:

comprises the activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes not related to the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the place visited.

It can be argued that volunteer tourism can be considered a tourism activity or 'holiday' because it involves the temporary movement of individuals from their usual place of work or residence to other destinations during their free time and with their willingness. Moreover, the purpose of travelling for the volunteer tourist does not involve receiving any financial compensation for their efforts: instead they have to pay for the privilege of volunteering (Wearing, 2001).

Volunteer tourists often pay more for their volunteer vacations than for a 'normal' vacation at the same destination (Wearing, 2001; Corti *et al.*, 2010). Such expenses normally cover the costs of accommodation, meals and the maintenance costs of the project in the relevant communities (Corti *et al.*, 2010). Additionally, in some cases, they also include a donation to the cause or projects (Tourism Research and Marketing (TRAM), 2008).

Volunteer tourism differs from other types of tourism in that it involves participating in various voluntary activities. Callanan and Thomas (2005) categorise the volunteering activities into nine activity groups, as shown in Table 1.

TRAM (2008) classified the voluntary components of volunteer tourism into three broad categories according to the following criteria: length of placement; effect on local communities; and the degree of expected responsibility of the volunteer tourists. The categories were short-term placements; long-term placements; and paid supervisor position placements.

Table 1: Categories of volunteering activities in volunteer tourism

(Source: Adapted from Callanan and Thomas (2005))

A short-term placement lasts up to three months. It involves 'direct action projects' or projects that directly improve the community and can be completed in a short period of time, such as the construction of buildings and temporary medical clinics. Long-term placements require volunteer tourists to participate in projects that have a deeper impact on the host community and which take longer to complete, such as volunteering in a one-semester English teaching programme. Supervisory position placements are for experienced people who manage volunteering programmes and supervise young or inexperienced volunteer tourists, especially those on short-term placements. Unlike other volunteer

tourists, those acting as supervisors are normally paid for the duration of the placement (TRAM, 2008). According to Morgan (2010), short-term placements which last around one to two weeks appear to be the most common type of volunteering placement.

2.3.2. Goodwill

The acts of the volunteer tourists are often considered to be out of goodwill or altruism and will potentially benefit other people (Wearing, 2001; Broad, 2003; Callanan and Thomas, 2005; McGehee and Santos, 2005; Corti *et al.*, 2010; Gray and Campbell, 2007). This is also closely linked to the concept of travel philanthropy, defined by Kepher-Gona (2008, p.1) as ‘a response by travellers and travel companies to the needs of destinations where they visit or operate their business.’

People who potentially receive benefits from the acts of the volunteer tourists are local residents in the community where volunteer tourism takes place. The benefits that the local residents can gain from the volunteer tourists can be categorised into three main areas: economic-related benefits, social-related benefits, and environment-related benefits. In terms of economic-related benefits, according to Morgan (2010), the host communities can enjoy both direct and indirect benefits from volunteer tourism. The direct benefits include increased manpower and direct financial support through volunteering placements, and indirect benefits are increased local employment, supplementary revenue and improved facilities (e.g. schools and parks).

In terms of social-related benefits, volunteer tourism not only provides a free workforce and funds to the local communities where it takes place (Callanan and Thomas, 2005; Wearing, 2001; Stoddart and Rogerson, 2004; McIntosh and Zahra, 2007), but it can also provide a viable means for education for local people (Sin, 2010). Sin (*ibid.*, p. 987) uses the Chinese proverb, ‘Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime’ to explain the significance of education-related projects offered by volunteer tourists to enable local people to rely on themselves rather than having to depend on the assistance offered by others. In addition, Wearing (2001) argues that volunteer tourism has the potential to promote the privileging of local culture and values. As for the environment-related benefits, volunteer tourism that takes place in nature-based destinations can help with the restoration and conservation of the environments in these destinations (Broad, 2003; Wearing, 2001).

2.3.3. Reciprocal benefits

According to existing literature (e.g. Wearing, 2001; Ooi and Laing, 2010; Raymond and Hall, 2008; Broad, 2003; Brown and Morrison, 2003; Uriely *et al.*, 2003; McGehee and Santos, 2005; Lepp, 2009; Sin, 2009; McIntosh and Zahra, 2007), volunteer tourism is arguably a mutually beneficial form of travel from which both the volunteer tourists and the host communities can benefit equally.

The potential benefits which the local residents in host communities can gain from volunteer tourism are discussed in Section 2.3.2. Therefore, this section will discuss only the potential benefits to volunteer tourists. The notion of self-development is often mentioned in existing literature (e.g. Broad, 2003; Jones, 2005; Harlow and Pomfret, 2007; Lo and Lee, 2011; McIntosh and Zahra, 2007; Zahra and McIntosh, 2007; McGehee and Santos, 2005). For example, Broad (2003), Jones (2005), Harlow and Pomfret (2007) and Lo and Lee (2011) all argue that the volunteer tourism experience facilitates the volunteer tourists to develop their abilities and skills in multiple ways, such as improving their confidence, enhancing their ability to work with others, gaining problem-solving skills and developing or enhancing their communication skills.

Additionally, Harlow and Pomfret (2007) note that environmental-related volunteer tourism programmes facilitate volunteer tourists to directly and actively engage in conservation activities, which help enhance their awareness and recognition of the importance of environmental resources as well as increasing their knowledge of environmental issues.

2.3.4. Cross-cultural exchange

Volunteer tourism is also believed to provide great opportunities for direct interaction and exchange between volunteer tourists and host communities (Jones, 2005; Brown, 2005; McIntosh and Zahra, 2007; Broad, 2003; Zahra and McIntosh, 2007). Brown (2005, p.488) notes that ‘volunteer experiences enable travellers to experience and learn beyond the typical tourism platform, where one

is surrounded by staged settings typified by beautiful beaches and fancy resorts, to see the people as they really are, their lives and their living environment.’ This is because the volunteer tourists live and work in the host community and engage in the real lives of the local people, which consequently allows them to directly observe and have engaging interactions with the local people (Broad, 2003).

2.3.5. Undertaken by Westerners in developing countries

The notion that the world is divided into a rich, developed ‘North’ world and a poor, developing ‘South’ world, where the former ought to be responsible and provide assistance for the latter because their privileges were gained at the expense of the latter (Silk, 2004; Sin, 2010), together with the notion that tourism is an effective means of transfer of wealth from rich countries to poor countries (Kepher-Gona, 2008), underpin the concept of volunteer tourism. This is because this form of tourism is often perceived as a practice of people from developed or Western nations, who are generally wealthier with better skills and knowledge, travelling to provide assistance to people in developing countries who are less fortunate and poorer (Corti *et al.*, 2010; Palacios, 2010; Sin, 2009; Simpson, 2005; Richter and Norman, 2010; Scheyvens, 2002).

This is affirmed by the fact that the most popular destinations for volunteer tourism are often less privileged or developing countries (Zahra and McIntosh, 2007; TRAM, 2008; Tomazos and Butler, 2009; Simpson, 2004) or Southern countries (Corti *et al.*, 2010). According to TRAM (2008), in 2007, Latin America was listed as the single most popular region for volunteering placement,

representing 36 per cent of the destinations offered by volunteer tourism organisations. It was followed by Asia and Africa, accounting for 28 per cent and 25 per cent respectively. Together these three regions represented almost 90 per cent of all the volunteer tourism destinations. Although these three regions are also found to be the most popular regions for volunteering placement in the work of Morgan (2010), the order of popularity was different, with Africa ranked in first place while Asia and Latin America held second and the third place respectively.

However, this aspect of volunteer tourism is also linked with the notion of inequality and neo-colonialism, which are directly related to a history of Western domination (Palacios, 2010). Sin (2009) argues that volunteer tourism and a giving attitude in the volunteer tourists cannot actually help the aid-recipients to share the privilege enjoyed by the volunteer tourists; on the contrary, it mirrors the dichotomy between the superior status of Western volunteer tourists and the inferior status of the aid-recipients in the host countries and reinforces the dominant position of the Western nations. Therefore, at the present time, concerns about the effectiveness and desirability of development aid that Westerners provide for people in the developing countries are valid (Palacios, 2010).

2.4. Volunteer Tourists

Wearing (2001) defines volunteer tourists as persons who seek a tourist experience that provides reciprocal benefits for themselves and the host communities where they visit. Gray and Campbell's (2007) study indicates that in the opinion of the local residents, the volunteer tourists, the volunteer tourism projects' staff members and other related stakeholders, there are mixed views regarding the volunteer tourists, ranging from regarding them as complete tourists or special tourists to not being tourists at all, with most respondents seeing them as a special type of tourist. In the same study, volunteer tourists were perceived as tourists by a greater proportion of the volunteer tourists themselves than by local people.

Gray and Campbell's (2007) study is supported by other researchers. For example, McGehee and Andereck (2009) argue that volunteer tourists are not viewed as tourists by all the volunteer tourists and local residents. Similarly, Wearing (2001), Lyons (2003) and van der Meer (2007) also point out that some volunteer tourists are reluctant to identify themselves as traditional tourists. Moreover, Lepp (2009) also found that some volunteer tourists require some form of duty to differentiate them from those of conventional tourists.

As one of the main aspects of the volunteer tourists is working without pay, the question of whether volunteer tourists should be considered as volunteers or a type of tourist arises. A number of researchers and scholars (e.g. Wearing, 2001; Raymond, 2007; Broad, 2003; Brown, 2005; McGehee and Santos, 2005; Jones,

2005; Zahra and McIntosh, 2007; Mustonen, 2006; Gray and Campbell, 2007) argue that volunteer tourists should be considered a type of tourist, rather than volunteers.

According to Raymond (2007), one evident distinction between volunteer tourists and conventional volunteers is that being a 'volunteer tourist' involves a travel component. By implication volunteer tourists are different from volunteers in the sense that they do not only work, but also spend time in tourism or leisure activities. In other words, the combination of working and travelling distinguishes volunteer tourists from conventional volunteers. A further distinction is made by Tomazos and Butler (2009) who highlight that volunteer tourists have to pay for travel, accommodation and food costs for their opportunity to work, just like tourists pay for a holiday, in contrast to conventional volunteers who do not pay or pay a nominal amount.

The motivations of volunteer tourists are a further category that can be used to differentiate them from conventional volunteers. Existing literature (e.g. Brown, 2005; Lo and Lee, 2011; Chen and Chen, 2011; Sin, 2009; Wearing, 2001) argues that volunteer tourists are driven by a desire to gain authentic and cross-cultural experiences with local people in the community they visit, by living with local people, working with them, and using the time when they are free from duties and obligations to interact with local residents.

Additionally, volunteer tourists are also argued to be motivated by a desire to gain different cultural experiences, which provide them with an opportunity for personal development, self-reflection and discovery (Wearing, 2001; Simpson, 2005; Carter, 2008). It is believed that they can only gain this experience outside of their home country, especially in a country which is physically and culturally different from their home (Jones, 2005). Moreover, Brown (2005) also points out that volunteer tourists are distinct from conventional volunteers in the sense that they seem to be driven by a desire to seek camaraderie, a sense of adventure, and a desire for exploration and novelty, motivations that are not as prominent among conventional volunteers.

Although existing literature agrees that volunteer tourists are a type of tourists, they argue that the volunteer tourists are different from other tourists in many ways. A number of factors are used to differentiate the volunteer tourists from other tourists. Lepp's (2009) study indicates that the volunteer tourists use the nature of their volunteer work to differentiate themselves from other tourists. The study of Gray and Campbell (2007) reveals that in the views of the volunteer tourists and the local residents who think that the volunteer tourists are different from other tourists, four main criteria are used to differentiate the volunteer tourists from other tourists: (i) work; (ii) altruism; (iii) desire to learn; and (iv) local involvement.

Gray and Campbell's (2007) study also adds that, in the opinion of volunteer tourists only, two further criteria differentiate them from other tourists: (i) lesser need for amenities; and (ii) longer stay. In the view of the local residents alone, further differentiation is found including: (i) less money spent by the volunteer tourists; and (ii) lesser impact caused by them (Gray and Campbell, *ibid.*). Barbieri *et al.*'s (2012) study indicates that work, altruism, and learning are used by the local people to distinguish between volunteer tourists and other tourists.

Brown (2005) argues that volunteer tourists are different from other tourists in terms of their greater sense of environmental responsibility and their choice of destinations, which tend to be remote and untouched, or poverty-stricken. In addition, Galley and Clifton (2004) point out that volunteer tourists differ from other tourists in terms of the experience they are seeking. They (*ibid.*) note that the volunteer tourists tend to look for a higher level of interaction and engagement, as well as a physically and intellectually challenging experience. McGehee and Andereck's (2009) study states that volunteer tourists require accommodation, food and transport in a more sustainable form compared to conventional tourists. It is evident from existing literature that the concept of volunteer tourists being different from other tourists is generally accepted.

Additionally, as volunteer tourists have distinct characteristics, they are also compared with a specific type of travellers such as pilgrims. Mustonen (2006, p.170) argues that volunteer tourists share some characteristics with pilgrims. First, both groups seek something ‘great or holy for the purpose of knowing higher thought of life.’ Secondly, both volunteer tourists and pilgrims make their travel in order to solve existing problems; for example, pilgrims travel to help people who suffer from diseases, whereas the volunteer tourists travel to help the community by improving the quality of life of the local residents. And lastly, both of these two groups enter into liminoid when they experience the transition from their everyday life to the different life they lead in the new community, and feel that their life has been profoundly changed.

Regarding the types of volunteer tourists, Brown and Morrison (2003) use the factor of the period of time that the volunteer tourists spend on volunteering during their holiday to classify the volunteer tourists and divide them into two main types, volunteer-minded and vacation-minded. The former refers to volunteer tourists who devote most or all of their vacation time to doing volunteer work for the communities they visit; whereas the latter denotes those who spend some proportion of their vacation on volunteering activities and use the rest of their time for leisure or tourist activities. Brown (2005) notes that although this classification of volunteer tourists takes a simplistic approach, it can, more or less, serve as a basis for typology of volunteer tourists. According to this approach, vacation-minded volunteer tourists are the focus of this study.

Perhaps, a more comprehensive classification of volunteer tourists belongs to the classification suggested by Callanan and Thomas (2005) who classify volunteer tourists into three main categories: shallow, intermediate and deep. The factors that they use in this classification include the duration of their trip, the skills or qualifications required of them, the degree of their engagement and contribution to local communities and the degree of other-oriented benefits they seek for their experiences (altruistic versus self-interested) and the greater their fulfilment of these attributes, the 'deeper' they are deemed to be.

The factors used by Callanan and Thomas (2005) to classify volunteer tourists, together with the main aspects of volunteer tourism as discussed in Section 2.3 can be used as a basis to develop a continuum of the volunteer tourists. Figure 3 displays characteristics of volunteer tourists that can be used to classified them into casual, intermediate and devoted typologies: duration of the volunteering element during their holiday; their skills and qualifications that match the volunteering tasks; their motivations (altruistic versus self-interested); level of intensity of their interaction and cross-cultural exchange with the host community; the impacts of their endeavour on the host community; and the impact of their experiences on themselves.

Based on the factors mentioned above, the types of volunteer tourist can be positioned along a continuum. At one end of the continuum is the 'casual volunteer tourist' who usually participate in a volunteer activity for a short period of time (according to Callanan and Thomas (2005), this type of volunteer tourists

typically spends less than four weeks in the host community); has no or limited skills/qualifications related to the volunteering tasks; tends to be motivated by self-interested motivations; has a low level of interaction and cross-cultural exchange with the host community; and the impacts he/she has on the host community and on him/herself is limited.

| Casual volunteer tourists | Intermediate volunteer tourists | Devoted volunteer tourists |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. The duration of the volunteering element during their holiday | | |
| Short-term (less than four weeks) | Medium-term (around one month to six months) | Long-term (six months or more) |
| 2. Volunteer tourists' motivations (altruistic versus self-interested) | | |
| Self-interested motivations are primary | Self-interest motivations are of similar importance to altruism | altruism is primary |
| 3. Level of intensity of their interactions and cross-cultural exchange with the host community | | |
| Low level | Medium level | High level |
| 4. The impacts of their endeavour on the host community | | |
| Low level/minimal direct contribution to the host community | Moderate direct contribution to the host community | High level of direct contribution to the host community |
| 5. The impact of their experiences on themselves | | |
| Low level of impact | Moderate impact | High and long-lasting impact |

Figure 3: The continuum of volunteer tourists

Source: Adapted from Callanan and Thomas (2005)

At the other end of the continuum stands the 'devoted volunteer tourist' who stays for a long period of time (e.g. six months or more); acquires particular skills/qualifications that can be used in the volunteering tasks; tends to be motivated by altruistic motivations; engages in a high level of interactions and cross-cultural change with local residents, contributes significantly to the host community and gains a high level of positive impact on themselves. In the middle of the continuum is the 'intermediate volunteer tourist' whose characteristics lie between the casual volunteer tourist and the devoted volunteer tourist.

Generally, volunteer tourists come from developed or Western countries, of which the United States of America appears to be the most common country of origin (TRAM, 2008). The United Kingdom and other developed European countries, Canada, Australia and New Zealand are also significant countries of origin for volunteer tourists (TRAM, *ibid.*). Volunteer tourists range from schoolchildren to retired people (TRAM, *ibid.*).

According to Cousins (2007), volunteer tourists come from four main groups: (i) the general public; (ii) gap year students; (iii) university students/recent graduates; and (iv) sixth-form students. Harlow and Pomfret (2007) and Cousins (2007) indicate that the majority of volunteer tourists are aged between eighteen and twenty-five years and are either on a gap year between school and university, studying at university, or graduates looking for work experience. Harlow and Pomfret (2007) point out that these groups of people generally have more freedom

to travel and volunteer for long periods as they are free from careers or the responsibility of having children.

2.5. The Concept of Orphan Volunteer Tourism

As this study is conducted in the context of orphan volunteer tourism, the researcher believes that it is necessary to review this concept. The term 'orphan volunteer tourism' is coined by the researcher to describe a form of short-term volunteer tourism undertaken at an orphanage and encourages international volunteer tourists to engage in care-giving activities for children. This definition is based on the definition of 'AIDS orphan tourism' given by Richter and Norman (2010), pioneers in the study of this specific area. Richter and Norman (*ibid.*, p.222) refer to AIDS orphan tourism as 'a form of volunteer tourism characterised by short-term travel to facilities to engage in everyday care-giving for "AIDS orphans" or children who have lost either one or both parents as a result of the HIV/AIDs epidemic.'

At the point of writing this thesis, there is very limited literature on the phenomenon of orphan volunteer tourism. The most cited literature is the work of Richter and Norman (2010) on AIDS orphan tourism in sub-Saharan Africa. Recently, there has been another published study on this phenomenon in Cambodia conducted by Guiney (2012). Therefore, the examination of the concept of orphan volunteer tourism presented in this section is based primarily on these two works, and on articles published in international newspapers, such as the Telegraph and the Independent.

This type of volunteer tourism has become a growing trend in the tourism industry throughout the world (Guiney, 2012). People have been bombarded with images presented by the international media, NGOs and tourism operators, showing that some parts of the world, such as sub-Saharan Africa and Cambodia, are faced with problems. For example, people are shown images of a large number of people living with and dying of complications arising from HIV in sub-Saharan Africa and the problem of instability, corruption and genocide in Cambodia, causing countless children to be orphaned and abandoned, and in need of care (Richter and Norman, 2010; Guiney, 2012). Such images, together with the popularity of volunteer tourism, have drawn attention to these children, and encouraged people in the Western world to take action (Richter and Norman, 2010).

NGOs, tourism operators and the orphanages see the opportunity in providing volunteer tourism programmes for short-term volunteer tourists at the orphanages as a new way of doing business (Richter and Norman, 2010). Guiney (2012) and Carmichael (2011) point out that the operation of orphanages in Cambodia relies on donations and volunteers; therefore, they have begun to do business by offering regular volunteer tourism programmes at the orphanage to receive continuous donations and support from the volunteer tourists.

NGOs and tourism operators generally advertise the extreme need of certain orphanages and the vulnerable and desperate children who reside there, and encourage people to help these children by participating in volunteer tourism

programmes to fulfil the role of care-givers at the orphanages (Richter and Norman, 2010). The volunteer tourists are also encouraged to believe that the experience they will get from this type of volunteer tourism would be rewarding and life-changing because it can help them fulfil their personal development desires, derived from encountering less fortunate children (Richter and Norman, 2010; Pitrelli, 2012).

The activities for the volunteer tourists at the orphanage generally include playing with children, singing songs, drawing pictures, and teaching English (Guiney, 2012; Carmichael, 2011; Pitrelli, 2012). Some orphanages also use volunteer tourists to increase staff capacity or for specific needs, such as providing piano lessons (Guiney, 2012). The duration of the programme is generally short, ranging from a few days to a few weeks, or in some cases up to several months (Guiney, *ibid.*).

Orphan volunteer tourism arguably provides both positive and negative impacts; however, its negative impacts have become issues of concern and have received much more interest from authors, researchers and organisations (e.g. Richter and Norman, 2010; Carmichael, 2011; Pitrelli, 2012). In terms of positive impacts, the study of Guiney (2012) indicates that orphan volunteer tourism provides a significant financial gain for the operation of the orphanage. This study found that in the view of the orphanage staff, the orphanage not only benefits from donations both at the time of their visit and in the future from the volunteer tourists, but also

from fund-raising, and being sponsored by the volunteer tourists in some projects such as the construction of buildings.

In addition, Guiney (2012) argues that orphan volunteer tourism is a form of tourism that can reduce leakage of money to international tourism organisations because money spent by the volunteer tourists goes to local organisations. This study also reveals that the educational opportunity for both the children and the staff of the orphanage provided by the volunteer tourists is perceived as a vital benefit of orphan volunteer tourism. The opportunity for the children to learn English from English native speakers free of charge is often cited as an invaluable benefit (Guiney, *ibid.*). The other benefits of this type of tourism include the volunteer tourists being seen as role models for different career options for the children and it also helps promote awareness and understanding of local culture (Guiney, *ibid.*).

In terms of negative impacts, orphan volunteer tourism could be seen as exploiting the children for the purpose of business (Richter and Norman, 2010, Guiney, 2012; Carmichael, 2011). In Cambodia specifically, Guiney (2012) and Carmichael (2011) point out that some orphanages look for poor families and entice parents to send their children to live at the orphanages with the promise that these children will have better lives and education, and in some cases, parents will make money from deciding to send their children to the orphanage. In these cases, the orphanages are using children as their products to induce donations and visits from Western tourists.

In addition, concerns about child protection are also raised by researchers (e.g. Guiney, 2012; Richter and Norman, 2010) and international organisations such as the International Organisation for Adolescents (IOFA), Friends International, and UNICEF (Pitrelli, 2012). Guiney's (2012) study reveals that some orphanages keep children in a poor state so that they can get more donations from tourists. Studies by Guiney (ibid.) and Pitrelli (2012) point out that some children at the orphanages are also suffering sexual abuse, either at the hands of the tourists or the directors of the orphanages.

Moreover, the emotional and psychological health of very young children is another major concern regarding orphan volunteer tourism. According to Richter and Norman (2010), young children who reside at the orphanages are likely to have already experienced difficult situations, and with orphan volunteer tourism taking place at the orphanage where they live, they have to face the on-going formation and dissolution of attachment bonds with different volunteer tourists, which is likely to have an impact on their socio-psychological development and long-term well-being.

2.6. Tourism in Thailand

2.6.1. Situation of tourism industry in Thailand

The tourism industry has played a vital role in the growth of Thailand's economy (World Trade Organisation, 2011). It has been a major source of foreign exchange earnings, as well as an effective means of creating employment, and promoting development in various parts of the country (World Trade Organisation, ibid.).

During the period 2002-2011, on average, the tourism industry contributed an estimated of 6-7 per cent of the total GDP of the country (World Travel and Tourism Council, 2012). In terms of job generation, in the same period more than 1,500,000 jobs were generated on average, including employment by hotels, travel agencies, airlines, and other passenger transportation services, restaurants, and other leisure industries (World Travel and Tourism Council, *ibid.*).

The importance of tourism in Thailand started during the Vietnam War when the US established military bases throughout Thailand, particularly in northern and northeastern regions (Nimmonratana, 2000). Thailand became a popular destination for the US military for rest and recreation, taken as a diversion from the fighting in Vietnam (Nimmonratana, *ibid.*). The US military presence in Thailand not only brought US visitors to the country, but also made Thailand become a well known tourist destination to the world, via international media image (Kontogeorgopoulos, 1998). Additionally, it also provided the stimulus for tourism development as a number of tourism-related businesses such as hotel, restaurant, and travel agencies grew to meet the demands of US military and other international tourists (Kontogeorgopoulos, *ibid.*).

Thailand has been one of the most popular destinations for international tourists and has hosted a steady stream of international tourists throughout the past decades. Table 2 shows the number of international tourists visiting Thailand and the tourism revenue gained from international tourists during the period 1998-2011. Over the period 1998-2002, Thailand experienced a steady growth in the

number of international tourists, increasing from just under 8 million in 1998 to just under 11 million in 2002.

However, in 2003, the SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) outbreak and war in Iraq caused a 7 per cent decline in the number of international tourists visiting Thailand (McDowell and Wang, 2009). Thai tourism experienced a brief slowdown in the number of international tourists at the beginning of 2004 because of avian influenza (McDowell and Wang, *ibid.*). However, the situation gradually recovered by the end of the year, which led the number of international tourists to increase to almost 12 million, accounting for a 16 per cent increase.

The consequences of the Boxing Day tsunami which hit the southern part of the country on December 26, 2004 shocked people around the world, and thereby affected the number of international tourists visiting in 2005 (Thitthongkam and Walsh, 2011; TAT, 2005). Potential tourists were uncertain and feared a recurrence, and decided to wait until they were sure that security and safety measures had been put in place before visiting Thailand (TAT, 2005).

The total number of international tourists visiting Thailand in 2005 was also affected by political unrest in the south, demonstrations against Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatt (McDowell and Wang, 2009) and increased market competition from other countries such as Vietnam, China, India, Japan, Hong Kong, and South Korea (Chancharat, 2011) which led the number of international tourists to decrease by approximately 1.5 per cent. However, with the effort of the Thai

government and the private sector to stimulate markets, for example by arranging a ceremony to commemorate the first anniversary of the tsunami, in order to recover Thailand's good image and show the world that all tsunami-affected areas were recovered (TAT, 2005), Thailand regained trust from tourists in 2006, when there was a 17 per cent increase in the number of international tourists, rising from approximately 11.5 million in 2005 to just under 14 million in 2006, despite the *coup d' état* in September 19, 2006 (McDowell and Wang, *ibid.*).

Since 2006, the number of international tourists has continued to rise, with one drop in 2009 when the number fell by approximately 7 per cent. This decline was caused by political events including the closure of Suvarnabhumi international airport and Donmuang airport by the People's Alliance for Democracy (PAD) in November 2008, and the violation at the Asian Summit in Pattaya in April 2009 which greatly affected the image of Thailand (Thitthongkam and Walsh, 2011).

In terms of tourism revenue gained from international tourists, Thailand experienced continuous growth in tourism revenue in the period 1998-2011, rising from approximately 240 billion Baht in 1998 to approximately 775 billion Baht in 2011, accounting for a 220 per cent increase. There were three periods of time when the revenue declined: in 2003 it declined by just over 4 per cent when there was an outbreak of SARS; in 2005 it decreased by around 4 per cent as a consequences of the Boxing Day tsunami, together with the political unrest in the south (Thitthongkam and Walsh, 2011; TAT, 2005; McDowell and Wang, 2009);

and in 2009 it declined by approximately 11 per cent as a result of the airports closures and riots.

Table 2: Number of international tourists and revenue generated between 1998 and 2011

| Year | No. of Tourists (Million) | % Change of No. of Tourists | Revenue (Billion Thai Baht) | % Change of Revenue |
|-------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1998 | 7.76 | +7.53 | 242.19 | +9.70 |
| 1999 | 8.58 | +10.50 | 253.02 | +4.48 |
| 2000 | 9.51 | +10.82 | 285.27 | +12.75 |
| 2001 | 10.06 | +5.82 | 299.05 | +4.83 |
| 2002 | 10.80 | +7.33 | 323.48 | +8.17 |
| 2003 | 10.00 | -7.36 | 309.27 | -4.39 |
| 2004 | 11.65 | +16.46 | 384.36 | +24.28 |
| 2005 | 11.52 | -1.51 | 367.38 | -4.42 |
| 2006 | 13.82 | +17 | 482.30 | +31.29 |
| 2007 | 14.46 | +4.65 | 547.78 | +13.57 |
| 2008 | 14.58 | +0.83 | 574.52 | +4.89 |
| 2009 | 14.15 | -6.91 | 510.25 | -11.18 |
| 2010 | 15.93 | +15.42 | 592.79 | +16.18 |
| 2011 | 19.23 | +26.68 | 776.21 | +30.94 |

Sources: Tourism Authority of Thailand (2003); Department of Tourism (2011)

Note: The exchange rate is approximately 45 Thai Baht = 1 pound

In terms of the international tourist arrivals for the Thai tourism industry, the major countries of origin include Malaysia, China, Japan, South Korea, Laos, Singapore, the United Kingdom, Germany, USA, India, Australia and France. Among these countries, tourists from Malaysia have been the most numerous, accounting for an estimated 12 per cent of the total number of international tourists (Department of Tourism, 2011) (See Figure 4).

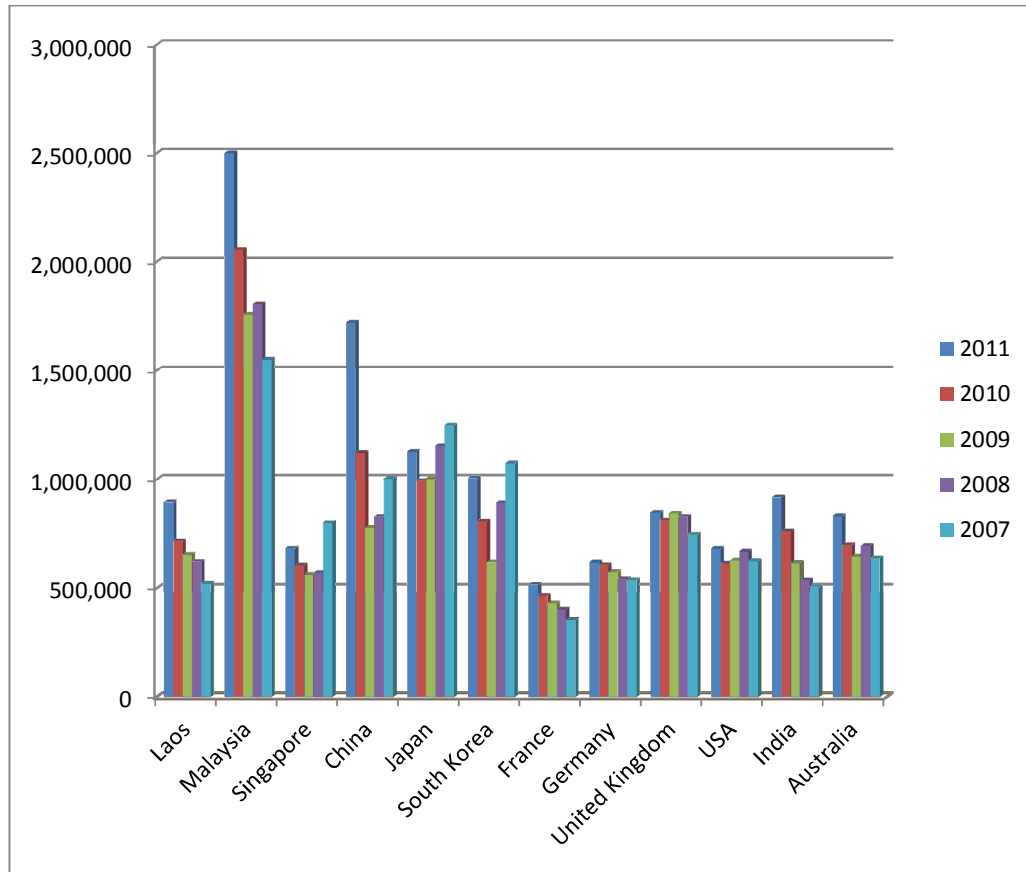


Figure 4: Home countries of international tourists visiting Thailand between 2007-2011

Source: Department of Tourism (2011)

The success of Thailand's international tourism can be attributed to a combination of factors including a variety of natural resources, unique culture, location, easy accessibility and marketing strategies (McDowall and Wang, 2009). Moreover, the Thai government has been actively supporting the tourism industry by encouraging and supporting private and public sectors to invest in infrastructure and tourism-related businesses such as hotel, restaurants, tourist attractions, creating a variety of marketing strategies and campaigns to promote tourist destinations in Thailand to the world, providing guidelines for the development

and promotion of tourist destinations, and supporting the production and development of personnel in the field of tourism (Chancharat, 2011; McDowall and Wang, 2009; TAT, 2010b). Moreover, it also includes tourism development in the National Economic and Social Development Plan, starting in the fourth Plan (1977-1981), and from then on, tourism development has been included as an important issue in every plan (TAT, 1995).

Thai tourism industry is mainly overseen by the Ministry of Tourism and Sports (MOTS) which includes the Department of Tourism to assume responsibility for the development of tourism sites, gathering statistics relating to tourism, developing standards and development plans for tourism-related businesses and tourist guides, inspecting and controlling the operation of tourism-related businesses and the performance of tourist guides, and tracking and evaluating the contribution of tourism development (TAT, 2013; World Trade Organisation, 2011). The promotion and marketing of tourism is the responsibility of another organisation called the Tourism Authority of Thailand, a state enterprise under the supervision of the MOTS (TAT, *ibid.*).

At the beginning of the development of the tourism industry, Thailand focused heavily on tourism's economic benefits, emphasising the development and promotion of mass tourism (Kontogeorgopoulos, 1998). Later, as the country increasingly became aware of the negative consequences of mass tourism, which created a number of social and environment dilemmas (Kontogeorgopoulos, *ibid.*; Kaosa-ard, 1994) and uneven distribution of economic benefits in favour of large

international enterprises, while local residents have little or no direct gain from tourism (Kaosa-ard, *ibid.*), the direction and focus of development changed towards sustainable tourism. This is evident in the National Tourism Development Plan 2012-2016, which emphasises local residents' participation in tourism development, the development and rehabilitation of tourist destinations for sustainability, and fair sharing of the economic benefits of tourism with local residents (World Trade Organisation, 2011).

2.6.2. Volunteer tourism and orphan volunteer tourism in Thailand

Volunteer tourism is relatively new in Thailand. Its name appeared officially for the first time as 'a promising future niche-market' in the Tourism Authority of Thailand's 2011 marketing strategy plan for the European region (TAT, 2010a). However, there was no published data on the number of international volunteer tourists or when it was first introduced in Thailand.

Callanan and Thomas's (2005) study, which used the database of GoAbroad.com (GoAbroad.com, 2012) reports that there were three volunteer tourism programmes offered in Thailand in 2003. Tomazos and Butler's (2009) study used the same database and found that the numbers of volunteer tourism programmes in Thailand in 2005 had increased significantly to 138 programmes. They (*ibid.*) attributed this phenomenal growth to the 2004 Boxing Day tsunami, which impacted on six provinces along the western coast of southern Thailand. The same study also reports that an increase in the number of volunteer tourism programmes in Thailand continued; in 2007, there were 176 programmes

offered. In December 2012, the researcher used the same database and found that the number of programmes had risen to 259 programmes, offered in every region of Thailand by ninety-eight organisations (GoAbroad.com, 2012). The growth of volunteer tourism programmes in Thailand between 2003-2012 is shown in Figure 5.



Figure 5: The growth of volunteer tourism programmes available in Thailand 2003-2012

(Sources: Adapted from Callanan and Thomas (2005); Tomazos and Butler (2009); and GoAbroad.com (2012))

Other sources, such as United Nations Thailand (2008a), United Nations Environment Programme (2005), Asian Development Bank (2005), and van der Meer (2007) point out that the 2004 Boxing Day tsunami not only drew a large amount of international aid from governments and private donations from around the world, but also attracted a number of volunteers from across the world to the tsunami-affected areas in Thailand. This was especially true of KhaoLak in

Phang Nga province, which was hit by the largest waves and suffered the deepest inland penetration. Many new NGOs were established for the sole purpose of providing immediate assistance to people in the affected area and they used volunteers as their main resource (van der Meer, 2007).

Although the basic disaster recovery activities, such as searching for bodies, evacuating survivors, and reconstructing housing and boats for the local people, was largely completed in the year after the tsunami, as many as 181 NGOs decided to continuously supply international volunteers to tsunami-affected areas in Thailand (van der Meer, 2007). The volunteer activities during the post-tsunami period were extended beyond providing tsunami relief and included working as English teachers, art instructors, and taking care of orphaned children (van der Meer, *ibid.*).

According to United Nations Thailand (2008b), in the aftermath of the tsunami 1,480 children had lost one or both parents or an immediate guardian. The large number of orphaned children has led to NGOs and tourism operators offering orphan volunteer tourism programmes, creating an image of Thailand as a tsunami-affected developing country where countless orphans are in need.

At the time of writing the thesis, the data on GoAbroad.com showed that there were 115 volunteer tourism programmes involving taking care of children at orphanages offered in Thailand (GoAbroad.com, 2012). This large number of orphan volunteer tourism programmes signified that there is strong need in

Thailand for the care of orphan children by volunteer tourists. This suggestion is supported by UNICEF Thailand (2012), who report that in 2009 there were around 1,400,000 orphaned children (aged 0-17 years old) in the country.

Randomly accessing around thirty programmes offered on GoAbroad.com, it was found that these programmes range from one week to several months' duration. The activities for the volunteer tourists are quite similar and include taking care of the children, playing with them, teaching English, and doing other work at the orphanage such as cleaning, gardening, and construction work. Volunteer tourists who want to participate in these programmes do not have to acquire specific qualifications or skills.

2.7. Conclusion

The definitions of volunteer tourism given by scholars and researchers in this field suggest that volunteer tourism constitutes five main aspects: (i) consists of volunteering and travelling components; (ii) involves goodwill practice on the part of the volunteer tourists; (iii) potentially provides reciprocal benefits; (iv) potentially promotes cross-cultural exchange; and (v) is generally undertaken by Westerners in developing countries.

Volunteer tourists are argued to be distinct from conventional volunteers because they not only work, but also spend time on tourism or leisure activities. In addition, they have to pay for an opportunity to volunteer in a destination because this opportunity is considered a holiday. Motivations such as to learn the local

culture, to gain new experiences, to meet like-minded people, and to gain a sense of adventure and novelty are also argued to make the volunteer tourists distinct from conventional volunteers. Although they are regarded as a type of tourist, volunteer tourists are also seen as different from traditional tourists. Factors including working, altruist motivations, a desire to learn, and local involvement, are used to differentiate these two groups. Types of volunteer tourists can be positioned along a continuum: the two ends of the continuum are casual volunteer tourists and devoted volunteer tourists. Between these two types are intermediate volunteer tourists.

Volunteer tourism has increased its popularity in many countries. For Thailand, the 2004 Boxing Day tsunami is a major factor influencing the phenomenon growth of volunteer tourism in the country, especially volunteer tourism at orphanages. This is because a number of children lost one or both of their parents during this disaster. This has led to NGOs and tourism operators offering orphan volunteer tourism programmes, creating an image of Thailand as a tsunami-affected developing country where countless orphans are in need.

This chapter only discusses the concept of volunteer tourism in general; the issues of volunteer tourists' motivations, their on-site experiences, the local residents' attitudes towards the volunteer tourists and the nature of interactions between tourists and local residents, which are the focuses of this study, are examined in Chapters Three and Four.

Chapter Three

Volunteer Tourists' Motivations and On-site Experiences

3.1. Introduction

This chapter provides an analytical and critical evaluation of the literature relating to definitions and conceptual and theoretical frameworks of volunteer tourists' motivations and volunteer tourism experiences. The chapter is divided into two main sections on volunteer tourists' motivations and their on-site experiences.

The chapter begins with definitions of tourist motivation and the significance of studying this issue. A discussion and evaluation of approaches to the understanding of tourist motivation is then presented. Relevant literature on volunteer tourists' motivations is also reviewed. Moreover, definitions of tourism experiences as well as conceptual framework to understanding the volunteer tourists' on-site experiences are also discussed. The chapter ends with an analytical review of literature on volunteer tourists' on-site experiences.

3.2. The Volunteer Tourists' Motivations

3.2.1. Definitions of motivation and tourist motivation

Many authors and researchers have attempted to define 'motivation'. Examples of such definitions given by well-known authors in the field of tourist motivation include: Murray (1964, p.7, cited in Iso-Ahola, 1982, p.257), who refers to motivation as '...an internal factor that arouses, directs and integrates a person's behavio[u]r'; Moutinho (1987, p.16) who defines it as 'a state of need, a condition

that exerts a push on the individual towards certain types of action that are seen as likely to bring satisfaction'; and Iso-Ahola (1982, p.258), who states that 'motives are aroused when individuals think of certain activities they could, should, or might do in the future, activities...that are potentially satisfaction-producing.'

From the above definitions, it can be seen that all these authors agree that motivation is closely linked with a person's action or behaviour. In other words, it is seen as a force that drives people to perform a certain action. Moutinho (1987) and Iso-Ahola (1982) also add the aspect of satisfaction to their definitions by stating that the action or behaviour is goal-oriented and that satisfaction is the goal.

In the context of tourism, these underlying notions are emphasised in the definitions of tourist motivation. For example, the definition given by Dann (1981, p.205), one of the most widely cited definitions of tourist motivation, states that tourist motivation is 'a meaningful state of mind which adequately disposes an actor or a group of actors to travel, and which is subsequently interpretable by others as a valid explanation for such a decision.'

Similarly, Pearce (1989, p.113) defines it as 'the set of needs and attitudes which predisposes a person to act in a specific touristic goal-directed way.' The essence of the interrelation between motivation and the action directed towards satisfaction is repeated in the definition given by Wearing (2004, p.216), who argues that 'motivation is aroused when individuals think of certain activities that

are potentially satisfying. Since people act to satisfy their needs, motivation is thought to be the ultimate driving force that governs travel behaviour.'

Tourist motivation is often considered synonymous with the 'purpose' of travelling (Cohen, 1972). It also refers to 'reasons' for travelling (Clary and Snyder, 1991). Tourist motivation is thought to be complex and dynamic (Sharpley, 2003; 2006). Generally, a tourist is not likely to be motivated to travel by only one motivation, but rather, by a combination of motivations (Page and Connell, 2009).

3.2.2. The importance of studying tourist motivation

The tourists' motivation is significant in its own right because it is the initial point of understanding tourist behaviour and systems of tourism (Pearce and Lee, 2005). Although it is argued by Crompton (1979) that motivation is only one factor among many contributing factors that can explain the complex nature of tourist behaviour, it is generally accepted by many authors (e.g. Crompton, 1979; Lo and Lee, 2011; Sharpley, 2006; Holden, 2006) that motivation acts as a powerful driving force behind the behaviour of tourists. Specifically, motivation is claimed to be 'tourism's starting gun' (Sharpley, 2006, p.32) or 'a trigger that sets off all the events involved in travel' (Parrinello, 1993, p.233). The importance of motivation is echoed by Holden (2006, p.63), who points out that 'without the desire and motivation to travel there would be no tourism system or tourism industry.'

The understanding of tourist motivation is important in terms of marketing as it can provide valuable insights for tourism marketers in understanding the travel patterns of the tourists, which, in turn, help to tailor tourism products appropriately to satisfy their target groups' needs and wants, especially in the competitive world of business (Fodness, 1994). Therefore, in this sense, this knowledge can help ensure the satisfaction of tourists.

In the context of volunteer tourism, studying volunteer tourists' motivation could help ensure maximisation of volunteer tourists' satisfaction (Coghlan, 2005). Bonjean *et al.* (1994) point out that fulfilling volunteer tourists' satisfaction is a very important consideration for organisations involved in volunteer tourism because volunteer tourists who are happy are likely to remain active and continue to volunteer.

This line of thought is echoed by Coghlan (2005, p.39) who argues that 'volunteer[s] will only be motivated to participate in an activity when their primary interests, obligations and needs can be met comfortably while giving service to others.' In line with this, Wearing (2004, p.218) points out the importance of the local people understanding tourist motivation by stating that 'by understanding the [volunteer] tourist motivations the local community will be in a better position to meet these needs and expectations.'

3.2.3. Approaches to the understanding of tourist motivation

(i) Challenges in studying tourist motivation

Understanding tourist motivation represents one of the most complex areas of tourism research (Sharpley, 2003). One of the major challenges in researching tourist motivations, as pointed out by Sharpley (2006, p.31) is that ‘a complete understanding of the motivation for travel and tourism remains elusive’, mainly because the tourists themselves may be unaware of what motivates them to travel, or have difficulties in describing their real motivations.

Additionally, researching tourist motivations also faces the challenge that up to a present time there is not a universally agreed theoretical framework to understand tourist motivation (Pearce, 1993). This issue is pointed out by Fodness (1994, p.559), who says that; ‘A widely accepted integrated theory of the needs and personal goals driving these reason given for travel and the benefit sought from it is however lacking.’ This section aims to provide an overview of theories and concepts of tourist motivations that serve as a basis to understanding the motivations of volunteer tourists and assesses its relevance to the study of this issue.

(ii) The role of motivation in the tourism demand process

First of all, the distinction between ‘tourist motivation’ and ‘tourist demand’ should be made clear. Regarding this, Pearce (1993, p.113) states that:

The term tourism demand should not be equated with tourism motivation.

Tourism demand is the outcome of tourists’ motivation, as well as

marketing, destination features and contingency factors... Tourist motivation is then a part rather than the equivalent of tourist demand.

In line with this, Sharpley (2003) notes that it is important to understand the role of motivation within the overall tourist demand process because a clear understanding of this is fundamental in understanding how needs are transformed into goal-oriented behaviour. Sharpley (2003; 2006) points out that generally, tourists go through a number of stages when buying and consuming a particular type of tourism activity (i.e. being aware of felt needs to travel; searching, collecting and evaluating information; making a decision; preparing for travelling; participating in tourism activities; and evaluating satisfaction). These stages represent the tourism demand process, which are influenced by a number of factors, including the socio-economic and psychographic characteristics of the tourist as well as their social, cultural and environmental factors (Sharpley, 2003; Heitmann, 2011).

Sharpley (2003) suggests the use of Dann's (1977, 1981) concept of push and pull motivational factors in the understanding of the role of motivation in the tourism demand process, by emphasising the need to understand the distinction between these two factors (the concept of push and pull factors will be discussed in detail later in the section). Regarding this, Dann (1981, p.191) states that; 'Theoretically the distinction is useful as it introduces logical and temporal sequencing'. With regard to the role of motivation in the tourism demand process, Sharpley (ibid.) explains that push factors represent the initiation of needs and wants of a tourist

which lead him/her to make a decision to purchase a holiday in the first place. These needs determine the type of holiday he/she wants. Once the decision to take a particular type of holiday has been made, the pull factors (i.e. the destination-specific attributes) determine his/her choice of destinations.

(iii) Approaches to tourist motivations

Early attempts to understand the individuals' motivation to perform certain actions were based upon instinct theory (Holden, 2006). Atkinson *et al.* (1983), referring to the work of McDougall at the beginning of the twentieth century, suggest that human behaviour are the results of ten inherited instincts, including acquisition, construction, curiosity, flight, gregariousness, pugnacity, reproduction, repulsion, self-abasement, and self-assertion. However, many psychologists make the criticism that McDougall's list was too short, and by 1924, over 800 separate instincts had been added to the list (Gross, 1992). The main limitation of this approach lies in that it only assumes that every action is the result of an instinct, which overlooks individual differences.

Another theory to understand motivation and human behaviour is 'drive-reduction theory', which encompasses two major concepts: homeostatic drive and incentive drive (Bernstein, 2011; Holden, 2006). The concept of homeostatic drive focuses on the maintenance of a biological equilibrium within the body (i.e. body temperature and related biological states). This concept has been expanded to include the maintenance of a psychological equilibrium. Central to this concept is

that homeostatic and psychological imbalance motivates or drives a person to perform a certain action to restore equilibrium (Holden, *ibid.*).

The concept of drive reduction was questioned by psychologists, as it overlooks the influence of 'expectation' on the behaviour. Davidoff (1994) argues that people often expect to gain pleasure or other benefits as an incentive when performing a certain action. Agreeing with this, Page and Connell (2009, p.68) state that 'tourism experiences, or rather the anticipation and expectations of a holiday, can act as strong motivators in relation to push factors'. For example, volunteer tourists are not likely to be solely driven by their psychological needs, but are also likely to be motivated by their expectation of incentives associated with volunteer tourism experiences, such as a desire to gain new experiences.

Iso-Ahola (1982) agrees on the role of expectation in motivating people to perform a certain action, by stating that motives are cognitive representations of future states, and therefore people are aware of the reasons for their behaviour. The relationship between expectation and motivation is explained by Vroom (1964) in that an individual's behaviour tends to be determined by the desirability of the outcome or 'incentive' of a particular action, together with the perceived relationship between that action and the outcome.

Witt and Wright (1992) apply the expectation concept in the context of tourism and propose the 'expectancy-valence model', which suggests that an individual is motivated by the expectation that there will be particular outcome of his/her

actions, which is viewed as a justification of such action. Yu (2008) argues that the expectancy-valence model offers an additional explanation to explore tourist motivations, which can be used as an alternative approach to understand the tourist motivation in the modern era. This concept of the integrated roles of internal needs or intrinsic motivations and expected outcomes or the reward, along with extrinsic motivations or needs arising from external forces and pressures (the intrinsic and extrinsic motivations will be discussed in detail later in this section) is used to understand the motivation of volunteer tourists in this study.

Drive-reduction theory is also criticised for overlooking the situation when individuals seek to put themselves in a tension-arousing environment (Holden, 2006). For example, some tourists participate in certain types of tourism activities in which they can face challenges. In the case of volunteer tourists, they may be motivated by a desire to live and work out of their comfort zone where they have to face challenges and difficulties such as language barriers which the expectation that these challenges and difficulties can help them develop themselves.

In terms of the study of tourist motivation, one of the widely-cited approaches is Dann's (1977, 1981) concept of pull and push motivational factors. According to him, push factors are internal to individuals, and which initiate the desire to travel, whereas pull factors refer to the attractions of the destination. He (ibid.) emphasises the significance of push factors as preceding factors that initiate the desire to travel, while maintaining that pull factors are the consequence of push

factors, by arguing that individuals normally realise their need for travel before making a decision about the chosen destination.

Dann (1977) also proposes the concepts of anomie and ego-enhancement and he argues that these two concepts are important motivational factors for travelling. A state of anomie represents 'the desire to transcend the feeling of isolation obtained in everyday life, where the tourist simply wishes to 'get away from it all' (Dann, *ibid*, p.187). In other words, anomie is the desire for social interactions, which individuals cannot fulfil while they are surrounded by their usual environment, but only when they are on holiday.

Dann (1977) explains that ego-enhancement refers to the need to be recognised by others or a desire for higher status in order to be perceived as superior. Individuals are normally unsatisfied with their social and/or economic status in their home or work environment because they feel that there are limited opportunities for rapid advancement. They see that travel can provide them with an opportunity to fulfil this need by visiting a place where no one knows their status. In turn, this gives them an opportunity to presume greater status in the eyes of others. For example, when visiting a developing country, volunteer tourists might get the feeling of being important to local people. To conclude, the anomie and ego-enhancement represent motivational factors that dispose individuals to travel. In this sense, travel is viewed as a means to fulfil these needs by taking them to a 'fantasy world,' as coined by Dann (1977, 1981), where they can act differently from their normal habits.

The concept of push and pull factors as suggested by Dann (1977, 1981) is supported by Crompton (1979) in his study on tourist motivations for taking holidays for pleasure. Crompton (ibid.) refers to 'push factors as 'socio-psychological motives', while pull factors are termed 'cultural motives.' Based upon 39 in-depth unstructured interviews, seven socio-psychological or push motives for taking holidays for pleasure were identified by Crompton (ibid.) which are: to escape from a perceived mundane environment; exploration and evaluation of the self; relaxation; prestige; regression; enhancement of kinship relationships; and facilitation of social interaction, whereas the cultural motives are concerned with the attribute of the destination; falling into this category are novelty and education.

In the case of volunteer tourism, the essence of the concepts of push and pull factors can also explain the motivations of volunteer tourists. For example, the volunteer tourists are initially aware of their needs to participate in volunteer tourism, which lead them to make a decision in the first place, and their decisions about the type of volunteer tourism programme and destinations appear to be influenced by the attributes of the programmes and destinations.

Dann (1981, p. 192) also suggests seven approaches to understanding of tourist motivations, which are as follows:

- (i) 'Travel as a response to what is lacking yet desire': this approach highlights the concept of anomie or a desire to experience something new which could not be fulfilled in an individual's usual environment;

- (ii) 'Destination pull in response to motivational push': this emphasises the importance of push and pull factors in motivating an individual to travel;
- (iii) 'Motivation as fantasy': the approach focuses on the free determination of an individual to perform actions that they could not possibly do or are not acceptable in their usual environment;
- (iv) 'Motivation as a classified purpose': in this approach, the purpose of travelling is perceived as the primary motivation;
- (v) 'Motivation typologies': this approach uses types of tourists to explain the motivation;
- (vi) 'Motivation as tourist experiences': here, tourist motivation is interpreted by their expected experiences in relation to their usual environment; and
- (vii) 'Motivation as auto-definition and meaning': the emphasis is placed on how tourists define and respond to situations, and how they see the local people as a way to understand their motivations.

According to Sharpley (2003), within these seven approaches, there are two distinct approaches that can provide a fundamental to the study of tourist motivations: extrinsic motivations and intrinsic motivations. He (ibid.) explains that extrinsic motivations are forces or pressures from the social and cultural environment of an individual, which eventually become the psychological needs of that person. These forces or pressures may come from the influence of family and friends, social class, culture, work environment, modern society and so on.

The concept of anomie, as proposed by Dann (1981) which was discussed earlier represents an example of extrinsic motivations.

Intrinsic motivations refer to an individual's personal needs that lead to his/her goal-oriented action to satisfy those needs. This approach assumes that every individual was born with innate needs and when people experience a state of tension or disequilibrium in their need system (or when they are aware of their felt need), their motivation emerges and transforms from a felt need into goal-oriented action (Sharpley, 2003). Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs theory is an example of a motivation theory that falls within this approach.

According to Maslow (1954), human needs can be classified into five hierarchical groups, with the physiological needs (i.e. hunger, thirst, rest, sex, etc.) at the bottom, followed by safety needs; love and belonging needs; and esteem needs in that order. Finally, at the highest level, we find self-actualisation needs. The summary of this hierarchy of needs is often interpreted as a pyramid. A person usually starts at the base of the hierarchy where physiological needs appear to dominate in an individual's mind and urge him/her to perform actions to satisfy these needs. Once these needs have been mostly fulfilled, he/she moves up to the next level, becoming aware of a desire to satisfy the higher level needs. It is significant to note that in terms of degree of fulfilment, each level of needs does not need to be completely satisfied before an individual enters the next level of need.

Intrinsic and extrinsic approaches can explain the motivations of volunteer tourists. Findings from existing studies on volunteer tourists' motivations show that both extrinsic and intrinsic motivations are found to drive the volunteer tourists to participate in volunteer tourism. For example, volunteer tourists are found to be motivated by a desire to escape from busy lives and stress in a big city (extrinsic motivation) (Lo and Lee, 2011). This desire is influenced by modern society where people are tired of their busy lifestyle and want to get out of it to another place where they can have a peaceful life. In addition, volunteer tourists are also found to be motivated by a social need is to meet and make friends with other like-minded people (intrinsic motivation) (Wearing, 2001; Carter, 2008)

There is also Volunteer Functions Inventory (VFI) which is proposed by Clary *et al.* (1998) that can be used to understanding volunteer tourists' motivation. To be specifically, this approach serves as the framework in examining the volunteer tourists' motivations in this study, in addition to the above mentioned approaches to tourist motivation. The VFI consists of six motivational functions, each of which has a potential role in motivating an individual to engage in a volunteer activity so that he/she can fulfil his/her needs (Clary *et al.*, *ibid.*).

Additionally, although this approach has been primarily used to further understanding of volunteers' motivations (e.g. Clary *et al.*, 1998; Busser and Carruthers, 2010; Papasakis *et al.*, 2005; Houle *et al.*, 2005), it is believed that it can also serve as a conceptual foundation for the comprehension of the motivations of volunteer tourists as well, because the main component of

volunteer tourism is volunteering and therefore, volunteer tourism and volunteering have characteristics in common, such as effortful, helpful and non-remunerative actions.

Volunteer Functions Inventory (VFI) emphasises the multidimensional nature of the motivations to volunteering by suggesting that volunteering activity can serve different functions or needs for different people, so that people undertaking a similar type of volunteering may have different motivations for doing so and the same volunteer can have more than one motivation when engaging in volunteering activity (Clary *et al.*, 1998; Clary and Snyder, 1999). According to Clary and Snyder (1999), based on their previous studies and studies with other colleagues (see Clary *et al.*, 1998), approximately two-thirds of their respondents indicated that they were driven by two or more important motivations.

VFI consists of six motivational functions: values, understanding, social, career, protective, and enhancement (see Figure 6). The values function refers to a desire to express altruistic and humanitarian concerns for the welfare or benefit of others (e.g. people who are less fortunate), to contribute to society, and to support a cause that is personally important. According to Clary *et al.* (1998, p.1518), ‘concern for others is often a characteristic of those who volunteer, distinguishing volunteers from non-volunteers.’

The understanding function involves a desire to learn new things, to exercise knowledge, skills, and abilities that might otherwise go unpractised, to gain new perspectives, and to explore personal strengths. The social function refers to a desire to strengthen one's relationship with other people or to be fit in, to get along with, or to be impressed by, people important to him/her. In other words, this function is driven by forces or pressures from the social and cultural environment of an individual.

Careers relates to a desire to enhance one's career prospects through volunteering. The protective function involves primarily coping with one's inner anxiety or personal problems in order to protect the ego from negative feelings. Therefore, the protective function could be seen as a desire to reduce one's own negative feelings, such as guilt over being more fortunate than others, or to escape or work through one's personal problems.

Finally, enhancement concerns a desire to enhance one's self-esteem. This function is in contrast to the protective function in that the latter focuses on reducing negative aspects of the ego, while the enhancement function emphasises maintaining or enhancing the positive features of the ego.

Figure 6: Six motivational functions of the Volunteer Functions Inventory (VFI)

(Source: Adapted from Clary *et al.*, 1998)

Many studies have used this framework for the study of volunteers' motivations. For example, Houle *et al.* (2005) used the VFI framework to investigate whether the volunteers prefer activities with benefits that match their own preferred volunteer motives and found that individuals do not randomly select volunteering activities, but are most likely to choose a task that best satisfies their personal motives. Additionally, van der Meer (2007) used the VFI framework to investigate the volunteer tourists' motivations to engage in post-tsunami volunteer tourism at KhaoLak, Phang Nga province, Thailand, and found that all six motivational functions of the VFI framework serve as motivations of the volunteer tourists and among these six motivational functions, those under the values function were the most important, whereas those under the protective function were the least important.

This framework can provide a basis for understanding the volunteer tourists' motivation in this study because, first, it takes into account both psychological and social dimensions of motivations or intrinsic and extrinsic motivations that potentially drive the volunteer tourists to engage in volunteer tourism. Second, as mentioned before, it emphasises the multifaceted nature of the motivations for volunteering, which is consistent with previous studies on volunteer tourism motivations (e.g. Wearing, 2001; Broad, 2003; Brown, 2005; Carter, 2008; Sin, 2009; Lo and Lee, 2011), which argue that people do differ in their motives for undertaking volunteer tourism.

Third, it contains the motivational aspects of altruism and self-interest, both of which are often found in the studies of volunteer tourism motivation, which report that volunteer tourists seem to be driven by a combination of altruism and self-interest (see Wearing, 2001; Broad, 2003; Brown, 2005; Carter, 2008; Sin, 2009; Mustonen, 2007; van der Meer, 2007). This argument is supported by Stebbins (1992, 2004), who argues that, although the motivations of volunteer tourists may vary vastly according to their different demographic backgrounds, the twin motivations of 'altruism' and 'self-interest' are found in all groups of volunteer tourists. In line with this, Clary and Snyder (1999, p.157) point out that, 'It appears that many volunteers' motivations cannot be neatly classified as either altruistic or egoistic, both because some specific motives combine other-interested and self-interested considerations and because many people indicate that they have both kinds of reasons for volunteering.'

To summarise, the study of tourist motivation emphasises the satisfaction of an individual's needs. This approach has long been used to understanding tourist motivation. However, as pointed out by Witt and Wright (1992, p.44) that 'the study of needs can at best only provide a partial explanation of motivated behaviour,' and other related factors must also be taken in account (Sharpley, 2003). The above discussion suggests that tourist motivation is also linked with their expectation of certain benefits or outcomes arising from participating in a particular type of holiday. For example, they are likely to choose the destination or type of holiday that can offer the best opportunity for them to achieve those outcomes. Moreover, as pointed out by Sharpley (ibid.), tourists also tend to purchase their holiday in advance, and prior to their departure, they tend to have expectation about their holiday, such as potential benefits or outcomes that they can gain from the holiday. Therefore, expectations should also be considered alongside extrinsic and intrinsic motivations. This approach is used as the theoretical framework for evaluating the volunteer tourists' motivations in this study.

3.2.4. Altruism versus egoism (or self-interest)

The study of volunteer tourists' motivations typically explores the central question '*why do these tourists engage in volunteering or helping activities while they are on holiday?*' The answers to this question seem to raise the classic debate of whether volunteer tourism is performed to serve altruistic or egoistic motivations. This is because volunteer tourism is an effortful and non-remunerative tourism

activity, which requires not only labour, but also time and other resources (sometimes even money) from the volunteer tourists.

This section aims to present the debate on altruistic versus egoistic or self-interested motivations in the context of volunteer tourism. This discussion is centred around the question of whether true altruism exists in volunteer tourists, whether the motivations to help others are merely to serve one's own interest, or whether they are a combination of both.

According to Batson (1991, p.6), one of the best-known pioneers in the study of altruism, altruism is defined as 'a motivational state with the ultimate goal of increasing another's welfare.' The key aspect that should be considered in this definition is the meaning of 'the ultimate goal'. Batson (*ibid.*, p.6) suggests that, 'For a goal to be an ultimate goal, it must be an end in itself and not just an intermediate means for reaching some other goal.' The ultimate goal of altruistic motivation is to increase another's welfare. He (*ibid.*) further argues that sometimes an altruistic motivation may lead to an action that benefits both the receiver and the helper; in this case, the action is still considered to be motivated by altruism as long as the ultimate goal is aimed at another's welfare.

Batson (2008) also introduced the 'empathy-altruism' hypothesis, which states that altruistic motivation is evoked by empathic concern that a helper feels for a person in need that leads him/her to relieve that need. According to this approach, even though an action caused by such empathic concern can produce self-benefits

for the helper, such as reducing his/her empathic concern or gaining self-reward, these self-benefits are not considered the ultimate goal of helping; they are unintended consequences. For this reason, Batson (*ibid.*) argues that true altruism with the ultimate goal of benefiting another does exist.

The other related, but contrasting, concept of altruism is egoism or self-interested motivation, which, according to Batson (1991, p.7), is 'a motivational state with the ultimate goal of increasing one's own welfare.' Considering this definition, egoistic motivation is centred around the benefits to the helper. Researchers who are advocates of universal egoism (e.g. Duffy, 2001; Munt, 1994; Dovidio *et al.*, 2006) reject the existence of true altruism by arguing that altruistic motivations are, in fact, self-serving attempts. Dovidio *et al.* (2006) point out that although helping obviously benefits the recipient, the primary reason that people help others is in fact to benefit themselves.

Dovidio *et al.*'s (2006) argument is based on the principles of the learning theory and the arousal and effect theory. The first theory suggests that people help others with the aims of obtaining rewards from both the recipients (e.g. praise) and themselves (e.g. pride) and to avoid punishment (e.g. blame or shame), whereas the latter notes that people are motivated to help others mainly to make themselves feel better, which means that the primary motivation for helping is in fact a selfish one (Dovidio *et al.*, *ibid.*). Agreeing with this, Mustonen (2007) claims that behaviour that seems to be altruistic may not necessarily be caused by altruistic motivation. He (*ibid.*) gave the example of a wealthy person who

occasionally donates money to charity; his motivation can be self-interested in that he aims to use the donation as a means of marketing.

When applying the notions of altruistic and egoistic motivations in the context of volunteer tourism, the questions that arise include: whether the helping endeavour of a volunteer tourist is connected with pure altruistic motivation; whether it is just an effort to serve their egoistic motivation; and whether it is a combination of both these things.

At the time of writing this thesis, there is no literature that claims that the motivations of volunteer tourists are purely altruistic. One explanation for this lies in the fact that although volunteer tourism has a voluntary component, it is also regarded as another type of tourism, which is a form of consumption (Mustonen, 2007). In this sense, although there are other ways to help other people, such as donating money, volunteer tourists choose volunteer tourism instead, which implies that almost without exception they seek to ‘consume’ self-benefits that arise from the tourism element of volunteer tourism (Mustonen, *ibid.*).

However, it cannot be concluded that the helping efforts of volunteer tourists are entirely motivated by pure egoistic motivation, because according to the existing literature, altruistic motivation is always mentioned by volunteer tourists, along with other egoistic motivations. Sin (2009) explains the combination of altruism and self-interested motivations that occur within volunteer tourists by stating that volunteer tourism is seen as providing reciprocal benefits to both host community

and volunteer participants themselves; therefore, when talking about their motivations, volunteer tourists often mention both altruistic and self-interested motivations. Bauman (1994) and Beck (1992) explain this by stating that ethical considerations are embedded in the life and decision-making of people in postmodern societies, thereby making it possible for them to have both altruistic and self-interested motivations to perform any actions.

Agreeing with this, Mustonen (2007) argues that volunteer tourism is probably the best example of action driven by both motivations. He (ibid.) also argues that the motivations of volunteer tourists seem to fluctuate along the continuum of altruistic and self-interested motivations; therefore, the border between altruism and self-interest is blurred and difficult to delineate, and it can be assumed that these two groups of motivations are interconnected.

Coghlan and Fennell (2009, p.393) also support the occurrence of the twin motivations of altruism and egoism and their blurred boundary by stating that: 'Certainly, it is a fallacy to say that volunteer tourists are completely altruistic, although it might be true that they behave in an altruistic manner and have some altruistic-like motivations.' In line with this, Söderman and Snead (2008, p.119) propose that volunteer tourists' motivations are rather 'reciprocal altruistic' because volunteer tourism is not only the act of doing good for the benefits of others, but also about doing good for the benefit of the volunteer tourists themselves.

3.2.5. Dimensions of volunteer tourists' motivations

Existing literature to date shares common findings that the motivations of volunteer tourists are multidimensional (e.g. Wearing, 2001; Broad, 2003; Brown, 2005; Carter 2008; Sin, 2009; Lo and Lee, 2011; Ooi and Laing, 2010) and generally consist of two dimensions of self-interested or egoistic and altruistic motivations, which are interconnected and have blurred boundaries as mentioned earlier (e.g. Stebbins, 1992, 2004; Wearing, 2001; Broad, 2003; Brown, 2005; Carter, 2008; Sin, 2009; Mustonen, 2007; van der Meer, 2007; Söderman and Snead, 2008). Self-interest is a broad term covering many aspects of motivations that revolve around self-benefits of volunteer tourists, whereas altruistic motivation involves other-benefits. This section aims to present the self-interested and altruistic motivations of volunteer tourists that have been reported in the current studies.

(i) Self-interested motivations

(a) To be immersed in/exchange with/learn about local culture

A desire for cultural immersion/exchange/learning is one of the main motivational factors for volunteer tourists (Brown, 2005; Lo and Lee, 2011; Sin, 2009; Wearing, 2001). Volunteer tourism is viewed as offering an authentic experience (Chen and Chen, 2011; Broad, 2003) where volunteer participants can physically and emotionally immerse themselves in the local culture and community in a more profound way through working and having first-hand interaction with local people (Brown, 2005). It is also seen as providing the most direct human interaction between volunteer tourists and local residents (Chen and Chen, 2011).

Volunteer tourists express the desire to interact with local people in many ways, such as living with them, eating with them, and learning local culture (e.g. cooking) from them (Lo and Lee, 2011; Chen and Chen, 2011; Wearing, 2001).

(b) To interact, and develop relationships, with local residents

Volunteer tourists are also found to be motivated by a desire to interact, and develop better and long-term relationships, with the local residents, which facilitate them to experience and understand the real life of the local community they visit (Chen and Chen, 2011; Lo and Lee, 2011; Sin, 2009). Lo and Lee's (2011) study also reveals that volunteer tourists believe that interacting and having good relationships with local people would help them to gain a better and more in-depth understanding of the actual needs and problems faced by these people, which in turn, enables them to come up with more comprehensive assistance for these local people.

(c) To discover themselves

The study of Carter (2008) clearly reports that some volunteer tourists undertook volunteer tourism because they wanted to get to know themselves better. Consistent with this, the studies of Sin (2009), Chen and Chen (2011), and Galley and Clifton (2004) also reveal that volunteer tourists saw a volunteer vacation as an adventurous and challenging trip where they were able to prove themselves and/or to push their limits.

Difficulties such as language barriers, little knowledge of local cultures, lack of familiar facilities and convenience (e.g. the conditions of the toilets, or no shower facilities) were seen as the challenges that they wanted to experience in order to see what was going to happen to them, and whether and how they were going to deal with such difficulties (Sin, 2009; Chen and Chen, 2011).

(d) To increase knowledge and skills

Volunteer tourists are also motivated by a desire to increase their knowledge of issues in which they are personally interested, such as issues relating to the environment (Galley and Clifton, 2004; Chen and Chen, 2011), culture (Sin, 2009), and/or society (Chen and Chen, 2011) of the host destination. Some volunteer participants want their volunteer tourism experience to facilitate them to become more environmentally active (Galley and Clifton, 2004).

A desire to improve their foreign language skills appears to be an influencing motivator for some volunteer tourists. For example, Söderman and Snead (2008) found that gap year volunteer tourists who had studied Spanish at school and/or planned to study Spanish at university tended to specifically choose to go to Spanish-speaking countries because they believe that working with local people in a community-based volunteering project would provide them with good opportunities to interact with native speakers and help them to develop their Spanish communication skills. Similar findings were reported in the study of Chen and Chen (2011) which reveal that volunteer participants who had studied Chinese intended to use it during their volunteer trip in China.

(e) To enhance academic/career prospects

Some volunteer tourists tend to see volunteer tourism vacations as a training ground or 'a geography of experimentation' as described by Simpson (2005, p.111) where they would have an opportunity to practice their skills and knowledge for volunteer projects (Wearing, 2001; Carter, 2008; Simpson, 2005). Some participants also believed that they would gain some experience that they could use or benefit from in their career or study (Wearing, 2001). This is in line with Simpson (2005) who argues that some professions are not available without a certain qualification in UK; therefore, volunteer tourists can use a volunteer vacation, which often takes place in other countries, as their geography of experimentation.

Moreover, Söderman and Snead's (2008) study also reveals that some volunteer tourists take volunteer vacations as a risk reducer for their career opportunity; in other words, volunteer tourism was perceived as providing them with a great opportunity to practice their profession before committing to it. Regarding academic and career achievement, volunteering experience is also perceived as a good way to help enhance the CV of the volunteer participants, helping them to get a job or to move up their career ladder (Galley and Clifton, 2004; Corti *et al.*, 2010).

(f) To meet and share experiences with other volunteer tourists

The interest in taking a volunteer tourism vacation is also triggered by a desire to meet and make friends with other volunteer tourists (Wearing, 2001; Carter, 2008). In addition to developing friendships with local people, some volunteer tourists also want to meet and share the experience of doing volunteer work with other people from other countries (Wearing, 2001). This finding is echoed in Brown's (2005) study, which reveals that volunteer tourism is seen as providing a great opportunity for volunteer participants to meet and make friends with other people who share similar interests, which adds value and enjoyment to the overall trip.

(g) For practical reasons

According to Sin's (2009) study, volunteer participants viewed a volunteer vacation as a means to gain access to the places that they may have had difficulty visiting on their own. This argument is supported by the study of Chen and Chen (2011), which found that volunteer participants perceived that volunteer trips enabled them to visit Chinese villages even though they did not speak Chinese. Perhaps the statement given by Söderman and Snead (2008, p.126) that, 'The uncertainty and unease of "the unknown" can be mediated by experiencing it from inside the comfort zone of a structured travel experience arranged by an organization' can explain why volunteer tourists are motivated to join this type of trip.

The cost of travelling is another concern regarding this category of motivation. According to the research of Sin (2009), the volunteer participants in her study received allowances from their university and other fundraisers to participate in the volunteer vacation. Therefore, they saw the volunteer vacation as a much cheaper way to travel, compared to other types of tourism. Sin (ibid.) expressed her concern about the volunteer tourists who just wanted to take advantage of volunteer tourism to go on a cheap holiday and have no interest in contributing to the well-being of host communities or in developing themselves, and she (ibid.) suggests the coordinators of volunteer vacations should acknowledge this.

Moreover, time is also mentioned as playing an important role in motivating individuals to go on a volunteer tourism trip. Chen and Chen (2011) and McGehee and Santos (2005) similarly note that most volunteer tourists decide to take a volunteer tourism trip because it is undertaken during their break from school, university or work, which they think is the right time for them. A gap year (a period, typically an academic year, between leaving a high school and entering a university, during which some students in UK take a break and pursue a range of activities) is often considered the right time for taking a volunteer vacation trip because young people, specifically in UK, are encouraged to leave home and travel elsewhere to have an experience which they could not gain at home (Söderman and Snead, 2008).

Additionally, other periods of time that people generally regard as ‘a critical time of change in their lives’ (McGehee and Santos, 2005, p.774), such as when one has recently retired, or when one is thinking about a career change or taking a break from work, are also viewed as ideal times for taking a volunteer tourism trip (McGehee and Santos, *ibid.*). Therefore, any volunteer tourism programme that is undertaken during these points of time is considered as being well timed and in turn motivates individuals to participate (Wearing, 2001).

(h) To escape from a mundane environment

Lo and Lee (2011) observe from their study that their Hong Kong volunteers viewed a volunteer vacation as a great way for them to escape from busy life and stress in the fast-paced city of Hong Kong.

(i) To gain new experiences

Some volunteer tourists opt for volunteer tourism because they want to see other parts of the world or another culture that they have not seen before (Carter, 2008; Sin, 2009; van der Meer, 2007), or to see how things are different in other countries (Chen and Chen, 2011). Volunteer tourists also see volunteer tourism not only as providing an opportunity to do volunteer activities, but its leisure component also offers them an opportunity to undertake such activities as forest trekking and reef diving (Galley and Clifton, 2004).

Some volunteer tourists also seek to gain a feeling of excitement and/or adventure to visit new and exotic places, to meet new people, and/or to do something fun (Wearing, 2001; Sin, 2009). Sin (2009, p.488) argues that this motivation is linked with volunteer participants' 'geographical imaginations' of the volunteer trip destination, which is seen as a 'far-away', 'exotic', 'different', and 'not frequently visited' place.

(j) To enhance relationships with family members

This motivation concerns volunteer participants who take a volunteer vacation with family members. They believe that by doing so, they are given an opportunity to spend more time, to do goodwill activities, and to interact more with their family members (Brown, 2005; Chen and Chen, 2011). This motivation may be expanded to cover relationships with other people, such as friends or colleagues. For example, the study of Chen and Chen (2011) also found that some individuals went on a volunteer vacation because they wanted to get to know their colleagues better.

In addition, for the volunteer tourists who take a volunteer trip with their children, volunteer tourism is believed to serve as a platform for real world education where they can teach their children about the differences that happen in the world, the poverty and difficulties of people who are less fortunate than them in other places, the insignificance of materialism, the value of life and the value of giving (Brown, 2005; Lo and Lee, 2011). Lo and Lee (2011) also argue that volunteer

participants in their study hoped that the volunteer tourism experience would have some positive impact on their children's studies and/or personal development.

(k) Religious-related motivations

It is argued that some volunteer tourists choose to participate in volunteer tourism because they are motivated by their religious beliefs (Taillon and Jamal, 2009; Lo and Lee, 2011). They believe that this type of trip provides them with an opportunity to serve their God (Taillon and Jamal, 2009) or to spread their personal religious beliefs to others in the hope that people would 'accept the grace of God' (Lo and Lee, 2011, p.5). However, Carter (2008) regarded this motivation as an altruistic motivation because in her study, volunteer participants saw it as a way to help other people.

(ii) Altruistic motivations

Altruism is closely connected with volunteering activity and therefore it is often reported by volunteer participants as one of their motivations to undertake a volunteer tourism trip. An analytical review of the literature on volunteer tourists' motivations found that altruism has been illustrated in many ways, has been performed in a variety of forms, and is influenced by a number of factors. Phrases such as 'giving back' (Brown, 2005), 'making a difference' (Brown, 2005; Lo and Lee, 2011), 'saving the world' (Wearing, 2001), 'doing good' (Wearing, 2001), 'showing love and care' (Lo and Lee, 2011), 'helping others' (Wearing, 2001; Carter, 2008; Chen and Chen, 2011; van der Meer, 2007), 'contributing' (Sin,

2009), and ‘doing something meaningful’ (Lo and Lee, 2011) are used to represent altruistic motivation.

In terms of the actions used to express altruistic motivation, Lo and Lee (2011) reveal that such action has been perceived by volunteer tourists in a number of forms, such as providing financial and material support to the needy, giving up their time, using their skills and knowledge for the well-being of the local residents (e.g. teaching health knowledge to the students in the local school, and giving encouragement to people who are in difficult situations).

For Chen and Chen (2011), altruistic action refers to behaviour which will help preserve the culture and tradition of the village. Interestingly, Carter (2008, p.60) categorises ‘Christian outreach’ as having an altruistic motivation. According to her study, volunteer tourists perceived that spreading their religious beliefs was the way to help others.

Altruistic motivation is influenced by many factors. Lo and Lee’s (2011) study reveals that an ethnic tie is the reason that made some volunteer tourists from Hong Kong decide to take a volunteer vacation in Chengdu, China, in order to help people after the Sichuan earthquake in 2008. This group of volunteer tourists thought that China was their motherland, so it was their responsibility to help people who shared the same blood as them.

An awareness of the difference between those who are less fortunate and those who are more fortunate is also mentioned among some volunteer tourists, especially those from Western or developed countries, as a reason that made them think that they should give back by helping people who are less fortunate than them (Brown, 2005).

Additionally, Wearing (2001) argues that factors like: past experience in community service; the power of the media that makes people realise the significance of development; and/or a wish to take part in community work in an effort to do something good also influence the altruistic motivation.

Moreover, the context of the project (e.g. aim and destination) can also influence altruistic motivation; for example, Chen and Chen's (2011) study reveals that the aim of a volunteer tourism project which was to collect, document and record all the data concerning the local tradition and culture of a village before it was lost during relocation influenced the volunteer tourists' motivation to help preserve the tradition and culture of the village.

Most researchers (e.g. Wearing, 2001; Broad, 2003; Brown, 2005; Carter, 2008; Sin, 2009; Chen and Chen, 2011) argue that altruism is not the strongest motivation of volunteer tourists. It comes after other motivations categorised as self-interested motivation, such as cultural immersion (Brown, 2005; Lo and Lee, 2011; and Chen and Chen, 2011), the desire for new experiences (Carter, 2008) or a desire to gain perceived benefits in terms of learning or getting to know the

country better beyond the scope of a normal tourist (Sin, 2009). At the time of writing this thesis, the study of van der Meer (2007) is the only published study that argues that altruism is the most important motivation of the volunteer tourist. Carter (2008, p.61) argues that the reason altruism appears to be less important than a desire for new experience lies in the fact that the majority of volunteer participants in her study were less than twenty-six years of age, a 'phase of life that has less responsibility and commitments compared to other age groups.' However, she (ibid.) also showed her concern that the findings of her study might be affected by the aim of the interview, which focused on finding out the experiences of the volunteer tourists, and the order of the interview questions that might direct the participants to respond to the question based on their volunteer tourism experience instead of their original motivations. Apart from this, there is no further evidence that explains the lower significance of altruistic motivations, compared to self-interested motivations as presented in the findings of the existing literature.

3.3. The Volunteer Tourists' On-site Experiences

3.3.1. Definitions of experiences and tourism experiences

To date there is no consensus on the definition of experience, although a number of scholars have made attempts to define it. These include: Holbrook and Hirschman (1982, p.132) who define experience as 'a steady flow of fantasies, feelings, and fun'; Hoch (2002, p.448) who suggests that experience is 'the act of living through an observation of events' and also refers to 'training and the

subsequent knowledge and skill acquired'; and Volo (2009, p.119) who refers to experience as the combination of

all the events that occur between sensation (i.e., an observer's awareness of an energy form impinging on a receptor physiologically designed to transduce it) and perception (i.e., the interpretation of the sensation), as well as memory (i.e., the subsequent organisation and recall of such interpretations) which will have been modified and conditioned in the interim by many if not all of the prior and subsequent occurrences of this 'sensation, perception, interpretation, sequence.'

Pine II and Gilmore (1999, p.11) state that an experience is created 'when a company intentionally uses service as the stage...to engage an individual' in such a way as to create a memorable event; and Page *et al.* (2001, pp.412-413) said that experience is 'a complex combination of factors that shape the tourist's feelings and attitudes towards his or her visit.'

The first three definitions share a similar standpoint that an experience is subjectively constructed and given meaning by an individual him/herself, whereas the last two definitions emphasise the role of the company, providers or other factors in shaping the experience for an individual. According to Volo (2009, p.120), the former group of definitions look at the experience as 'the experience essence' and the latter regard it as 'the experience as offering.'

As this study focuses on how volunteer tourists themselves interpret and give meaning to their volunteer tourism experience, the concept of ‘the experience essence’ is employed. Among the definitions above, this study utilises Volo’s (2009) definition as its conceptual framework because it encompasses the main concepts of tourists’ experiences (sensation, perception, and memory), which are of the interest of this study. Additionally, this definition also integrates space and time into the concept of tourism experience by arguing that tourism experiences that occur in the mind of the tourists happens only outside their ‘usual environment’ and their ‘contracted time’ (or the time in which they are engaged to do paid work) (Volo, 2009, pp.119-120) which supports the fact that participation in volunteer tourism requires individuals to travel from their usual environment and out of their contracted time to the host destination.

The tourism experience is argued to be complex and diverse in nature (Volo, 2009). This argument is supported by Wickens (2002), who reveals that the British holidaymakers visiting Chalkidiki, Northern Greece, have diverse patterns of interests and activities; and the study of Uriely *et al.* (2002), which not only found that different backpackers tend to have different experiences even though they partake in a similar tourist activity, but also found that an individual backpacker can also engage in different types of experience in a single trip.

3.3.2. Conceptual framework to understanding the volunteer tourists' on-site experiences

The concept of volunteer tourism experience as multidimensional which is conceptualised by McIntosh and Zahra (2007) is used as a framework. McIntosh and Zahra (ibid.) argue that volunteer tourism experience consists of three main dimensions: (i) the experience of local culture; (ii) the experience relating to the volunteer tourists themselves; and (iii) the experience of the interaction and relationship between the volunteer tourists and the local residents. These dimensions are consistent with the main aspects of volunteer tourism as discussed in Section 2.3.

Additionally, upon reviewing related literature on the volunteer tourism experience, it was found that the volunteer tourists' on-site experiences also encompass interactions and relationships with other volunteer and the dimension of the volunteer tourists' feeling. Therefore, these aspects are added as a framework for understanding this topic. The conceptual framework for understanding the volunteer tourists' on-site experience is shown in Figure 7.

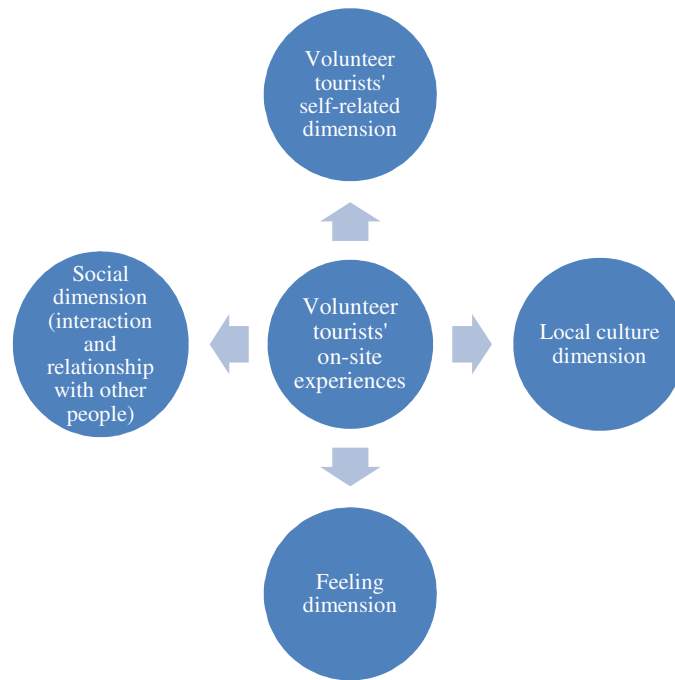


Figure 7: The volunteer tourists' on-site experience dimensions

(Sources: Adapted from McIntosh and Zahra (2007) and other relevant literature)

3.3.3. The nature and dimensions of the volunteer tourists' on-site experiences

There is a consensus among existing literature that volunteer tourism provides meaningful experiences for volunteer tourists. Specifically, the nature of volunteer tourism experience is conceptualised in a variety of notions including being 'transformative' (Jones, 2005; Lepp, 2009); 'learning' (Jones, 2005); 'alternative' (McIntosh and Zahra, 2007); 'authentic' (McIntosh and Zahra, 2007; Broad, 2003; Brown, 2005); 'intrinsically rewarding' (Zahra and McIntosh, 2007; Barbieri *et al.*, 2012); 'cathartic' and 'life-changing' (Zahra and McIntosh, 2007); 'beneficial' (Lepp, 2009), and 'worthwhile' (Broad, 2003).

Additionally, the volunteer tourism experiences are thought to be distinct from conventional tourism experiences in that they are ‘more authentic, genuine, reflexive, of contemporary cultural content and a meaningful interpersonal experience’ (McIntosh and Zahra, 2007, p.553) and centred around altruistic motives, rather than ‘the hedonistic and escapist nature of traditional holidays’ (Zahra and McIntosh, *ibid*, p.115).

Existing literature (e.g. McIntosh and Zahra, 2007; Wearing, 2001; Zahra and McIntosh, 2007; Broad, 2003; Jones, 2005; Harlow and Pomfret, 2007; Lo and Lee, 2011) similarly argues that experiences gained by volunteer tourists are diverse. A review of existing literature suggests four main dimensions of the volunteer tourism experience: (i) volunteer tourists’ self-related; (ii) social; (iii) local culture; and (iv) feelings.

(i) Volunteer tourists' self-related dimension

Experiences gained by volunteer tourists are arguably centred around the volunteer tourists themselves (Wearing, 2001; Zahra and McIntosh, 2007; Broad, 2003; Jones, 2005; Harlow and Pomfret, 2007; Lo and Lee, 2011). In other words, they involve the volunteer tourists’ personal development and self-reflection because such experiences are learning in nature (Wearing, 2001; Zahra and McIntosh, 2007). The volunteer tourists’ experiences that relate to ‘self’ or personal development and self-reflection encompass a number of aspects, which are discussed in turn.

First of all, the findings of previous studies (Broad, 2003; Jones, 2005; Harlow and Pomfret, 2007; Lo and Lee, 2011) reveal that volunteer tourists learn and develop a range of skills during their volunteer tourism vacations. These skills, described by Jones (2005, p.87) as 'soft skills', include self-confidence, interpersonal or social skills, communications skills, and problem-solving. In terms of self-confidence, volunteer tourists often noted that they had gained more confidence to travel independently (Jones, *ibid.*) and to handle responsibility (Broad, 2003). The confidence they gained resulted from dealing with challenges and uncertainty during their volunteer tourism vacation which were apparently different from their lives in their home country (Jones, *ibid.*).

Volunteer tourists also indicated that they had developed their interpersonal or social skills which enabled them to get on and work comfortably with other people (Broad, 2003; Jones, 2005; Harlow and Pomfret, 2007), which would benefit them in their future study and working life (Jones, 2005). Closely linked with the interpersonal skills are communication skills, which facilitated the volunteer tourists to speak publicly and to communicate and build a good rapport with different kinds of people, especially those whom they have never met (Jones, 2005; Lo and Lee, 2011).

Problem-solving skills are also reportedly learnt by volunteer tourists as a result of the unique nature of the volunteer tourism experience that forces them to cope with day-to-day problems and challenging situations concerning their volunteering activities and daily life, as well as to deal with their own emotions,

especially when they had to work in a foreign culture and climate (Broad, 2003; Jones, 2005; Lo and Lee, 2011).

Apart from the above-mentioned skills, other skills and abilities which are reported by volunteer tourists to have been developed as a result of participating in the volunteer tourism experiences include: leadership skills (Lo and Lee, 2011), increased persistence (Lo and Lee, *ibid.*), perseverance (Lo and Lee, *ibid.*), greater tolerance for other people (Harlow and Pomfret, 2007; McGehee and Santos, 2005), feelings of empowerment (McGehee and Santos, 2005) and self-efficacy (McGehee and Santos, *ibid.*).

Secondly, researchers (Broad, 2003; McIntosh and Zahra, 2007; Zahra and McIntosh, 2007; Lo and Lee, 2011) uniformly indicate that volunteer tourism experiences enable the volunteer tourists to reflect on and evaluate their own 'selves'. In other words, these experiences helped them learn or find out more about themselves and become aware of new things such as their own potential.

This notion of self-reflection and self-evaluation is also found in the study of Harlow and Pomfret (2007), who argue that volunteer tourism experiences help enhance the volunteer tourists' self-concept. They (*ibid.*) found in their study of the volunteer tourism experience in Kafue National Park in Zambia that volunteer tourists had discovered new abilities and areas of interest such as knowledge of animal identification and an interest in cooking for other people, which gave them a sense of pride and achievement.

Thirdly, Harlow and Pomfret (2007) argue that volunteer tourism experiences also facilitate volunteer tourists to gain spiritual benefits from being and working in the natural environment. The volunteer tourists gradually developed a deep psychological association with the natural environment, which in turn led them to develop a greater appreciation of it.

Likewise, Zahra and McIntosh (2007) found that some volunteer tourists in their study had gained spiritual benefits. They (ibid.) reported that prior to their volunteer tourism trip, religion had never been a part of their life, but after experiencing the significance of religion in the lives of local people, volunteer tourists changed their attitudes towards the role of religion in their own life.

Fourthly, it is also reported that volunteer tourism experiences facilitate the volunteer tourists in the transformation of their values and perceptions about their lives and the world (Broad, 2003; Brown, 2005; Zahra and McIntosh, 2007; Lo and Lee, 2011). This transformation is the result of their opportunity to witness first-hand the difference between their lives and the lives of others. This makes the volunteers more aware of things around them that they might never have appreciated before, such as the importance of love, family values, and the internal values of human beings, compared to the minimal importance of material needs and external appearance (Broad, 2003; Brown, 2005; Zahra and McIntosh, 2007; Lo and Lee, 2011).

The studies of Broad (2003), Brown (2005), Zahra and McIntosh (2007), and Lo and Lee (2011) report similarly that volunteer tourists had changed their perception of 'happiness' once they realised that true happiness did not come from the possession of material things, but from other things, such as love, care, and appreciation of things they already had.

Zahra and McIntosh (2007, p.118) found that volunteer tourism experiences enable the volunteer tourists to 'go out of' themselves, or to transform from being self-oriented to being other-oriented, which they metaphorically described as changing from 'facing the wall' to turning 'their back to the wall' and experiencing a '180 degree turn' where the volunteer tourists enjoyed a broader vision and perspective of life. A similar conclusion is also found in the study of McGehee and Santos (2005), which reports that volunteer tourists changed their previously myopic and self-centred views of the world and realised that their issues or problems were far smaller than the issues other people were facing.

Volunteer tourism experiences can also encourage volunteer tourists to become more conscious of natural resources and global issues (Harlow and Pomfret, 2007; McGehee and Santos, 2005). Harlow and Pomfret (2007) found that volunteer tourists were encouraged to become more aware of the significance of water, which resulted from the scarcity of water and the effort to gain access to it in the national park where the volunteer tourism expedition took place. Likewise, McGehee and Santos (2005) reveal that the volunteer tourists in their study

became more aware of the overuse of natural resources and started to adopt the practice of recycling and reusing after witnessing this.

It is also reported that volunteer tourism experiences significantly impact on the behaviour of the volunteer tourists. According to Broad (2003) and McGehee and Santos (2005), the volunteer tourists were more considerate with their time, money and other resources, in order to ensure that these things were spent in a worthwhile and productive manner.

Additionally, the studies of Broad (2003), Brown (2005), and Lo and Lee (2011) similarly point out that volunteer tourism experiences significantly affect the direction of the future studies and careers of some volunteer tourists because these experiences help broaden their horizons and facilitate them to discover their real interest in their future study and/or career. Not only that, but according to Lo and Lee's (2011) study, volunteer tourism experience also benefits the current studies of the volunteer tourists, and for some of them, these experiences also serve as an invaluable addition to their CV.

Next, volunteer tourism experiences also impact on the personal lives of some volunteer tourists, as reported by Broad (2003). Some volunteer tourists met their life partners (local residents in their host communities) during their volunteer tourism trip and decided to relocate to stay with their partners (Broad, *ibid.*).

Furthermore, volunteer tourism experiences also promote a global perspective among the volunteer tourists (Jones, 2005; McGehee and Santos, 2005). According to Jones's (2005) study, the volunteer tourists were young people who had never travelled outside Western regions. Therefore, unsurprisingly, they had limited knowledge of life in other parts of the world and volunteer tourism experiences helped open their eyes and made them see things on a more global level. For example, the volunteer tourists in this study (ibid.) reported that the volunteer tourism experience enabled them to make the link between their home country and their host country as they found that the coffee and flowers grown in the host country were sold in department stores in their home country, or that the local residents had good knowledge about many things in their home country, such as football teams.

Likewise, McGehee and Santos (2005) found that volunteer tourists in their study changed from separating themselves from other people to seeing that they had things in common with people who live in other parts of the world, shown by the fact that they stop defining themselves by ethnic background.

Regarding the issue of gaining global perspective, Simpson (2004) has a contrasting view. According to her study (ibid., p.682) on the volunteer tourism experience of gap year students, she argues that such volunteer tourism experiences emphasise the great differences and inequality between the volunteer tourists and the local people, which in turn reinforces the notion of 'them' and 'us'. This is because the gap year-volunteer projects create a 'geography' of the

world where there are simplistic boundaries between the developed or northern countries and developing or southern countries, and this perception, in turn, legitimises young unskilled people from developed countries coming to help people in developing countries (Simpson, *ibid.*).

Simpson (2004, p.689) points out that volunteer tourism experiences do not enable the young volunteer tourists to truly understand the nature and the cause of poverty in the host country: they just use the poverty as a means to distinguish the developed world from the developing world and adopt the idea of 'luck' or 'lotto logic' to explain the differences and inequality they encounter.

Simpson (2004) also challenges the arguments of Zahra and McIntosh (2007) and McGehee and Santos (2005) mentioned above, stating that volunteer tourism experiences help volunteer tourists 'get out' of themselves and become other-oriented. In the view of Simpson (*ibid.*), volunteer tourists focus on themselves as luckier or more fortunate than the local people and fail to understand the circumstances that explain poverty in the host country.

Lastly, previous studies (Zahra and McIntosh, 2007; McGehee and Santos, 2005; Jones, 2005; Barbieri *et al.*, 2012) also argue that volunteer tourists gained a sense of global citizenship as a result of participating in volunteer tourism. Zahra and McIntosh (2007, p.118) indicate that the volunteer tourists in their study gained a 'sense of justice, rights and duties and the responsibilities one has towards society,' which made them realise that they had the potential to contribute to and

be responsible for society by just being ‘a better person,’ ‘a better family member,’ and ‘a better friend,’ and then expanding their responsibilities to contribute to their own community and their own countries.

According to Jones (2005), the volunteer tourists in his study expressed their sense of global citizenship through their intention to participate in volunteering activities in the future; whereas Barbieri *et al.*'s (2012) study reports that volunteer tourists claimed that they intended to work towards poverty alleviation.

The context in which volunteer tourism takes place is found to act as a powerful influence on the personal development and growth of volunteer tourists. According to Jones (2005), the overseas element of volunteer tourism significantly enhances the learning impact of volunteer tourists because they are living and working in a place that is not culturally familiar and have to deal with a language barrier and greater stress, especially in a low income setting. This makes their experience more challenging and forces them to interact more often and more intimately with other people than when they live in their usual environment, which in turn helps them to reflect on themselves and develop skills as mentioned above (Jones, *ibid.*).

Agreeing with this, Broad (2003), Zahra and McIntosh (2007), Barbieri *et al.*, (2012) affirm that the profound interaction between volunteer tourists and others, especially local people, heightens the impact on personal development and

transformation, and a change in the values of volunteer tourists as it provides them with opportunities for self-reflection.

(ii) Social dimension

The social dimension of volunteer tourism experiences involves having interaction and good relationships with other people. Previous studies (Brown, 2005; McIntosh and Zahra, 2007; Lo and Lee, 2011; McGehee and Santos, 2005; Barbieri *et al.*, 2012) argue that the volunteer tourism experience facilitates engaging interactions and meaningful friendships between volunteer tourists and local people. The friendship between volunteer tourists and the host communities is claimed to be one of the enduring beneficial impacts the volunteer tourists gained from their volunteer tourism experiences (Brown, 2005; Lo and Lee, 2011).

Examples of evidence for meaningful friendship established between the volunteer tourists and the local people include: Broad's (2003) study, which reported that some volunteer tourists had entered into relationships with local residents and subsequently decided to relocate to the host community; McGehee and Santos's (2005) study, which indicates that local people gave souvenirs to volunteer tourists as a sign of their friendship; and Barbieri *et al.*'s (2012) study, which shows that local people tried to teach traditional construction techniques to volunteer tourists, even though they had limited knowledge of English.

Barbieri *et al.* (2012) point out that friendship between the volunteer tourists and the host community is encouraged by a variety of factors, including daily and close interactions with local people; openness on the part of the local people; and local people's positive attitudes towards volunteer tourists as they view the volunteer tourists as a special type of tourist, or not tourists at all, due to their working/altruistic/learning nature.

Moreover, volunteer tourism experiences are also found to promote friendship among the volunteer tourists (Brown, 2005; McGehee and Santos, 2005; Lo and Lee, 2011; Broad, 2003; Harlow and Pomfret, 2007). This is based on the fact that volunteer tourism is likely to draw and tie like-minded people together and facilitates intense interactions among them (Brown, 2005; McGehee and Santos, 2005; Lo and Lee, 2011). Although the duration of the volunteer tourism vacation may be short, nonetheless the interaction among the volunteer tourists can be intense, because they generally spend most of their time together, and share resources and do activities together, such as sharing meals and sleeping areas, attending training, working; travelling to and from the tourist sites during their leisure times, and more importantly, sharing the same feelings (Brown, 2005; McGehee and Santos, 2005).

Harlow and Pomfret (2007) and McGehee and Santos (2005) argue that the unique nature of the volunteer tourism experience, which provides a group setting and forces the volunteer tourists to be tied together and creates a sense of being part of the same group, significantly assists in the development of a bond of

friendship among them. Brown (2005) argues that friendship among the volunteer tourists is one of the enduring benefits gained by the volunteer tourists from their volunteer tourism experiences.

In addition, it is also evident that volunteer tourism experiences serve as a way to enhance relationships among family members who participate in volunteer tourism vacations together, such as spouses, and parents and children. According to Brown (2005), volunteer tourism experiences not only provide an efficient way for parents to communicate with and pass on their values to their children, but also serve as a shared experience for family members facilitating a stronger bond between them. In addition, Lo and Lee's (2011) study reports that volunteer tourism experiences help the volunteer tourists gain a better understanding of their family members.

(iii) Local culture dimension

Existing literature (Jones, 2005; Brown, 2005; McIntosh and Zahra, 2007; Broad, 2003; Zahra and McIntosh, 2007) reports that volunteer tourism experiences promote cross-cultural exchanges and understanding between volunteer tourists and host communities. This is because volunteer tourists have an opportunity to immerse themselves in the host communities, which allows them to have direct and interactive encounters with local people (Broad, 2003; Jones, 2005; McIntosh and Zahra, 2007). The volunteer tourists are able to experience the 'real' and authentic lifestyle of local residents, allowing them to go beyond the 'gazing' of 'superficial interactions' (McIntosh and Zahra, 2007, p.547).

When comparing the volunteer tourism experience with the traditional tourism experience, volunteer tourism experiences are more 'genuine,' while the traditional tourism experiences are said to be 'superficial' (McIntosh and Zahra, 2007, p.547). This is because volunteer tourists live and work in the host community and engage in real life among the local people, which allows them to have more intimate and engaging interaction with the local people and witness 'the backstage' environment (Broad, 2003, p.69).

Cross-cultural exchanges and understanding between volunteer tourists and host communities are evident in the studies of Jones (2005) and McIntosh and Zahra (2007), which similarly indicate that prior to the trip, the majority of volunteer tourists generally had limited knowledge about their host countries, cultures and the way of life of local people; instead, they held simplistic, stereotypical viewpoints about the host countries and the local people, gained from the media in their home country. However, after engaging interactions with the local people, their prejudices and stereotypical impressions of the host country and local people were dispersed and were replaced by true understanding. Therefore, it can be argued that volunteer tourism experiences are learning in nature because they enable volunteer tourists to gain a true and sophisticated understanding of the difference between their culture and that of the host country (Jones, *ibid.*; McIntosh and Zahra, *ibid.*).

It is also found that volunteer tourism experiences not only promote understanding of cultural differences for the volunteer tourists; in Broad's (2003) study in Thailand, volunteer tourism experiences also facilitate the demonstration effect in which volunteer tourists adopted local cultural practice, or to be specific, Buddhist practices, such as wearing images of the Buddha. This finding supports the power of the volunteer tourism experiences in promoting the local culture of the host community to the tourists.

(iv) Feeling dimension

Previous studies (Broad, 2003; Brown, 2005; Zahra and McIntosh, 2007; Lo and Lee, 2011; Lepp, 2009; Harlow and Pomfret, 2007; Barbieri *et al.*, 2012) reveal that, overall, volunteer tourists were generally satisfied with their volunteer tourism experiences. However, some had negative feelings.

The positive feelings of the volunteer tourists towards their volunteer tourism experiences are expressed by a variety of expressions, such as 'fun, enjoyment, and pleasure' (Broad, 2003); 'worthwhile' (Broad, 2003); 'challenging' (Zahra and McIntosh, 2007); 'rare and memorable' (Lo and Lee, 2011); 'one of the best experiences in their lives' (Broad, 2003); and 'a once in a lifetime experience' (Lepp, 2009). Furthermore, Brown's (2005, p.490) study also reports that in the view of the volunteer tourists, the voluntary component of their vacation acts as the highlight of their trip; it serves as a 'vacation experience enhancer.'

These positive feelings of the volunteer tourists are based on a variety of factors. The studies of Harlow and Pomfret (2007), Zahra and McIntosh (2007), and Gray and Campbell (2007) report that the satisfaction of the volunteer tourists is closely linked to the nature of certain volunteering activities that they find ‘fun’ and ‘interesting.’

According to Brown’s (2005, p.491) study, the volunteer tourists’ overall satisfaction comes from three main factors: (i) an opportunity to meet and interact with like-minded people; (ii) their positive attitude change as a result of the volunteer tourism experience as they realise the importance of little things such as ‘the exchange of love, care, curiosity, understanding, and appreciation’, rather than material needs; and (iii) being ambassadors for their own country, which helps local people in the host country have a better understanding and positive image of their country.

Altruistic acts are also mentioned as key factors in the sense of satisfaction of the volunteer tourists – for example, Zahra and McIntosh’s (2007) study indicates that the satisfaction of the volunteer tourists came from feeling that they had made a difference through their voluntary service, while Gray and Campbell’s (2007) study reveals that the volunteer tourists felt satisfied with their trip partly because their need to help with conservation had been fulfilled.

Furthermore, Harlow and Pomfret (2007, p.197) point out that the development of knowledge is also an important aspect of the satisfaction of the volunteer tourists; the volunteer tourists in their study mentioned that ‘the more their knowledge developed, the more enjoyable the experience was.’ Barbieri *et al.* (2012) found different factors added to the satisfaction of the volunteer tourists: the balance of voluntary and tourism activities, and the nature of the tourism activities that allow the volunteer tourists to enjoy sightseeing at local tourist attractions.

However, the study of Gray and Campbell (2007) indicates that volunteer tourists do not gain only positive feelings from their volunteer vacation, but may also have some negative feelings. According to their study, negative feelings resulted from a variety of factors, including feeling unneeded or being used, struggling with the language barrier, physical hardship (insects, lack of sleep, physical exertion), disappointment at not seeing turtles (the main focus of the relevant project), and lack of activities and amenities.

The nature of voluntary tasks is also one of the main factors causing volunteer tourists’ negative feelings. Relevant studies include: Harlow and Pomfret’s (2007) study, which reveals that some volunteer tourists reported that some volunteering tasks were hard work, boring, and repetitive; Zahra and McIntosh’s (2007) study, which found that the dissatisfaction of the volunteer tourists partly came from the hardship of the volunteering tasks that involve clearing the garbage; and Barbieri *et al.*’s (2012) study, which states that when the volunteer tourists were not assigned to volunteer tasks, it caused frustration for them. The latter study also

indicates that miscommunication of the expected time for the volunteer tasks to be completed is also another factor causing negative feeling.

Spending time with fellow volunteer tourists is also a key factor leading to the dissatisfaction of some volunteer tourists. Harlow and Pomfret (2007) reported that despite the fact that volunteer tourists established good rapport and friendship with other volunteer tourists in the group, some volunteer tourists had negative feelings concerning other volunteer tourists, such as irritation, feeling the difficulty of living and working closely with other people, a need to escape from the other volunteer tourists, feeling that some of the volunteers were inconsiderate, and feeling isolated from the rest of the group.

Other factors leading to negative feelings of the volunteer tourists include witnessing and encountering suffering and hardship among local people in the host countries, such as poverty (Zahra and McIntosh, 2007), and not being part of the natural environment (Harlow and Pomfret, 2007).

3.4. Conclusion

The study of tourist motivations has posed challenges for researchers not least because of lack of an agreed framework to understand tourist motivations. Without careful and aware reflection, respondents may be unaware of or have difficulties in describing their real motivations. However, it is generally acknowledged that an understanding of tourist motivations is concerned with an individual's needs. These needs can be either intrinsic or extrinsic or a

combination. Linked with the influence of needs on tourist motivation is the expectation of the benefits that can be gained from engaging in a particular type of tourism. Therefore, this should be taken into consideration when studying tourist motivation.

Tourist motivation is also related to tourist experience. Tourist experience can be conceptualised as all the events that happen to the tourist during the holiday which is outside their 'usual environment' and their 'contracted time', and these events are a combination of feeling, perception, and memory.

In the context of volunteer tourism, the motivations of volunteer tourists are found to be multidimensional in nature and revolve around self-interest and altruism, which are interconnected and have blurred boundaries between them. This twin dimension of volunteer tourists' motivations suggests that volunteer tourists do not only act only for the benefits of others, but also for their own benefit. In terms of volunteer tourists' experiences, existing literature argues that volunteer tourists' experiences are multidimensional and generally consist of four main dimensions: self-related, social, local culture and feelings, and these dimensions make the volunteer tourism experience distinct from other types of tourism.

Chapter Four

Local Residents' Attitudes towards Volunteer Tourists

4.1. Introduction

This chapter aims to discuss and critically review the conceptual and theoretical framework as well as literature relevant to understanding local residents' attitudes toward volunteer tourists. It begins with definitions of attitude and the significance of understanding local residents' attitudes towards tourists and tourism development. A discussion of factors that have been used in studying the attitude of local residents towards tourists and tourism development is then presented.

This chapter also discusses the social exchange theory that is used as a framework in this study to understand the hosts' attitudes and interactions between volunteer tourists and their hosts. Relevant literature on local residents' attitudes towards volunteer tourists is also reviewed. Finally, this chapter ends with an overview of some Thai values that help to better interpret the hosts' attitudes towards volunteer tourists.

4.2. Definitions of Attitudes

A number of scholars have attempted to define 'attitude' in order to give a basis for its understanding. Thomas and Znaniecki (1918, cited in Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980, p.13) are argued to be the pioneers who used the attitude concept to explain social behaviour and suggested that attitudes are 'individual mental processes that

determine a person's actual and potential responses.' In line with this, Fishbein and Ajzen (1975, p.6) define an attitude as 'a learned pre-disposition to respond in a consistently favo[u]rable or unfavo[u]rable manner with respect to a given object', whereas Fridgen (1991, p.43) defines attitudes as 'intellectual, emotional, and behavio[u]ral responses to events, things, and persons which people can learn over time.'

There is a consensus among these definitions in that they regard attitudes as being 'learned' predispositions that can 'direct' or 'influence' an individual to 'respond' in a certain way to given objects or events. Jafari (2000) argues that the term 'attitude' is synonymous with 'opinion', and therefore, they are used interchangeably in social science literature.

Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) suggest that attitudes are connected with behaviour. They (ibid., p.62) explain this connection by using their Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), which argues that, 'a person's behavio[u]r is determined by his intention to perform the behavio[u]r and that this intention is, in turn, a function of his attitude toward the behavio[u]r and his subjective norm.' In other words, the behaviours of people are believed to be influenced by their attitudes.

Lepp (2007) also supports Ajzen and Fishbein's (1980) argument by stating that the attitude of local residents can lead to a certain reaction to the development of tourism in their communities, either positively or negatively. He (ibid., p.876) adds that 'positive attitudes towards tourism could lead to pro-tourism behavio[u]r

such as local participation in tourism development and the conservation of the resources on which tourism depends.’

According to Ajzen and Fishbein (1980, p.19), attitudes are ‘complex systems comprising the person’s beliefs about the object, his feelings toward the object, and his action tendencies with respect to the object.’ This suggestion implies that attitude can be classified into three dimensions: (i) cognitive (beliefs, knowledge, perceptions), affective (the emotional aspect and is expressed through feelings of liking or disliking), and behavioural (the action component of attitude that consists of the predisposition to act in a certain way) (Ajzen and Fishbein, *ibid.*). This conceptual framework is used to explain the local residents’ attitudes towards volunteer tourists and volunteer tourism in this study.

4.3. The Significance of Understanding Local Residents’ Attitudes towards Tourists and Tourism Development

The significance of understanding of local residents’ attitudes towards tourists and tourism development lies primarily in the general acceptance that local residents are key players in the success or failure of sustainable tourism development (Ap, 1992; Taylor, 1995; Chandralal, 2010). This is because they have permanent status in the community where tourism activities take place and are in a position to provide either an on-going support or to hinder the development of tourism (Andereck and McGehee, 2008; Ap, 1992).

Examples of the support provided by local residents include participation in the planning, development, and operation of tourist attractions, and extending their hospitality to tourists (Ap, 1992; Lepp, 2007). On the other hand, the local residents can also discourage tourism development by opposing it or exhibiting hostile behaviour toward tourists (Ap, 1992). Moreover, local residents are argued to be part of the tourism product (Taylor, 1995) and can make or break a positive experience of the tourists (Knox, 1982).

Existing literature uniformly agrees that successful development of tourism in a community requires local residents to have a positive attitude towards tourists and to give their on-going support (Ap, 1992; Ambrož, 2008; Kuvan and Akan, 2005). Murphy (1981, p.195) also suggests that local residents must be ‘willing partners’ in tourism development. Furthermore, Lepp (2007) argues that local residents’ attitudes also play an important role as an indicator of tourism’s appropriateness. For example, positive attitudes among local residents may indicate that tourism has been developed appropriately and fits the local condition of the communities. Therefore, to summarise, local residents’ attitudes towards tourists and tourism development need to be considered by related tourism industry planners if they want on-going support from them (Andereck and McGehee, 2008). There is also a suggestion that local residents’ attitudes need to be constantly monitored, so that negative impacts and problems can be promptly rectified (Jafari, 2001; Faulkner and Tideswell, 1997).

The study of local residents' attitudes towards volunteer tourists is still very limited, especially those using a qualitative approach. As noted by Fredline and Faulkner (2003) and McGehee and Andereck (2004), local residents are not a homogeneous group of people, but diverse. Therefore, they are likely to vary greatly in their attitudes. Qualitative studies on this topic are required so that in-depth and rich information can be obtained.

4.4. Factors Used in Understanding the Local Residents' Attitudes

In the past three decades, numerous studies have been conducted to understand local residents' attitudes towards tourists and tourism development. Many of these attempted to identify factors that have an influence on local residents' attitudes. A variety of demographic characteristics such as age, gender, educational level, and length of residence have been used to explain how local residents' attitudes differ from one another. The results of the studies are not definite, but reveal mixed responses. In addition to the demographic characteristics of local residents, there are several other variables that have been used in the study of local residents' attitudes towards tourists and tourism development which can be classified into two main groups: tourist-related factors, and destination-related factors.

Tourist-related factors include types of tourists, tourists' abilities to adapt to local standards, and cultural differences between tourists and local residents. Regarding types of tourists, Faulkner and Tideswell (1997) and Ambrož (2008) agree that the type of tourist plays an important role in affecting the variations in the attitude of local residents. Ambrož (ibid.) also states that because local residents perceive

that different types of tourists have different impacts on their communities, some types of tourists are not preferred by the local residents in some regions.

Consistent with these studies, Smith (1989) argues that the type of tourist also affects their ability to adapt to local standards. Using the type of tourists proposed by Cohen (1972), Smith (*ibid.*) argues that novelty-seeking tourists are likely to be better able to adapt themselves to local conditions than those tourists who seek familiar Western amenities. Therefore, the former group tends to cause fewer negative impacts on local residents, and consequently is more welcome to locals than the latter (Smith, *ibid.*). Lepp (2007) supports this argument by stating that novelty-seeking tourists seem to generate more direct economic benefits to local people due to their interest in experiencing local conditions.

In addition, Lepp (2007) argues that the cultural differences between tourists and local residents is also found to significantly affect the local residents' attitudes, especially when the latter group is comprised of those who live in Eastern nations and the former are those from Western countries, because their cultural differences appear to be greater. He (2007, p.879) also points out that some behaviours of Western tourists are seen as contrasting to the modest lifestyle of local residents, especially those in the rural area, and local residents' perception that tourists are 'excessive consumers of sex, alcohol, food and natural resources' can trigger their negative attitudes towards these tourists and tourism development.

Lepp's (2007) argument is echoed by Soontayatron's (2010) study on Thai residents' attitude towards tourism impacts in Koh Samui. Soontayatron (ibid.) notes that there are huge differences in culture between Thai people and Western tourists, as the former are influenced by Buddha's teaching to reject a way of life dependent upon material possessions, while the latter group values capitalism. She (ibid.) argues that such cultural differences may lead to cultural conflict between tourists and local residents.

Destination-related factors include proximity to tourism centres, community dependency on tourism's economic benefit, and impacts of tourism. A number of studies (e.g. Pizam, 1978; Harrill and Plotts, 2003; Harrill, 2004; Williams and Lawson, 2001) reveal that the distance between the residence of local people and the tourism centre has a significant effect on the attitudes of local residents towards tourism, in that those who live close to the centre of tourism facilities and services are more likely to have negative attitudes towards tourism. However, other studies (Pearce II, 1980; Sheldon and Var, 1984; Korça, 1998; Belisle and Hoy, 1980) suggest the reverse, arguing that those residents who live close to the tourism centre are more positive in their attitudes towards tourism than those who live a long way from it.

Regarding community dependence on tourism's economic benefits, Smith and Krannich (1998) classify host communities into groups according to whether they are tourism-saturated, tourism-realised or tourism-hungry (the latter being more dependent on the economic benefits of tourism). Based on their study (ibid.),

despite the negative impacts of tourism, the residents in the tourism-hungry communities tend to have positive attitudes towards tourism development as long as its economic benefits outweigh its negative impacts.

Smith and Krannich's (1998) argument is supported by Lepp (2007, p.883) who labels Bigodi, the community where his study is conducted, 'tourism-hungry'. Its residents have positive attitudes towards tourism due to their 'hunger for economic development'. Similarly, Soontayatron's (2010, p.4) study also reports that despite the negative impacts of tourism, local residents held positive attitudes toward it because they earn the majority of their income from the tourism business, and therefore view it as the only way for them to survive. They had difficulty in blaming tourism as a cause of negative impacts in their community, and instead indicated other causes for these problems (Soontayatron, *ibid.*). Conversely, McGehee and Andereck (2004) found that residents in communities that are dependent on tourism tend to be more aware of negative impacts of tourism, and have more negative attitudes towards it accordingly.

In terms of the impact of tourism, Lepp (2007) and Chandralal (2010) report that local residents' positive attitudes are primarily based on the perceived positive impacts of tourism, and although they are aware of its negative impacts, they still held favourable attitudes towards it as long as the positive impacts outweigh the negative.

In line with this, Faulkner and Tideswell (1997, p.24) suggest that the positive attitudes of local residents can also result from the phenomenon of an 'altruistic surplus', which refers to 'an unselfish acceptance of certain costs in the interest of community-wide benefits.' In other words, altruistic surplus suggests that local residents are likely to hold positive attitudes towards tourists and tourism development as long as their community as a whole enjoys positive impacts of tourism, despite the fact that they may personally experience some negative impacts. They (ibid.) found that in urban communities in Australia, there is general acceptance that collective community benefits from tourism supersede individual interests.

4.5. Social Exchange Theory

Although a number of studies of local residents' attitudes towards tourists and tourism development use Doxey's (1975) 'Irridex' model and Butler's (1980) model of the lifecycle of a tourist destination, these models are not used in the current study. This is firstly because the application of these models is more suitable for a longitudinal study where changes in local residents' attitudes according to the stage of tourism development and an increase in the number of tourists can be observed, but this study does not use a longitudinal approach and does not aim to examine changes in local residents' attitudes over time.

Secondly, these models have a limitation, as pointed out by some researchers (e.g. Shaw and Williams, 2002; Williams, 1998; Faulkner and Tideswell, 1997; Jafari, 2001) in terms of their unidirectional nature and emphasis only on the negative

attitudes of local residents, with little recognition of the positive attitudes that can occur as well. Therefore, this type of study may fail to address a situation where a successful tourism development scheme is implemented and can reduce tourist pressures, or where local residents may become willingly involved in the development of tourism in their community.

In addition, these models also maintain the sense of homogeneity in the local resident's characteristics and attitudes; therefore, they can be criticised as overlooking the complexities that exist within the host communities due to mixed demographic and social backgrounds, and the diverse values and traditions of its members (Faulkner and Tideswell, 1997; William, 1998; Carmichael, 2000; Lepp, 2007).

Ap (1992)'s social exchange theory is used as a framework in this study in the understanding of the host community attitude towards the volunteer tourists because it can explain both positive and negative attitudes and perceptions of the local residents towards tourists, as explained by Ap (1992), who is the pioneer in applying social exchange theory into the context of tourism. Ap (ibid., p.685) reports that:

a social exchange paradigm offers a useful theoretical framework, which can account for both the positive and negative impacts of tourism as perceived by the host population. Social exchange theory is a logically and

intuitively appealing one that may be used to explain why residents develop positive or negative perceptions of tourism impacts.

This is supported by Faulkner and Tideswell (1997, p.7), who state that:

Possibly the most valuable contribution to the development of a theoretical analysis of variations in the response to tourism within communities, however, has come from Ap's (1992) adaptation of social exchange theory.

Moreover, this model is one of the most well-known which has been widely used in the field of tourism. It not only provides a basis for the understanding of local resident's attitude, but also serves as a framework in the understanding of the interactions and relationships between the tourists and the host community members. For this reason, social exchange theory is also used as a theoretical framework for examining the nature of interactions between volunteer tourists and hosts. The analytical review of social exchange theory presented in this section aims to provide a foundation for the understanding of the host community members' attitudes as well as the interactions between them and the volunteer tourists.

The tourism industry consists of exchanges between and among individuals, various stakeholder groups and organisations, especially between tourists and local residents, often referred to as host-guest relationships (Sutton 1967;

McGehee and Andereck, 2009). Sutton (1967) and Mathieson and Wall (1982) point out that the interactions between tourists and the members of the local community tend to be unequal and unbalanced in nature. Ap (1992, p.667) furthers this argument by stating that ‘not all asymmetric resident-tourist exchanges favour the tourist. There are occasions when tourists may be taken advantage of due to their inadequate knowledge.’

Ap (1992, p.668) conceptualised social exchange theory as ‘a general sociological theory concerned with understanding the exchange of resources between individuals and groups in an interaction situation. Interactions are treated as a process in which “actors” supply one another with valued resources.’ According to Ap (ibid.), the term ‘actor’ refers to ‘a person, a role-occupant, or a group that acts as a single unit,’ whereas ‘resources may be of a material, social, or psychological nature’, which ‘become the object of exchange among people.’

Sharpley (2003) suggests that in the context of tourism, both tourists and their hosts go through a process of negotiation, exchange or interaction in which both aim to gain a satisfactory level of benefits from the encounter. Furthering to this, Cropanzano and Mitchell (2005, p.876) argue that ‘an exchange requires a bidirectional transaction – something has to be given and something returned’. For example, while tourists may seek the benefit in a form of a desired experience and local people in the form of an economic gain, both parties also provide one another with resources needed by one another (e.g. tourists buy souvenirs and local residents arrange a cultural show).

Ap (1992) explains that the social exchange process consists of four main components: (a) the identification of need satisfaction; (b) exchange relation; (c) consequences of exchange; and (d) determination of the consequences. In between these components are a set of processes that link them together, including; (1) initiation of exchange; (2) exchange formation; and (3) exchange evaluation, as referred to in Figure 8.

Figure 8: The model of the social exchange process

Source: Adapted from Ap (1992)

Demonstrated in Figure 8 is that the social exchange process is initiated with the 'identification of need satisfaction' which serves as the rationale for actors to engage in such exchange. This component represents the needs and expectations or motivations of the actors that direct them toward goal-oriented behaviour. The

identification of need satisfaction is linked to the second component, the 'exchange relation' by a process of initiation of exchange where both groups of actors commence the exchange.

Exchange relation consists of two subcomponents: antecedents and form of exchange relation, linked by a process of exchange formation. The antecedents refer to forms of opportunities perceived by at least one of the actors before the exchange occurs. The antecedents or perceived opportunities normally occur in forms of: (i) 'rationality of behaviour', when the actors believe that they can gain potential rewards or benefits derived from exchange; therefore, tending to act in a rational manner that leads them to obtain such benefits; (ii) 'satisfying of benefits', in which actors attempt to gain a satisfactory and acceptable level of benefits from the exchange, since the ideal maximised benefits may not always be possible; (iii) 'reciprocity': a situation in which each actor provide benefits that are important to one another equitably; and (iv) 'justice principle': the exchange must be perceived by both parties as reasonably fair.

If either party perceives that the results of exchange will be unrewarding, dissatisfied or unfair, withdrawal of exchange process will occur, so that there will be no exchange between actors. Alternatively, if both parties feel that the exchange will provide fair, satisfactory and reciprocal rewards, they continue to undergo the exchange process and the transfer of resources between them occurs.

Exchange relations can occur in either a form of balanced or unbalanced exchange between two parties based on power or dependence of the actors. Power refers to the ability of one actor to exert control over the outcome of another's experience. The power arises from having resources that are important and valued by another actor. If both parties perceive that they both gain reward from the exchange and have similar levels of power, the exchange relation is considered balanced. However, if one actor has high levels of power, comparative to the other, the exchange relation is unbalanced, placing the former in an advantageous position. In the latter situation, the disadvantaged actor may develop negative attitudes to the advantaged actor.

De Kadt (1979, p.50) argues that the nature of the interactions or exchanges between the tourists and their hosts can take one of three paths: (i) 'where the tourist is purchasing some good or service from the host, where the tourist and host find themselves side by side, for example, on a sandy beach ... and where the two parties come face to face with the object of exchanging information or ideas.' In relation to social exchange theory, the last situation of De Kadt is the situation where exchange relation is balanced or where the tourist and the host interact on the basis of equality and mutual respect and are mutually rewarded.

Once the exchange process is completed, or at the end of the holiday, both tourists and the hosts evaluate the exchange of resources. The consequences of the evaluation can be either positive or negative. If positive, future exchange is likely to occur; that is, for the tourists, they tend to engage in a particular type of tourism

activity or visit that destination again, and for the hosts, they will continue to welcome the tourists to their community and/or provide on-going support for tourism development in their community.

Alternatively, if the consequences are evaluated as being negative, the exchange is unlikely to occur in the future; that is when the tourists do not want to visit the destination and/or the hosts are not willing to welcome the tourists. The consequences of the exchange evaluation can take the form of a sequence: examining outputs from the exchange; determining the action to respond to another party based on the outputs; and evaluating the psychological outcomes (feeling) of the consequences.

The outputs are the benefits that the actors have gained from the exchange. For example, if the evaluation of the exchange is positive, the outputs for the tourists can be gaining new experiences or having learnt about local culture, and for the hosts, they can be in the form of income or employment. For the actions, the tourists may recommend their friends to visit the community, and the hosts may extend their friendliness, courtesy, and hospitality to tourists, or adapt themselves to some inconveniences caused by tourism, such as long queues for purchasing goods and services, sharing local facilities with tourists, overcrowding, noise, and traffic congestion. As far as outcome is concerned, either a positive attitude or a negative attitude held by either group towards the other is a good example of outcome.

The consequence of exchange leads to the decision of both parties about their future exchange; if the exchange is a positive one, they are likely to engage in the future exchange, but if negative, the possibility of the future exchange is very low or may not happen.

4.6. Relevant Literature on Local Residents' Attitudes towards Volunteer Tourists

At the time of writing this thesis, there were very few studies on local residents' attitudes towards volunteer tourists and volunteer tourism development that were widely published. Examples include McGehee and Andereck's (2009) study of several communities in Tijuana, Mexico; McIntosh and Zahra's (2007) study of an indigenous Maori community in the North Island of New Zealand; Gray and Campbell's (2007) study of Gandoca, Costa Rica; Sin's (2010) study in Cambodia; and Guiney's (2012) study of orphanage tourism in Cambodia.

The study of McGehee and Andereck (2009) reveals that volunteer tourists are sometimes not perceived as tourists by local residents. They (ibid.) add that volunteer tourists are perceived as different to mass tourists, in that they require resources such as accommodation, food and transport in a more sustainable form.

However, Gray and Campbell's (2007) study indicates that there are diverse views about volunteer tourists, ranging from them being seen as complete tourists, special types of tourists, or not tourists at all. They (ibid.) also reveal factors that local residents use to differentiate the volunteer tourists from other tourists: (i) the

working nature of the volunteer tourists; (ii) their altruistic nature; (iii) their desire to learn; (iv) their local involvement; (v) the lower amount of money they spend; and (vi) the lower impact they have.

In line with this, Barbieri *et al.*'s (2012) study also indicates that the local people generally have positive attitudes towards volunteer tourists because they view the volunteer tourists as a special type of tourist or not a tourist at all due to their work, altruism, and learning nature. Additionally, Gray and Campbell (2007) point out that in the view of the local residents, the volunteer tourists tend to spend less money than other tourists, but this is accepted and even promoted because the volunteer tourists work, and because their money is spent on locally-owned accommodation.

McGehee and Andereck (2009) used social exchange theory to explain local residents' attitudes towards volunteer tourism. Their study (*ibid.*) suggests that perceived personal benefits from volunteer tourism have a strong influence on people's attitudes toward tourism development and would predict their support for additional volunteer tourism. In other words, those who benefit the most from volunteer tourism are likely to have positive attitudes toward it and, in turn, are more supportive of volunteer tourism development in their communities. Conversely, those who do not benefit to the same extent are more likely to perceive its negative impacts. However, in the latter case, it is significant to note that lack of perceived personal benefit does not appear to influence their support for volunteer tourism. The possible explanation for this may lie in the notion that

residents who do not feel they benefit from volunteer tourism also feel that they will not be affected by its negative impacts, or that they are possibly unaware of such negative consequences. The results of this study are consistent with their previous study in Arizona communities in 2004 (see McGehee and Andereck, 2004), which used a similar model but focused on mass tourism.

McIntosh and Zahra's (2007) study indicates that local residents generally have a favourable attitude towards the volunteer tourists and volunteer tourism in their community and their positive attitudes are primarily based on the conduct and behaviour of a previous group of volunteers who had visited the community three years earlier, together with the trust that had been established with the volunteer tourism organiser. Their study also reports that: the volunteer tourists are open, appreciate local culture, are interested to spend time with children, and do not express any superiority over the local culture; they are also perceived to bring about positive impacts for the community and the example set by the volunteer tourists was reported to be the biggest impact on the community. In addition, the same study reveals that local residents stated that volunteer tourists made the children proud to be Maori because they showed their interest in, and admiration for, Maori people and their culture. Moreover, local residents also mentioned that the volunteer tourists serve as role models for their children.

Similarly, Sin's (2010) study reports that local residents have positive attitudes towards volunteer tourists and they also perceived that the acts of the volunteer tourists are beneficial for them. For example, they could gain knowledge or ways

of doing things from different volunteer tourists, and the children also benefit from care given by the volunteer tourists. The same study also reveals that local residents are well aware of the good intentions of the volunteer tourists although they may have to face the problem of a language barrier. In addition, Sin (ibid.) observed from her study that local residents not only received care from the volunteer tourists, but they also showed their care for the volunteer tourists. For example, students who helped to look around the streets for a volunteer tourist's lost bag or the local residents not telling the volunteer tourists about a snake because they thought the volunteer tourists would be frightened.

Lo and Lee (2011) point out some factors that can create negative attitudes among local residents (although their study examines the motivations and perceived values of the volunteer tourists, it also addresses some views related to the local residents' attitudes towards volunteer tourists). They (ibid.) state that the great discrepancy between life in the host community and that of the volunteer tourists may create negative feelings among the local residents because they may feel inferior and frustrated when meeting volunteers from wealthier countries. In addition, the number of volunteer tourists can also cause some problems, such as insufficient food and resources if there are many volunteer tourists visiting at the same time.

As for the context of orphan volunteer tourism specifically, Guiney's (2012) study reveals that staff members of the orphanage where volunteer tourism was taking place perceived both positive and negative impacts of volunteer tourists on the

orphan children (see Section 2.5). To briefly reiterate, the volunteer tourists are viewed as a vital source of income for the orphanages because they not only donate (both at the time of their visit and in the future), but also conduct fundraising, and sponsor some projects, such as the construction of buildings. In addition, the volunteer tourists are appreciated by the orphanage's staff members in terms of their roles in providing education for both children and staff, especially the opportunity for the children to learn English from English native speakers free of charge. Moreover, the volunteer tourists are also seen as role models for the children for different career options.

4.7. Thai Values that influence Attitudes towards Tourists

Soontayatron (2010) argues that some Thai values, mainly drawn from Theravada Buddhism, an official religion of Thailand, play a significant role in influencing Thai people's attitudes towards tourists and tourism development. These values include: avoidance of confrontation or face-to-face conflict; '*chai-yen*' or cool heart behaviour; '*kreng-jai*' or deference and consideration; '*choei*' or non-response to certain situations; face-saving; '*bunghun*' relationships or gratitude; and '*numjai*' or kindness and sincere concerns. These values are discussed below.

4.7.1. Avoidance of confrontation or face-to-face conflict

Thai people generally believe that in order to create and maintain good relationships with others, confrontation and face-to-face conflicts must be avoided at all costs because the results of a confrontation can make either side 'lose face' (Kitiyadisai, 2005). Thai people normally try to find a way to ensure that conflicts

do not occur (Ekachai, 1990; Kislenko, 2004). Agreeing with this, Komin (1990) argues that direct confrontation would be the last choice for Thai people when dealing with conflicts.

4.7.2. Chai-yen or cool heart behaviour

Chai-yen refers to an individual's ability to control him/herself emotionally when facing the problems or conflicts by remaining calm and avoiding display of feelings or emotions directly (Komin, 1990; Soontayatron, 2010). It can also refer to relax and flexibility. Thai people also highly value harmony, respect and dignity; therefore, in their view, it is inappropriate to express anger or impoliteness in public (Ekachai, 1990; Kislenko, 2004).

In the context of local residents' attitudes towards tourism, Soontayatron (2010) argues that *chai yen*, together with confrontation avoidance, help Thai people to deal with inappropriate behaviour of tourists and negative tourism impacts in a 'soft' way. It can also refer to relaxing and being flexible. However, Kislenko (2004) points out that this Thai value can also make Westerners frustrated when matters of punctuality are concerned, because it is not unusual for Thai people to be late for social and business engagements.

4.7.3. Kreng-jai or deference and consideration

Kreng-jai is one of the most difficult Thai values to define in English. According to Klausner (1993), this value is also difficult for foreigners to understand. However, there are attempts to define it, including unwillingness or shyness in

seeking help or asking for something from others (Ekachai, 1990); ‘a complex combination between diffidence, deference and consideration with proper respect and appropriate behavior’ (Soontayatron, 2010, p.531); and ‘an attitude of having consideration for others and being thoughtful in maintaining a smooth social atmosphere’ (Kitiyadisai, 2005, p.20).

4.7.4. Choei or non-response to certain situations

Embree (1950) observed that Thai people normally show the behaviour of *choei* when experiencing unexpected behaviour or situations. This behaviour is also believed to be a means to avoid giving negative responses or showing one’s real position about certain situations (Embree, 1950; Komin, 1990).

The role of this Thai value in influencing Thai people’s attitudes towards tourists and tourism development was found in Soontayatron’s (2010) study, which reports that some Thai residents in Koh Samui demonstrated neutral attitudes towards tourists and tourism development in their area by showing hesitation when speaking about their views and using words such as “like it...but”; “cannot judge”; and “do not like...but okay” in expressing their opinion.

4.7.5. Face-saving

Thai people are considered to have a high ego and very strong sense of self-esteem and pride; therefore, they try to avoid speaking about bad things that may be associated with themselves or their communities to others in order to save face (Komin, 1990).

Soontayatron's (2010) study reveals that the local people in Koh Samui demonstrated the value of face-saving when they mentioned the image of their community. They felt uncomfortable when admitting that their community was attractive to lower socio-economic markets, like the backpackers, because these tourists had an indecent image and could cause more negative impact to their communities because they did not want to lose face.

4.7.6. Bunkhun relationships or gratitude

According to Komin (1990), *bunkhun* is a psychological bond between the patron and the receiver, in which the former renders help and favours to the latter who, in return, must remember this goodness and seek to pay back this favour. In Soontayatron's (2010) study, *bunkhun* is demonstrated by local residents in terms of their community attachment and their sense of belonging. In other words, some local residents felt that their community has brought many good things to them; therefore, they have to be grateful to their community by showing their pride at being born in this community and their strong intention to live and die there, even though their community has experienced a lot of changes caused by tourism.

4.7.7. Numjai or kindness and sincere concerns

Numjai literally means 'water from the heart' (Kitiyadisai, 2005) and is used to refer to genuine kindness, consideration, generosity, and sincere concern for others without expecting anything in return (Komin, 1990; Kitiyadisai, 2005).

4.8. Conclusion

This chapter has explained the concept of attitude and the approaches that have been used to study local residents' attitudes toward tourists and tourism development. It has been agreed among researchers and scholars that attitudes are learned predispositions that can direct or influence an individual to act in a certain way to given objects or events. Specifically, attitudes are a system consisting of the person's belief, feelings, and actions.

In the context of volunteer tourism, the studies to date uniformly argue that local residents tend to have a positive attitude toward volunteer tourists. The factors influenced the positive attitude of the local residents include good conduct and behaviour of pervious volunteer tourists, trust which has been developed between them and the volunteer organisation, the nature of volunteer tourists which involves working, altruism, and learning, and the benefits they had gained from the work of volunteer tourists.

In this study, social exchange theory is used to examine the hosts' attitude toward volunteer tourists and the interactions between these two groups. In the context of tourism, social exchange theory assumes that tourists and local residents undergo a process of exchange or interaction from which both seek satisfactory benefits. This theory can provide a useful framework in examining whether volunteer tourism can provide reciprocal benefits, as argued in of the existing literature. This chapter also provides an overview of some of Thai values that can be used to better understand the local residents' attitude in the context of Thailand.

Chapter Five

Research Methodology

5.1. Introduction

Chapters Two, Three, and Four established the foundation and framework for understanding volunteer tourists' motivations, their on-site experiences, the hosts' attitudes, and the interactions between these two groups. This chapter explains and evaluates the research methodology to generate the data and knowledge to answer the research questions.

The chapter justifies the use of an interpretive paradigm and the qualitative case study approach that informs this study. It also presents details of the sampling techniques, data collection methods, and data analysis methods which are employed. In addition, a discussion of researcher reflexivity, an explanation of ethical considerations, the conduct of the pilot and main studies, and issues of trustworthiness are presented.

5.2. Rationale for Using an Interpretive Paradigm

The primary aim of this study is to gain a rich and in-depth understanding of how volunteer tourists give meanings to their motivations and their on-site experience gained from participating in a volunteer tourism vacation at the Home and Life orphanage, and how the hosts in Thai Muang perceive the volunteer tourists.

This study is primarily based on the researcher's understanding of volunteer tourists' interpretation of their motivations and on-site experiences and hosts' attitudes towards the volunteer tourists. In addition, it is also based on the researcher's encounters with volunteer tourists and local residents of Thai Muang sub-district. Given the nature of this study, an interpretive approach (as opposed to a positivist paradigm) is considered the most appropriate.

According to Guba and Lincoln (1994, p.105), a paradigm refers to 'the basic belief system or worldview that guides the investigator, not only in choices of method but in ontologically and epistemologically fundamental ways.' The term paradigm encompasses three interrelated aspects: ontology, epistemology, and methodology (Jennings, 2001). The ontological position of this research underlies the epistemological assumption, which in turn prescribes the methodological approach for conducting the research (Cohen and Manion, 2000). Each aspect presents the debate between a positivist paradigm and an interpretive paradigm and reflects how the interpretive paradigm is deemed appropriate for this study.

5.2.1. Ontological assumption

Ontology is concerned with the basic beliefs about the nature of reality (Jennings, 2001). The ontological assumption of an interpretive paradigm proposes that the social world does not exist, but is created through the routine interaction of individuals who live in it (Denzin, 1989a; Holden, 2006). In other words, it is socially constructed; therefore, it can be understood and interpreted only from the point of view of those individuals who live within it (Goodson and Phillimore,

2004). It also posits that there is no absolute reality of the world (Patton, 1990), but rather the world is made up of multiple realities; therefore, it is very complex in nature (Finn *et al.*, 2000; Jennings, 2001).

On the other hand, the positivist paradigm relies upon the existence of an objective social world (Gephart, 1999). It holds that the reality of the world is knowable and predictable (O’Leary, 2004) and is regulated by ‘universal laws and truths’ (Jennings, 2001, p.35). It emphasises causal relationships by assuming that there are general patterns of cause and effect that can be used as a fundamental for predicting and controlling social phenomena (Lutz, 1989; Cohen and Crabtree, 2006). Its goal is to discover these patterns using scientific methods (Denscombe, 2007). In addition, positivism holds that there is a single and absolute truth and reality of the world that can be generalised and applicable to all other similar phenomena (O’Leary, 2004).

This study posits that the motivations and on-site experiences of volunteer tourists and the hosts’ attitudes towards volunteer tourists are socially constructed and ‘based on interrelations and interactions’ (Goodson and Phillimore, 2004, p.39) between the volunteer tourists, the hosts and the environments in a specific context. In addition, it does not hold that the volunteer tourists and the local residents are a homogenous group of people who share similar perspectives. In this sense, the motivations and the on-site experiences of the volunteer tourists, as well as the hosts’ attitudes, appear to be diverse, based on the perception of each

person and the context of the study. This assumption fits well with the interpretive paradigm.

5.2.2. Epistemological assumption

Epistemology concerns the nature of the relationship between researcher and researched (Jennings, 2001). An interpretive paradigm emphasises a close relationship, social interaction, and working partnership between researcher and researched, which is believed to be fundamental for meaning and knowledge production (O'Donoghue, 2007; Goodson and Phillimore, 2004; Jennings, 2001). This means that the relationship between researcher and researched is subjective, interactive and co-operative (Decrop, 2004).

Moreover, Blumer (1962, cited in Jennings, 2001) suggests that the best way to truly understand multiple realities of the social world is to become one of the actors in that social setting so that the insider's view can be achieved. Therefore, an interpretive researcher is encouraged to obtain '*verstehen*' (after Weber, 1978, cited in Jennings, 2001) or the 'emic' perspective, which generally equips them to be able to enter and immerse themselves in the dynamic social setting being studied (Hollinshead, 2004) in order to be able to interact and gain the point of view perceived by the respondents (Jennings, 2001). In contrast, positivists emphasise that relationship between the researcher and the researched as being objective and value-free (Jennings, 2001). This is to ensure that there is a clear separation between the subjective biases of the researcher and the objects or events being studied (Cohen and Crabtree, 2006).

As mentioned earlier, this study holds that the volunteer tourists' motivations and on-site experiences and the hosts' attitudes are created through routine interrelations and interactions between volunteer tourists, hosts and the environments occurring in a study context; the epistemological assumption of an interpretive paradigm is deemed appropriate for this study.

This study employed the case study approach using a combination of qualitative research methods as a means for the researcher to enter and become one of the actors in the volunteer tourism phenomenon at the study site. This approach also enabled the researcher to work together with the respondents in the production of knowledge of interest to this research (for details of the case study approach, see Section 5.2.3 (i)).

5.2.3. Methodological assumption

Before discussing the methodological assumption of interpretive and positivist paradigms, it is important to understand the differences between methodology and methods, which are sometimes used as though they were synonymous. According to Silverman (1993, p.1), methodology refers to 'a general approach to studying research topics', whereas method is 'a specific research technique.'

An interpretive paradigm typically uses qualitative methodology (Jennings, 2001). This methodological approach involves the investigation of how people make sense of, or interpret, social phenomena, rather than the identification and the prediction of cause-effect relationships (Willig, 2008). Therefore, it tends to

generate a rich description of the social world in a specific context by attempting to gain an insightful meaning from a small number of participants (Patton, 1990) through in-depth interviewing and observation (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000). The nature of qualitative research can be summarised by the following description given by Denzin and Lincoln (2000, p.8):

The word *qualitative* implies an emphasis on the quality of entities and on process and meanings that are not experimentally examined or measured (if measured at all) in terms of quantity, amount, intensity, or frequency. Qualitative researchers stress the socially constructed nature of reality, the intimate relationship between the researcher and what is studied, and the situational constraints that shape inquiry. Such researchers emphasise the value-laden nature of inquiry. They seek answers to questions that stress *how* social experience is created and given meaning.

In contrast to an interpretive paradigm, positivism holds that the methods of the natural sciences can be applied to the investigation of social phenomena (Denscombe, 2007), and in order to study reality, certain methodological procedures must be specified and carried out strictly (Cohen and Crabtree, 2006). In essence, positivist researchers commence their study by developing hypotheses from theory concerning causal relationships. Then, they test and verify these hypotheses (Jennings, 2001) using experimental and quantitative methods (Gephart, 1999). This assumes that if the research is undertaken properly with representative sample of participants, the results of the research will be true or

probably true and can be generalised to the population as a whole or to other situations of the same type (Ryan, 2006).

This study is informed by a qualitative methodological approach because it does not seek to identify nor predict causal relationships. Instead, it aims to gain a holistic, rich and in-depth description and insightful meanings of volunteer tourists' motivations and on-site experiences, hosts' attitudes and the interaction and relationship between these two groups. In addition, the researcher believes that the issues of study of this research are complex and dynamic and cannot be conveyed via numerical and statistical representations. She believes that the statistical nature of quantitative research cannot capture multiple realities of volunteer tourists' motivations and on-site experiences, host's attitudes, and the interaction between them.

The researcher also holds that the 'emic' perspective used by a qualitative study can lead her to better understand how volunteer tourists make sense of and interpret their motivations and on-site experiences of volunteer tourism, and how the local residents interpret their attitudes towards volunteer tourists. Based on this, this study adopted a case study approach using a combination of qualitative data collection methods, including semi-structured interviews, participant observations, a focus group discussion and diaries.

(i) The Case study

Yin (2009, p.18), one of the most cited authors using the case study approach, defines the case study as ‘an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context...’. The case study focuses on one unit or case with the goal of gaining a holistic, in-depth description and understanding of the real life of that particular case, together with the relationships and/or processes of that real life occurring in that particular case (Tellis, 1997; Denscombe, 2007). The case can be an individual, a group, a community, an organisation, a programme, or even a situation or an incident in a particular phenomenon (Ary *et al.*, 2010; Willig, 2008; Denscombe, 2007).

The rationale for employing the case study approach in this study lies in its ability to facilitate the researcher to gain a holistic, rich and in-depth understanding of the issues under investigation, which is the primary aim of this study. Through the use of this approach, the researcher was able to devote her efforts to studying just one case, thereby having a great opportunity to delve into the issues in great detail, and to discover how the many parts of the phenomenon affect one another (Denscombe, 2007). The work of the researcher was facilitated by the use of multiple data collection methods, which allowed her to study the phenomenon of volunteer tourism from different approaches (Denscombe, 2007; Willig, 2008).

Yin (2009) suggested six sources of evidence that can be used in the case study approach: (i) documentation; (ii) interviews; (iii) participant observation; (iv) archival records; (v) direct observation; and (vi) physical artefacts. However,

there is no need to use all of these in every case study. This list is similar to the sources suggested by Willig (2008), which include (i) semi-structured interviews; (ii) participant observations; (iii) diaries; and (iv) personal and official documents. In this study, semi-structured interviews, participant observation, a focus group, and diaries were employed.

Regarding data analysis, Willig (2008) suggests that a number of different techniques can be used including grounded theory, interpretative phenomenological analysis, thematic analysis, global analysis, the Twenty Statement Test, and Repertory Grids. In this study, thematic analysis was employed.

One of the important issues when conducting the case study is identifying ‘the case’ or the unit of analysis (Tellis, 1997). Regarding this, Johansson (2003) suggests that the case should: (i) be a complex functioning unit; (ii) be suitable for investigation in its natural context with a multitude of methods; and (iii) be contemporary. The case study of this study is the volunteer tourism programme that was held at the Home and Life orphanage in Thai Muang sub-district, Phang Nga province, Thailand. This case has all the features as suggested by Johansson (ibid.).

Additionally, there are other considerations that must be made regarding the design and the selection of the case. These questions concern the choice between intrinsic, instrumental or collective case studies, and whether there should be

single or multiple case studies (Willig, 2008; Stake, 1995). Stake (1995) identifies three alternative ways of selecting a case: intrinsic case study, instrumental case study, and collective case study. According to him, an intrinsic case study is chosen because the case is interesting in its own right. An instrumental case study is undertaken when a researcher wants to gain insight into a particular phenomenon, and a particular case represents an example of that phenomenon; the case becomes secondary because it facilitates an understanding of something else. For a collective case study, a number of cases are selected jointly.

This study employed an intrinsic case study because the volunteer tourism programme at the Home and Life orphanage is interesting in its own right. The context of this case is unique in many ways. First, the orphanage was established as a response to the 2004 Boxing Day tsunami with the aim of providing a self-reliant home for the children affected by this disaster. Second, it operates in a family atmosphere, where only limited numbers of volunteer tourists are required in order to preserve this atmosphere. Thirdly, although the orphanage is located in Phang Nga province, which is one of the most famous tourist destinations of Thailand, it is situated in a remote area where there are very few attractive tourist sites and facilities for tourists. The detail of the setting of the case study for this study is discussed in Section 1.7.

Regarding the distinction between single and multiple case studies, Willig (2008) recommends that a single case study should be used either when the case represents a test-case for existing theories or it is a case that is of intrinsic

interest to the researcher. For the multiple case studies, Willig (ibid.) points out that this approach should be undertaken when research aims to generate new theories. In this study, a single case study approach was adopted because it is of intrinsic interest to the researcher. Moreover, this study does not aim to produce new theories; thus, it is not necessary to use multiple case studies. In addition, a single case study approach enabled the researcher to devote her efforts to studying the particular case in great detail.

However, a case study approach has been criticised for its lack of generalisation (Tellis, 1997; Johansson, 2003). As this study employed an interpretative enquiry utilising qualitative research methodology and does not aim to generalise its findings, the issue of generalisation is not central to this study. This study adopted transferability to be an alternative criterion for ensuring that the findings of the study, derived from the specific single case, are transferable to other situations similar to the context of this study. The techniques used for ensuring transferability are discussed in Section 5.10.2.

5.3. Sample and Sampling Techniques

In keeping with the interpretive paradigm using a qualitative approach, non-probability sampling technique is deemed appropriate for this study (Marshall, 1996). Qualitative researchers tend to deal with relatively small numbers of respondents (Willig, 2008) who yield 'richer' information than others, and therefore are more likely to provide more valuable insight for the issues being studied (Marshall, 1996).

Marshall (1996, p.523) argues that ‘choosing someone at random to answer a qualitative question would be analogous to randomly asking a passer-by how to repair a broken down car, rather than asking a garage mechanic– the former might have a good stab, but asking the latter is likely to be more productive.’ Therefore, non-probability sampling techniques including purposive sampling and snowball sampling were adopted in this study. The respondents consist of two main groups: (i) the volunteer tourists who participated in the volunteer tourism vacation at the Home and Life orphanage, and (ii) the local residents of Thai Muang sub-district who host the volunteer tourists.

5.3.1. Purposive sampling

Purposive sampling is a method by which a researcher chooses a particular group of individuals or events to be studied based on the specific purpose of the study (McNeill and Chapman, 2005; Christopher and Kristen, 2003). In purposive sampling, the researcher is assumed to already know something about the specific people or events being studied and deliberately chooses particular ones among these people or events, whose qualification and experiences yield a great deal of valuable insight and information about the research questions (Denscombe, 2007; Burns and Grove, 2005).

According to Patton (1990, p.169), ‘the logic and power of purposeful sampling lies in selecting *information-rich cases* for study in depth.’ Carey (2009) points out that the priority of the purposive sampling is to gather enough respondents to be able to provide sufficient data for the investigation of the research questions.

In this study, purposive sampling was used for the selection of the volunteer tourists. The selection was based on specific criteria presented below. The main reasons behind this decision were: (i) the Home and Life orphanage is a specific, enclosed site where all the volunteer tourists who were respondents of this study stayed; therefore, snowball sampling was not necessary; and (ii) there were few volunteer tourists participating at the orphanage; however, all of them had direct experiences that yield valuable insights for the research questions. The selection criteria were:

- Must be international tourists – based on the definition of tourist given by WTO (1995), international tourists refers to ‘persons travelling to and staying in places outside their “usual environment” for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes not related to the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the place visited.’ Here, the ‘usual environment’ refers to the tourists’ original country.
- Must be eighteen years old and above for ethical reasons;
- Must be spending part of their holiday volunteering at the Home and Life orphanage for at least two weeks; and
- Must be able to communicate in English for the convenience of data collecting.

5.3.2. Snowball sampling

Snowball sampling, also referred to as network sampling, assists a researcher to identify certain key informants by asking the first set of respondents to nominate other individuals with the required characteristics who may be willing to be interviewed. These persons are then asked to take part in the research and also to identify others (Burns and Grove, 2005; McNeill and Chapman, 2005; Howitt and Cramer, 2005).

Burn and Grove (2005, p.353) point out that the strengths of snowball sampling lie in the fact that it ‘takes advantages of social networks’ and that people in the same social group are likely to have characteristics in common. They (ibid.) also add that this technique also enables a researcher to gain access to the right people, who are sometimes difficult or impossible to locate in other ways and to take advantage of the multiplier effect in which one person introduces two or more others as additional respondents. In addition, this method also helps enhance a researcher’s credibility because he/she can use the nominator as some kind of reference to the new people; in this way, it is more likely that he/she will gain acceptance from nominees (Denscombe, 2007).

Snowball sampling was used to identify and gain access to the host respondents of Thai Muang sub-district. In addition to the strengths of snowball sampling as stated above, other reasons for using this technique include: (i) the researcher was not familiar with the study site; therefore, she had little idea about which individuals would possess the required characteristics; and (ii) Thai Muang sub-

district is a small, close-knit sub-district where everyone knows each other. For these reasons, at the stage of designing the research process, the researcher believed that she could benefit from the established rapport that she made with the representative of Andaman Discoveries and the manager of the Home and Life orphanage by asking them to introduce other potential respondents. The criteria for selecting the host respondents included:

- Must be Thai citizens;
- Must be eighteen years and above for ethical reasons;
- Must have been living in Thai Muang sub-district for at least three years; and
- Must have roles and activities that involve them with the volunteer tourists or potentially benefiting from or being affected by the volunteer tourists.

These samples and sampling techniques were tested for their effectiveness during the pilot study and this is discussed in Section 5.8.6.

5.3.3. Sampling size

Determining an appropriate sample size in qualitative research totally depends on the judgment and experience of the researcher in evaluating the quality of the information collected (De Gagne and Walters, 2010). Marshall (1996, p.523) notes that an adequate sample size for a qualitative study is ‘one that sufficiently and holistically answers the research question.’ Therefore, practically, the number of informants needed usually becomes obvious as researchers achieve data

saturation and redundancy – that is, when new categories or themes stop emerging from the data. In supporting this, Jennings (2001, p.149) states that ‘with qualitative research, it is the ‘quality’, not the ‘quantity’, of the data that determines the sample size.’ Therefore, in this study, the researcher continued collecting data until data saturation was reached.

5.4. Data Collection Methods

This study adopted a multi-method qualitative research approach to gather the data. This approach is deemed appropriate in exploring the ‘what’, ‘how’, and, most significant, ‘why’ questions of the issues being studied. Denscombe (2007, p.134) states that using a combination of methods to collect the data permits the researcher to use a triangulation strategy, which allows the ‘weaknesses in one method to be compensated for by strengths in another method.’ Specifically, semi-structured interviews, a focus group, participant observation, and diaries were used in this study. Each of them is discussed in turn in this section.

5.4.1. Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews are the most widely used method of data collection in qualitative research (Willig, 2008) because they can provide a large amount of high quality data in a relatively short time (Carey, 2009). Generally, there are three forms of interviews: structured, semi-structured and unstructured (Denscombe, 2007; Jennings, 2001).

A structured interview is a rigid interview which makes use of a predetermined list of questions and limited options in terms of answers (Denscombe, 2007). The second form is less rigid because a researcher has a flexible interview guide that is used to prompt respondents to discuss certain topics (Jennings, 2001). This interview guide adds some structure to the interview to ensure that the main topics are covered, although the ordering of the issues discussed may vary between interviews (Jennings, *ibid.*). The last form of interviews is far less rigid because the interviewers may only have to ask a few open-ended questions to commence the conversation (Tappen, 2011). The questions are not based on a guide, but are generally created during the interaction (Tappen, *ibid.*).

The rationale for choosing semi-structured interviews lies in their potential to enable a researcher to gather 'rich' data (Carey, 2009) because it allows a researcher to clarify questions and probe the topics being investigated (Bebbie, 1990). If the answers of the respondents are unclear or too brief, this technique enables a researcher to probe by asking the respondents for clarification, by giving an example or simply requesting more details on that specific issue (Carey, 2009). Moreover, this type of interview corresponds to the interpretive paradigm, which is the framework of this study.

However, the researcher was also aware of the limitations associated with this technique. As pointed out by Carey (2009), it is often not possible for a researcher to know whether informants are telling the 'truth' about their experiences at all times because they may have their own reasons to avoid telling the facts. In this

case, the researcher followed the suggestion made by Carey (ibid.) of using her own instincts in conjunction with careful consideration of the interview transcripts for possible inconsistencies when she interpreted the data. Additionally, triangulation was used to overcome such weaknesses.

5.4.2. Focus groups

A focus group is a group interaction in which members discuss particular issues, led by a moderator (Carey, 2009). Typically, a researcher acts as a moderator who introduces the participants, introduces and organises the focus of the discussion, leads the discussion and prompts members to respond to the issues raised by him/her or other participants (Willig, 2008).

The rationale for using focus group discussions in this study is that it would be used to supplement the semi-structured interviews, allowing the respondents to discuss themes which emerge from the interviews. The researcher believed that the interaction among group members could generate rich data which would come from the group members questioning, extending, challenging and commenting on one another's opinions, as suggested by Jennings (2001) and Gibbs (1997). Moreover, there are other benefits, as pointed out by Gibbs (ibid.): (i) it allows some degree of flexibility to uncover and probe into unexpected issues that may arise during the group interaction; and (ii) it would also help the researcher to explore the degree of consensus among the respondents on some particular issues.

However, focus groups also have some limitations, of which the researcher was aware. For example, she might face the challenge that some group members who have a stronger personality might influence the other members' opinions and/or discourage them from expressing their views (Bell, 2005). Moreover, some participants might decide to keep quiet or moderate their opinions to the opinion of the majority of the group members, even though they do not agree with it (Sommer and Sommer, 2002).

In order to overcome these limitations, Bell (2005) suggests that a researcher should create his/her own techniques to keep the so-called strong-personality people in line, as well as to encourage the silent members to give their voice to the group. Law *et al.* (2003) also suggests that a researcher makes a periodic check in order to see whether all group members are in agreement with a particular opinion. These suggestions proved to work well for the researcher when conducting a focus group.

5.4.3. Participant observation

Participant observation is a method of data collection that requires a researcher to do fieldwork or to participate in the daily life of people in the social setting being investigated, in order to observe, listen, question and understand their lives and culture (Bell, 2005). Junker (1960) categorises four forms of participant observation used in qualitative research: the 'complete observer'; the 'observer as participant'; the 'participant as observer'; and the 'complete participant.'

According to Junker (1960), the complete observer and the complete participant are similar in that the role of a researcher remains unknown to the group being studied. The difference between these two forms is that, as a complete observer, a researcher observes from a distance and does not interact with the group, whereas being a complete participant allows a researcher to be a member of the group being studied. As for the observer as participant and the participant as observer, they share similar characteristics in that the role of a researcher is known to the members of the groups. However, for the former, the interaction between a researcher and the respondents is brief, while for the latter, a researcher engages in the daily life of the group members and has regular interactions with them.

Denscombe (2007) points out that whichever of these four roles a researcher chooses for his/her study, he/she must attempt to preserve the naturalness of the social setting being studied and should be aware of their presence by avoiding altering the phenomena in that setting. In this study, the participant as observer was chosen because the researcher realised that it would be difficult to conceal her role as a researcher if other data collection methods such as semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions were used.

The rationale for utilising participant observation in this study lies in its strengths, as pointed out by Carey (2009) and Denscombe (2007). Carey (ibid.) states that other methods of data collection seem to have limitations to access to what people actually do in the real-world setting. For example, semi-structured interviews and focus groups only allow a researcher to gain the data on 'what people *say* but not

on what they *do*' (p.122). He (ibid.) adds that the only way to gain data on what actually and normally happens in the social setting being studied is through observation.

In line with this argument, Denscombe (2007, p.206) claims that participant observation is a more direct way to gain an insider's point of view as this method relies on 'the direct evidence of the eye to witness events first hand', which, in turn, would enable the researcher to be aware of those hidden aspects of events being researched. In addition, the researcher also believed that participant observation could enable her to become immersed in the social setting being studied, thereby providing an opportunity to observe how the respondents construct and interpret their meanings and knowledge of the issues being studied (Jennings, 2001).

The limitation of participant observation lies in the fact that it may not function well with a large group of respondents who may not stay together at all times, because a researcher can only be in one place at one time and may lose some valuable data which he/she could have obtained from observing other groups (Jennings, 2001).

This proved to be true in this study because there were two groups of respondents: the volunteer tourists and the hosts. When the respondents were separated, the researcher had to observe only one group. Moreover, as also pointed out by Jennings (2001), a researcher may also be biased and misinterpret the phenomena.

However, this limitation was overcome by the use of other methods, together with an exercise of researcher reflexivity.

5.4.4. Diaries

Diaries are a data collection technique in which a researcher asks the participants to record their daily lives (Lewis and Massey, 2004). Lewis and Massey (ibid.) and Sommer and Sommer (2002) suggest that in using this technique, a researcher should encourage participants to record what they have observed as immediately as possible, in order to help them recall a complete picture of what they are writing as well as to avoid recording inaccurate information.

In this study, diaries were chosen with the intention of using them as a supplementary tool. As pointed out by Lewis and Massey (2004), this technique can increase the amount of data to be added and triangulated with those gained from other means of data collection without requiring a cost or time commitment on the part of a researcher.

A major limitation of using diaries, as stated by Bell (2005), is that, for some participants, writing diaries could be time-consuming and irritating, and if they are not truly interested in writing diaries, they would not probably write about their experiences in detail. This limitation was faced by the researcher, who coped with it by using her established rapport with the volunteer tourists to encourage them to write the diary.

Additionally, Sommer and Sommer, (2002, p.191) point out that diaries do not guarantee that they can uncover the ‘unvarnished truth’ because people can sometimes add some other ‘fanciful’ information, such as their wishes or their dreams in their diaries, rather than writing only what they have actually done, or what exactly happened to them. In this case, triangulation can be used to overcome this weakness.

5.5. Data Analysis

Generally, when analysing the data, qualitative researchers use an inductive approach to transform the data gathered into meaningful knowledge associated with the phenomenon being studied (Denscombe, 2007; Jennings, 2001). Bogdan and Biklen (2007, p.159) define qualitative data analysis as ‘working with data, organizing them, breaking them into manageable units, coding them, synthesizing them, and searching for patterns.’

The process of qualitative analysis can start as soon as the data are collected (Jennings, 2001). In qualitative inquiries, the stages between data collection and data analysis are not actually separate from one another, nor are they sequential activities in the research process, but instead these two stages are overlapping to some degree (Denscombe, 2007; Miles and Huberman, 1994).

In this study, thematic analysis was employed. This analysis approach is defined by Braun and Clarke (2006, p.79) as ‘a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data.’ According to Braun and Clarke (ibid.),

the thematic data analysis process consists of six phases: (i) become familiar with the data; (ii) generating initial codes; (iii) searching for themes; (iv) reviewing themes; (v) defining and naming themes; and (vi) producing the report.

The reason for using a thematic analysis lies in its accessibility and flexibility. As suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006), thematic analysis provides an accessible and flexible method for qualitative data analysis because it is not attached to any particular theoretical or epistemological approaches; thus it can be applied across different theoretical frameworks.

5.6. Researcher Reflexivity

Qualitative research acknowledges that ‘researchers are subjective, fallible human beings who are full of biases and favo[u]rite theories’ (Gilgun (2010, p.3) and inevitably influence and shape the findings throughout the research process based on their socio-political background, values and beliefs (Lietz and Zayas, 2010; Willig, 2008; Glaser and Strauss, 1967). This is because in qualitative inquiry the researcher is central to the research process, as he/she is the key instrument of the interpretation of the reality being studied (Watt, 2007; Denscombe, 2007).

Therefore, a qualitative researcher needs to be aware of, and always reflect upon, the way that their identity, values, perspectives and beliefs may influence the research process and its findings, and must acknowledge them in the research report (Willig, 2008; Feighery, 2006). In addition, Willig (2008) maintains that a researcher must also address the impossibility of him/her remaining outside of the

phenomenon being studied while conducting research. This process is called researcher reflexivity.

Researcher reflexivity can be used as a means to enhance the quality of the research because it not only allows a researcher to be aware of, and continuously scrutinise, his/her role, but also to share his/her own perspective, beliefs, and experiences with others (Gilgun, 2010). Through researcher reflexivity, readers have an opportunity to chart the changing beliefs of a researcher as well as to better understand how he/she interprets the data and how the findings of the research are reached (Taylor-Powell and Renner, 2003). Through researcher reflexivity, all the evidence that supports the research results is presented, which makes the study more credible (Taylor-Powell and Renner, *ibid.*).

In this study the researcher reflected on her own background, beliefs, and experiences and how these shape the research process and findings. She followed the recommendation of researchers such as Taylor-Powell and Renner (2003), Watt (2007), and Maxwell (2005) who suggest keeping a reflexive journal on every aspect of the research throughout the entire project (for an extract from the researcher reflexive journal, see Appendix 3).

5.7. Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations are crucial when carrying out research. Acknowledging this, the researcher conducted the study strictly based on the ethical practice which she addressed in the Research Ethics Scrutiny (see Appendix 4). Moreover,

before conducting interviews, the researcher first ensured that the respondents were aged eighteen years or above and gave them the research information sheet, in English for volunteer tourists (Appendix 5) and Thai for the hosts (Appendix 6).

The research information sheet explains: the aims of the study and the voluntary nature of the research, in which the respondents are free to withdraw without question at any time before a certain date; their right to refuse to answer any questions they feel uncomfortable with; the anonymity and confidentiality of their information by the use of pseudonyms in any written and/or oral presentations; and how their information would be stored and used in the thesis and other related publications.

The researcher asked the respondents to read it carefully and also gave them an opportunity to ask any questions concerning the research. After that she gave them a consent form which they were asked to fill in and sign for the purpose of seeking their permission to video-record the interviews and the use of their words with pseudonyms in publications. The consent form was in English for volunteer tourists (Appendix 7) and Thai for hosts (Appendix 8).

5.8. The Pilot Study

5.8.1. Before starting

The researcher had gained permission to conduct the pilot study and the main fieldwork at the Home and Life orphanage from the manager of the orphanage from early January 2011. Since then, a rapport between the researcher and the manager of orphanage was established and maintained via e-mail. Discussions with the manager of the orphanage about the details of the study, such as the main aims, the potential respondents, the duration of the pilot study and the main fieldwork were also held. These discussions aimed to provide necessary information to the orphanage manager, a key person in supporting the study.

The pilot study was undertaken over a three-week period between 4th -24th June 2011 at the Home and Life orphanage in Thai Muang sub-district, Phang Nga province, Thailand. During this period, the researcher stayed at the orphanage, sharing a room with volunteer tourists.

5.8.2. Rationale for the pilot study

Following the suggestions of Light *et al.* (1990, p.217), who stated that: '[A pilot study is] a proving ground for your instruments and [serves] as a training ground for you... a place where unforeseen problems can occur and be dealt with, without danger to ultimate findings', together with other suggestions given by other authors and researchers which are discussed below (e.g. Jennings, 2001; van Teijlingen and Hundley, 2001; Bryman, 2004), the researcher conducted a pilot study.

First, the pilot study was carried out to ensure that the data collection techniques were appropriately designed and would capture data for the research questions (Jennings, 2001). For example, the questions for the semi-structured interviews were tested to make sure that they were unambiguous and clearly understood by potential respondents and elicited rich data for the research questions.

Second, it was also expected to provide an opportunity for the researcher to practice her interview technique before conducting the main study (van Teijlingen and Hundley, 2001; Bryman, 2004). Third, the pilot study was believed to provide advance warning about unanticipated problems or difficulties that may affect the research process (van Teijlingen and Hundley, 2001).

Next, bearing in mind that nothing should be assumed, the researcher conducted the pilot study with the hope that it would provide her with some useful ideas and/or clues for the study that she may not have realised before. In addition, it was conducted to identify potential respondents. The researcher also hoped to build a rapport with them, especially with staff members of the orphanage who were the main supporters of this study.

5.8.3. Selecting potential respondents

Following the initial decision made about sample and sampling techniques as discussed in Section 5.3, a total of twelve respondents were selected, six of whom were volunteer tourists, and the other six local residents.

The volunteer tourists were selected using purposive sampling. All of the volunteer tourists who participated in the volunteer tourism programme at the Home and Life orphanage during the period of conducting the pilot study, whose qualifications met the criteria and were willing to participate, were selected. However, one of the criteria for selecting this group of respondents (length of stay), had to be changed from at least two weeks to at least one week, because some of the volunteer tourists stayed for only one week, but they could provide valuable information about their motivations and on-site experience nonetheless. As a result, there were six volunteer tourists participating in the pilot study.

For the hosts, snowball sampling was used to select the respondents based on the criteria that were set in advance. Snowball sampling proved effective because Thai Muang sub-district is a very small, close-knit sub-district where everyone knows each other; therefore, the researcher could benefit from the kinship and friendship networks that are long established in this community. Figure 9 shows the web of snowballing contacts, which consists of a total of six local people who were selected. From the figure, L01, who is the first respondent, introduced the researcher to his colleagues, one of whom introduced her to the other respondent.

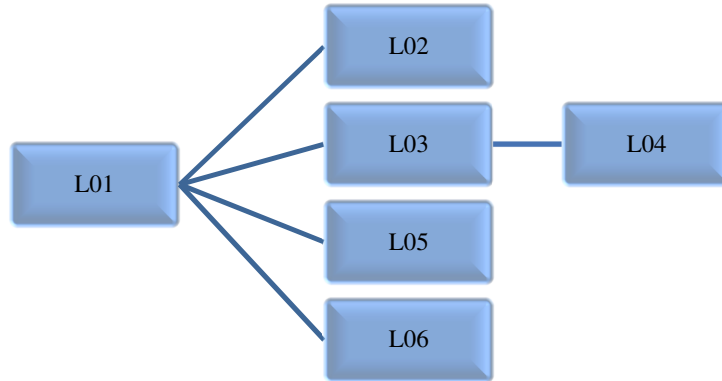


Figure 9: The web of snowballing contact for the group of host respondents established during the pilot study

5.8.4. Profile of the respondents

All the volunteer tourists were gap year students from the United Kingdom. Four were female and two were male and all of them were single. Four people stayed at the orphanage for two weeks, while the other two stayed for one week. Their ages at the time of conducting the pilot study were around eighteen and nineteen years old. The full demographic details of the volunteer tourist respondents are presented in Appendix 9.

Five of the host respondents were staff members of the orphanage and the other one was the teacher at the local primary school. Three were female and three were male. Their ages ranged from twenty-three to fifty-two years old at that time. Three were married; one was divorced while the other two were single. The academic backgrounds varied from high school education to postgraduate studies.

Their full demographic details are shown in Appendix 10. Pseudonyms were used for ethical reasons to protect the anonymity of the respondents.

5.8.5. Data collection and data analysis

The combination of qualitative data collection techniques as mentioned in Section 5.4 was used to collect the data. Of the group of volunteer tourists, four of them were interviewed individually using the semi-structured interviews, whereas the other two, who refused to give an interview separately, were interviewed together. The interviews were conducted in English. They were also asked to keep a diary throughout their stay. The researcher also used participant observation and recorded what she observed in field notes as well as keeping the reflexive journal throughout the pilot study.

Of the group of host respondents, all of them were interviewed individually. The interviews were conducted in Thai, although some of them can speak good English. This is because all of them felt most comfortable to give an interview in their own mother tongue which enabled them to express their opinions and feelings more easily. Participant observation was also undertaken.

All the interviews were video-recorded after obtaining permission and were later transcribed and analysed using thematic analysis. Originally, the focus group discussions were also intended to be used for both groups of respondents during the pilot study but the researcher faced some difficulties in arranging them. These difficulties are discussed in detail in Section 5.8.6.

5.8.6. Reflection on the pilot study

The pilot study proved to be a very significant stage during the study process. First, it helped identify potential respondents for the main study. For the group of volunteer tourists, the manager of the orphanage gave the researcher some details about the volunteer tourists who had already applied to participate in a volunteer tourism programme at the orphanage between June and September 2011. This gave her an idea about the rough number of volunteer participants who could be potential respondents for the main study as well as other information, such as some of their demographic background (e.g. gender, nationality), and the dates and length of their stay.

For the group of host respondents, the pilot study provided a clearer idea about which groups of local residents could be potential respondents for the main study. Before conducting the pilot study, the researcher could identify only two potential groups of local residents, which were the staff members of the orphanage and the teachers at the local primary school where the volunteer tourists go to teach English. This was because she knew from the initial discussion with the manager of the orphanage that the volunteer tourists spent most of their time at the orphanage and went to teach English at the local primary school only on Monday and Tuesday. Therefore, apart from these two groups of local residents, the researcher did not know which other groups of local residents would meet with the selection criteria.

However, during the pilot study, she came to know the other three potential groups of local residents. The first group was the parents and relatives of the children at the orphanage who sometimes came to visit their children during the weekend. Some parents and relatives live nearby the orphanage so sometimes the children went to visit and/or stay with them during the weekend. Although many of them did not interact directly with the volunteer tourists, they benefit from the endeavours of the volunteer tourists who come to take care of their children and teach them English. The second group was the construction men who came to do work on the new bakery at the orphanage. This group worked very closely with the volunteer tourists. The last group was other local people who had an opportunity to interact with the volunteer tourists due to their ability to speak English.

During the three-week period of the pilot study, the researcher had built a rapport with these potential respondents (the hosts) mainly by having informal conversations with them. For the staff members of the orphanage, besides having informal conversations, she had also participated in some volunteer work that could not be done by the volunteer tourists, including helping the children with homework in subjects other than English and translating Thai documents into English. Additionally, she taught English at the school on the days when there was no volunteer tourist at the orphanage.

The pilot study also suggested that some criteria for selecting the respondents needed to be revised. According to the reservation details, almost 40 per cent of the volunteer tourists had applied to join the volunteer tourist programme at the orphanage for only one week. Moreover, the researcher had learnt from her own observation, together with the interviews with volunteer tourists, that even if they stayed only a week, they had gained certain experiences from this volunteer vacation because they lived at the orphanage and had done a variety of activities. Therefore, the criterion concerning the volunteer tourists' length of stay was shortened from two weeks to one week in order to cover the one-week stay volunteer tourists. Other criteria remained the same.

For the group of hosts, the criterion of the length of time that they had been living in Thai Muang sub-district was changed from at least three years to at least one year. This adjustment was intended to include some potential respondents who appeared to possess valuable and rich information about the volunteer tourists because their roles or activities were directly involved with the volunteer tourists, but had been living in Thai Muang sub-district for less than three years.

Regarding the data collection techniques, as a consequence of the pilot study, the approach for collecting data needed to be adjusted and refined. Firstly, the original interview guides for both the volunteer tourists and the hosts were revised for the main study as they did not produce rich description. Some questions were also added. Original and revised interview guides for both groups of respondents,

together with the rationale for change, are presented in Appendix 11 (volunteer tourists) and Appendix 12 (hosts).

For the focus group, it was noted that there might be difficulties in conducting it. For the volunteer tourists, this was due to the number of the interviewees because generally there were only one or two volunteer tourists coming to stay at the orphanage each week (generally the volunteer tourists commenced their volunteer tourism programme on either Sunday or Monday). Therefore, the focus group with volunteer tourists could not be conducted during the pilot study due to the number of respondents, which was too few.

However, there was a possibility that the researcher might be able to conduct one or two focus group interviews during the main study because, according to the information of the advance reservation of the volunteer tourists, there would be some weeks when groups of four to six volunteer tourists would be staying at the orphanage at the same time. However, nothing was assumed at the time of conducting the pilot study, and therefore the researcher bore in mind that she might or might not have an opportunity to conduct a focus group with the volunteer tourists. In case she had that opportunity, she might still face the problem arising from untested questions. The interview guide for a focus group interview for the volunteer tourists is shown in Appendix 13.

Similarly, for the group of host respondents, the situation did not facilitate the implementation of the focus group. The staff members of the orphanage were very busy because there were only six of them who had to look after twenty-six children and some of them also had to do construction work at the bakery building. Therefore, when one had free time, the others had not.

This also occurred with the teachers at the local primary school, because each teacher had his/her own class, which meant he/she had to teach every subject to the students in his/her own class starting from 8.30am to 3.30pm. They had free time only during the lunch break and when the volunteer tourists came to relieve them to teach English. Therefore, it was difficult to make an appointment with at least three teachers who were available at the same time for the purpose of conducting a focus group interview.

Although at the time of the pilot study the researcher realised that there were other groups of local people who could be potential respondents for the focus group such as the parents of the children and the construction men, they were very shy and not used to expressing their opinion in a group setting. For this reason, the researcher decided not to carry out the focus group with local people during the main study.

For the diaries, the topics provided in the diary that gave guidelines for the volunteer tourists to write down their on-site experiences were also revised. The original version of the diary, together with the rationale for revising it, is shown in Appendix 14, and its revised version is shown in Appendix 15.

In terms of practicing interviewing techniques, the pilot study provided a great opportunity for the researcher to become familiar with the questions as well as gaining an idea of how to use proper language in order to avoid confusion or misunderstanding. For example, the researcher learnt to avoid using the term ‘volunteer tourist’ because most of the local people were not familiar with this term. They just called the volunteer tourists by the terms *Ar-sa-sa-mak*, a Thai term referring to a ‘volunteer’, or *farang*, which means a Westerner. Additionally, she also learnt not to use English words when interviewing host respondents because some of them did not understand these words.

Lastly, it was found that not all of the local residents were familiar with volunteer tourism because this type of tourism is still new in Thailand. Therefore, when asking the local residents’ opinion about this type of tourism, they stated that they did not know what to say. However, when asking their opinion about the volunteer tourists, they appeared to have a lot of information to share. For this reason, the focus of the local residents’ questions was revised to emphasise only the volunteer tourists, changing research question no. 3 to “*How do the hosts perceive the volunteer tourists?*” A summary of the main adjustment made as a consequence of the pilot study is shown in Appendix 16.

5.9. The Main Study

The main study was conducted over a period of three months between 1st July and 30th September 2011. During this period, the researcher stayed at the orphanage, sharing a room with volunteer tourists. At this stage, as a result of the pilot study, the researcher was more familiar with the study site and had already established a good relationship with many potential respondents among the local residents.

5.9.1. The respondents and sampling procedures

There were a total of forty-four respondents participating in the main study; twenty-four of whom were volunteer tourists, and the other twenty local residents. The total number of respondents was defined by the saturation point of the data. Considering the changes that were made as a consequence of the pilot study, some criteria for selecting the respondents were changed and some groups of local residents were added, as discussed in Section 5.8.6. However, to make it clear, the updated version of the selection criteria for each group of the respondents is as follows:

The selection criteria for volunteer tourists were:

- Must be international tourists;
- Must be eighteen years old and above for ethical reasons;
- Must be spending part of their holiday volunteering at the Home and Life orphanage for at least one week; and
- Must be able to communicate in English.

The selection criteria for the host respondents were:

- Must be Thai citizens;
- Must be eighteen years and above for ethical reasons;
- Must have been living in Thai Muang sub-district for at least one year;
and
- Must have roles and activities that involve them with the volunteer tourists, potentially benefiting from or being affected by the volunteer tourists.

The volunteer tourists were selected using purposive sampling. During the period of conducting the main study, there were twenty-four volunteer tourists participating in the volunteer tourism programme at the Home and Life orphanage. All of them possessed the required qualifications set in the selection criteria.

Upon the volunteer tourists' arrival at the orphanage, and after receiving the orientation about their responsibilities and duties during their stay, the manager and/or the staff members of the orphanage introduced the researcher to them. Then, the researcher introduced herself again as a PhD student from the University of Bedfordshire in the United Kingdom and explained about her study. She then asked them to participate in the study. Fortunately, all of the volunteer tourists agreed to do it. Dates and time were arranged for interviews, which was normally around one or two days before they left the orphanage.

The researcher believed that one of the main reasons that she gained very good co-operation from the volunteer tourists was that she was introduced by the manager/staff members of the orphanage, which gained the trust of the volunteer respondents. Moreover, a context of commonality which the researcher shares with most of the volunteer tourists in terms of her educational background as a student from the United Kingdom, as well as her ability to communicate in English, also helped in bridging any perceived gap between her and the volunteer tourists.

The reasons that just a few volunteer tourists came to this orphanage were as follows. First, the manager and the staff members of the orphanage wanted to retain a family atmosphere in the orphanage; therefore, they did not want too many volunteer tourists at one time because that would create the feeling of a business. Second, the orphanage could only accommodate up to six volunteer tourists at one time. Third, some people acknowledged that because this was during the school term when all the children go to school during the weekdays, they knew that they would not have much opportunity to look after the children. During the school term, they would have to do housework, construction work, and teach English at the school on Monday and Tuesday. Therefore, they decided not to participate during this time.

The host respondents were selected using snowball sampling that proved to be very effective during the pilot study. During the pilot study, each respondent was asked to introduce other people whom they thought met the selection criteria.

Dates and times for the interview were sorted out with the nominees who were willing to participate in the study.

As a result, a web of contact, which was established during the pilot study, was further expanded (Figure 10). The initial respondents, who were already interviewed during the pilot study, were also asked to take part in the main study again because there were changes in the interview guide as a consequence of the pilot study. Moreover, the researcher also believed that this initial group of respondents would have more information regarding their attitudes towards the volunteer tourists to share with her. This belief was based on the fact that there would be new groups of volunteer tourists, likely to possess different characteristics or perform differently from the previous group of volunteer tourists. As a result, there were twenty local people participating in the study.

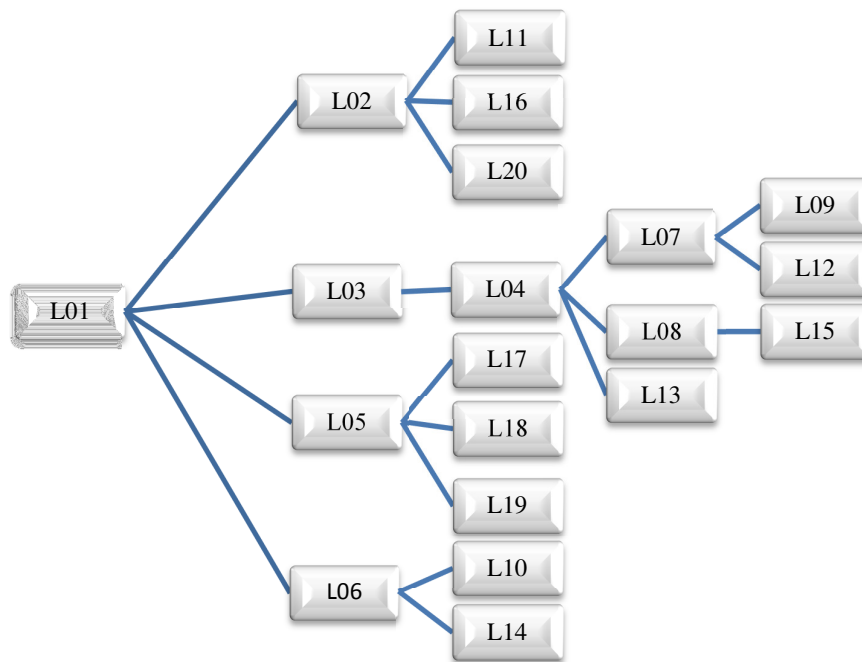


Figure 10: Snowballing web contact for the main study

5.9.2. Profile of the respondents

The respondents in the group of volunteer tourists were comprised predominantly of females: twenty out of twenty-four people. Their ages ranged from eighteen to forty-three years old. In terms of their educational and professional background, university bachelors' degree appeared to be the norm for the group, accounting for eighteen respondents. Sixteen of these were recent university graduates who were taking a break before starting their career, while the other two were a teacher and an outdoor instructor trainee who was also studying for a Master's degree. The rest consisted of one high school student, two university students, one engineer who had a background in vocational education and the other two had finished high school (A-levels) and had worked for some time before taking a career break.

The majority of the volunteer respondents were from the United Kingdom, which accounted for sixteen people. The rest included two Australians, three New Zealanders, two Portuguese, and one Dutch. Full demographic details are shown in Appendix 9.

For the group of host respondents, the composition was thirteen females and seven males, with ages ranging from twenty-three to seventy-seven years. Twelve of them were married, five were single and the other three divorced. There was a wide range of educational backgrounds, from primary school (grade four) to Master's degree.

In terms of professions, six were staff members of the orphanage, seven were teachers, five did freelance jobs (at the time of conducting the study, three were hired by the orphanage to do construction work, one was hired to do housework and the other was working somewhere else), one respondent was a waitress at the local restaurant and the other one was the mother of two of the staff members at the orphanage who also stayed at the orphanage. The full demographic background of the host respondents can be seen in Appendix 10.

5.9.3. Data collection

Following a reflexive analysis of the methodological approach made after conducting the pilot study, the researcher employed a combination of qualitative data collection techniques.

(i) Semi-structured interviews

Twenty-four volunteer tourists and twenty local residents were interviewed individually, using in-depth semi-structured interviews. The respondents chose the place and time for the interview. All volunteer tourists and most of the local people, except the teachers, were interviewed at the orphanage. The interviews with the teachers took place at Wat Muang Pracharam school where they were working. Each interview lasted between forty and ninety minutes and was transcribed later.

The English interviews were carried out with the volunteer tourists and the Thai with the local residents. Before starting the interview, the process of ensuring ethical practice was introduced. The interviews with the volunteer tourists focused on their motivations for participating in the volunteer tourism programme at the orphanage and the on-site experiences they had gained from this volunteer tourism vacation. The interview guide for the volunteer tourists is presented in Appendix 11.

Regarding the host respondents, the key focus of the interviews was their attitudes towards the volunteer tourists. The interview guide for the group of host respondents can be seen in Appendix 12. The researcher also took notes on some key issues, such as the reactions of the interviewees and the feelings they expressed. This was done during and immediately after the interviews.

(ii) A focus group

As mentioned earlier, generally there were one or two volunteer tourists staying at the orphanage at a time, which limited the possibilities for conducting a focus group. However, there were three periods of time when around four to six volunteer tourists came at the same time. Of these three periods, the researcher had only one opportunity to conduct a focus group with five volunteer tourists.

The difficulties that made the other two periods of time impossible for conducting a focus group were due to special events arranged by the orphanage to raise funds, and the visits of groups of volunteers from the United Kingdom and

Singapore that were undertaken during those periods. These activities kept the volunteer tourists busy throughout their stay because they had to help with the preparation and hosting of the activities. Therefore, they were not available for the focus group discussion. However, each of them had spare time for individual interviews.

The focus group was conducted on 20th August 2011 at the orphanage. It was conducted in English and lasted for one hour and forty-three minutes. The purpose of the focus group was not only to cross-check with the findings from the semi-structured interviews, but also to elaborate on some issues. The interview guide for the focus group interview is shown in Appendix 13.

The focus group discussion was undertaken on the basis that every respondent was encouraged to discuss a given topic. Moreover, they were also encouraged to question, challenge and/or comment on the responses of other participants. Notes were taken on some key issues, such as the reactions of the interviewees and the feeling they expressed, during the interviews and immediately after the interviews. All of the participants of the focus group also gave individual interviews before the focus group interview was undertaken.

(iii) Diaries

On the first day of their stay at the orphanage, the volunteer tourists were given a diary in which they were asked to write down their experiences each day throughout their stay. These were returned to the researcher on the last day before

leaving. The form of the diary can be seen in Appendix 15. Fourteen out of twenty-four respondents wrote the diary, all of them female.

The key challenges here were that some respondents refused to write the diary because they did not like writing or some thought that they would not have time to write; some respondents initially promised to write the diary, but did not keep their promise; and some did not write it every day. Acknowledging this challenge, the researcher tried to seek more cooperation from the respondents by encouraging volunteer tourists who share the same room to write in the diary, which proved helpful.

(iv) Participant observation

The researcher observed the behaviour of, and the activities performed by, the volunteer tourists and the hosts. This was conducted in the form of ‘participant as observer’ as categorised by Junker (1960), in which the respondents were aware of the researcher’s identity and the researcher has regular interactions with the respondents. It was found that apart from observing the respondents, having informal conversations with them also helped the researcher to gain additional information not shared in interviews.

The researcher noticed that the semi-structured interviews might create a formal atmosphere where some respondents seemed to avoid giving negative answers. For example, some host respondents, when talking about the volunteer tourists, spoke about them only in a positive way during the interview, but later when the

researcher had casual conversations with them, they told her things they did not like about the volunteer tourists.

The observation took place mainly at the orphanage and the school. Other places, like the local market and tourist attractions where the staff members of the orphanage took the volunteer tourists and the children to during the weekend, were also used to observe situations. Staying at the orphanage proved a great opportunity for the researcher to observe and have informal conversations with both volunteer tourists and hosts. She tried not to get involved with their main activities. For example, she did some volunteer work that could not be done by volunteer tourists, like helping the children with homework in other subjects, and translating Thai documents into English.

The main challenge faced by the researcher at this stage lay in the fact that the respondents were not at the same place at all times, forcing the researcher to be selective in her observation. Moreover, she was also aware that her presence may influence the respondents' experiences and how they discussed them in the interviews. However, it was impossible to exclude herself from the study site or to conceal her role as a researcher because other data collection methods, such as semi-structured interviews and a focus group, were used in conjunction with this method. However, despite its limitation, her overt presence helped her to develop a rapport with the respondents which facilitated a relaxed and open environment for the interviews. In addition, this technique was used as part of the triangulation.

The activities and behaviour of the respondents, as well as the informal conversations with them, were observed and recorded in the field notes which were organised chronologically. Examples of field notes are shown in Appendix 17. The observation was also extended to the children at the orphanage who are the centre of this volunteer tourism programme. The researcher tried not to ask them sensitive questions; rather, she observed more and asked only general questions, such as whether they would like volunteer tourists to keep coming at the orphanage, what they like about them and what they do not like about them.

5.9.4. Data analysis

The data analysis was conducted during the data collection and continued after data collection was completed. Although computer software qualitative data packages like Nvivo are available, the researcher chose to analyse the data manually because this allowed her to immerse herself in the data.

Before starting the data analysis, the interviews were transcribed by the researcher herself. Although this was time-consuming, it was worthwhile because the researcher became very familiar with the data. In transcribing the interviews with the volunteer tourists, the researcher faced some difficulties concerning the English language because it is not her mother tongue. Although her English is quite good, she still has limitations about informal language and/or slang terms used by the interviewees. Moreover, some interviewees spoke very fast. Therefore, many times, she could not catch what the interviewees were saying.

To address these difficulties, the researcher sought assistance from her colleague, who is British, to transcribe the parts of the interviews that she could not do, as well as to check the accuracy of other parts of the transcription which had been made by her. Then, all the transcriptions were cross-checked with the tape recorded interviews again, to confirm the accuracy. Examples of the interview transcriptions and how data were analysed are shown in Appendix 18 (a semi-structured interview with a volunteer tourist), Appendix 19 (a semi-structured interview with a host respondent), and Appendix 20 (a focus-group interview with volunteer tourists).

The data gathered from different techniques were cross-checked. The study not only sought convergence, but also the differences or contradictions that occurred within the data. The data analysis process followed six phases of thematic analysis, as introduced by Braun and Clarke (2006): (i) becoming familiar with the data; (ii) generating initial codes; (iii) searching for themes; (iv) reviewing themes; (v) defining and naming themes; and (vi) producing the report. The description of each phase is presented in Appendix 22. The key themes were established according to the interpretation of the meaning attached to the data in relation to the research questions. The results of the thematic analysis are reported and discussed in Chapters Six and Seven.

5.10. Matters of Validity, Reliability and Trustworthiness

The notions of validity and reliability are fundamentally concerned with the evaluation of the quality of the research. Validity refers to the extent to which the research process and instruments yield true and credible results (Sommer and Sommer, 2002). In other words, it determines how truthful the research findings are (Golafshani, 2003). Two main dimensions of validity are internal validity and external validity. The first refers to the extent to which the research instruments genuinely measure what they are intended to measure, whereas the latter is about the generalisability of the research results to the real world (Sommer and Sommer, 2002). As for reliability, it is concerned with the extent to which the research results are consistent and repeatable over time under a particular research instrument (Finn *et al.*, 2000).

However, notions of validity and reliability are seen as being aligned with quantitative research, which is underpinned by the assumption that the world is governed by the laws of nature; therefore, the study of the world depends largely on the research instrument. However, the concepts of validity and reliability are argued by a number of researchers (e.g. Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Popay *et al.*, 1998; Lietz and Zayas, 2010; Golafshani, 2003) as inapplicable to qualitative research, which is underpinned by different assumptions and philosophies, thus requiring different criteria in ascertaining its quality.

Qualitative research is grounded in the assumption that the social world is made up of multiple realities and is dynamic in nature; therefore, the study of the social world cannot be measured or reproducible and has no relevance to validity and reliability (Stenbacka, 2001; Golafshani, 2003).

Regarding this concern, this study employed trustworthiness as proposed by Lincoln and Guba (1985) to ensure its rigour and quality. The approach of trustworthiness is the most cited standard for assessing the quality of the qualitative research. Central to qualitative research is the concept of getting as close as possible to ‘the perspectives of the research participants’ (Lietz and Zayas, 2010, p.191).

Although the researchers may have their favourite ideas about the issue being studied, which the research participants might share, the study can achieve trustworthiness as long as the research procedures are undertaken in such a way that the perspectives of the research participants are ‘authentically gathered and accurately represented in the findings’ (Lietz and Zayas, 2010, p.191). According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), trustworthiness is achieved through four criteria: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. The strategies used in this study to establish each of these criteria are discussed in this section.

5.10.1. Credibility

Credibility refers to the extent to which the research findings represent ‘credible’ interpretations derived from the perspectives of the research participants (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, p.296). In other words, it emphasises that ‘interpretations must be authentic and accurate to the descriptions of the primary participants’ (Drisko, 1997, p.191). This concept is parallel to internal validity (Lincoln and Guba, 1985).

Crucial to the achievement of credibility is the careful management of the threats of research reactivity and bias (Padgett, 2008; Lietz and Zayas, 2010). The first involves the potential that a researcher or study procedures may have an impact on the participants, thereby changing the findings of the study, whereas the latter refers to how the socio-political background, values and preconceived ideas and beliefs of the researcher may affect the research process, thereby potentially leading to misinterpretation of the data (Lietz and Zayas, 2010; Willig, 2008; Glaser and Strauss, 1967).

To manage research reactivity, the researcher followed the suggestion of Lietz and Zayas (2010, p.192) by trying to make her data collecting efforts ‘less conspicuous and intrusive without deception’ (i.e. concealing a video-recorder while interviewing and trying not to get involved with the main activities of the participants). Additionally, the strategies including researcher reflexivity, triangulation, member checking, and thick description were also used to manage the treat of researcher bias.

In terms of researcher reflexivity, the researcher kept a reflexive journal throughout the research process (already discussed in Section 5.6). As for triangulation, this study employed a combination of qualitative data collection methods (detail presented in Section 5.10.5).

Member checking involves seeking feedback from the research participants in order to ensure a true record of their perspectives (Padgett, 2008; Lietz and Zayas, 2010). In this study, member checking was done by providing each respondent with a description of the main themes which emerged from his/her interview, which he/she was asked to verify and give comments on.

The challenge faced by the researcher regarding this effort involved the response rate of feedback gained from the group of volunteer tourists. This was because the researcher only finished summarising the main themes after the volunteer tourists had already left the orphanage; therefore, she had to send these to them via e-mail and many respondents did not reply to her e-mails. The researcher dealt with this challenge by re-sending it twice more each one week apart. This technique proved to be somewhat effective because she got more responses back from the respondents. The result was that fourteen out of twenty-four volunteer tourists verified the main themes.

For the group of local respondents, eighteen out of twenty respondents verified the themes of the findings, while the other two could not be contacted after the interviews. The excellent response from the group of host respondents was due to

the fact that the researcher had stayed at the orphanage during the main fieldwork, allowing her to meet face-to-face with them easily. Moreover, the established rapport and trust gained during the period of data collection also played a role in this effort. Most of the respondents from both groups verified the themes without giving other comments. Some respondents gave more examples and clarified their initial responses.

In addition, thick description of the phenomenon being studied was also employed to enhance credibility. Shenton (2004, p.69) summarises the significance of thick description by stating that

it helps to convey the actual situations that have been investigated and, to an extent, the contexts that surround them. Without this insight, it is difficult for the reader of the final account to determine the extent to which the overall findings “ring true.”

In this study, thick description involves explaining the study’s context and site in detail, presented in Sections 1.2 and 1.7, and in Appendix 1 (pictures of the study site) and Appendix 2 (pictures of volunteer tourists’ activities). It is also demonstrated throughout this chapter and in Appendices 4, 9-16, and 22.

5.10.2. Transferability

Transferability refers to the extent to which the research findings are applicable to other contexts, theory, practice and future research (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). This approach is used in preference to the concepts of external validity or

generalisability (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Shenton, 2004). Unlike quantitative research, qualitative research uses a small number of respondents not derived from probability sampling, so it is not possible to generalise the findings to the whole population, nor to conclude that the findings produced by this small number of the respondents are directly applicable to other situations (Shenton, 2004; Lietz and Zayas, 2010).

Despite its lack of generalisability and direct application to other contexts, the findings of qualitative research are argued to be transferable to other situations if researchers believe that their situations are similar in context (Bassey, 1981). In order to promote transferability of the qualitative research, Devers (1999, p.1165) suggests that

In order for findings to be transferable, the contexts must be similar. Therefore, it is the role of the researcher to identify key aspects of the context from which the findings emerge and the extent to which they may be applicable to other contexts.

In this study, thick description is again used to establish transferability.

5.10.3. Dependability

Dependability is proposed as a criterion used in preference to reliability (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). As mentioned earlier, in quantitative research, reliability is achieved when the study's results are consistent and reproducible under a similar methodology. It assumes that if the research is undertaken properly under the right

conditions, the results will be true or probably true and can be repeated (Guba and Lincoln, 1994; Finn *et al.*, 2000). This is because it emphasises the use of specific methodological procedures that are carried out strictly (Cohen and Crabtree, 2006).

In contrast, qualitative research allows for some flexibility and changes that may occur during data collection (Lietz and Zayas, 2010). For example, the composition of the research participants and/or the interview guide for the semi-structured interviews may need to be revised after reflecting on its effectiveness during the pilot study (Lietz and Zayas, *ibid.*). Therefore, central to the establishment of dependability of the qualitative research is demonstrating that the research procedures are well documented, 'thereby enabling a future researcher to repeat the work, if not necessarily to gain the same results' (Shenton, 2004, p.71). To do this, many researchers and authors (e.g. Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Holloway, 1997; Lietz and Zayas, 2010; Shenton, 2004) suggest keeping an audit trail which is used in this study. According to Holloway (1997, p.26),

The audit trail is the detailed record of the methods and decisions made by qualitative researchers before and during the research process. It includes a description of the setting, events and activities as well as a rationale for the research.

In this study, an audit trail is demonstrated in Section 5.3, which explains the sample and sampling techniques used in this study. Section 5.4 explains the data collection methods; Section 5.7 discusses ethical considerations, and Section 5.8 describes the conduct of the pilot study and its consequences after reflecting on the effectiveness of the methodological approach. Section 5.9 describes the conduct of the main study including the data collection, and Section 5.9.4 discusses the data analysis. Moreover, the interpretation of the data is presented in Chapter Six and Chapter Seven. Finally, the audit trails are presented in Appendices 3-22.

According to Lietz and Zayas (2010, p.196), keeping audit trails ‘can help to clarify concerns and increase the confidence of other researchers and reviewers about the conduct of the study.’ In line with this, Tie (2009, p.116) points out that, ‘By being transparent in one’s work, it allows the process to be judged by others, not necessarily so that they could replicate the process and reach the same conclusion.’

5.10.4. Confirmability

Confirmability refers to the extent to which ‘the work’s findings are the result of the experiences and ideas of the informants, rather than the characteristics and preferences of the researcher’ (Shenton, 2004, p.72). Confirmability of this study is achieved through the use of member checking, researcher reflexivity, and audit trails. These techniques enable external collaborators to evaluate or to confirm the research procedures and findings (Lietz and Zayas, 2010; Shenton, 2004). A

summary of techniques used to achieve each criterion of trustworthiness is shown in Appendix 23.

5.10.5. Triangulation versus crystallisation

According to Stake (2000, p.443), triangulation is ‘the use of multiple perceptions or observations to provide verification or clarify meaning.’ The relevance of this technique to qualitative research is pointed out by Mason (2002, pp.190-1), who notes that ‘social phenomena are a little more than one-dimensional ... [therefore the study should try to]... grasp more than one of those dimensions.’

Denzin (1989b) identifies four forms of triangulation: (i) data triangulation, which involves gathering data through various data sources; (ii) investigator triangulation, which refers to the use of more than one researcher to gather and interpret data; (iii) theoretical triangulation, which refers to the use of several theoretical positions in interpreting data; and (iv) methodological triangulation, which draws more than one method for gathering data relevant to a study.

Denzin (1989b) also adds that there are two types of methodological triangulation: within-method and between-method triangulation. The former refers to the use of varieties of the same method to explore a research issue (i.e. using open- and closed-end questions within a questionnaire), whereas the latter involves using different research methods; for example, the combination of interviews and observation in order to cross-check the findings.

The within-method triangulation strategy has limitations as only one method is being used, allowing the biases and/or weaknesses inherent with that particular method to remain (Denzin, 1989b). Therefore, between-method triangulation is likely to yield more trustworthiness because the limitations of one method can be compensated by the strengths of another, and through the combination of methods, researchers can achieve the best of each (Denzin, 1989b; Denscombe, 2007). In this study, between-method triangulations were employed, in which different data collection methods were used (as discussed in Section 5.9.3).

Regarding triangulation, Patton (1990, p.465) suggests the researcher should bear in mind that ‘there is no magic in triangulation’ because it does not always guarantee that the findings gathered from different approaches will automatically come together and generate a clear whole picture. He (ibid.) also suggests that researchers should try to understand and explain the differences in the data and the reasons behind these differences.

Moreover, Tobin and Begley (2004) point out that the use of triangulation for the sole purpose of seeking confirmation of the data gained from multiple approaches may lead to the recognition that one single reality is sought in qualitative research, which does not correspond to its ontological basis. Therefore, they (ibid., p.393) call for the use of triangulation as a means to provide completeness of the findings by stating that

Completeness is important to qualitative inquirers, as it allows for recognition of multiple realities. Inquirers are thus not using triangulation as a means of confirming existing data, but as a means of enlarging the landscape of their inquiry, offering a deeper and more comprehensive picture.

Therefore, this study employed triangulation with the purpose of providing more completeness of the findings, rather than to identify its fixed point. In other words, this study did not expect that different methods of data collection should be reconciled in order to achieve a single, convergent explanation of the phenomenon being studied. Rather, although the purpose of triangulation in verifying the data from different approaches still remained, it also aimed to reflect, represent, and explain the differences and contradictions of data that occurred from the use of multiple data collection methods.

The approach that this study used approaches the concept of crystallisation proposed by Richardson (2000) who points out that we should not triangulate data, but crystallise them. She (*ibid.*, p.934) argues that the term triangulation carries the image of fixed rigid position in the domain of plain geometry, and is therefore inapplicable to a study of the world that has ‘far more than three sides.’ Tobin and Begley (2004, p.393) state that

This enables a shift from seeing something as a fixed, rigid two-dimensional object towards a concept of the crystal, which allows for an

infinite variety of shape, substance, transmutations, multi-dimensionality and angles of approach.

However, this study did not adopt the idea of crystallisation in a full pattern; rather, it preferred to use the term triangulation. This is because, as pointed out by Tobin and Begley (2004), the literature on the concept of crystallisation in qualitative research is still very limited at the present time and studies using this concept have not yet been widely published; therefore, using this concept without clear guidelines and good examples could lead to confusion and misunderstanding.

5.11. Conclusion

This chapter has reviewed and evaluated the methodological, theoretical and practical issues that have guided the research process. This study is underpinned by an interpretive paradigm utilising qualitative research methods, an approach that attempts to generate rich and in-depth understanding of the volunteer tourists' motivations, their on-site experiences, the hosts' attitudes and the interactions between these two groups.

This chapter has also explored and evaluated the use of a case study, and purposive and snowball sampling techniques suitable for the study of the volunteer tourism programme at the Home and Life orphanage. The justification of data collection methods (including semi-structured interviews, a focus group, participant observation, and diaries), the use of thematic analysis and the practice

of ethics has been discussed. The main themes of the findings which arose from thematic analysis are presented in Chapters Six and Seven. Finally, the use of researcher reflexivity, triangulation, member checking, thick description, and an audit trail in ensuring the trustworthiness of this research have been evaluated.

Chapter Six

Volunteer Tourists' Perspectives on their Motivations and On-site Volunteer Tourism Experiences

6.1. Introduction

Following the thematic analysis of the data discussed in Chapter Five, the main themes relating to the perspectives of the volunteer tourists on their motivations and on-site volunteer tourism experiences were identified. This chapter aims to present the 'voice' of the volunteer tourists, who are the 'guest' in the volunteer tourism 'host-guest' relationship, whilst the perceptions and interpretations of the host community will be presented in the next chapter. This chapter is structured into two main sections: the volunteer tourists' motivations; and the volunteer tourists' on-site experiences.

As there are two main groups of respondents in this research (volunteer tourists and hosts), to avoid confusion, the term 'volunteer respondents' will be used to refer to the volunteer tourists, whereas the term 'host respondents' will be used for the hosts. With the aim of reflecting the respondents' 'true voice,' Chapters Six and Seven intersperse the interpretations of the findings with quotations from the respondents. In addition, field notes are presented in the interests of completeness.

6.2. The Volunteer Tourists' Perspectives on their Motivations

This section aims to investigate why the volunteer tourists engage in orphan volunteer tourism in Thailand. Five main themes were identified: (i) to help the children; (ii) to gain personal development and growth; (iii) to gain new experiences; (iv) to learn about/be immersed in the local culture; and (v) to meet and make friends (See Figure 11). Each of these motivations is presented in the following sections.

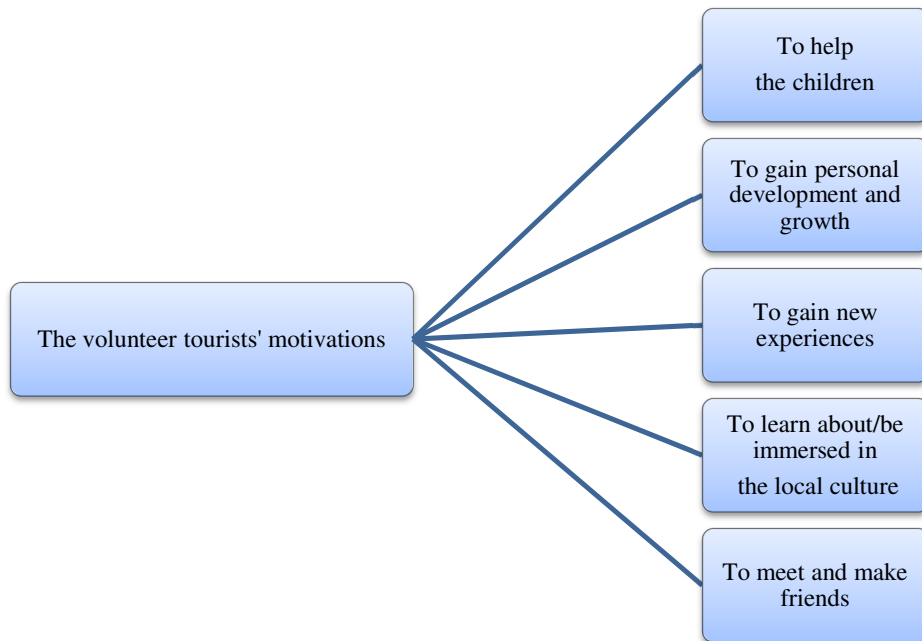


Figure 11: Volunteer tourists' motivational themes

6.2.1. *To help the children*

A desire to help the children is the most prominent motivational factor, was cited by every volunteer respondent as one of their main motivations. Common

expressions among the volunteer respondents demonstrating this motivation include “to help out”; “to do something worthwhile for the children”; “to make myself useful for the children”; and “to make the lives of the children better.”

When probed further, five main factors were identified: (i) having heard about the 2004 Boxing Day tsunami in Thailand; (ii) realising that they were more fortunate or wealthier than the children; (iii) wishing to reduce their guilt and the feeling of being selfish; (iv) believing that it is a good thing to do; and (v) having personal interests in children.

Firstly, the 2004 Boxing Day tsunami appeared to be the main factor driving the volunteer respondents to come to help the children at the orphanage who were affected by it. The volunteer respondents mentioned that they had always wanted to come to help these children since the time of the tsunami, but did not have any opportunity during that time. Therefore, when they had time for their vacation and had known that there were children who were still suffering from the tsunami, they decided to spend part of their holiday helping these children at the Home and Life orphanage, as V28 stated:

I saw when the tsunami hit, what effect it had and still [has] years on. I always wanted to come to help, but at that time I was in the school and my parents didn't let me. That's why, when I was travelling this time, I felt it would be great to give something back by helping these children.

The pictures of the tragedy of the 2004 Boxing Day tsunami, which had been published worldwide, were still clear in many of the volunteer respondents' minds. Many of them talked about the pictures they had seen and could still remember how they felt about pictures such as a small boy crying over the dead bodies of his parents, families looking hopelessly at the destruction of their houses, children crying while searching for their parents, etc. They said that these pictures always reminded them to come and help these children while they were still capable of doing it.

Furthermore, the event of the 2004 Boxing Day tsunami was also the main factor making many volunteer respondents specifically choose a tsunami-affected area in Thailand as the destination for their volunteer vacation. Here, it can be seen that the context of the place where volunteer tourism taking place acts as a significant influential factor in the volunteer tourists' motivation.

Secondly, many volunteer respondents also felt that because they were born more fortunate or wealthier than many other people in the developing countries, it was their responsibility as a global citizen to help less fortunate people. This notion was largely stated during the individual interviews and also overwhelmingly mentioned during the focus group discussion. As V19 mentioned during the focus group discussion:

I think it's definitely primarily to do with wealth and [feeling] fortunate because our countries are stabilised, we have the skills, the infrastructures

and everything. It's sort of arrogant in a way because we feel we have the skills because we're from a developed country and so we feel we have a lot to teach these people.

The above comment reflects the volunteer respondents' perception that being a citizen of a developed country made them wealthier, more fortunate, and more capable in terms of skills and knowledge than many people in a developing country. In the volunteer respondents' views, being wealthier and more fortunate but not sharing this with other poor and less fortunate people was interpreted as having a lack of responsibility as a global citizen.

Some volunteer respondents also stated that they could not be totally happy with their own good fortune upon realising that there were many other people in the same world who were suffering from poverty and natural disasters. In their view, their wealth and good fortune enabled them to visit and lend a hand in volunteering activities in developing countries.

It is important to note that this perspective of the volunteer respondents contains a sense of imperialism in which they viewed that they were educationally and economically superior, or better off than, the people in Thailand. However, in the researcher's view, they did not mean to show off. On the contrary, they just wanted to explain the reason for participating in volunteer tourism at the orphanage.

Thirdly, closely related to the previous factor, some volunteer respondents stated that they felt guilty that they were born more fortunate, but they'd never done anything to help other people who are less fortunate. They felt they were selfish and wanted to reduce their guilt and the feeling of being selfish by helping the children at the orphanage. This notion was clearly illustrated by V18 during the focus group:

I feel like if you're in this world, you know, that has so many things wrong [with it], it would be really selfish, as a privileged person like we are, to not go and try and give some love and some help to the people who don't have as much as we do. With this you feel like you are less selfish, you feel much better about yourself.

Fourthly, many volunteer respondents considered volunteer work as being a worthwhile and helpful practice. This notion is based on the perception that volunteering not only made the children's lives better, but it also made them feel better about themselves. The volunteer respondents believed that their volunteering activities, such as teaching English, giving warmth and care, and giving donations to the children, would not only provide the poverty-stricken children with an opportunity to start their lives in the future, but these practices also made them feel proud and happy about themselves. Some volunteer respondents compared volunteer tourism activity with other leisure tourism activities, such as drinking, going to parties, and lying on the beach, by saying that

the former was a worthwhile and beneficial activity for the whole society, whereas the latter were selfish activities and useless.

Finally, the majority of the volunteer respondents stated that they were personally interested in children and that inspired them to help children who are in need. This was also their main reason to participate in volunteer tourism at the orphanage rather than at other places. For example, V01 stated,

I always wanted to volunteer at an orphanage because I love kids and always feel comfortable with them. Besides, I think helping less fortunate kids would provide a good head start for them.

6.2.2. To gain personal development and growth

It is not surprising that a need for personal development and growth was cited by the volunteer respondents. This is because the majority of the volunteer respondents were recent graduates who were seeking related working experiences for their future career. In addition, most of them were young and wanted to discover themselves or find their limits. They believed that participating in volunteer tourism would help them fulfil such desires.

Many of the volunteer respondents stated that they planned to teach or work with children and believed that this volunteering experience could help them with their career. The following statement from V18 demonstrates how the volunteer respondents summarised this motivation:

[I am here] because of the job I'm going into when I go home. I want to teach children at the primary or secondary school, so for me this was definitely to see how it is like to teach, how good I am at teaching. I think I also want to see how my teaching affects others, so see how I can improve.

It is evident from V18's statement that the volunteer tourism experience was viewed as a training ground where the volunteer respondents could practice and test their skills, acquire the required experience before entering into the real working life, and try out a new career without making a long-term commitment. It was seen as a means to gain experience.

For many volunteer respondents, participating in volunteer tourism was also a means to 'prove' or verify that they could actually do something they were afraid to do before, such as teaching English to non-English speaking children. In other words, it acts as a reassuring 'first step' into their future career.

It is important to note that the context of foreign, non-English speaking country of Thailand serves as an important factor in influencing this motivational factor. Many volunteer respondents revealed that teaching English to non-English-speaking children in a foreign country, like Thailand where English is not the official language, would be a much more rewarding experience for their teaching career than if they did it in their home countries because they could learn more about how to explain the lessons more clearly and how to improvise teaching techniques to suit the capability of the children. Some volunteer respondents also

stated that this would be challenging due to the fact that they could not speak Thai to their students; therefore, this experience would enable to them to gain more ideas about how to solve the problems when the students did not understand what they were teaching.

Additionally, for some volunteer respondents, volunteer tourism experience could also serve as a key addition to their CV because it could demonstrate to their prospective employers or universities that they acquired certain qualifications, as exemplified by V19:

It does look good to employers if you have written down on your CV, “I’ve done this and this and this experience,” and they can see that you’re a rounded person rather than you just went on your gap year and had a big party.

In the view of V19 and other volunteer respondents who shared this motivation, volunteer tourism experience could serve as an indication to prospective employers that they had good qualifications, such as having related working experiences, being flexible and adaptable, being responsible, willing to try new things, accepting of other cultures, problem-solving skills, maturity, etc.

For some volunteer respondents, volunteer tourism was believed to enable them to prove to themselves that they could do something on their own. For example, V19 stated that she wanted to prove to herself that she was able to communicate with

people who do not speak English; while V26, who was half Thai and half Australian, wanted to prove that she was capable of staying in Thai culture without the help from her mother, who is Thai.

I want to see what I'm capable of, like communicating with people who don't speak my language and [then to] try and cross that barrier (V19).

Before coming here I was a bit nervous, because it's hard going straight into all the Thai culture and here I knew there'd be, like, some English speaking volunteers, so at least I'd feel a bit better. I just want[ed] to see whether I could do it, do it by myself as well, instead of with Mum around all the time (V26).

From the above statements, it is evident that the notion of volunteer tourism as an activity that takes place in an unfamiliar setting where one has to do things one has never done before was perceived as a crucial factor enabling the volunteer respondents to prove themselves or to push their limits. Unfamiliar setting, in the view of the volunteer respondents, covers a number of challenges which helped them to prove themselves, including language barriers, lack of or limited knowledge of cultures and activities, being out of their own comfort zone, and lack of familiar facilities. These things forced them to rely primarily on themselves and deal with such difficulties without the help of their family members and/or their friends.

Volunteer tourism experience was also perceived as a means to discover oneself. As stated by V16, one of her motivations was to understand herself better in terms of what she wanted to study and to work at in the future:

I hope that doing things I have never done before and learning from the kids and people here will make me understand what I want to do.

What is reflected in the above statement is that volunteer tourism could serve as a platform from which the volunteer tourists could gain perspectives about themselves. This is because it provides an opportunity to do things they have never done before and to meet and learn from different types of people, which helps them reflect upon themselves and realise their own potential.

6.2.3. To gain new experiences

According to the data, the volunteer tourists' desire to gain new experiences encapsulates two main notions: (i) having different experiences out of the volunteer tourists' home country; and (ii) having a volunteering experience which they had never had before.

For many volunteer respondents, this was the first time they had visited Thailand. They decided to participate in volunteer tourism in Thailand because they wanted to have different experiences in another country that is far away from, and different from, their own country's culture and physical geography. For example, V07 said, "I just want to have that different experience, a bit of contrast from what

it is like in England,” and V16 stated that “I think I was quite motivated by a feeling that it would be an amazing experience to get to see a different country and live in a different culture and surrounding.”

Some volunteer respondents also believed that participating in a volunteer tourism vacation enabled them to gain a new and challenging experience of Thailand in a much better way than conventional tourism. This is because they would have an experience of being out of their comfort zone, would do things they had never done before, and would stay in non-tourist areas, whereas conventional tourism would only provide them with similar experiences to what they are used to in their own countries, although the environment is different. As V16 said about conventional tourism, “It seems to be different, but in fact, you just experience similar things in the different country.”

For some volunteer respondents, this was the first time they had taken a volunteer tourism vacation, which they had longed to do for some time. For example, V02 stated that for her, this experience served as an experiment so that she would know how she felt about volunteer work:

I am only doing it because I want to have an experience of volunteering. Besides, I want to know how I like it. If I didn't like it, well, I am only here for one week. If I did like it, I can come back another time. It's just like a 'taster.'

Similarly, V01, who had done voluntary work in his country of origin but had never done it abroad, stated that the reason that he wanted to take a volunteer tourism trip at the orphanage was to see what it was like: “I just wanted to give it a go and see what it is like to volunteer in another country.”

6.2.4. To learn about/be immersed in the local culture

Some volunteer respondents stated that they wanted to engage in volunteer tourism because they would like to learn about or to immerse themselves in the local culture and they believed that volunteer tourism would enable them to gain a better understanding of Thai culture. This motivation was illustrated by the following statements:

I think it is about [trying] to see how the rest of the world lives, especially in a country like Thailand... I think it's a lot to do with the fact that if we didn't do volunteer work, we would not have been able to learn and experience how Thai people live. For me, I'm sure I haven't got a full [grasp of the] reality of what it's like but without volunteering. (V20, focus group)

It is mostly just to help ease myself into Thai culture. I just know a little bit of Thai culture before coming here, so that's the reason why I wanted to come to Thailand. So I could learn, just absorb myself in everything Thai. [I want] to learn the language, to learn the culture, to get to know my family as well. (V26)

The above statements suggest that for some volunteer tourists such as V20, volunteer tourism served as an effective means to enable them to experience and learn about the local culture from the 'inside' rather than merely looking in from the 'outside'. This helped them to see the 'actual' ways of life of the local people, which they would not gain from a leisure tourism experience.

This motivation appeared to be significant for V26, who is half Thai and half Australian and had grown up in Australia. She stated that she was motivated to do volunteer work during her holiday in Thailand by a desire to be able to integrate herself into Thai culture because she realised that she was also Thai and had always wanted to know her own culture. She did emphasise her desire to learn the Thai language, which she believed would help her get to know her family members in Thailand better because they do not speak English.

The perception of volunteer tourism as providing an opportunity for volunteer tourists to immerse themselves in the local culture and gain a real insight into it came from the fact that they had to live in the same house as the orphanage staff and children, who are local people; therefore, they could see how these people actually live and also had an opportunity to interact with them in a more direct and engaging way. For V26, who wanted to improve her Thai language, she realised that living with Thai people and a lot of Thai children would force her to communicate in Thai with them, and the more she communicated, the better her Thai language would become.

6.2.5. To meet and make friends

A couple of volunteer tourists stated that they wanted to meet and make friends with other people. For example, V16 stated that:

I think one of the reasons [that I take a volunteer tourism vacation] is to meet new people and make friends because I knew that I would meet other volunteers and, of course, Thai people and a lot of children here ...And especially when I see that someone has less than I have, I want to know them and share their lives which I think it makes me grow.

From the above statement, it can be seen that V16 felt that the benefits of meeting new people through volunteer tourism are twofold; which are an opportunity to make new friends, and a means to learn from these people. This is because volunteer tourism brings together people from all walks of life, whether they are volunteer tourists or local people, it provides a platform for individuals to meet, interact, learn, and exchange views with each other. Additionally, in V16's view, she believed that learning and sharing lives with people who were less fortunate would help her to learn a number of different things from them which consequently would allow her to develop herself.

6.3. Volunteer Tourists' On-site Experiences

This section presents the main themes concerning the on-site volunteer tourism experiences gained by the volunteer respondents during their vacation at the Home and Life orphanage. Based on the data analysis, four main themes or dimensions of the volunteer tourists' on-site experiences were generated: (i) personal development and growth; (ii) social; (iii) cultural; and (iv) feeling (see Figure 12).

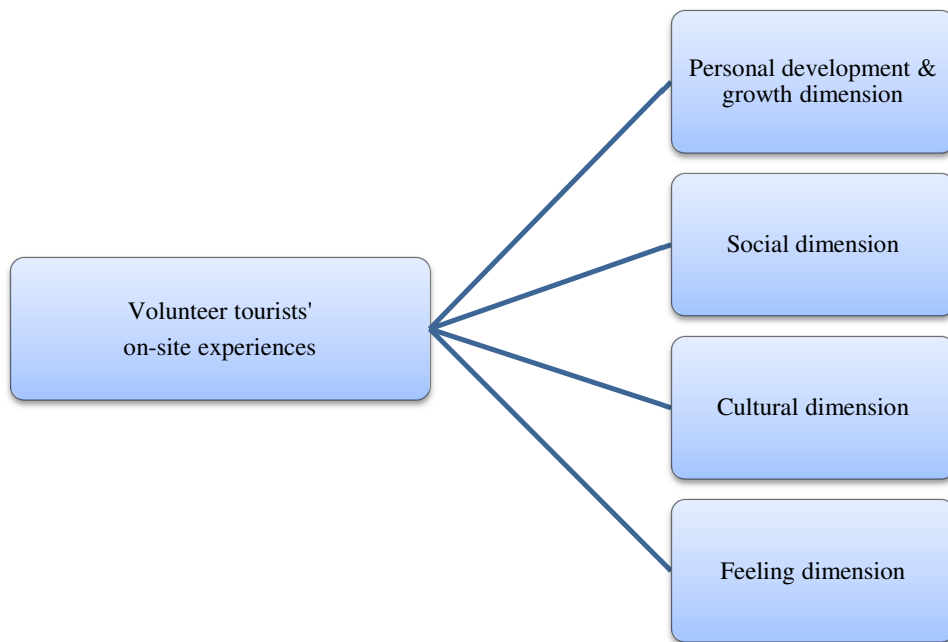


Figure 12: Volunteer tourists' on-site experiences, main themes

6.3.1. Personal development and growth dimension

The personal development and growth dimension can be categorised into six sub-themes: (i) the development/enhancement of soft skills; (ii) the opportunity for self-reflection; (iii) an insight into career direction; (iv) learning new values and perceptions; (v) gaining a global perspective; and (vi) gaining a sense of global citizenship.

(i) Development/enhancement of soft skills

A number of soft skills were cited as the benefits gained through volunteer tourism experiences, such as self-confidence, adapting to different situations; interpersonal skills, patience, and becoming more active, etc. Among these, the most frequently cited soft skill was self-confidence, which mainly resulted from the fact that the volunteer respondents had to encounter challenging and unfamiliar situations, which they had to deal with on their own. As V07 said:

For me, I think I have more confidence [from] being able to take control of the kids and look after them on my own ... Every time you do something you've never done before and face some challenges like language barriers, it always boosts your confidence.

What is reflected from the statement of V07 is that challenges and unfamiliar situations that the volunteer respondents encountered during the volunteer tourism vacation, such as doing things that they've never done before, doing things on their own without any help from others, and having to deal with difficulties such

as language barriers, play a crucial role in enhancing their self-confidence. They served as ‘proof’, confirming that they were actually able to handle difficulties and new things on their own. This sentiment was also shared by many other volunteer respondents. For example, V09 stated that the volunteer tourism experience had proved that she was able to travel abroad, especially to a non-English speaking country, on her own.

The challenges and unfamiliar situations also served as factors in enhancing other soft skills. For example, V09 stated that working with non-English children facilitated her to learn to be more patient. Specifically, she said that she had learnt how to use different kinds of approaches and teaching techniques when teaching English to the children.

Moreover, meeting and interacting with other people, either other volunteer tourists or the local people, also helped the volunteer respondents to improve their interpersonal skills. For example, V18 revealed that she had learnt how to be polite and to control her emotions when living with other people, even when she was upset, and V13 stated that, having seen that the orphanage’s staff and the construction men working very hard, she was inspired to be more active.

(ii) Opportunity for self-reflection

The data analysis also reveals that volunteer tourism experiences facilitated the volunteer tourists to reflect on and evaluate their own ‘selves’. This sub-theme was found mainly during the focus group discussion; two volunteer respondents

reported that they had discovered potential that they had never realised before, as exemplified by V20:

I've never ever thought I would be here teaching children, standing up in front of children. In the uni[versity] and college, I was terrified of talking in front of big groups of people, let alone just standing up and trying to teach people something. So I've definitely discovered that I can actually speak in front of the class and teach English to the children, and never, ever in a million years thought I could. (V20, focus group)

It can be seen from the above statements that V20 had discovered that she could stand up in front of a lot of children and teach English to them. She confirmed that, without these volunteer tourism experiences, she would never have learnt she could actually do this. Other things mentioned by the volunteer respondents were being patient with the children, and their ability to live with basic things, without luxuries and comforts. The notion of first-hand experience or “doing things [they] have never done before” was repeatedly mentioned as the key factor enabling the volunteer respondents to discover previously unrealised potential.

(iii) An insight into their career direction

Volunteer tourism experiences were also found to affect the direction of some of the volunteer respondents' future careers. Seven volunteer respondents said that they wanted to be teachers and had realised during participating in volunteer

tourism vacation that they really liked teaching and had the potential to do it. This notion is exemplified by V22:

I've always liked children but I am never sure whether I can actually teach them or make them understand what I am teaching. Now I've realised I'm quite good with children and I've enjoyed the teaching and that's the thing I want to do in my future that I hadn't really been sure about before. (V22, focus group)

It is evident from the above statement that volunteer tourism experience not only allowed V22 to have first-hand experience of teaching, and to practice her teaching skills, but it also proved that she was good at teaching. Similarly, some volunteer respondents stated that before taking the volunteer tourism vacation, they also had the idea that they wanted to be teachers, but were not actually sure whether they were good at it. During the vacation, the volunteer tourism experience helped them to be certain that they were going to pursue this career.

(iv) Learning new values and perceptions

The volunteer respondents claimed that being first-hand witnesses of the differences between their own lives and the lives of the children at the orphanage made them aware of things that they had never realised before. This consequently facilitated the transformation of some of their values and perceptions. The volunteer respondents revealed that they had not only taught the children, but they had also learnt a lot of things from them. The most frequently cited things they

had learnt were appreciation of things they already had, and the minimal importance of material needs. As V23 said:

The lives of the kids here made me realise that you can live simply and be so happy over this simple thing... It is so materialistic at home and the kids there have so much and yet they have no appreciation of it... And yesterday, when the kids were getting their presents, that was amazing. It was better than any Christmas because they're so appreciative of everything they have.

According to V23 and other volunteer respondents, they had learnt from the children that even though these children had been through difficult times, for example losing their parents in the Boxing Day tsunami, they were still happy with everything they had, even things that may be very simple. This is in contrast to their lives, or the lives of the children in their own countries who were very materialistic and had little or no appreciation of things they had. This had made them realise that the most significant thing in life was not having the most expensive things, but appreciating things they already have.

Witnessing the lives and the characters of the children at the orphanage also taught the volunteer respondents how easy it is to have a happy life, to be positive about the world, and to make the best of situations without being bogged down in their own problems. For example, V13 said that she had learnt about these values

from the strength and courage of the children who, even though they had difficult backgrounds, could still be positive and happy with their life.

The value of love and caring for other people was also mentioned as something the volunteer respondents had learnt from the children at the orphanage. For instance, V15 claimed that she had seen that the children had so much love and care to give to others, despite their difficulties. Moreover, some volunteer respondents stated that they had learnt the significance of respecting older people. For example, V18 stated that she had seen that the children always respected older people and this made her aware of that old people should be respected for their wisdom and life experiences.

Another value the volunteer respondents had learnt from the children at the orphanage is gratitude. For example, V17 said that she had learnt that the children were very grateful for everything they had received, in contrast to her brothers and other children at home who always took everything for granted. This made her feel that being grateful was significant in life.

(v) Gaining a sense of global perspectives

Volunteer tourism experiences were also claimed to promote a sense of global perspective for many volunteer respondents. To be more specific, the volunteer respondents had developed links between their own lives and those of the local people through their volunteer tourism experiences. Some volunteer respondents revealed that they had seen that many people in Thai Muang sub-district were

suffering from poverty and this not only made them realise the differences between the lives of Western people and those of the local people, but it also made them aware that there were also many people in their own country suffering from poverty as well. V18's statement illustrates this point.

I think we don't really see the poverty in the UK as much because that's where you live and that's where you are, whereas here it is easier to see. Then, this makes me realise that there's obviously this kind of problem in our country as well, it's a shame that's maybe a little bit overlooked. (V18, focus group)

It can be seen that volunteer tourism not only facilitated the volunteer respondents to be aware of the differences between their lives and the lives of the local people, but also made them realise there were some similarities between them or other people in their home country and the local people in the host country.

(vi) Gaining a sense of global citizenship

Volunteer tourism experiences also developed a sense of global citizenship for the volunteer respondents. Some volunteer participants said that the volunteer tourism experience had made them aware of their potential to help others, as said by V04:

Just seeing the kids here, and see how our money, our effort and our skills can help them with their daily life and their future, especially in terms of

their education, I want to do more, I'm quite sure that I'm really going to volunteer again in the future.

The above statement clearly reveals that a sense of global citizenship came from the volunteer tourists' awareness that they were in better positions than the children at the orphanage and that gave them the potential to help make the lives of the children better. This factor, together with their own witness of the positive outcomes of their contribution to the orphanage, inspired them to continue doing good things for society by volunteering, and conducting fundraising exercises for the causes they believe in.

6.3.2. Social dimension

The volunteer respondents reported that they had met and established or developed relationships with other people during their volunteer tourism vacation which include: (i) the local people; (ii) fellow volunteer tourists; and (iii) the people they came with.

(i) Relationships with local people

The volunteer respondents stated that they had established a bond with the children at the orphanage. Such a bond was established on four main factors: the volunteer respondents' personal interest and positive feelings towards the children; the time they had spent with each other; the confidence of the children to interact with volunteer tourists; and the children's positive attitudes towards the volunteer tourists.

As mentioned before, many volunteer respondents chose to participate in the volunteer tourism vacation at the orphanage because they were personally interested in children. After spending time at the orphanage, they were impressed by the children, who were well disciplined, loving and very grateful for everything they received. These things facilitated the establishment of a good relationship between the volunteer respondents and the children.

For the second factor, it was found that the volunteer respondents had spent most of their time doing activities with the children, which helped to strengthen their relationship. This is partly because the volunteer respondents wanted to do it, and partly because of the location of the orphanage, which is separate from other places, as it was inconvenient for the volunteer respondents to go to other places because of the limited options of public transportation in the area.

Moreover, it was observed by the researcher that the children at the orphanage were very confident and eager to interact with the volunteer respondents, which was different from the adult local people and other children, who were always shy and afraid of Westerners and tried to avoid talking to them.

Lastly, it is also the researcher's own observation that the children at the orphanage seemed to have a very positive attitude towards the volunteer tourists. This is because they have been receiving assistance from the volunteer tourists in a variety of forms, such as monetary and other donations, education, and love and

care. Moreover, their positive attitude came from the orphanage staff who had been teaching them gratitude.

The established bond between the volunteer respondents and the children at the orphanage is evident from the fact that the volunteer respondents could remember the name of every child and got to know each of them personally. Some volunteer respondents also offered to write down the characteristics of each child for the orphanage so that it could put this information in the welcome pack for the new volunteer tourists which would help these people to have some ideas about each child. Furthermore, many volunteer respondents said that it would be very sad for them to leave the children at the end of their time at the orphanage, as shown by the following statements:

I've gotten attached to the kids, and especially with some of them. In general I think it's going to be quite sad when I leave. But I hope that the children aren't very sad... I hope that I'm sadder than them, because otherwise I'll feel worse. I hope that they don't even notice that I'm gone.

[Extract from V16's diary: 4th August 2011]

Tonight, there was a small farewell party for V01 and V02. At the end of the party, one boy went to hug V01 and cried over him. I noticed that V01 and V02 also had tears in their eyes and they looked very sad. It was really sad for me to witness this situation.

[Field note entry: 4th June 2011]

The statement of V16 in her diary showed that she really cared about the feelings of the children and did not want to them to be sad, although she was really sad herself to know that she was going to leave the orphanage in the very near future. The volunteer respondents and the children cried, hugged each other, and exchanging gifts to be a reminder of each other whenever the volunteer respondents had to leave, and that confirmed the bond established between them.

For the relationship between the volunteer respondents and the adult local people, the volunteer respondents said that they had established good relationships with the orphanage staff and some teachers, especially those who could speak English. According to the volunteer respondents, this relationship was based mainly on their impression of the dedication and performance of the orphanage staff in taking care of the children and the friendliness of the orphanage staff and the teachers at the school.

However, apart from these two groups, the volunteer respondents did not seem to have an opportunity to establish good relationships with other local people. This is mainly due to four factors: the language barrier; the location of the orphanage; the shyness of local people when meeting Westerners; and some volunteer respondents had no interest in establishing relationships with local people.

(ii) The relationship with the other fellow volunteer tourists

Many volunteer respondents revealed that they had established a good relationship with the other volunteer tourists whom they met at the orphanage, even though they had spent only one or two weeks together. This good relationship formed because these volunteer tourists had spent their lives together in a different situation to their normal life and especially in a foreign country, which helped them develop a sense of 'being in the same team' very quickly. This is because they shared similar experiences and emotions, whether it positive or negative.

The feeling of being in the same team was significantly reinforced by the challenging and unfamiliar environment of the overseas country, together with being in a close-knit setting of the Home and Life orphanage, where they could not easily separate themselves by going out to other places. Even in the orphanage, which is quite a small place and more like a house, some of the volunteer respondents mentioned that it was quite impossible to find him/herself alone, without the other volunteer respondents sitting nearby. This made them become closer to each other because they were forced to spend most of their time together, which they were very happy with.

Many volunteer respondents also stated that they intended to maintain this relationship after completing this volunteer tourism vacation by keeping contact with each other by sending e-mails, or even going to visit each other when they went back to their countries, because many of them came from the same country. More interestingly, some volunteer respondents agreed to join the leisure trip to

other tourist attractions in Thailand together after finishing their volunteer tourism programme. These notions were illustrated by V24 below:

Yes, I met these girls here and I have been living with them now for about two weeks and it feels like I have known them forever because we have shared so many experiences together. So I think it is an amazing way to get closer to people because you share so much with them, ups and downs, positives and negatives, tears, whatever.

(iii) The relationship with the people they came with

The majority of the volunteer respondents were taking a volunteer tourism vacation with their boyfriend or girlfriend, friends, or spouse. All of them revealed that the volunteer tourism experience helped strengthen their relationship because it made them closer to one another, since they had to spend all of their time together and shared similar experiences in challenging and unfamiliar situations.

The foreign context of the volunteer tourism destination and the unfamiliar situation of the volunteer tourism experiences significantly reinforced the relationship of the volunteer respondents who had come together, because they inevitably created some difficulties or pressure for the volunteer respondents, which they had to support each other through. This made them understand and turn to each other more. As V29 said:

Because you are thrown into a situation that you are unfamiliar with so you go through the same thing at the same time and share relations and support each other. When you share something that close with someone else, obviously yes, you form a bond quicker because you are both doing the same thing...And especially here which is quite enclosed, so when you had problems with each other, you just cannot run away like when you were at home, it kind of forces you to stay and talk to your friends.

Some volunteer respondents said that this volunteer tourism experience would serve as a reminder of good experiences that they once shared together which they could always talk about it and also could tell others about later. This was expressed by V13, who had come with her friend: “It will definitely strengthen our relationship, we’ll have some great stories to talk to each other about and we will probably be able to tell our kids.” According to V24, this volunteer tourism experience would “hold” her and her friend together forever.

6.3.3. Cultural dimension

The notion of gaining a ‘real’ or ‘actual’ insight into Thai culture, and the ways of the lives of Thai people, were also mentioned by the volunteer respondents. They stated that this aspect of volunteer tourism is unique to volunteer tourism, and would not be present if they came to visit Thailand as a leisure tourist.

The data of this study suggests that gaining real and genuine cultural-related experience of the volunteer tourists is based on two main factors: (i) the fact that the volunteer respondents had lived in the orphanage, which allowed them to have an opportunity to have intense and genuine interactions with the local people; and (ii) the difference between the volunteer tourists and other tourists.

Firstly, the volunteer respondents stated that being a volunteer tourist, they had an opportunity to immerse themselves in the local culture, or in this case in the family of the orphanage, which they felt a part of. This facilitated them to have direct and engaging observations and interactions with the orphanage staff and the children, which, in turn, helped them learn about Thai culture and the local residents' lives in a more direct, authentic way. This was exemplified by V24:

You get to know the actual Thai people...You're living with them, you're eating with them, you're playing with them. You're doing everything with them so you really get to know them and you get a real experience.

Secondly, according to the volunteer respondents, they believed that they were different to the other tourists in the way that other tourists see the local people's lives and resources in the destination as things they can use for their own self-serving purposes, whereas the volunteer tourists regard these things as being meaningful and interesting as well as being part of their learning process. This different perception in turn influenced their perception about the significance of cross-cultural exchanges between them and the local people; they seemed much

more eager to learn about the lives and the culture of the local people, as well as sharing information about their own lives with these people.

The volunteer respondents also believed that the local residents similarly viewed them as being different to leisure tourists. Some volunteer respondents compared their previous leisure tourism experience in Thailand when they visited tourist areas with their volunteer tourism experience at the orphanage, saying that the ways in which Thai people treated them when they were a leisure tourist were totally different to the way the Thai people at the orphanage treated them. They said that when they were leisure tourists, Thai people who they met seemed to see them as sources of money and treat them as ‘a customer’, whereas the Thai people at the orphanage genuinely welcomed them and treated them as ‘a guest’ or ‘a member of family.’

They believed that it was because they came here for a good purpose, which was to help the local people, rather than to have fun. Therefore, they found the interactions between them and the local people at the orphanage more personal and genuine, which, in turn, facilitated them to gain a better understanding of the local culture. Moreover, local residents were also more willing to share their culture with them.

It was found that the volunteer respondents had learnt about Thai culture mainly from their own observation of the lives of the orphanage staff and the children and their interactions with these people. Some volunteer respondents mentioned that

they had learnt about Thai culture more from the children than from the adults because the adults seemed to be afraid that they would offend them when telling them about the right manners in Thai culture, whereas the children did not think too much about those things, so they were very straightforward when telling them about what they should or should not do. There are a number of aspects which the volunteer respondents claimed to have learned about Thai culture; such as words in Thai, Thai values and Thai manners.

Most of the volunteer respondents said that they had learnt some Thai words, such as how to count in Thai, how to greet other people, and some Thai words that children normally say to each other, like *abnam* (taking a bath) and *kin kao* (having a meal). Among the volunteer respondents, V26 (whose main motivation was to practice the Thai language) appeared to benefit the most because she had some knowledge of Thai (her mother is Thai). She mentioned that living with Thai people, especially the children, who were eager to teach the Thai language to her and correct her when she said something wrong or mispronounced words helped her to improve her Thai language.

In terms of Thai values, four main values were mentioned by the volunteer respondents as things they had learnt from their volunteer tourism experiences, including *chai-yen* or cool heart behaviour; the values of the family; the significance of respecting older people; and gratitude. The last two values were discussed in Section 6.3.1(iv); therefore, only the first two will be discussed here.

Many volunteer respondents stated that they had learnt about *chai-yen*, which refers to the ability to emotionally control oneself when facing problems. It can also mean relaxing and being flexible. They said that they had learnt this value when they had noticed that even though they were given a schedule or were told about the activities for each day, those plans had never been strictly followed. This is because the orphanage staff usually did not do things according to the plans: they were always flexible. In addition, they had also noticed that Thai people seem to be very relaxed and do not rush when doing things, in contrast to the Westerners who always take things very seriously and get stressed easily. While this Thai value is a good lesson for some volunteer respondents, it had caused some volunteer respondents to feel frustrated sometimes because they expected things to be done according to the plan they had received.

The value of family is another value learnt by the volunteer respondents. V06 told the researcher during an informal conversation that he had learnt that Thai people value their family and generally stayed with their family even after they were married. He was surprised to learn that there were two or three generations living together in the same house. This made him feel warm and miss his family very much at the same time.

A number of aspects of Thai manners were mentioned by the volunteer respondents. Among these, the most cited include *wai*¹ or the way Thai people greet each other; taking shoes off before entering rooms such as bedrooms,

¹ *Wai* means the way Thai people greet each other by placing both of their palms together in front of their chest and slightly bowing their head.

classrooms, temple halls, etc.; not pointing to anything using a foot; and never touching other people's heads without necessary reasons. Apart from learning the local culture, the volunteer respondents also stated that they also had shared knowledge of their countries and their culture with the orphanage staff and the children. However, according to them, their contributions to the cross-cultural exchanges were quite limited. In other words, they had learnt about the local culture more than they had shared their own culture with the local people and this is mainly because of the language barriers between them and the local people.

According to the volunteer respondents, they had shared knowledge of their countries and their culture mostly with the children, such as knowledge of the football teams in UK, some social etiquette and tips about daily life according to Western cultures, such as what to say when sneezing, how to greet others and some games the children in their countries play.

6.3.4. Feeling dimension

Overall, the volunteer respondents were greatly satisfied with their volunteer tourism experience at the Home and Life orphanage. Some of them stated that they would like to come back to the orphanage in the future. However, they also expressed some concerns and negative feelings about their experience.

Although some of the volunteer respondents seemed to be reluctant to express their negative feelings during the formal interviews, they felt more comfortable to talk about these things during informal conversations with the researcher after the

rapport between them and the researcher had been established. Moreover, the researcher had persuaded them to tell her their true feelings by saying that their information would be valuable for the improvement of the volunteer tourism programme at the orphanage and other volunteer tourism organisations.

After talking about their concerns or negative feelings, most of the volunteer respondents were quick to insist that despite having such concerns or feelings, upon considering their experience in general, they were very happy and satisfied with it. The factors that caused the volunteer participants' positive feelings and negative feelings are discussed in turn.

(i) Factors causing the volunteer tourists' positive feelings

Six main factors were identified as influencing the volunteer respondents' positive feelings: (a) the characteristics and performance of the orphanage staff; (b) the characteristics of the children at the orphanage; (c) the facilities of the orphanage; (d) the operation of the orphanage; (e) the volunteer tourists' own altruistic practice; and (f) the benefits they gained from the volunteer tourism participation. The last factor has already been discussed (in the dimensions of personal development and growth, social, and cultural); therefore, it will not be discussed in this section again.

(a) The characteristics and performance of orphanage staff

The staff of the orphanage were overwhelmingly complimented by the volunteer respondents as being one of the key factors making their volunteer tourism experience at the orphanage a very positive one. Generally, the compliments concerned their warm welcome, friendliness and helpfulness, their dedication to helping the children at the orphanage, and their performance in looking after the children. These comments were exemplified as follows:

I am coming to the other side of the world and I don't know any of these people but they have been so welcoming and accepting. I am feeling like I have joined part of a family on the other side of the world, it's just like I was at my own home. (V07)

Seeing the development of these kids, they are so far in advance. They [the orphanage staff] are doing a great job with engaging the kids... They have been so dedicated. (V09)

Feeling part of a big family was found to be a strong factor leading the volunteer respondents to have favourable feelings about their experience. As reflected in V07's statement, he did not feel that he was a stranger or a mere visitor, but rather a member of this big family. This feeling made him feel warm and as if he were at his own home. Like V07, other volunteer respondents shared the same view by saying that all of the staff were very friendly and treated them as if they were their own brothers or sisters, which made them feel relaxed.

This feeling was also found to be a key factor causing many of the volunteer respondents to decide to come back to visit the orphanage in the future as a close friend or brother or sister of the staff, not as a volunteer tourist. Some said that they were going to keep in touch with the staff of the orphanage and continuously support the orphanage when they got home by conducting fundraising for it.

Moreover, the statement of V09 shows that she had a great impression of the dedication of all of the staff members who had been devoting their lives to helping the children at the orphanage. This view was also shared by other volunteer respondents who had learnt from the volunteer tourism agencies which they applied through, as well as from the staff members themselves, that all of the staff members, especially L01 and L02 who were the founders of the Home and Life orphanage, decided to sell their houses and gave up their careers in their home town of Chiang Mai in order to use the money to build the orphanage and look after the children who were the victims of the Boxing Day tsunami.

Finally, the staff were also praised for their performance in looking after the children who they really love and care about, as illustrated in V09's statement. They felt that, despite being affected by the Boxing Day tsunami, the children at the orphanage were very lucky to be looked after by these staff members who take care of them as if they were their own children.

(b) The characteristics of the children at the orphanage

The volunteer respondents were also greatly impressed by the children at the orphanage who were very grateful for everything they received from the volunteer tourists, whether it was big or small. They also had a lot of love to give to others. The children were also seen as being smarter and better disciplined than other children at school. These characteristics of the children, based on the views of the volunteer respondents, were the results of good care given by the staff members of the orphanage. The statement of V16 is a good example to illustrate this notion:

They are not like what I expected to see, not like the orphan children I used to imagine...They give love to anyone, because they get love from a lot of people like the orphanage staff and us. They're more open-minded and very well-disciplined.

The above statement shows that V16 was very surprised to see that the children at the Home and Life orphanage were very well behaved, which was in contrast to her previous view about orphan children in general, who she thought would have problematic behaviour. Moreover, she and other volunteer respondents were also impressed that that these children had so much love to share with other people. They believed that these characteristics mainly resulted from the good care given by the orphanage staff and continuously having volunteer tourists who have good hearts coming to take care of them.

(c) The facilities at the orphanage

According to many volunteer respondents, the bedrooms and the food which the orphanage provided were much better than they had expected. In particular, the food, which was mostly Thai food, was praised by many volunteer respondents.

(d) The operation of the orphanage

As discussed earlier, the volunteer respondents felt that they were part of a big family of the orphanage. This notion was also cited as a key feature of the operation of the orphanage which they were impressed with and which made the Home and Life orphanage different from other orphanages they had known or imagined, in terms of its atmosphere. As stated by V13:

Just seeing that they are one big family, they are not just a bunch of orphans waiting...They have the older children who help the adults take care of the younger which is very nice and sweet. The feeling in this house is just amazing.

The small number of the children at the orphanage, which is only twenty-six children, and the way the orphanage staff teach the children to take care of each other by teaching the older children to help take care of the young children gave it the atmosphere of a family, rather than a place where orphans gathered together.

(e) The volunteer tourists' own altruistic practice

Apart from the attributes of the orphanage, it was found that positive feelings of the volunteer respondents also came from their awareness of their own altruistic practice which made them feel that they had done something good for other people. For example, V07 said:

It's really nice to help out and know that you are doing something good and you are a good person. It's some kind of happiness that occurs inside you which makes you feel glad and proud of yourself.

In addition, for V15, she not only felt good because of her own awareness of her contribution, but she also felt very positive to learn that her contribution was recognised by the local people. She related the time when she and her friends went to teach English at the local vocational college and found that the teachers and the students there were very grateful to her. She explained:

We went to the school yesterday and they treated us like we were queens. Everyone was so grateful, like, 'Thank you for volunteering', I don't know how to explain my feeling at that time, it's just really great.

(ii) Factors causing the volunteer tourists' concern and negative feelings

Five main factors were identified as the causes of the volunteer tourists' concerns and negative feelings: (a) an established bond with the children at the orphanage; (b) being underutilised/helpless/unneeded; (c) lack of communication from the orphanage to the volunteer tourists; (d) the percentage of the volunteer tourism vacation fees deducted by the agencies; and (e) lack of communication between the agencies and the orphanage about the programme.

(a) An established bond with the children at the orphanage

As mentioned earlier, the volunteer respondents had established a bond with the children at the orphanage and this caused sadness to them when they left.

(b) Being underutilised/helpless/unneeded

The feelings of being underutilised, useless and unneeded were expressed by the majority of the volunteer respondents. These feelings were primarily based on three main factors: (i) no or few activities for the volunteer tourists to do during the day when the children go to school; (ii) the feeling that the orphanage is a complete family which does not need help from the volunteer tourists; and (iii) language barrier.

Firstly, because the main field work was conducted during the school term, the children at the orphanage had to go to school so there were very few activities, or sometimes no activities for the volunteer respondents to do during the daytime,

except on Monday and Tuesday when they were assigned to teach English at the local school. Many volunteer respondents revealed they were sometimes bored and frustrated when they were not assigned to do activities and wanted to be assigned more work because they had come to the orphanage to help. V09 said that she and her boyfriend, V07, had to take two days off and went to the nearby provinces because they felt bored. Other volunteer respondents stated that they felt guilty just sitting around not doing anything and they would be very happy to be assigned more work. V15 wrote in her diary that:

At this orphanage I think the children are very used to Westerners, so it's not such a big deal to them. It is a very different experience from other parts of Thailand and Africa. I felt more needed and important in other places than here.

[Extract from V15's diary: 2nd August 2011]

However, some volunteer respondents such as V07 and V11 had a different view. They thought that there were always things for the volunteer tourists to do at the orphanage, but had to use their own initiative to find things to do by themselves or offer help to the staff rather than wait to be told what to do.

Interestingly, the notion of being a family at the orphanage did not cause only positive feelings for the volunteer tourists. For some volunteer respondents, this caused negative feelings of being unnecessary, because the orphanage felt like a complete family that has everything it needs. According to some of the volunteer

respondents, the children there already had good people to take care of them. Besides, the activities at the orphanage were already organised by the staff and there was nothing left for them to do. Based on this perception, they felt that they were intruding into this 'already happy' family and their contribution would be much more needed somewhere else. These feelings were illustrated as follows:

I just felt like the children don't really need us here...I think there will be other orphanages, maybe bigger ones, where volunteers will be more needed...They are just so tight...It feels like we are coming in, intruding a little bit on their space kind of thing. (V20)

The language barrier between the volunteer respondents and the children is also one of the major factors causing the volunteer respondents to feel underutilised. This is because they felt that they could not make the children truly understand what they were teaching them. Moreover, they felt that their knowledge and skills would be used in a much more useful way in other countries where the children or the local people could speak the same language as them.

What was also found in this study is that the volunteer respondents wanted to take a volunteer tourism vacation because they wanted to do something that gave them a sense of accomplishment and of doing something worthwhile. Therefore, when their desire was not truly achieved, it is not surprising that they were disappointed.

(c) Lack of communication from the orphanage to the volunteer tourists

Many volunteer respondents revealed that they did not have an idea of what they were expected to do at the orphanage. For example, V12 said that she was taken aback when the orphanage staff asked her whether her husband and she had a project for the children. She also said that she and her husband would be happy to create a project for the children if they had been told about it beforehand.

This view was also shared by some other volunteer respondents who explained that they did not know that they were going to teach English at the local school, and if they had known, they would have prepared for the lessons beforehand. Many volunteer respondents also complained that they did not know about what they were expected to teach at school and had to use their own ideas. Some volunteer respondents also mentioned the schedule for daily activities which they found that the staff did not follow, which made them frustrated because they liked things to be organised.

The volunteer respondents stated that they expected to be informed about the activities they had to do at the orphanage and about other important information before they arrived at the orphanage because they wanted to be prepared, so that their contribution would be more worthwhile for the children and their other plans would not be affected.

(d) The percentage of vacation fees deducted by agencies

It was found that all of the volunteer respondents who applied for their volunteer tourism vacation through the agencies were frustrated to know that the majority of the fee that they had paid to the agencies was kept by these agencies, leaving only a small portion to the orphanage. They originally thought that the majority of the fee would go to the orphanage because this was stated on the website of the agencies and was the main factor inspiring them to apply through these agencies. However, after learning from the orphanage staff that this was untrue, they were very unhappy. They stated that they would rather use the money deducted by the agencies to help the children.

It was observed by the researcher that actually the orphanage staff did not want to mention this information to the volunteer tourists. It happened because the volunteer tourists were unhappy that they were often asked by the staff to pay or donate more money for extra activities, such as for petrol expenses when they went to the market or nearby attractions, or meals for the children for which the volunteer respondents had to buy ingredients from their own money. They confronted the staff and asked why they had to pay for extra activities when they had already paid the fee. The staff members were obliged to tell them that they had received only a small part of the fee from the agencies which covered only accommodation and meals during their stay.

According to the volunteer respondents, they felt that they were being cheated by the agencies, which were doing this against their wishes. They also felt that their contribution to the orphanage in terms of donation was obstructed by this action, which was unacceptable.

(e) Lack of communication between the agencies and the orphanage

Some volunteer respondents mentioned a mismatch of information between the agencies they applied through and the orphanage staff, mainly related to their working hours and holidays. The volunteer respondents thought that this mismatch resulted from a lack of communication between the agencies and the orphanage. The volunteer respondents said that they were informed by the agencies that they would work five days a week during the weekdays from 9.30am until 3.30pm with two days off on weekends. However, once they arrived at the orphanage, they were assigned by the staff to work from early in the morning until 9.00pm.

The lack of communication between the agencies and the orphanage clearly caused the volunteer respondents to feel frustrated because they did not expect to work until late at night. However, they did not want to offend the orphanage staff nor let them think that they did not want to help, so they did not refuse when the staff asked them to work for more hours and sometimes during the weekends. However, they said that they were going to call the agency and ask them to explain to the orphanage staff about the mismatch of information.

The researcher observed that these complaints occurred with only one group of volunteer respondents who were staying at the orphanage and occurred only after the orphanage received complaints from the previous group of volunteer tourists about the lack of activities during the day, as discussed earlier. Therefore, the orphanage decided to assign the new groups of volunteer tourists more work to do. In addition, this is based on informal conversations with one of the orphanage staff who told the researcher that she and the other staff felt that some groups of volunteer tourists spent time among themselves and hardly offered to help in the activities; therefore, they felt that it was necessary to assign them more work. This information confirms the notion of a lack of effective communication between the orphanage and the volunteer tourists, as discussed before.

6.4. Conclusion

The findings demonstrate that the motivations of the volunteer tourists in this study are multidimensional. Five key motivational factors were identified: (i) to help the children; (ii) to gain personal development and growth; (iii) to gain new experiences; (iv) to learn about/become immersed into the local culture; and (v) to meet and make friends with other people. Amongst these five motivational themes, helping the children was the most dominant motivational factor, whereas to meet and make friends with other people was the least frequently mentioned.

Similar to the motivations, the volunteer tourists' on-site experiences were also found to be multidimensional. Four main dimensions of the volunteer tourists' on-site experiences were identified: (i) personal development and growth; (ii) social;

(iii) cultural; and (iv) feelings. Volunteer tourism experience was found to facilitate a learning process among volunteer tourists that made them develop themselves in a number of ways, such as acquiring new skills, discovering their potential and learning about new values. The volunteer tourists made new friends with the local residents (both adults and children) and other volunteer tourists, whilst strengthening the relationships with people they travelled with. Working and living in an orphanage also helped them gain an insight into local ways of life and culture. Additionally, all of the volunteer tourists stated that they were very satisfied with their experiences, although they had some concerns and negative feelings about some issues. These included feeling underutilised, a lack of communication from the orphanage staff, and a mismatch of information from agencies and the orphanage.

Chapter Seven

Hosts' Attitudes towards Volunteer Tourists

7.1. Introduction

This chapter aims to present the 'voice of the host' in the volunteer tourism's 'host-guest' relationship. The analysis of the data generates key themes relating to the hosts' attitudes towards the volunteer tourists as shown in Figure 13. The results of the research reveal that the host respondents generally held a very positive attitude towards the volunteer tourists. However, some host respondents also expressed concerns about aspects of the volunteer tourists' behaviour and perceived under-performance. The important factors influencing the positive attitudes and concerns of the host respondents towards the volunteer tourists are subsequently analysed in this chapter.

7.2. Hosts' Attitudes towards Volunteer Tourists

The host respondents expressed a variety of feelings to show their positive attitude towards the volunteer tourists, which included being impressed (e.g. by the volunteer tourists' conduct, performance and the benefits they had provided); being glad (e.g. to welcome the volunteer tourists to their community); being grateful (for the volunteer tourists' generosity, efforts, and dedication); being proud (of their own culture when the volunteer tourists showed an interest in it) and; most importantly, the feeling that having the volunteer tourists was necessary for them or their community.

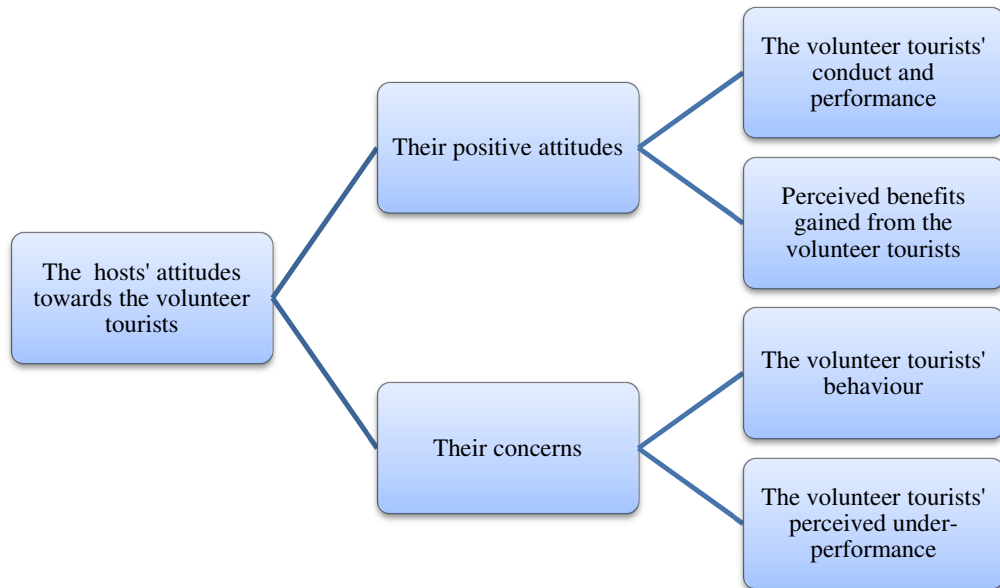


Figure 13: Hosts' attitudes towards the volunteer tourists, main themes

However, some host respondents also expressed their concerns about some of the volunteer tourists' behaviour and perceived under-performance, which was not exactly a negative attitude because they thought that these issues of concern could easily be prevented and/or improved (e.g. the way the volunteer tourists dress), and some of these issues did not actually come under the control of the volunteer tourists, but occurred from inefficient arrangement of the volunteer tourism programme (e.g. there was no connection in teaching content delivered by different volunteer tourists).

In fact, at the time of conducting the main fieldwork, some of these issues of concern had already been prevented and/or improved to the satisfaction of the host respondents (e.g. inappropriate dressing and showing affection in the public). However, the researcher believes that this information should not be omitted because the host respondents still mentioned it, which might imply that they were still concerned and would not be happy to find that future volunteer tourists had such behaviour and/or performance.

Another piece of evidence showing that the host respondents did not have negative attitudes towards the volunteer tourists is the tone which they used when they talked about these concerns, which did not show any sign of anger, or other negative feeling. On the contrary, they spoke in a moderate tone and often found reasons to explain the volunteer tourists' behaviour.

Above all, host respondents held the view that the volunteer tourists came to do good things for the community, especially for the children, without seeking anything in return, and the benefits they received from the volunteer tourists, together with other good examples of performance from them evidently overshadowed these small issues. As a result, some of the volunteer tourists' inappropriate behaviour could be easily forgiven or simply ignored.

At this point, it is necessary to point out that all of the host respondents referred to the volunteer tourists using the term *Ar-sa-sa-mak*, which is a Thai term referring to a volunteer, or the term *farang* which means a Westerner, instead of calling

them ‘volunteer tourists.’ This is because they were not familiar with the concept of volunteer tourism. However, they have been familiar with volunteers who had been coming to provide assistance in their community and the communities nearby after the Boxing Day tsunami.

Some host respondents viewed the volunteer tourists as being non-tourists, whereas some perceived them as a special type of tourist. The former group generally perceived the word ‘tourists’ as referring to mass tourists who visit the tourist attractions for only self-serving purposes, and do nothing to help the community; therefore, they felt reluctant to call them tourists when they had come to provide assistance to their community. The latter group of host respondents were aware that these volunteer tourists also went to visit other places for leisure purposes like other tourists, but they were seen as being different to other tourists, especially mass tourists, in that they spent part of their free time helping the local people or giving back to the place where they visit.

Specifically, the volunteer tourists were viewed as being different to other tourists in five main aspects: (i) they spend part of the vacation helping/working for the place where they visit without seeking anything in return; (ii) they are more eager to learn about local culture and to have close interaction and involvement with local people; (iii) they require only basic accommodation and food; (iv) they normally spend less money; and (v) they generate a lot more benefits to the host community.

7.2.1. Their positive attitudes

All of the host respondents perceived that the volunteer tourists were good people who sacrificed their own comfort to help out or to do good deeds for the well-being of the children and their community. The following quotations show the positive attitude of the local people towards the volunteer tourists:

These volunteers come with a good heart...What they do is very beneficial. For example, the children have an opportunity to study English; the staff members of the orphanage, the school and the community also receive benefits from them...The volunteers can also exchange their culture and other things with us. This is mutually beneficial because we benefit from them and they also benefit from us. Our children have an opportunity to develop their skills and abilities which, in turn, leads to the development of our community and country. (L05)

If you ask me whether our community can survive without them[the volunteer tourist], the answer is yes, it can, but it is not in a developing way. I think it is much better to have the volunteers who are good people here in our community. (L01)

L05 and L01 shared the view that the contribution of the volunteer tourists was beneficial and was a significant factor for the development of Thai Muang sub-district. L05 felt that children are the future of a nation; therefore, the benefits that the children at the orphanage and the students at the school had received from the

volunteer tourists in terms of English communication ability and the development of other skills and abilities could help develop Thai Muang sub-district and the country, whereas L01 thought that the local residents could benefit from the expertise, knowledge and skills of the volunteer tourists.

It was also found that it was not only the adult host respondents who had a very positive attitude towards the volunteer tourists, but the children at the orphanage and at the local school where the volunteer tourists went to teach English also shared this feeling. The researcher's own observation confirmed this as she had seen pictures of the children hugging and kissing the volunteer tourists repeatedly while conducting the main field work. Additionally, from her informal discussions with the children, she found that all of the children were well aware that these volunteer tourists came to help them; therefore, they had a very good feeling towards these volunteer tourists which was generally shown through their affection towards them.

(i) Factors influencing the host respondents' positive attitude

The host respondents' positive attitude towards the volunteer tourists was primarily based on two main factors: (a) the conduct and the performance of the volunteer tourists; and (b) the benefits the host respondents perceived they had gained from them. These factors, together with the associated sub-themes, are shown in Figure 14 and are discussed in detail in the following sections.

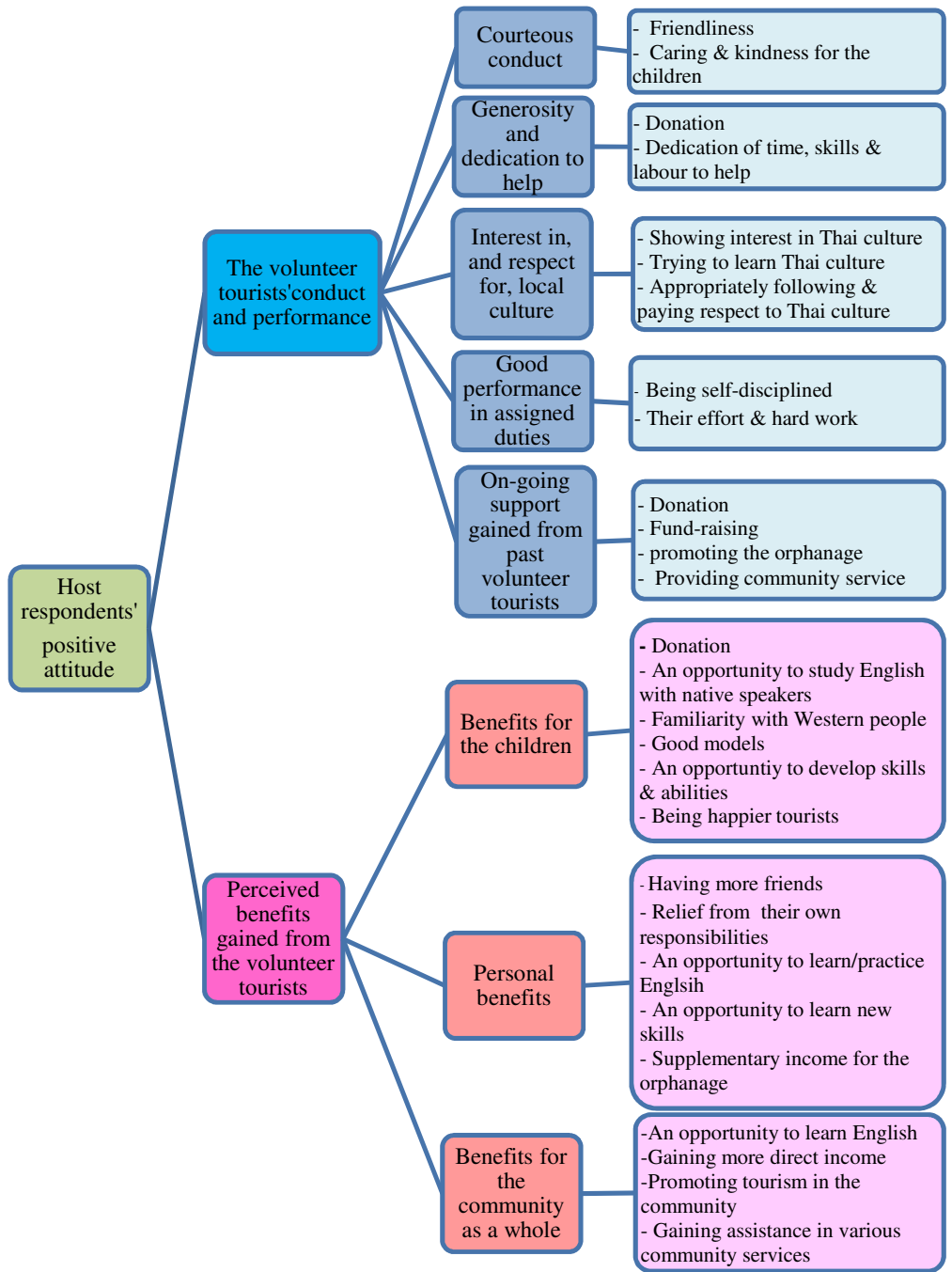


Figure 14: Factors influencing the host respondents' positive attitudes

(a) The conduct and performance of the volunteer tourists

(1) Courteous conduct

The volunteer tourists were seen as being very friendly to the host respondents, and being caring and kind to the children. These notions are exemplified in the following quotation:

Whenever we meet each other, they always smile and say 'hello' to me. Unlike other *farangs*, they don't appear arrogant or have a frowning face to me and other teachers. This really makes me feel good and positive about them. (L12)

It is evident from the above statement that the practices of the volunteer tourists were commonly seen as being friendly, including smiling, greeting, not being arrogant and being enthusiastic to talk with the local people even though there was a language barrier between them. It is noteworthy that the host respondents seemed to compare the volunteer tourists with other foreign tourists whom they had met before. In their view, the latter appeared to be unfriendly, arrogant and always had frowning faces. Therefore, they were quite surprised to find that these volunteer tourists were different.

The volunteer tourists were also seen as being kind to, and loving towards, the children². This notion was expressed largely by the orphanage staff, the teachers, and the parents of the children at the orphanage. It is apparent that the host

² The children in this research are both the children at the Home &Life orphanage and the students at Wat Muang Pracharam school where the volunteer tourists taught English.

respondents do love and care about the children; therefore, they are ready to have positive feelings towards anyone who shares such feeling with them, as exemplified by L07: “Whoever they [these volunteer tourists] are, I don’t care, only if they love our students, that is enough to please me.”

In the view of the host respondents, the volunteer tourists’ love and kindness towards the children was expressed through a variety of actions, such as always spending time with the children, paying attention to them, caring about their well-being, and not minding about their physical appearance. As L02 stated:

You know, some children may look shabby, some have boogers in their nose or dishevelled hair and some are not cute. But they [the volunteer tourists] don’t feel disgusted by them. They hug these children without showing that they are disgusted or something. But for other tourists, they don’t even mind to talk to the children, let alone hug them. So we at the orphanage are sometimes very worried about the feeling of the children when those tourists visit us here. (L02)

What is also reflected in L02’s statement is that she really cared about the feelings of the children and was worried that they might feel inferior if they felt that they disgusted other people. Therefore, when she had witnessed that the volunteer tourists did not care about the physical appearance of the children, she was very glad and felt positively about the volunteer tourists.

(2) Generosity and dedication to help

The volunteer tourists were also perceived by the host respondents as being generous and dedicated to providing help. This factor was found to be relatively significant in influencing the host respondents' positive attitudes towards the volunteer tourists. This conduct of the volunteer tourists was not only expressed in the form of donations of money and items to the children, but also in the form of dedication of time and labour in order to do goodwill activities for the community they visit without seeking anything in return. This is clearly illustrated by L03:

They [the volunteer tourists] always ask us how they can help. I do feel apprehensive because they have already paid the fees to us...When they know that we want student uniforms for the children, they immediately ask us how much money is needed. If they cannot support the whole amount, they do fundraising in order to achieve the exact amount of money or more and donate it to us, so we can buy the student uniforms for everyone. (L03)

What is reflected in the above statement is that the volunteer tourists were seen as having strong wills and putting in their best efforts to help. This is clearly illustrated by the fact that the volunteer tourists wanted to ensure that they could completely fulfil the needs of the children. Although they could not help completely by themselves, they sought assistance from other people they knew in order that the plans could be achieved. Moreover, the host respondents were also impressed that the volunteer tourists dedicated their time and labour to help the

children even though they had to work on some very tiring tasks such as cleaning, gardening, construction, etc.

It was also found that the respondents were grateful for the generosity and dedication of the volunteer tourists. A sense of gratitude is an essential element in Buddhist Thai society. Thai people are taught to be grateful to everyone and everything that they believe has done good things for them and they feel an obligation to repay or return favours to those people whenever possible. Therefore, it is not surprising to see that some respondents were concerned about their obligation to return favours to the volunteer tourists. They believed that the volunteer tourists did not want money in return for their efforts and dedication; therefore, they tried to support them and gave other things to them within their ability, such as providing refreshments and teaching materials for them, and being generous to them. Moreover, for the orphanage staff, they showed their gratitude to the volunteer tourists by giving a certificate to them.

(3) Interest in, and respect for, local culture

Many host respondents were very glad to learn that the volunteer tourists had an interest in, and showed respect to, Thai culture. They revealed that the volunteer tourists were excited to experience Thai culture and wanted to learn about it; some volunteer tourists also tried to practice some aspects of Thai culture such as doing *wai* when greeting and saying thanks to others, speaking Thai and dressing in Thai traditional costume. These points are illustrated in the following statements:

When we have festivals, they are really interested to see what these festivals are like... The other day when there was a farewell party for the volunteers and our children showed Thai classical dance. I think they liked Thai culture because all of them also wore Thai traditional costume. When I saw this, I was very glad because these are our national costume and they wore them. (L11)

Many host respondents were so glad when they were talking about how they saw that the volunteer tourists had an interest in Thai culture. I have noticed from their tone and their eyes. To be honest, being a Thai, I also shared the same feeling of the respondents during the interviews. It is very good to know that the foreigners are interested in, and tried to practice, Thai culture. I feel very proud of my own culture.

[Field note entry: 15th August 2011]

It is evident from the above statements that the host respondents might not expect the volunteer tourists to be interested in Thai culture initially. When they found out that these volunteer tourists were interested in it and wanted to learn about Thai culture, they were very surprised and glad. Moreover, the volunteer tourists' interest in Thai culture also made them feel that these volunteer tourists shared their interest in the things that they regard as being significant for their society as well as making them proud of their own culture. This led them to have positive attitudes towards the volunteer tourists.

The aspect of religious belief is another important issue that emerges from the interviews. In Thailand, it has been common to see Western Christian missionaries trying to disseminate their religious beliefs to Thai people. Some Thai people are against these missionaries and this feeling is also shared by many host respondents of Thai Muang sub-district. However, the host respondents had realised that the volunteer tourists did not come for this purpose, which made them feel positive about the volunteer tourists.

Moreover, the host respondents stated that the volunteer tourists were respectful to the religious belief of Thai people. According to L01, the volunteer tourists showed this by joining in the activities relating to Buddhist beliefs, such as praying and practicing meditation:

On the Buddhist holy days, I normally take the children to the activity room to pray. These volunteers usually come with us. When I lead the children to pray, normally I speak slowly so the children can repeat after me and these volunteers also put their hands together in a *wai* position and repeat after me together with the children. (L01)

(4) Good performance in assigned duties

In addition to taking care of the children at the Home and Life orphanage, which is the main duty of the volunteer tourists, they are also assigned to do other tasks at the orphanage which include teaching and playing with the children; doing housework such as cleaning, gardening, laundry; and doing construction work.

Besides, they are also assigned to teach English at Wat Muang Pracharam school where the children at the orphanage go on Monday and Tuesday.

The volunteer tourists' performance in the assigned duties was often complimented by the host respondents, especially the orphanage staff and the teachers. This is clearly one of the important factors influencing their positive attitude towards these volunteer tourists. The reason that this theme was commonly mentioned by these two groups of host respondents was probably because they had witnessed the performance of the volunteer tourists most closely, compared to other host respondents. Moreover, they were the groups of host respondents who appeared to benefit most from the activities done by the volunteer tourists.

The volunteer tourists were complimented as being self-disciplined in terms of being punctual and working in an orderly fashion, always put forth their best efforts and working hard on their assigned jobs. As stated by L04 and L05:

These volunteers are always punctual...When they tell the students to work on some things, they make sure that the students work [in an] orderly [fashion]. Suppose they use the paper for some activities in the class, when they finish, they always make sure that the classroom was cleaned and in an orderly state such as no paper is left under the tables. But for Thai teachers like us, we never do this. (L04)

There is one volunteer who did the compost bin with me. He went back to his country and after one year he came back here again. The first thing he did when he arrived here was going to the compost bin that he did with me to check how it works...I was so impressed that he still followed what he did. That inspired me to pay more attention to my work. (L05)

L04 compared the performance of the volunteer tourists with those of the Thai teachers at the school by stressing that the first group showed a better performance. This point implies the view of Thai people that Western people are superior to them, and Thai people must see them as role models. This belief is commonly held by many other host respondents. Similarly, L05 also accepted this view when he said that he was inspired by a volunteer tourist whom he saw as a role model in terms of having a strong intention to work.

Moreover, all of the teachers complimented the volunteer tourists in terms of their working style and their teaching techniques, which motivated the students to study English. English language is perceived to be very difficult for Thai students, especially when it is taught by Thai teachers who are not good at it or who do not have good teaching techniques. Therefore, it is unsurprising that the teachers admired the volunteer tourists when they were able to make the students enjoy studying English.

The volunteer tourists' working style, which was always complimented by the teachers, involves good teaching planning and preparation. The teachers were impressed that the volunteer tourists always planned the teaching content beforehand and prepared the teaching materials on their own, to support the teaching content. Many of them gave examples of when the volunteer tourists taught English vocabulary and made pictures of the vocabulary from paper by themselves and used these to help them while teaching.

As for teaching techniques, the teachers were impressed that the volunteer tourists used a variety of teaching techniques, such as allowing the students to practice what they have learnt, using games, and encouraging the students to participate and think in the class, which proved not only to attract their attention and motivate the students to study, but also helped with the development of the students' self-learning skills and thinking skills.

From the researcher's observations, these teaching styles were totally different from what the teachers at this school normally did. The teachers were used to giving lectures and expecting the students to sit still and listen quietly while they were teaching. The students were hardly encouraged to participate or to express their ideas in the class. Therefore, the teachers were impressed to learn new teaching styles from the volunteer tourists. This was exemplified by L15:

They [the volunteer tourists] use a variety of teaching techniques...They teach in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere which makes the students enjoy studying. Moreover, they always encourage the students to participate in the class activities and think out[side] of the box, which helps to boost their self-confidence. (L15)

Giving rewards to the students is another thing that was commonly complimented by many teachers. This was not only viewed as a sign of being generous on the volunteer tourists' part, but was also seen as a good teaching technique that motivated the students to study. The rewards that the volunteer tourists gave to the students were not only in the form of materials such as dolls, stationery and toys, but also in affection they expressed towards them, such as hugging.

Although this practice was perceived as being a good teaching technique, some of the teachers found that it was difficult for them to follow because giving rewards required a budget that the school does not have; therefore, it could only be done by the volunteer tourists who could afford this. However, some teachers showed their concerns about giving rewards to the students that were seen as being inappropriate for the students if they were given too often. This point will be discussed later in Section 7.2.2 (i).

(5) On-going support gained from past volunteer tourists

This factor was only mentioned by the orphanage staff. This is because they are closer to the volunteer tourists, compared to other groups of host respondents. It is evident that most of the staff members of the orphanage and the volunteer tourists had established a good relationship with each other during the time that the latter group stayed and worked at the orphanage.

A relationship still remained strong after the volunteer tourists left the orphanage. This friendship was established and maintained based on the impression that these two parties had of each other: the volunteer tourists were impressed with the operation of the orphanage, the courtesy, dedication, and performance of the staff, and the behaviour of the children, which made them want to keep supporting the orphanage after they left; and the staff were impressed with the conduct and performance of the volunteer tourists as well as the perceived benefits the orphanage had gained from them. The staff members regarded the past volunteer tourists as their friends who were still willing to support the orphanage. Many orphanage staff stayed in touch with past volunteer tourists regularly, mainly via e-mails and Facebook.

The staff and the children at the orphanage received on-going support from many of the past volunteer tourists in four major forms: (i) donations of things and money; (ii) fundraising activities on behalf of the orphanage; (iii) sponsoring orphanage projects; and (iv) promoting the volunteer tourism programme at the orphanage to other people.

The staff were very impressed that many of the past volunteer tourists still donated money and other items for the orphanage regularly, and many had also been conducting fundraising on their behalf. Additionally, while conducting the main field work, the orphanage was constructing a new bakery and coffee shop, sponsored by past volunteer tourists.

Moreover, many past volunteer tourists had also helped promote the volunteer tourism programme at the orphanage by producing good word-of-mouth information about the orphanage and by actively recommending other people whom they knew to come to participate in the volunteer tourism programme at the orphanage.

(b) Perceived benefits gained from the volunteer tourists

The second factor that played an important role in influencing the host respondents' positive attitude towards the volunteer tourists was the perceived benefits they had gained from the volunteer tourists. These perceived benefits can be categorised into three main groups: benefits for the children; personal benefits; and benefits for the community as a whole. Each of these perceived benefits is discussed in turn.

(1) Benefits for the children

The word 'children' in this section covers both the children at the orphanage and the students at Wat Muang Pracharam school. When the host respondents spoke about the benefits they believed they had received from the volunteer tourists,

they primarily mentioned those relating to the children. This shows that the host respondents really love and care about the children in their custody and wish for good things to happen to these children. Therefore, when they perceived that the children had benefited from the presence, conduct and performance of the volunteer tourists, they did not hesitate to portray positive attitudes towards them. This was mentioned by every host respondent, which confirms the argument above that the host respondents love and care about the children. Furthermore, it also implies that in their view, benefits for the children were most beneficial for the community. The other explanation is that they were aware that the volunteer tourists' main attention was on taking care of the children's well-being.

The benefits which the children had gained from the volunteer tourists can be categorised into six main groups: donations; an opportunity to study English with native speakers; familiarity with Western people; good role models; an opportunity to develop their skills and abilities; and being happier from the care given by the volunteer tourists.

In terms of monetary donations, the children at the orphanage had been receiving monetary donations from the volunteer tourists since the orphanage first started offering the volunteer tourism programme. This money had been used for their education and living expenses, which include food, clothes, books etc. In addition, they had received donations in the forms of items such as stationery, books, medicines, clothes, computers and toys etc. The items donated were also extended to the students at the school, normally in the form of stationery, books and toys.

The second benefit that the children gained from the volunteer tourists was an opportunity to study English with English native speakers, or Western people whose English is good. All of the host respondents felt that this was the most significant benefit for the children and it was also found to be the most important factor influencing their positive attitude towards the volunteer tourists. This is because they were aware that English is the most widely used language around the world. In addition, there are many foreign visitors who come to Thailand, either for travelling, for leisure or for business purposes. For these reasons, the ability to communicate in English is viewed as being important if one would like to earn good money in the future. People who have good English are believed to have more opportunities than those who do not.

The host respondents stated that the volunteer tourists had been helping to improve the children's English communication ability significantly, and the children's English was better than that of other children of the same age. In their view, the children have a very good opportunity to study 'real' English or to study with 'real *farangs*.' In Thai Muang sub-district, there are very few Western people visiting because it is not a famous tourist attraction and most of these Westerners were not as accessible as the volunteer tourists. Therefore, the volunteer tourists were seen as the only source of first-hand experience available for the children to learn English. As expressed by L16:

The children here have a very, very good opportunity to speak English with 'real *farangs*'...Without these volunteers, they wouldn't have a chance to practice speaking with real foreigners... It is like the first-hand experience, which is better than learning from only in their books.

L16's view was also shared by many host residents. This clearly indicates that the host respondents believed that studying English with English native speakers, or Western people who can speak English, is an effective way for the children to develop their English language. This view was overwhelmingly shared by the teachers, who pointed out that the students had received an opportunity to learn the correct English pronunciation from English native speakers, which is a problem faced by many Thai English language teachers. The host respondents also emphasised that studying English with the volunteer tourists was free of charge, which was a good opportunity for these children.

Apart from the English language, the volunteer tourists also provided an opportunity for the children to develop other skills and abilities by either raising funds for skills development projects, or using their own expertise or skills to teach the children, such as playing tennis, or arranging for a trainer of other sport for the children.

The fourth benefit which the children had gained from the volunteer tourists was an opportunity to become familiar with Western people, which, in turn, made them more confident when they met foreigners. The confidence of these children

was seen to be different from other Thai children, who are shy or scared of Western people. Moreover, the host respondents also perceived that being familiar with Western people provided the children with an opportunity to learn about Western culture, such as some parts of social etiquette and tips about the daily life (e.g. how to greet people in a Western style, what to say when sneezing etc.), which is seen as being beneficial for them if they choose to work in the hotel or other service industries.

Additionally, the volunteer tourists were seen as being good people who could serve as good models for the children in many ways, such as helping others without seeking anything in return, generosity, and protecting the environment. The volunteer tourists could also inspire the children to study at a high level. Some host residents also indicated that the volunteer tourists inspired the children to realise the significance of their own community because they had witnessed that the volunteer tourists had come to do good things for their community, so they, as the members of the community, should also do good things for their own community when they grow up.

Finally, the host respondents believed that the children were happier and “warmer” from the care given by the volunteer tourists. They realised that the children at the orphanage generally encountered emotional and psychological needs more than other children, as they did not have an opportunity to live with their own parents. Therefore, they felt that the volunteer tourists, whom they think are good people, could help in fulfilling these needs. They thought that the

volunteer tourists came with good hearts, and good feelings towards these children so that the love and care given by them had made the children feel warmer and happier. These notions are clearly reflected in L06's statement:

As we know that most of the children at this orphanage don't have parents, so, when there are good people[the volunteer tourists] coming to help take care of them ... They feel mentally warmer...they just want to hold their hands and hug them. This is enough for them to be happy.

(2) Personal benefits

It was found that the personal benefits were not considered as important as the benefits for the children. Some host respondents viewed the benefits they gained from the volunteer tourists as side benefits, whereas some host respondents did not mention these benefits at all until asked. The explanation for this could be that the host respondents gave priority to the children, or that they were well aware that the focus of the volunteer tourists was the well-being of the children, rather than that of the adult host respondents.

The personal benefits that the host respondents had received from the volunteer tourists include: having more friends; relief from their own responsibilities; an opportunity to learn/practice English; an opportunity to learn new skills; and supplementary income for the orphanage.

As mentioned earlier, the orphanage staff regarded the volunteer tourists as their friends, both during and after their stay. Therefore, it is not a surprise to find that 'having more friends' was commonly mentioned as a personal benefit gained from the volunteer tourists by most of the orphanage staff.

The second personal benefit which the host respondents had received from the volunteer tourists was being relieved of responsibility. This was overwhelmingly mentioned by the teachers because every teacher at Wat Muang Pracharam school had his/her own class for which he/she was responsible and had to teach almost every subject, including English, which they were not good at. Therefore, when their responsibility for teaching English was relieved by the volunteer tourists, they were very happy because they had more time to do other tasks such as correcting the students' homework or going to the library. Moreover, as they realised that they were not good at teaching English language, they thought that the students would benefit a lot more from studying English with the volunteer tourists, who were generally English native speakers or spoke good English.

The other group of host respondents that mentioned this type of benefit is the orphanage staff, who had been relieved by the volunteer tourists of their responsibilities for taking care of the children and doing housework, such as cleaning, gardening and laundry. During the main fieldwork, there were only six staff members at the Home and Life orphanage, who had to take care of twenty-six children. Therefore, it made sense that the staff would be very happy to have more people to come to relieve them of these responsibilities.

Thirdly, the host respondents also had a good opportunity to learn and practice their English with the volunteer tourists. This kind of benefit was only mentioned by the host respondents who can speak some or good English. Having to work regularly with the volunteer tourists forced some of the host respondents to speak English with them, which consequently helped boost their confidence in speaking English with foreigners.

Additionally, having an opportunity to learn new skills from the volunteer tourists was also cited as another important benefit that the host respondents gained from the volunteer tourists. Since the volunteer tourists came from different backgrounds, they had acquired a variety of expertises and skills that they could share with the host respondents. For example, some volunteer tourists had a good knowledge of looking after children; some were nurses or doctors who could share their knowledge of first aid; and some had good skills of decorating and cooking.

As for the host respondents who are teachers, learning teaching techniques from the volunteer tourists was a common benefit amongst them. The teachers felt that the teaching techniques of the volunteer tourists were very good at enhancing the children's self-learning and thinking skills, which could boost their confidence as well as making the class fun and interesting, which would motivate the children to study.

Lastly, gaining supplementary income for supporting the orphanage was also cited as a personal benefit gained by the orphanage staff, who had to consider the survival of the orphanage. All of the staff stated that they had been receiving the fees paid by the volunteer tourists. Although this fee is primarily used to cover the cost of the volunteer tourists' food and accommodation, the orphanage still received some small profit from that fee which they can use for the operation of the orphanage.

(3) Benefits for the community as a whole

Having the volunteer tourists in Thai Muang sub-district was also perceived as beneficial for the community as a whole. These benefits include: an opportunity to learn English; gaining more direct income; promoting tourism in the community; and gaining assistance in various community services.

Firstly, the host respondents suggested that other groups of host respondents, such as sellers and other groups of children could also benefit from the volunteer tourists in terms of gaining an opportunity to learn English. Other host respondents, such as sellers, could also learn English language from the volunteer tourists by trying to communicate with them. This ability in English communication could help them to communicate with other foreigners who come to visit Thai Muang sub-district. Additionally, other children also had an opportunity to study English with the volunteer tourists because the Home and Life orphanage also arranges an English session once a week on Wednesday evenings, which other children in Thai Muang sub-district were invited to attend.

This English session was taught by the volunteer tourists at the orphanage and those from the volunteer teacher centre in KhaoLak.

The host respondents also pointed out that the volunteer tourists had helped create employment opportunities for some groups of local people, especially the Moken³ people, who were very poor and whose only source of income was from fishing, which could be done only six months a year, out of the monsoon season. The construction of the bakery and coffee shop, which had been sponsored by past volunteer tourists, had created job opportunities and another source of income for these Moken people.

Moreover, the host respondents also found that the volunteer tourists generated income for other local people by spending their money buying fruit, food and other things from them. The volunteer tourists also help promote the tourist attractions of Thai Muang sub-district to their friends and families by giving good recommendations.

Lastly, the host respondents also mentioned that the volunteer tourists had been helping in various kinds of community services, such as doing maintenance work for the temples and the local medical stations, and helping the police to communicate with other foreigners if they had problems. Moreover, during the

³ Moken people or Thai Mai (Thai Mai means new Thai people) are Sea Gypsies who used to migrate from one island to another island along the Andaman Coast, but now some groups of them have settled in the mainland of Thai Muang sub-districts and other districts in PhangNga province as well as other provinces nearby.

main fieldwork, one group of volunteer tourists was also asked to judge in the pronunciation competition of the students at the vocational college.

7.2.2. *The issues of concerns*

(i) *The host respondents' concerns*

Some host respondents expressed their concerns about some of the volunteer tourists' inappropriate behaviour and perceived under-performance. The issues of concern relating to the volunteer tourists' inappropriate behaviour includes inappropriate dress and showing affection in the public. Their under-performance involves their performance in taking care of the children, in doing housework and in teaching English (Figure 15).

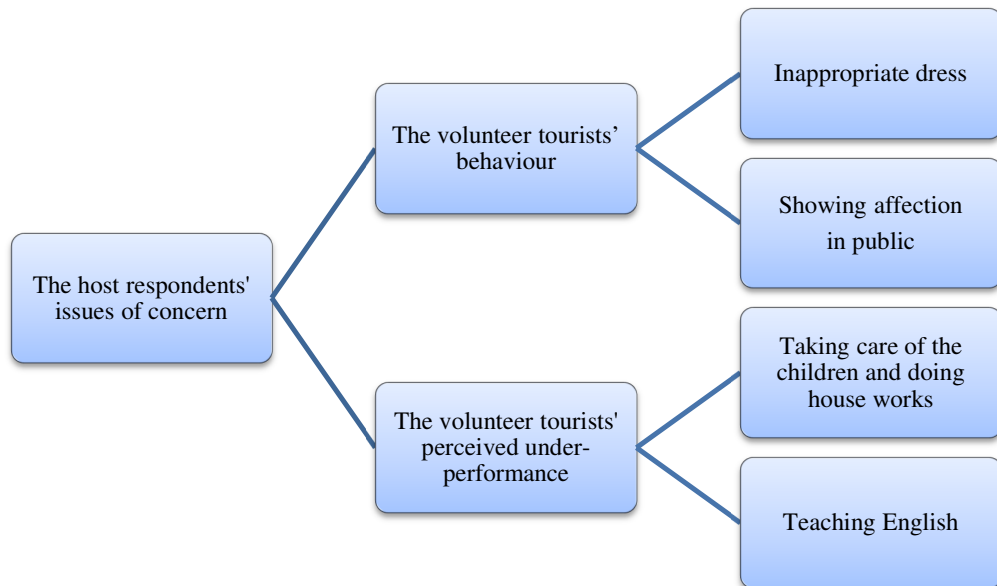


Figure 15: The host respondents' issues of concern towards the volunteer tourists

Such concerns were mentioned by only two groups of host respondents; the orphanage staff and the teachers. This is possibly because their duties and responsibilities were closer to the volunteer tourists than other groups and were primarily related to the well-being of the children. The latter point is possibly a reason why all of the concerns were related to the children. In other words, local respondents were worried that these concerns could affect the behaviour of the children or their academic results.

(a) Volunteer tourists' inappropriate behaviour

The behaviour of the volunteer tourists that was perceived by the host respondents as being inappropriate involves the way they dress and show affection in public. These concerns were mainly based on the host respondents' experience of the previous groups of volunteer tourists. At the time of conducting the main field work, these issues were already rectified because the orphanage staff arranged an orientation for the volunteer tourists about the local culture, 'dos and don'ts in Thailand', and the rules and regulations of staying at the orphanage. The host respondents said that, generally, the volunteer tourists followed these instructions and were willing to improve their behaviour when they were warned. The following sections discuss each of these types of conduct in details.

(1) Inappropriate dress

This issue of concern originated mainly from the female volunteer tourists who dressed in such a way that too much skin was shown to be considered appropriate

in Thai culture. Thai people generally dress so that most of their skin is covered. This issue was the most cited concern expressed by the local respondents. They were very worried about this issue because the volunteer tourists had to spend most of their time with the children and they also took on the role of a teacher; therefore, they were expected to be a role model for the children in every way, including how to dress. Furthermore, they also had to work with construction men, so it was not appropriate for women to wear sexy clothes while working with a lot of men.

The dressing issue was considered more important when visiting important places, such as Buddhist temples, sacred places for Buddhist Thai people, and the school, which is an official place where people are expected to dress in a respectful way.

The following statement illustrates these points:

Some of them [the volunteer tourists] wear a sexy strappy vest top with a low neckline and when they bend over, the students can see their boobs... One of the students told me that 'Oh, teacher, today I see a *farang's* boobs'... I would like them to dress properly because they are a teacher as well... I had to explain to the kids that our country is a hot country, so that these *farangs* had to dress in the way that their skin could get a lot of air. (L07)

However, the host respondents understood that the volunteer tourists did not have any bad intention, but simply dress according to their own culture which does not

have rules about showing too much skin, and Thailand is a hot country, so the volunteer tourists who came from colder countries were not familiar with its weather, and had to wear very light clothes that might show a lot of skin. They also explained these reasons to the children to prevent them from imitating the way volunteer tourists dress.

Moreover, in order to solve this problem, the orphanage staff also introduced some solutions for the volunteer tourists by making T-shirts for them to wear when they go to teach at the school. They also explained how to dress properly in Thai culture on the first day of their arrival, giving advice such as not to wear shorts or skirts that are too short or strappy vest tops with a very low neckline. In addition, before going to the Buddhist temple, they suggested beforehand how to dress appropriately.

The host respondents stated these solutions worked very well because the volunteer tourists followed their suggestions. They said that they understood that this issue might offend some volunteer tourists, but they thought it was an important issue to be addressed and they believed that the volunteer tourists would understand it if they explained the reasons in a polite way.

(2) Showing affection in public

Many volunteer tourists came as part of a couple and they showed their affection in public, such as hugging or kissing each other openly. In addition, the majority

were teenage couples who were not married and slept together in the same room. This conduct was considered inappropriate in Thai culture.

In Thai culture, showing affection to each other is something a couple is supposed to do only in private places, and only married couples can sleep together in the same room. Although at the present time many young couples in Thailand, especially those in big cities, do not follow this culture strictly, sleeping together before marriage and showing affection in public are not generally acceptable, especially in remote areas, and can cause rumours and humiliation for their parents.

Although the host respondents did not like this conduct, they understood that such conduct was normal in Western culture. However, this conduct was seen as setting a bad example for the children, as stated by L06:

For example, some volunteer tourists who are a couple but are not yet married always hug and kiss each other in public. I understand that these things are normal in their countries, but it is not in our country. The children may imitate them when they grow up...I personally feel awkward to tell them not to do these things because it is their culture and it is also their personal things.

Many other host respondents also shared the view of L06 about feeling awkward and thought that it would be impolite to forbid the volunteer tourists to show their affection for each other in public because it was their personal issue and they did

not want to offend them. Therefore, they created some solutions for this issue. This showed that they really cared about the feelings of the volunteer tourists and tried to avoid anything that might offend the volunteer tourists by employing soft solutions to prevent the problem, instead of confronting them.

The solutions include assigning a couple to work separately so that they did not have time to be together, thereby reducing the opportunity for them to show their affection in public. Moreover, they also thought that it was important to explain to the children about the difference between Western culture and Thai culture and teach them the significance of following Thai culture.

(b) Volunteer tourists' under-performance in assigned duties

According to the orphanage staff, some volunteer tourists, especially those who were teenagers, did not use their best effort to do the assigned tasks. For example, they did not actually help the children when taking a bath but just watched while they were taking a bath by themselves; they did only what they were assigned to do without doing anything else they could actually do on their initiative; they did not know how to perform some specific tasks properly, such as ironing or hanging the clothes. These points were illustrated by L01:

Some volunteers have never done these kinds of work before ...However, I still think it is a good thing that they have come here and are ready to do volunteer works. They may need some times to adjust themselves to us.

According to L01, this issue occurred because the volunteer tourists did not understand how to perform the tasks properly according to the expectation of the orphanage staff. In other words, they did not know what they were actually supposed to do. For example, in the case of the children bathing, the orphanage staff wanted the volunteers to do it for the children because in Thailand, Thai parents always do this, since they believed that children cannot do it by themselves, but the volunteer tourists did not understand this expectation and performed according to their own understanding and culture.

However, it can be seen that L01 did not want to accuse the volunteer tourists as being irresponsible; on the contrary, he said that this issue occurred because the volunteer tourists had never done these tasks before and they might need time to adjust. He also stressed that although the volunteer tourists could not perform their tasks properly, they still had good intentions.

For the teachers, their issues of concern focused on some of the teaching styles that the volunteer tourists used, which they viewed as being inappropriate for Thai students. For example, they allowed the students to do everything freely without paying proper respect to the teachers, such as allowing the students to interrupt them while they were giving a lecture, allowing the students to walk freely in the class without asking for permission, and letting the students stand over their shoulder while they were sitting.

These manners were not allowed for Thai students because they were indications of lack of respect to the teachers. The respondents believed that this was also the result of the differences between Western and Thai cultures. Their concern was that the students might absorb these manners and forget how to act properly in the classroom according to Thai culture. Many teachers also stated that they did not want to speak about this issue directly to the volunteer tourists because they did not want to offend them; therefore, they chose to solve this problem by explaining to the students the difference in culture and what manners they should follow.

The second concern of the teachers involves the rewards given by the volunteer tourists to the students, which some teachers thought could affect the behaviour of the students. They had noticed that the volunteer tourists used many types of rewards to motivate the students to study and do activities. Although they thought that it was a good teaching technique, they also found that this technique was used too often and could possibly cause the students to do everything because of the rewards, rather than because they want to.

The next concern expressed by the teachers is that each volunteer tourist came to teach for a very short period of time, such as one week or two weeks, and there was no connection in the teaching content between different volunteer tourists. Sometimes, therefore, the students had to learn things that had already been covered by previous volunteer tourists.

According to the researcher's own observations, volunteer tourists were told by the orphanage staff to create their own lessons, without giving any other information about what had already been taught, or what each class was supposed to study according to the school curriculum. Therefore, the volunteer tourists did not have any idea about what they were supposed to teach. This situation also occurred for the researcher herself during the pilot study when she also took on the role of a volunteer tourist and was asked to teach English at the school while there were no other volunteer tourists at the orphanage. She asked the orphanage staff about the teaching content she was supposed to teach, and was told that she could teach anything she felt was important for the students to know, such as English vocabulary. For this reason, the volunteer tourists did not know what to teach.

The other issue stated by the teachers is that the volunteer tourists focused their teaching more on English language used in daily life, rather than English grammar. The use of English language in daily life was thought by the teachers as not being useful for the students in terms of taking examinations. In Thailand, English grammar is considered very significant and is central to English language. It is normal for Thai teachers who teach English to focus their teaching mainly on English grammar and the examinations focus on that.

For this reason, it is not surprising to see that this issue was mentioned by the teachers at Wat Muang Pracharam school, especially L13, who is a director of the school. L13 thought that this issue did not arise from any bad intention of the

volunteer tourists, but it was a mistake made by the school itself that it did not create a teaching plan and send it to the orphanage so that the orphanage could cooperate with the volunteer tourists. L13 believed that this problem could be solved by creating a teaching plan for the volunteer tourists so that each volunteer tourist would know what lessons were already taught, and what they had to teach next. With this solution, the lessons given by each volunteer tourist coming at different times would be connected with each other. Moreover, the school could also set out what lessons they would like the volunteer tourists to teach, such as focusing more on English grammar.

Lastly, a couple of the teachers also stated that they had noticed that many times, the teaching tasks had mainly been carried out by one of the orphanage staff, and the volunteer tourists just took on the role of teaching assistants by helping the orphanage staff correct the students' exercises. They also added that this issue was not the fault of the volunteer tourists, but arose from the interference of the orphanage staff. Therefore, they thought this problem should be addressed by the orphanage.

7.3. Conclusion

The results demonstrate that the host respondents have mixed views about the volunteer tourists: some viewed them as non-tourists, whereas some viewed them as a special type of tourist. Five main criteria were found to be used by the host respondents to distinguish the volunteer tourists from other tourists: (i) helping and working without seeking anything in return; (ii) eagerness in learning about

local culture and having close interaction and involvement with local people; (iii) requiring basic accommodation and food; (iv) spending less money; and (v) generating more benefits to the host community.

It was found that all of the host respondents generally had positive attitudes towards the volunteer tourists. These were primarily based on two main factors related to the conduct and performance of the volunteer tourists and the perceived benefits they gained from them. The benefit for the children in terms of them having opportunity to study English language with native speakers was cited as the most significant factor. However, some host respondents also expressed concerns about some of the volunteer tourists' behaviour and under-performance. In the hosts' view, the issues of concern were due to cultural differences.

Chapter Eight

Discussion of Findings and Conclusion

8.1. Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings presented in Chapters Six and Seven in relation to the conceptual and theoretical framework and existing literature (discussed in Chapters Two, Three, and Four). It is organised according to the topics listed in the research objectives: the volunteer tourists' motivations; the volunteer tourists' on-site experiences; the hosts' attitudes towards the volunteer tourists; and the interaction between the volunteer tourists and the hosts. This chapter also analyses the contribution to knowledge made by this study. A discussion of the limitations of the study, suggestions for volunteer tourism organisations and other stakeholders, as well as suggestions for future research, is also presented.

8.2. Discussion of Findings

8.2.1. The volunteer tourists' motivations

(i) The multidimensional nature of the volunteer tourists' motivations

The findings of this study indicate that the motivations of the volunteer tourists are multidimensional, a combination of intrinsic and extrinsic motivations, with expectations of potential outcomes which can be gained from their participation in the volunteer tourism programme at the Home and Life orphanage. For example, a desire to meet and make friends with other people demonstrates a social need or intrinsic need of the volunteer tourists, whereas a desire for personal development

and growth can be interpreted as extrinsic motivations, because, according to the data, this need was influenced by external factors such as modern society or the home culture of the volunteer tourists (young volunteer tourists from the United Kingdom participated in the volunteer tourism as part of their gap year because it is a popular in their home country). A desire for personal development and growth also reflects the volunteer tourists' intrinsic needs as well as their expectations of outcomes through participation.

A desire to help children can be interpreted as arising from a combination of extrinsic motivation and intrinsic motivation. The data suggests that this desire was influenced by external factors, such as the 2004 Boxing Day tsunami, and a sense of global citizenship (which has been actively promoted in postmodern society). It was also influenced by internal needs such as the volunteer tourists' need to reduce a feeling of guilt at being born more fortunate and needs for self-fulfilment. A desire to learn about and be immersed in the local culture and to gain new experiences represents the volunteer tourists' expectations of outcomes from participation in volunteer tourism at the orphanage.

These findings are concurrent with several other studies of the motivations of volunteers and volunteer tourists (e.g. Wearing, 2001; Broad, 2003; Brown, 2005; Carter, 2008; Sin, 2009; Lo and Lee, 2011; Ooi and Laing, 2010; Smith, 2003). The findings also support the arguments made by Clary *et al.* (1998), and Clary and Snyder (1999), who remark that people undertaking a similar type of volunteering activity may have different motivations for doing so, and that the

same volunteer can have more than one motivation for engaging in volunteering activity.

In this study, it is apparent that, despite the fact that all the volunteer tourists had participated in similar volunteering activities at the same place, they were driven by different motivations. In addition, each of the volunteer tourists was motivated by a mix of motivational factors.

(ii) Comparing five motivational themes with the Volunteer Functions Inventory approach (VFI)

As mentioned in Chapter Three, this study uses the Volunteer Functions Inventory (VFI) proposed by Clary *et al.* (1998) as the conceptual framework for understanding the volunteer tourists' motivations in participating in Thailand's orphan volunteer tourism. Chapter Six presents the five motivational themes of the volunteer tourists: (i) to help the children; (ii) to gain personal development and growth; (iii) to gain new experiences; (iv) to learn about/be immersed in the local culture; and (v) to meet and make friends with other people.

These motivational themes support the VFI framework in that similar volunteer tourism activities performed by the volunteer tourists can serve different functions or needs for different people. In addition, these five motivational themes are quite similar to the motivational functions of the VFI framework, with the absence of the enhancement function and the protective function, and the addition of the

cultural-related motivational function (to learn about/be immersed in the local culture).

A desire to help the children is related to the value function of the VFI framework because it emphasises the volunteer tourists' desire to provide benefits to other people. Gaining personal development and growth is related to the career function, as this theme reflects the needs of the volunteer tourists to gain experiences and skills and other related benefits that can help them achieve in their current study and/or career.

However, the motivational of gaining personal development and growth is not only limited to the aspect of career benefits of the volunteer tourists, as suggested in the VFI, but it also encompasses three other aspects that are associated with the volunteer tourists' desire for personal development and growth: (i) a desire for an opportunity to practice or test their skills and/or to acquire experiences before entering working life; (ii) a need to prove themselves; and (iii) a wish to discover themselves. The first two aspects are part of the understanding function in the VFI framework, but in this study they are considered to be more related to a desire for personal development and growth, especially the first aspect, which evidently is directly involved with the future career of the volunteer participants.

The volunteer tourists' motivation in gaining new experiences is related to the understanding function of VFI because it emphasises a desire to learn new things. Specifically, this motivational theme relates to the volunteer tourists' desire to

have a different experience out of their home country and their desire to have a volunteering experience. A need to meet and make friends with other people is related to the social function of VFI. However, it emphasises a desire to meet and have relationship with new people who may or may not be in the volunteer tourists' social group, rather than a desire to fit in or strengthen relationships with people in their social groups, which is the focus of the social function.

However, the motivational themes related to the enhancement function of the VFI or a desire to enhance one's self-esteem, and the protective function or a need to reduce one's own negative feeling, are not found as major motivational factors for the volunteer tourists in this study. These aspects were found to serve as factors influencing the volunteer tourists' desire to help the children. In other words, the volunteer tourists did not regard these two aspects as the main reasons for participating in Thailand's orphan volunteer tourism, but only as expected consequences of helping the children.

Moreover, this study identifies an additional motivational factor to the VFI framework, which is a desire to learn about/be immersed in the local culture. This motivational theme reflects one main feature of the volunteer tourism (as discussed in Chapter Two), which is cross-cultural exchange between volunteer tourists and local people in the communities where the volunteer tourism takes place. This motivational theme focuses on the volunteer tourists' perception of volunteer tourism as a means for them to learn and understand the local culture of their host community from the 'inside' in an authentic way.

(iii) Altruism versus egoism

The findings regarding the volunteer tourists' motivations in this study share the findings of several other examples of existing literature, which claim that both altruism and egoism or self-interest play an important role in driving the volunteer tourist to engage in volunteer tourism, and these two dimensions are closely interconnected and there is a blurred boundary between them (e.g. Stebbins, 1992, 2004; Wearing, 2001; Broad, 2003; Brown, 2005; Carter, 2008; Sin, 2009; Mustonen, 2007; van der Meer, 2007; Coghlan and Fennell, 2009; Chen and Chen, 2011; Lo and Lee, 2011).

All of the volunteer tourists stated that their motivations were a mixture of both altruistic and self-interested motivations. These findings have resonance with the argument of Clary and Snyder (1999, p. 157) that

It appears that many volunteers' motivations cannot be neatly classified as either altruistic or egoistic, both because some specific motives combine other-interested and self-interested considerations and because many people indicate that they have both kinds of reasons for volunteering.

The blurred boundary between altruistic and egoistic motivations in driving an individual to engage in one specific activity may challenge Batson's (1991) concept of altruism versus egoism. To reiterate briefly, Batson (ibid.) stated that these two groups of motivations lie on opposite end of the continuum (see Section 3.2.4) and in order to justify whether the motivation is altruistic or egoistic, the

ultimate goal of one's motivation is used: if the ultimate goal of an individual is the welfare of others, his motivation is considered altruistic. Although his action may also produce benefits for himself, these are unintended consequences of his altruistic motivations and actions. On the other hand, if the ultimate goal of one's motivation is to increase his own welfare, then his motivation is considered egoistic. It is evident that, according to Batson (ibid.), the ultimate goal of any individual in helping others is either for the welfare of other people or for the welfare of one's self. In other words, these two ultimate goals cannot direct the motivations at the same time.

However, all of the volunteer tourists in this study seemed to find it difficult to identify whether their ultimate goal or desire was for the welfare of the children or for their own benefit. In their view, it could be both: they wanted to make the lives of the children at the orphanage better and wanted to give back to the society; and at the same time, they hoped that they could also benefit from their contribution.

Although the majority of the volunteer tourists said that making the lives of the children better was more important for them in engaging in volunteer tourism at the orphanage than gaining benefits for themselves, it was not their sole ultimate desire because they also hoped that they would benefit. In this case, their motivations still cannot be considered pure altruism based on Batson's (1991) altruism concept because the volunteer tourists' self-benefits are not unintended consequences: they are also part of their ultimate goal.

This finding also challenges the perspective of the advocates of universal egoism's concepts (e.g. Duffy, 2001; Munt, 1994; Dovidio *et al.*, 2006), who argue that motivations for helping are all in fact some form of self-serving motivations. In contrast, the findings of this study suggest that the volunteer tourists' motivations do not primarily or solely aim at their own benefits, but the need to help or increase the welfare of the children evidently plays an important role in driving them to engage in volunteer tourism. This study concludes that the motivations of the volunteer tourists consist of multiple layers of ultimate goals in which the needs for the welfare of others and one's own welfare are both present.

In addition, the concept of reciprocal altruism proposed by Söderman and Snead (2008), as discussed in Section 3.2.4 seems to be one of the best explanations of the combination of altruistic and egoistic motivations of the volunteer tourists and their blurred boundary that was found in this study. They (*ibid.*) suggest that volunteer tourists' motivations can be considered reciprocal altruism because volunteer tourism is not only about the benefit of other people, but it is also for the volunteer tourists' own benefit. The five motivational themes of the volunteer tourists presented in Chapter Six evidently demonstrate the reciprocal altruism concept, in which the volunteer tourists' desire to help the children and their desire for their own benefit are presented.

(iv) Comparing the volunteer tourists' motivations with other existing literature

The main themes of the volunteer tourists' motivations in this study are in many ways consistent with those reported in other studies, as reviewed in Section 3.2.5. However, there are some motivational factors which are presented in other studies that are not shared by this study: (i) practical reasons; (ii) a desire to enhance relationships with family members; and (iii) religious-related motivations.

Firstly, in terms of practical reasons related to travelling, such as gaining access to places that are difficult to visit on their own (Sin, 2009; Chen and Chen, 2011), cost of travelling (Sin, 2009), and right time (Chen and Chen, 2011; McGehee and Santos, 2005), it was found in this study that these motivational factors were not interpreted by the volunteer tourists as their main motivations to participate in orphan volunteer tourism, but served only as factors that make their motivation stronger or as influencing factors that help them to make a final decision for engaging in volunteer tourism at the orphanage. For example, many volunteer participants, especially recent graduates and students, stated that the volunteer tourism programme at the Home and Life orphanage suited their available time and their budget; therefore, they decided to participate in the programme at this place rather than other places.

Secondly, enhancing relationships with family members was reported as one of the main motivations of the volunteer tourists in the studies of Brown (2005) and Chen and Chen (2011); however, this motivational factor is not presented in this

study. This could be because many of the volunteer participants in these two studies had taken their volunteer vacation with their family members, whereas the majority of the volunteer participants in this study were young recent graduates and students who were taking a trip with their friends. There was only one mature couple, and this motivational factor was not mentioned by them.

Regarding religious-related motivations, relevant studies to date are those conducted by Taillon and Jamal (2009); Lo and Lee (2011); and Carter (2008). Lo and Lee (2011) and Carter (2008) point out that some volunteer participants in their study were selected through the network of a local church. This is contrary to this study because the volunteer tourists were selected using purposive sampling from those who were volunteering at the orphanage. None of the volunteer tourists in this study mentioned any religious-related motivations in participating in volunteer tourism. Apart from this reason, it is still not clear why this motivational factor was not found, but it may have something to do with the personal beliefs, interests and characteristics of the volunteer tourists.

This study is consistent with the study of van der Meer (2007), who studies volunteer tourism in KhaoLak, Phang Nga province, Thailand, in that other-oriented motivation or a desire to help others is the most dominant motivation of the volunteer tourist. However, this finding differs from other studies, which report that volunteer tourists were more strongly motivated by self-oriented motivations. For example, Wearing (2001), Broad (2003), and Sin (2009) similarly reported that volunteer tourists were more passionate about travelling to

other countries than helping wildlife or contributing to the local community; Brown (2005), Lo and Lee (2011), and Chen and Chen (2011) all reveal that a desire to be immersed into the local culture is the strongest motivation for the volunteer participants in their studies. Carter's (2008) study found that a desire for new experience outweighs a desire to help others.

The difference between the finding of this study and these studies could be attributed to two major factors, which include the Boxing Day tsunami, and the Western volunteer tourists' perception of inequality between themselves and the children at the orphanage. These two factors were frequently mentioned by the volunteer tourists as the main factors influencing their desire to help the children. These factors are discussed in detail in the next section. Moreover, the Boxing Day tsunami also serves as a reason explaining the similarities in the findings between this study and van der Meer's (2007) study.

(v) Factors influencing the volunteer tourists' motivations

This section discusses the significant factors influencing the volunteer tourists' motivations, which include: (a) the context of the place where the volunteer tourism is undertaken; and (b) the notion of inequality between the Western volunteer tourists and the children at the orphanage.

(a) The context of place where the volunteer tourism is undertaken

In terms of the context of the place where the volunteer tourism is undertaken, firstly, the notion of Thailand as a foreign non-English speaking country was found to influence many of the volunteer tourists when they choose it as their volunteer tourism destination. This is because it provided an unfamiliar, challenging environment where they could get the most out of the experience for their future career. For example, someone hoping to become a teacher might learn more about communicating with students using a variety of teaching techniques that suit the capability of the children by overcoming a language barrier. This finding, therefore, supports the concept of perceiving volunteer tourism as ‘a geography of experimentation’ or a training ground for gaining academic or career achievement, as suggested by Simpson (2005, p.111).

In addition, the notion of the unfamiliarity of Thailand, which encapsulates a number of aspects, such as being out of their comfort zone, language barriers, and lack or limited knowledge of cultures, was found to influence the volunteer tourists’ desire to prove to themselves that they were capable of doing things they had never done before.

The unfamiliarity of Thailand also influenced the volunteer tourists’ desire for gaining new experience. For many volunteer tourists, this was their first time visiting Thailand; therefore, it is not a surprise that their ‘geographical imagination’ of Thailand, as a place that is ‘far away’ and ‘different’ and where they would gain an experience that is totally new and different from their own

country, played an important role. This finding is consistent with the study of Sin (2009, p.488), who showed that the Singaporean volunteer tourists' 'geographical imagination' of South Africa as a place that is 'far away', 'exotic', 'different', and 'not frequently visited' by other Singaporeans influenced their motivation to participate in volunteer tourism there.

Furthermore, Thailand is also known as a country hit by the Boxing Day tsunami. This not only significantly influenced the volunteer tourists' desire to help the affected children, but also played an important role in the selection of a place where they could best exercise their altruistic practices. Many of the volunteer tourists stated that they wanted their contribution to be the most beneficial, so they believed that it should be performed in a place where there is much need.

Secondly, it was found that the notion of working at an orphanage influenced a desire to help less fortunate children and a desire for personal development and growth of the volunteer tourists. In terms of a desire to help the children, the majority of the volunteer respondents chose to volunteer at the orphanage because they had a personal interest in children; therefore, they wanted to help children who were in need. A number of the volunteer tourists stated that they felt more comfortable spending time with children and would be happy to help children who were less fortunate to have a better life and this was their primary reason for choosing to volunteer at the orphanage, rather than other places.

In addition, the orphanage was also specifically chosen by many volunteer respondents because it was believed to be a place where they could gain the most relevant work experience. The majority of the volunteer tourists in this study were recent graduates who were seeking experience relevant to their future career. Many of them stated that they wanted to be a teacher or work with children, so the orphanage seemed to be the perfect place for them. Again, this finding has resonance with an argument of Simpson (2005, p.112), who remarks that volunteer tourism is seen as 'a geography of experimentation' by the volunteer tourists who want to gain experience that they could use or benefit from in their future career. It also supports the argument made by Söderman and Snead (2008), who said that volunteer tourism also serves as 'a risk reducer' for volunteer tourists who want to practice their profession before committing to it.

The influence of the volunteer tourism destination to the volunteer tourists' motivations, as discussed above, supports the study conducted by Houle *et al.* (2005) in that it argues that the volunteer tourists, whose motivations were already identified, do not randomly select tasks or destinations, but are most likely to choose a task and/or a place that can best satisfy their predetermined motivations.

(b) The notion of inequality between the Western volunteer tourists and the children at the orphanage

In terms of the notion of inequality between the Western volunteer tourists and the children at the orphanage, it is found that all of the volunteer tourists in this study adopted a 'giving attitude' which came from the perception that they were more

privileged than the children at the orphanage. Their privileges were expressed by such terms as 'being more fortunate', 'being wealthier', 'acquiring more and better knowledge and skills', and 'coming from modern, developed, and civilised countries.' Together with a giving attitude, they also adopted a sense of global citizenship which urged them to feel that it was moral and ethical to share their privileges with others who were less privileged than them.

This finding echoes one of the features of volunteer tourism, as discussed in Chapter Two, that volunteer tourism is often the practice of Western people going to assist people in developing countries (Corti *et al.*, 2010; Palacios, 2010; Sin, 2009; Simpson, 2005; Richter and Norman, 2010; Scheyvens, 2002), which results from the perception of the former that there is an inequality existing between them and the latter, and that as they are more privileged and educationally and economically superior, it is their responsibility to help the latter, who are less privileged than them (Brown, 2005). The finding supports the study of Brown (2005) which state that awareness of inequality is one of the major factors influencing Westerners to 'give back' by helping less fortunate people because they perceived that they were wealthier.

All of the volunteer tourists in this study were from Western countries, including the UK, Australia, New Zealand, the Netherlands, and Portugal. They realised that there was a big gap between them and the children at the orphanage in many ways; therefore, they wanted to share what they had. Generally, the volunteer

tourists' giving attitudes and altruistic motivations were expressed in the form of donations, and teaching English to the children.

The way in which the volunteer tourists spoke about their perception of being more privileged than the children may seem arrogant; for example, V21 stated that, "I think it's because in the Western countries, obviously we're wealthier so we don't see poverty on the street", and V22 said that, "I think it's definitely primarily to do with wealth because our countries are stabilised, we have the skills, the infrastructures and everything." However, the researcher observes that they did not mean to show off: they just wanted to explain.

Regarding the volunteer tourists' giving attitude, the researcher has a different view to Sin (2009), who states that a giving attitude of the volunteer tourists cannot actually help the aid-recipients to share the privilege enjoyed by the volunteer tourists. This is because, based on the researcher's observation, in this study, monetary and other donations and English teaching performed by the volunteer tourists for the children at the orphanage provided capital for the children, both in the form of financial resources and social capital which could benefit their future study because part of the money donated by the volunteers would be used for the children's future education, and English communication skills could add value to the children's profile, which, in turn, helps them to be able to enjoy privileges in the future.

The finding of this study is consistent with Simpson's (2004, p.685) study, which points out that the gap year students were generally encouraged by their organisations to have the view that development in the 'third world' is simple and is a matter for Western people to 'get on with' because Westernisation is a part of the development process, and that 'doing something is better than doing nothing, and therefore, that doing anything, is reasonable.' According to Simpson (2004), these perceptions make it not only possible, but also legitimate for young, non-skilled volunteer tourists to go to aid development in the third world.

It was found in the current study that the volunteer tourists, especially those who were recent graduates and students, seemed to adopt these perceptions. They perceived that they were capable of aiding development at the orphanage in Thailand by donating money and items and teaching English to the children. Moreover, they also believed that development at the orphanage could also be achieved through their labour and their good intentions.

These two factors, as discussed above, also support Carter's (2008, p. 62) argument when she states that, 'The volunteer tourists' needs, images and attitudes of destination, as well as their social, cultural, and physical environmental influences, all impact their motives to choose a particular project in a particular country.'

8.2.2. Volunteer tourists' on-site experiences

(i) Dimensions of on-site volunteer tourism experiences

The findings of this study regarding volunteer tourists' on-site experiences support those of other studies by arguing that the volunteer tourism experience is multidimensional in nature (e.g. McIntosh and Zahra, 2007; Wearing, 2001; Zahra and McIntosh, 2007; Broad, 2003; Jones, 2005; Harlow and Pomfret, 2007; Lo and Lee, 2011). To be specific, four main dimensions of the volunteer tourists' experiences were found in this study: (i) personal development and growth; (ii) social; (iii) cultural; and (iv) feeling. These dimensions are consistent with the conceptual framework for understanding the volunteer tourists' on-site experiences (see Section 3.3.2).

The multidimensions of on-site volunteer tourism experiences were perceived by the volunteer tourists as being significantly beneficial to them, confirming the findings of previous literature which suggest that volunteer tourism is viewed as being a meaningful and rewarding way of travelling (Zahra and McIntosh, 2007; Barbieri *et al.*, 2012; Jones, 2005; Lepp, 2009). The benefits of volunteer tourism were illustrated by the volunteer tourists in this study in a variety of terms, all of which echo those reported in previous literature; for example, being 'transformative' (Jones, 2005; Lepp, 2009); 'learning' (Jones, 2005); 'alternative' (McIntosh and Zahra, 2007); 'authentic' (McIntosh and Zahra, 2007; Broad, 2003; Brown, 2005); 'intrinsically rewarding' (Zahra and McIntosh, 2007; Barbieri *et al.*, 2012); 'beneficial' (Lepp, 2009); and 'worthwhile' (Broad, 2003).

However, the notion of being ‘cathartic’ and ‘life-changing’, as suggested by Zahra and McIntosh (2007) was not found in this study. This is possibly due to the fact that the volunteer tourists’ responses in this study were wholly based on their experiences at the time of their volunteer tourism participation, and they still had no idea how these experiences would change or affect their lives in the long run, which is in contrast with the study of Zahra and McIntosh (2007) which examines the nature of the volunteer tourism experience from the volunteer tourists who participated in volunteer tourism over a ten-year period.

The findings of this study support other studies which found that volunteer tourism experiences facilitate the volunteer tourists’ personal development and growth in a number of ways, including: developing and enhancing soft skills (Broad, 2003; Jones, 2005; Harlow and Pomfret, 2007; Lo and Lee, 2011); self-discovery/reflection (Broad, 2003; McIntosh and Zahra, 2007; Zahra and McIntosh, 2007; Lo and Lee, 2011); transformation of their values and perceptions about their life and the world (Broad, 2003; Brown, 2005; Zahra and McIntosh, 2007; Lo and Lee, 2011); gaining an insight into their future career direction (Broad, 2003; Brown, 2005; Lo and Lee, 2011); gaining a global perspective (Jones, 2005; McGehee and Santos, 2005); and gaining a sense of global citizenship (Zahra and McIntosh, 2007; McGehee and Santos, 2005; Jones, 2005; Barbieri *et al.*, 2012).

However, there are some aspects of personal development and growth that were not detected in this study. The first is spiritual benefits in terms of religious belief, as suggested in the study of Zahra and McIntosh (2007), which reveals that volunteer tourists had changed their attitudes towards the role of religion in their own life after experiencing the significance of religion in the lives of people in their host countries. The reason that this aspect of volunteer tourism experience was not found in this study is not clear but it may have something to do with the personal beliefs, interests and characteristics of the volunteer tourists. The topic of religious belief, whether it is their own or the host respondents', seemed not to be of interest to the volunteer tourists in this study.

In addition, spiritual benefits in terms of the development of appreciation of the natural environment, and changing views about using natural resources and global issues, as suggested by Harlow and Pomfret (2007) and McGehee and Santos (2005), were also not found in this study. One possible explanation could lie in the fact that the volunteer tourism project of this study was not associated with the natural environment, but focused on the children. Therefore, unsurprisingly, these issues were not mentioned by any of the volunteer tourists.

The other aspect of the volunteer tourism experiences that was not found in the current study is changes in the volunteer tourists' behaviour and their use of time, money, and other resources, which are found in the studies of Broad (2003) and McGehee and Santos (2005), and changes in their personal life (getting married to local people) which is reported in the study of Broad (2003). The absence of these

aspects of volunteer tourism experiences in this study may lie in the fact that at the time of interview, the volunteer tourists were not aware of these aspects of their experiences; or the period of their participation in volunteer tourism may be too short for these aspects to occur.

In terms of social dimension, the finding of this study echoes those reported in existing literature that volunteer tourism facilitates the establishment of good relationships between volunteer tourists and local people (Brown, 2005; McIntosh and Zahra, 2007; Lo and Lee, 2011; McGehee and Santos, 2005; Barbieri *et al.*, 2012). This study also found that in the context of orphan volunteer tourism, the children at the orphanage seem to be the group of local people with whom the volunteer tourists spent most time and established the deepest bond. Four main factors were identified to facilitate such a deep bond between the volunteer tourists and the children: the volunteer respondents' personal interest and positive feeling towards the children; the time they had spent with each other; the confidence of the children to interact with volunteer tourists; and the children's positive attitudes towards the volunteer tourists.

These factors support the finding of Barbieri *et al.* (2012), which points out that friendship between the volunteer tourists and the host community is encouraged by a variety of factors, which include daily close interactions with local people; openness on the part of the local people; and the local people's positive attitudes towards volunteer tourists. In addition, this study also adds that the volunteer

tourists' positive feeling towards the children also serves as a major factor that facilitates the establishment of a relationship between them and the children.

Moreover, the study found that the volunteer respondents did not have an opportunity to establish good relationships with the local people who live outside the orphanage, except for some teachers who could speak English. Apart from the factor relating to openness on the part of the local people (or shyness of the local people) as suggested by Barbieri *et al.* (2012), three other factors were found to hinder the establishment of friendship between volunteer tourists and these local people: language barriers, the isolated location of the orphanage, and the lack of interest of the volunteer tourists in establishing a relationship with them.

This study also found that volunteer tourism also promoted friendship between the volunteer tourists themselves, which is consistent with existing studies (Brown, 2005; McGehee and Santos, 2005; Lo and Lee, 2011; Broad, 2003; Harlow and Pomfret, 2007). This study agrees with Harlow and Pomfret (2007) and McGehee and Santos (2005), who argue that the volunteer tourism experience facilitates group setting and creates a sense of being part of the same team, which helps promote the establishment of a bond and friendship among them.

The volunteer tourism was also found to strengthen the relationship between the volunteer tourists and the people they came with, which is consistent with the studies of Brown (2005) and Lo and Lee (2011). It also supports the argument of

Brown (2005), who points out that volunteer tourism experiences serve as a shared experience for the volunteer tourists and those with whom they came.

In terms of a cultural dimension, the findings of this study support the notion that volunteer tourism facilitates the volunteer tourists to gain a 'real' or 'actual' insight into local culture, as argued by McIntosh and Zahra (2007). This study also agrees with the argument made by Broad (2003), who said that living and working in the host community allows the volunteer tourists to have more intimate and direct observations and interactions with the local people, which, in turn, helped them to learn about the local culture in a more profound way.

Moreover, this study found another factor that played a significant role in facilitating the volunteer tourists to be able to gain real and actual insight into local culture, which is the difference between the volunteer tourists and the leisure tourists. The data of this study suggests that according to the volunteer tourists, the difference between them and other tourists had influenced their interest in learning the local culture because they considered the local people's lives and the resources in the host community as being meaningful and interesting, thereby inducing them to learn about them, whereas the leisure tourists regarded these things as useful for their own self-serving purpose.

Moreover, the volunteer tourists also believed that the local residents were more willing to share their knowledge of the local culture with them than with other tourists because they came to help, rather than to have fun and to use up the

resources; therefore, the local people regarded them as guests or members of a family with whom they were happy to share their culture. This finding supports the argument of McGehee and Andereck (2009), who state that volunteer tourists are sometimes not viewed as tourists, either by local residents or by themselves.

Finally, for the feeling dimension, the findings of this study indicate six main factors causing positive feelings of the volunteer tourists. One of these is consistent with existing studies, which is the volunteer tourists' own altruistic practice (Zahra and McIntosh, 2007; Gray and Campbell, 2007). This study is also in agreement with that reported in Brown's (2005) and Harlow and Pomfret's (2007) studies, which indicate that some aspects of the benefits gained from participation in volunteer tourism, such as meeting and interacting with like-minded people, and gaining more knowledge, are factors causing positive feelings; however, this study also found that other benefits received from volunteer tourism also served as influencing factors for positive feelings.

It was found that in the context of orphan volunteer tourism, specific influencing features of the orphanage included: (i) the characteristics and performance of the orphanage staff; (ii) the characteristics of the children at the orphanage; (iii) the facilities of the orphanage; and (iv) the operation of the orphanage.

Regarding the volunteer tourists' negative feelings, this study identified five factors causing negative feelings. Among these, only the factor of a feeling of being underutilised/helpless/unneeded was found to be consistent with previous

studies (Gray and Campbell, 2007; Barbieri *et al.*, 2012). Moreover, this study found that in the context of orphan volunteer tourism, an established bond between volunteer tourists and the children seemed to play an important role in causing the volunteer tourists' negative feeling, specifically feeling sad when they had to leave the orphanage. It was also found that the factors which the volunteer tourists believed could potentially hinder their contribution to the orphanage can also cause negative feelings: (i) lack of communication from the orphanage; (ii) the percentage of the volunteer tourism vacation fees which were deducted by the agencies; (iii) lack of communication between the agencies and the orphanage.

(ii) Factors facilitating a beneficial, multidimensional on-site volunteer tourism experience

This study agrees with other authors (Jones, 2005; Broad, 2003; Zahra and McIntosh, 2007; Barbieri *et al.*, 2012) who argue that the overseas context of the volunteer tourism destination, together with the unique nature of volunteer tourism that emphasises intense, engaging, and interactive encounters with the host community, are key factors in facilitating the multidimensional aspects of the on-site experiences for the volunteer tourists. These factors are now discussed.

(a) The overseas context of the volunteer tourism destination

This study is in agreement with Jones (2005), who points out that the overseas dimension of the volunteer tourism destinations, especially those in a low income developing country like Thailand, has a powerful role in pushing the volunteer tourists to deal with challenges, unfamiliar things, and difficulties on their own

and to interact more often, and intimately with other people than when they live in their usual environment, which, in turn, helps them to develop.

In this study, it was found that the context of Thailand had created the environment of unfamiliarity, which was challenging and resulted in the volunteer tourists being out of their comfort zone. This is because they had to face language barriers and a different climate and culture. Moreover, working at the orphanage also forced the volunteer tourists to do activities which they had never done before, such as taking care of children, teaching English, cleaning and doing construction work. These things forced them to experience new things that they would not have done if they had stayed in their own country and consequently helped them to develop new skills (e.g. improvising different ways of teaching English to the non-English speaking children, being more confident when teaching and taking control of the children etc.), to discover their own potential (e.g. living without luxuries), and/or to gain an insight into their future career.

Secondly, the overseas context had also helped the volunteer tourists to gain a global perspective. As Jones (2005) points out, volunteer tourism that takes place abroad helps open the eyes of the volunteer tourists to see things in a more global way; for example, helping them to make a link between their own country and the host country. Consistent with this argument, this study found that volunteer tourism not only helped the Western volunteer tourists to be aware of poverty in Thailand, but it also made them realise that this problem also occurred in their own country.

Thirdly, the overseas context had also facilitated the volunteer tourists to be aware of inequality and differences between themselves and the children at the orphanage which, in turn, helped promote a sense of global citizenship among them. This is because it helped the volunteer tourists to be aware of their potential to help other people and to make a difference in the world, especially for those who were less fortunate than them.

However, the researcher thinks that this factor alone would not have enough power to promote a sense of global citizenship among the volunteer tourists; this aspect of volunteer tourism experiences is rather the result of a combination of this factor, together with the volunteer tourists' witness of the positive results of their contribution during their volunteer tourism participation which proved to be beneficial for the children at the orphanage. These two factors are believed to inspire the volunteer tourists to continue volunteering, and contributing to society.

However, regarding the aspects of a global perspective and a sense of global citizenship that developed among the volunteer tourists, this study challenges the argument of Simpson (2004, p.682), who points out that volunteer tourism, which involves people from developed countries coming to help those in developing countries emphasises the great difference and inequality between them and the local people and consequently reinforces the notion of 'them' and 'us' which would make the inequality between volunteer tourists and local people greater.

Although the notion of inequality between the volunteer tourists and the local residents did play a role in motivating the Western volunteer tourists to participate in volunteer tourism, as discussed earlier, it was found that although the volunteer tourists did mention the differences between themselves and the children and their educationally and economically superior position, they did not try to make these differences greater. They tried to lessen these differences by learning from the children, for example, learning some of the children's values which they could adopt in their own lives. Moreover, they used their superior position, whether in the form of monetary and other donations and skills and knowledge, and especially in terms of their knowledge of the English language, to make the lives of the children better.

Fourthly, the challenging and unfamiliar atmosphere of the foreign context of volunteer tourism also facilitated the sense of being in the same group among the volunteer tourists, which, in turn, helped to establish or strengthen relationships among them. This is because this atmosphere inevitably created difficulties or pressure for them, which they had to go through together.

(b) The unique nature of volunteer tourism that emphasises intense, engaging, and interactive relationships with the host community

Consistent with previous studies (e.g. Broad, 2003; McIntosh and Zahra, 2007; Barbier *et al.*, 2012), this study found that the nature of volunteer tourism, which emphasises intense, engaging, and interactive encounters with host communities,

facilitated the beneficial, multidimensional aspect of the volunteer tourist experience in a number of ways.

The studies of Broad (2003), Brown (2005), Zahra and McIntosh (2007), and Lo and Lee, (2011) similarly indicate that witnessing first-hand the differences between the volunteer tourists' lives and the lives of the local people, who are far less privileged than them, facilitated the volunteer tourists in transforming their values and perceptions about their life. This argument is proved to be true in this study as the volunteer tourists learnt and adopted a lot of values from closely observing and interacting with the children at the orphanage. This aspect of the volunteer tourism experiences seemed to be unique in the context of Thailand's orphan volunteer tourism.

Secondly, this also helped to develop the relationship between the volunteer tourists and other people. In terms of their relationship with the local residents, this study agrees with the argument of Barbieri *et al.* (2012) who point out that one of the main factors encouraging the friendship between the volunteer tourists and the host community is daily close interactions between them. It was evident from the study that the close friendship between the volunteer tourists and the children and the orphanage staff was the result of their intense interaction.

The volunteer tourism programme at the Home and Life orphanage was designed to encourage interaction between the volunteer tourists and the children and the orphanage staff, as the volunteer tourists had to stay at the orphanage and to spend

their time doing activities with either the orphanage staff or the children or both. Moreover, this interaction was also reinforced by the isolated location of the orphanage and the limited option of public transportation provided in the area of Thai Muang sub-district, which forced the volunteer tourists to spend most of their time at the orphanage. The intense interactions of the volunteer tourism also helped to promote friendship among the volunteer tourists and strengthen relationships among those who had come together, which supports existing studies (Brown, 2005; McGehee and Santos, 2005; Lo and Lee, 2011).

Thirdly, the finding of this study concurs with those reported in several studies (Jones, 2005; McIntosh and Zahra, 2007; Broad, 2003), which argue that this nature of volunteer tourism facilitates the volunteer tourists to gain real and actual insights into the local culture of their host community.

8.2.3. The hosts' attitudes towards the volunteer tourists

(i) Variation in the hosts' attitude

The hosts' attitude towards the volunteer tourists identifies all of the three dimensions of cognitive, affective, and behavioural, as suggested by Ajzen and Fishbein (1980). In terms of the cognitive dimension, the hosts' attitudes showed their beliefs, knowledge, and perceptions of the volunteer tourists (e.g. their perception that the volunteer tourists are good people who sacrifice their own comfort to help the children without seeking anything in return).

As for the affective dimension, a variety of feelings were displayed, such as being impressed by the volunteer tourists' conduct and performance, being glad to continuously welcome these volunteer tourists to their community, and being grateful for the volunteer tourists' help. Lastly, in terms of the behavioural dimension, the hosts' attitude was expressed through the friendliness and hospitality that they demonstrated to the volunteer tourists.

The findings of this study support the argument made by Fredline and Faulkner (2003) and McGehee and Andereck (2004), who state that local residents in the host community are heterogeneous groups of people who possess diverse characteristics, thereby being likely to have a variation in their attitudes towards tourists. Although generally all the host respondents expressed positive attitudes towards the volunteer tourists, the expression of their feelings and opinions about the volunteer tourists did vary in some specific details. For example, while some host respondents did not view the volunteer tourists as tourists at all, some perceived them as a special type of tourist; and while some host respondents were totally impressed by the volunteer tourists and had positive attitudes towards them without any concerns, some expressed concerns about some of the behaviour of the volunteer tourists.

(ii) Volunteer tourists: tourists or not?

Regarding the hosts' view about whether or not the volunteer tourists were a type of tourist, this study found that the host respondents had mixed views: some viewed the volunteer tourists as non-tourists, whereas some viewed them as a

special type of tourist. The latter group was aware that these volunteer tourists also visited other places for leisure purposes like other tourists, but they were 'special' or different from other tourists, especially mass tourists, in that they spent part of their free time helping the local people or giving something back to the place they visited. This finding concurs with that suggested by McGehee and Andereck (2009), but is not entirely consistent with the finding suggested by and Gray and Campbell (2007). The first reports that the volunteer tourists are sometimes not viewed as tourists by local residents, whereas the latter reveals that there is mixed opinion about the volunteer tourists, ranging from being seen as complete tourists, being a special type of tourist, and not being tourists at all.

In terms of the main criteria used by the hosts to differentiate the volunteer tourists from other tourists, especially mass tourists, the finding of this study identified five main criteria: (i) helping and working without seeking anything in return; (ii) eagerness in learning local culture and having close interaction and involvement with local people; (iii) requiring basic types of accommodation and food; (iv) spending less money; and (v) generating more benefits to the host community. These aspects not only encompass all of the aspects suggested by McGehee and Andereck (2009), Gray and Campbell (2007), and Barbieri *et al.* (2012), but also add the aspect of generating more benefits to the host community.

This study also supports other researchers (e.g. Faulkner and Tideswell, 1997; Ambrož, 2008; Smith, 1989; and Lepp, 2007) who argue that the type of tourist plays an important role in affecting the attitudes of local residents. According to

these researchers, different types of tourists bring about different impacts to the host community; some types of tourists are more associated with negative impacts, whereas some types tend to create more benefits.

In addition, Smith (1989) states that some types of tourist, especially the novelty-seeking tourists, are able to adapt themselves to the local standards of the community, which is different from other tourists, who seek familiar Western amenities. As a result, some specific types of tourists are preferred by the local residents. This study found that the hosts' perception of the volunteer tourists as being non-tourists, or special kind of tourists who are different from other tourists as mentioned before, did affect their attitudes by leading them to have a positive attitude towards the volunteer tourists.

(iii) Using the social exchange theory to understanding the hosts' attitudes towards the volunteer tourists in the context of Thailand's orphan volunteer tourism

The findings of this study do not entirely support the social exchange theory. In the context of local residents' attitude, the social exchange theory suggests that local residents seek benefits of tourism in exchange for services or resources they offer, and those residents who recognise the benefits of tourism tend to view tourism positively; conversely, those who perceive themselves as incurring the costs of tourism are likely to have negative attitudes towards it (Ap, 1992; McGehee and Andereck, 2004).

Although this study agrees that the host respondents sought benefits from the volunteer tourists from the exchange in tourism, it argues that in the context of orphan volunteer tourism, they did not primarily seek personal benefits from such exchange, but rather sought benefits for the children and also expected the volunteer tourists to have good conduct and performance during their visit in exchange for their services and resources.

In the case of this study, the services and resources offered by the hosts in exchange for such benefits and good conduct and performance of the volunteer tourists not only included the accommodation and food and the place and activities where the volunteer tourists could practice their volunteer tourism, but also included their friendliness, hospitality, and care. The latter is consistent with the finding of Sin's (2010) study which found that the local residents show their care to the volunteer tourists in return for their acts. To be more specific, this study found that the strongest factor influencing the hosts' attitudes was the benefit for the children in terms of an opportunity to study English with English native speakers. This finding is in contrast to McGehee and Andereck (2009), who state that personal benefits have a strong influence on local people's attitudes, because this study found that personal benefits were seen by the host respondents as side benefits that they received from the volunteer tourists.

A possible explanation for such a finding is that the host respondents were well aware of the main purpose of the volunteer tourism at the orphanage, which was to help the children; therefore, they did not expect to gain any personal benefits

from these volunteer tourists. Although many host respondents did mention personal benefits that they had gained from the volunteer tourists and stated that these benefits did influence their positive attitudes towards the volunteer tourists, none of them considered these benefits as the most important thing, but rather as side benefits which they saw as unimportant as they perceived that the children at the orphanage and the students at the school could benefit most.

In addition, this study is also inconsistent with the social exchange theory and the study of McGehee and Andereck (2009) in that the local residents who do not enjoy personal benefits from the volunteer tourists are more likely to perceive its negative impacts. Although the negative attitudes of the host respondents were not found in this study, some host respondents expressed their concerns about some of the volunteer tourists' behaviour and under-performances. The local people who expressed such concerns are the orphanage staff and teachers, whose duties and responsibilities were closer to the volunteer tourists than other groups of host respondents, and who were concerned with the well-being of the children.

It can be seen that the lack of perceived personal benefits did not serve as a key factor leading the host respondents to have concerns about the volunteer tourists. On the other hand, the well-being of the children which might be affected by the volunteer tourists' behaviour and under-performance, together with working closely with them which allowed the host respondents to have more opportunity to be aware of such behaviour and performance, served as the key factors that led them to have such concerns.

(iii) Comparing the findings with existing literature

The findings of this study support the studies of McIntosh and Zahra (2007), Sin (2010), and Barbieri *et al.* (2012), as it was found that the host respondents generally had favourable attitudes towards the volunteer tourists. However, in terms of the factors influencing their positive attitudes, the findings of the study are inconsistent with those suggested by McIntosh and Zahra (2007).

According to McIntosh and Zahra's (2007) study, local residents' positive attitudes are primarily based on two main factors: the conduct and behaviour of a previous group of volunteer tourists; and the trust local residents had established with the volunteer tourism organiser. In this study, however, although the conduct and performance of the volunteer tourists was also mentioned as one of the two main influencing factors of the host respondents' positive attitudes, it was not mentioned as relating to only the previous group of volunteer tourists, but rather to both the previous group and the current group of volunteer tourists. Moreover, the factor of established trust between the local residents and the volunteer tourism organiser, as suggested by McIntosh and Zahra (2007), was not identified as a factor influencing hosts' positive attitudes in this study. It was found that the volunteer tourists' conduct and performance played an important role in influencing their positive attitudes.

A possible explanation for this difference in the findings could be that, in the view of the host respondents, the good conduct and performance of the volunteer tourists and the benefits they gained from these tourists were only associated with

the volunteer tourists themselves, not with the volunteer tourism organisers. Also, six of the host respondents of this study are staff members of the Home and Life orphanage, which is the volunteer tourism organiser. As for the other respondents, although it was observed by the researcher that all of them had a very good relationship and established trust with the staff members of the orphanage, their positive attitudes were not influenced by this factor.

In the context of orphan volunteer tourism, this study found that the benefits gained from the volunteer tourists in terms of an opportunity for the children to study English with English native speakers was perceived as invaluable and served as a strong factor influencing the hosts' positive attitudes. A similar finding is also reported in the study of Guiney (2012), who explores orphan volunteer tourism in Cambodia, and Sin (2010), who studies the host community perception in Cambodia.

However, this finding is in contrast with other studies (e.g. Smith and Krannich, 1998; Lepp, 2007; and Soontayatron, 2010) which examine local residents' attitudes towards leisure tourists and report that the perceived economic benefits gained from the tourists is the primary factor influencing the positive attitudes of local residents. Although the economic benefits gained from the volunteer tourists were mentioned by some host respondents in this study, such as in terms of gaining supplementary income for the orphanage, and gaining employment opportunities and income for some groups of local people, especially the Moken

people in the community, they only served as side benefits gained from the volunteer tourists.

A possible explanation for this difference may lie in the fact that, firstly, the local people in Thai Muang sub-district did not depend on tourism's economic benefits, but on fishing and the cultivation of crops. Unlike KhaoLak, which is located around thirty kilometres from Thai Muang sub-district and is well-known as a tourist resort, Thai Muang has never been known as a tourist destination, but serves only as a passageway between well-known tourist attractions in Phang Nga province, such as KhaoLak and Phuket province.

Secondly, the volunteer tourists were viewed as being different to mass tourists who always spend a lot of money at the places they visit. They were perceived as either non-tourists or special kinds of tourists who generally spend less money; therefore, they were not expected to generate economic benefits for the community, especially in terms of a main source of income or employment opportunities. In addition, the local residents were also aware that most of the volunteer tourists who participated in the volunteer tourism at the orphanage were teenagers, who were perceived as having little money to spend on their vacation.

Thirdly, it is also apparent that the host respondents were well aware that the main purpose of the volunteer tourism program of the Home and Life orphanage was to help the children who live at the orphanage, and that most of the volunteer tourists who came to participate in this programme were those who had a good level of

ability in English communication, and these perceptions led them to expect to gain benefits from these volunteer tourists in the form of their ability and skills in teaching English to the children, rather than by gaining money from them. Similar to other Thai people, the host respondents believed that an ability to communicate in English is highly significant and served as an effective way to be successful in one's future career. For this reason, they regarded the children's opportunity to study English with English native speakers as the most significant benefit and the most important factor causing them to have positive attitudes towards the volunteer tourists.

Regarding the hosts' concerns, this study found that their concerns about the volunteer tourists' behaviour were the result of cultural differences. This finding supports the argument made by Lepp (2007), who states that cultural difference between tourists and local residents is found to significantly affect the local residents' attitudes, especially when the former are Western people and the latter group are Eastern residents. He (ibid.) also said that some of the behaviour of the Western tourists was seen as being contradictory to the modest lifestyle of the local residents, especially those in rural areas. The major concerns of the host respondents involve the way the volunteer tourists dressed, and showing affection in public. As stated by Soontayatorn (2010) in her study about the impacts of the attitudes of Thai residents on tourism in Koh Samui, together with the opinion of the researcher as a Thai person who grew up in Thai culture, Thailand is a conservative country, which is reflected through its culture concerning dressing and showing affection in public. Public dress is taken as a sign of respect towards

society and culture (Soontayatorn, 2010). Normally, Thai people, especially those who live in the countryside, wear clothes that do not show too much skin. Clothes like a strappy vest top with a low neckline, a strapless top, shorts, and short skirts are considered inappropriate in public, especially when visiting Buddhist temples and other official places such as schools and government offices.

Regarding showing affection in the public, Thai people are very reserved; they believe that showing affection, such as kissing and hugging each other, must be performed only in private. Thai people have a motto: *khao muang ta lieu hai lieu ta tam*, which has the same meaning as the English motto, 'When in Rome, do as the Romans do'; therefore, especially in the countryside, Thai people expect the foreigners who visit Thailand to follow their culture. It is true that Thai people in big cities like Bangkok are less reserved now and do not expect as much from the foreigners. In fact, most of them are used to how Western people dress and show affection in public. In Thai Muang sub-district, however, it is evident that local people still expected the Western volunteer tourists to respect local culture.

To summarise, the hosts' concerns did not result from cultural differences in terms of Thai local residents giving no importance to material possessions and the Western volunteer tourists giving too much importance to capitalism, as suggested by Soontayatron (2010). On the contrary, they resulted from the difference in the degree of conservativeness between these two groups.

The fact that the host respondents had an overall positive attitude towards the volunteer tourists, despite having some concerns as mentioned above, supports the concept of 'altruistic surplus' suggested by Faulkner and Tideswell (1997). To reiterate briefly, Faulkner and Tideswell (ibid.) suggest that local residents are likely to hold positive attitudes towards tourism as long as their community as a whole still experiences positive impacts of tourism, and despite the fact that they may personally experience some negative impacts of tourism.

According to the current study, it is apparent that the key interests of the host respondents were the benefits and the well-being of the children and the good conduct and performance of the volunteer tourists; therefore, as long as the children could enjoy the benefits from the volunteer tourists and the hosts were still aware of the volunteer tourists' good conduct and performance, they were likely to have positive attitudes towards them and were willing to continuously welcome them to their community.

(iv) The influence of Thai values on hosts' attitudes towards volunteer tourists

This study also suggests that some Thai values, as discussed in Section 4.7, played a significant role in influencing the hosts' attitudes. The first value is the *bunghun* relationship, or gratitude, which, according to Komin (1990), refers to a psychological bond between the patron and the receiver, in which the former provides help and favours to the latter who, in return, is grateful and seeks to pay back this favour. In this study, it is evident that all of the host respondents were

very grateful to the volunteer tourists and felt that they were obliged to pay back the help given by the volunteer tourists and the least they could do for the volunteer tourists was to offer their friendliness and hospitality.

The second value is *numjai* which refers to genuine kindness, consideration, generosity, and sincere concern for others without expecting anything in return (Komin, 1990; Kitiyadisai, 2005). It is apparent that the host respondents perceived that the volunteer tourists also shared this value, which served as one of many factors making them feel positively about the volunteer tourists.

The third and fourth values, which are the avoidance of confrontation or face-to-face conflict and *chai-yen* or cool heart behaviour, appeared to serve as a way for local residents to deal with their concerns. This study is in agreement with Soontayatron (2010), who said that the value of confrontation avoidance, together with the value of *chai-yen*, helped Thai people to deal with the inappropriate behaviour of the tourists and negative tourism impacts in a soft way.

It is apparent that the host respondents chose not to solve such issues of concern by direct confrontation with the volunteer tourists; instead, they chose to use other, softer ways, such as explaining politely to them about the local cultures, the 'dos and don'ts' in Thailand, and the rules and regulations of staying at the orphanage, making T-shirts for them to wear, and explaining to the children about cultural difference. For some issues, such as their concern about the volunteer

tourists' under-performance in teaching, they chose to blame themselves that such issues had resulted from the fact that they did not provide a teaching plan.

(v) Acceptance of the superior position of the Western volunteer tourists

Perhaps one of the most interesting findings of this study was that, generally, the host respondents willingly accepted the superiority of the Western volunteer tourists without having any negative feeling regarding their own inferiority. This finding is inconsistent with Lo and Lee (2011), who argue that the great discrepancy between the life of the local residents in the host community and that of volunteer tourists from Hong Kong, who appear to be more privileged and wealthier, might have created negative feelings among the local residents. This is because such a difference could cause the local people to feel inferior and frustrated. On the contrary, the current study found that many host respondents were well aware of the superior status of the volunteer tourists, which was reflected in their expressions, such as “these people come from richer and more developed countries than ours”, “when they come to Thailand, they bring with them civilisation and modernity to share with us”, “they have more opportunities than us”, and “they come from a more civilised country.”

Moreover, the host respondents viewed the Western volunteer tourists as being better in terms of working, compared to Thai people. For example, they were seen as role models for them and the children in terms of self-discipline (e.g. punctuality and working in an orderly fashion) and always putting forth their best effort and working hard on their assigned work. This knowledge did not make the

host respondents frustrated; on the contrary, they felt grateful to the volunteer tourists that these people wanted to share their privileges with them or to help lessen the gap by helping the children, who were the future of the community, by providing education, donating money and teaching English.

One possible explanation for this phenomenon was that the hosts were satisfied with what they are and what they already have, although they did not reject any development which could make their lives better, as long as that development was not contradictory to their ways of living. Moreover, this study is in agreement with Kislenko (2004), who points out that Thailand has never been colonised by Western nations; therefore, Thai people do not suffer emotional-hang ups of having been colonised and are free from anti-Western feeling.

8.2.4. The interactions between the volunteer tourists and the hosts

Tourism is a platform where interactions between tourists and members of a host community inevitably occur. The findings relating to volunteer tourists' motivations and their on-site experiences, and the hosts' attitudes (as discussed in Chapters Six and Seven and earlier in this chapter) provide a good basis for an examination of the nature of the interactions and relationships between the volunteer tourists and their hosts in Thai Muang sub-district. By using the model of social exchange theory proposed by Ap (1992), this section aims to examine whether volunteer tourism in the context of an orphanage can lead to balanced and reciprocal two-way interactions between these two groups.

To briefly reiterate, social exchange theory concerns exchanges or interactions between the actors in the tourism industry, especially between tourists and their hosts. An interaction is viewed as a form of exchange of valued resources between these two groups, from which each group seeks benefits potentially arising from such resources. Social exchange theory is a sequential process beginning with the identification of needs satisfaction (when the actors are aware of needs and/or have expectation of benefits which they can gain from the exchange), exchange relation (where the exchanges or interactions occur), consequences of exchange (when the exchange is evaluated), and the determination of the consequences (see Section 4.5).

It is evident from the data analysis that both volunteer tourists and hosts initially decided to get involved in the volunteer tourism programme at the orphanage, because they were motivated and/or expected to gain benefits from volunteer tourism. For the volunteer tourists, five main motivations were identified (as discussed in Section 6.2) which clearly explains why they decided to engage in volunteer tourism.

For the hosts, they needed assistance from the volunteer tourists. As mentioned earlier in Section 1.7, Thai Muang was one of the communities affected by the Boxing Day tsunami and Home and Life orphanage was established to help the affected children. The tsunami made a very deep impact on the lives of the local people. Although it has been more than eight years since the tsunami, Home and Life orphanage still needed assistance from volunteer tourists because the

operation of the orphanage depended mainly on the donations of volunteer tourists. Additionally, the number of staff did not support the number of the children at the orphanage, and therefore it required volunteer tourists to help take care of the children.

In addition, the hosts also believed and expected that volunteer tourists would bring good things to their community, especially to the children. These needs and expectations explain why the orphanage offered the volunteer tourism programme; why the school allowed the volunteer tourists to teach their students; and why other host respondents welcomed them to their community. The identification of needs satisfaction of the volunteer tourists and the hosts supports the argument made by Ap (1992, p.671) that, 'Unless a need exists, there is no rationale, motivation, or basis upon which the actor can develop a willingness to initiate exchange with another party.'

When the volunteer tourists arrived at the orphanage and engaged in volunteer tourism programme, they had interactions with their hosts. It is evident from the data that both volunteer tourists and hosts interacted with each other in a rational manner, or in a manner they believed could lead them to fulfil their motivations and/or their expectations. This explains the form of 'antecedents' in terms of 'rational behaviour' which occurs during the process of interactions.

For the volunteer tourists, it can be seen from the findings that they behaved and had interactions with their hosts in a way which they believed could enable them to fulfil their motivations. It is evident that their experiences which they had gained are linked with their motivations. For example, those who were motivated by a desire to gain teaching experience tended to work hard on preparing for the lessons, use their skills and knowledge and try to use different techniques in teaching English to the children to ensure that their motivation was satisfied and they could gain satisfactory benefits from their actions.

For the hosts, it was also found that they also acted in a rational manner in order to fulfil their needs and expectations by developing and assigning tasks to the volunteer tourists (e.g. taking care of the children, teaching English at school, doing housework, and working on construction projects) which they believed would bring benefits to them.

It is evident that the behaviour of each group and the interactions between them brought about the benefits that were perceived to be satisfactory, acceptable, and reciprocal from the points of view of both groups. Neither acted only for the purpose of satisfying their own motivations, but acted in a way that could benefit one another. In other words, they did not just seek to 'take', but also 'intended' to 'give.' This may be the unique nature of volunteer tourism, which tends to provide mutual benefits for both volunteer tourists and hosts.

Perhaps an altruistic motivation or a desire to help children on the part of the volunteer tourists, and the perception of the hosts that volunteer tourists were different from traditional tourists, could best explain this situation. For the volunteer tourists, although they took care of, and taught English to, the children and even did housework, with the purpose of fulfilling their own desire to help the children (which made them feel better about themselves), these behaviours evidently benefited the children and the hosts. For the hosts, they not only sought to benefit from the volunteer tourist, but also regarded them as ‘a member of their family’ or ‘friends’, and were willing to share knowledge of their culture to them, and facilitated them in a process of personal development and growth (e.g. supporting them while they were teaching).

Additionally, in terms of feelings or attitudes, both parties were greatly satisfied with each other. These positive feelings were primarily based on the characteristics and behaviour of both parties. For example, the volunteer tourists were impressed by the behaviour of the children at the orphanage and the dedication and performance of the orphanage staff in taking care of the children, whereas the hosts were impressed by and grateful for the generosity and dedication of the volunteer tourists. Moreover, it is also evident that both parties shared an interest in the well-being of the children, which caused them to have positive feelings and attitudes towards each other.

Furthermore, although the volunteer tourists had some negative feelings, these feelings were not related to the hosts, but centred around the incompleteness and incorrectness of the information they received from the orphanage and agencies, and the feeling that their contribution would not be as beneficial as they expected. Another factor that caused the negative feelings of the volunteer tourists was breaking the bond they had established with the children at the orphanage; this feeling inevitably occurs when two parties have spent time together. The sadness of the volunteer tourists was not as a result of any inappropriate behaviour on the part of the hosts, but caused by their own sensitivity. As for the hosts, although they had some concerns about the behaviour and performance of the volunteer tourists, they thought these were not big issues and could be easily solved or prevented, and some of these concerns were seen as the fault of the hosts themselves.

The nature of these interactions also supports the argument of McIntosh and Zahra (2007), who state that the hosts have a significant role in shaping the volunteer tourists' experiences, and the findings of existing studies (e.g. McGehee and Andereck, 2009; McIntosh and Zahra, 2007; Lo and Lee, 2011; Gray and Campbell, 2007; Barbieri *et al.*, 2012; Guiney, 2012), which report that the behaviour and attitudes of the hosts towards the volunteer tourists are indeed influenced by the presence, actions of, and benefits gained from, volunteer tourists.

Moreover, the reciprocal exchanges or interactions between the volunteer tourists and the hosts found in this study, add another piece of evidence to support the argument that volunteer tourism provides reciprocal benefits for both volunteer tourists and host communities made by several researchers (e.g. Wearing, 2001; Ooi and Laing, 2010; Raymond and Hall, 2008; Broad, 2003; Brown and Morrison, 2003; Uriely *et al.*, 2003; McGehee and Santos, 2005; Lepp, 2009; Sin, 2009; McIntosh and Zahra, 2007).

Based upon the satisfactory, reciprocal interactions between the volunteer tourists and the hosts as discussed above, it can be argued that the interaction between them was in the form of a balanced exchange. This is because each party had resources that were important and valued in the view of the other and had shared those resources in an equal and fair manner: for example, the volunteer tourists had English skills and shared their skills with the children, and the hosts had places such as an orphanage and a school where the volunteer tourists can gain the benefits they sought after.

Although both the volunteer tourists and the hosts had a perception that there was inequality between them in terms of their socio-economic background, this perception did not cause unbalanced interactions between them. On the contrary, both felt that they could benefit from this inequality: the volunteer tourists had learnt a lot of things from the lives of children (e.g. the values of love and the minimal importance of material possessions, etc.), whereas the hosts had gained benefits from the skills, knowledge and wealth of the volunteer tourists.

The consequence of the interactions between the volunteer tourists and the hosts in this study was found to be positive. Based on social exchange theory, this evaluation of the consequence of the interactions can be explained by using the form of a sequence: examining outputs from the interactions; determining the action to respond to another party based on the outputs; and evaluating the psychological outcomes (feelings) of the consequences.

The outputs were in the forms of benefits that each party had gained: for the volunteer tourists, they had gained a desired experience (as discussed in Section 6.3); and for the hosts, the benefits that they had gained include the benefits for the children, personal benefits, and benefits for the community as a whole (as discussed in Section 7.2.1).

In terms of action, the data showed that many volunteer tourists provided ongoing support to the orphanage, and many of them also recommended that their friends participate in volunteer tourism at Home and Life orphanage; for the hosts, the examples include extending friendliness and hospitality to the volunteer tourists and giving souvenirs and certificates to them.

As for the psychological outcomes or feelings, it has already been mentioned that both parties had positive feelings toward one another, and these outputs, action, and outcomes determined their future involvement in volunteer tourism. It is evident that both groups showed an intention to engage in volunteer tourism in the future. Many volunteer tourists mentioned that they intended to volunteer at the

Home and Life again and some said that they wanted to visit the orphanage as a close friend in the future. For the hosts, all of them were willing to welcome volunteer tourists to their community again. To conclude, the interactions of the volunteer tourists and the hosts in this study was a reciprocal and rewarding one, which brought benefits to both groups in and was sufficient for them to decide to be involved in volunteer tourism in the future.

8.3. Contribution to Knowledge

This study contributes to the development of knowledge in the field of volunteer tourism, especially in the context of Thailand's orphan volunteer tourism. The contribution to knowledge can be contextualised into three main aspects: (i) enhancing the understanding of the motivations of volunteer tourists in relation to a natural disaster that occurred in a host destination; (ii) contributing to the emerging debate on the potential of volunteer tourism in reinforcing inequality between Western volunteer tourists and local residents of a developing country; and (iii) analysing the role of the children in orphan volunteer tourism.

8.3.1. The volunteer tourists' motivations in relation to a natural disaster that occurred in a host destination

The findings related to the volunteer tourists' motivations in this study to an extent echo those reported in previous studies in the sense that volunteer tourists appear to be motivated by a combination of motivations, the most significant ones relating to helping others in need or 'giving back', personal development, leaning about the local culture, and making new friends. However, a significant difference

in the findings is the weighting of the motivations, with the desire to help others in need being far stronger in this case than motivations oriented towards self-interest, which are acknowledged as the strongest motivation in many other volunteer tourist studies. This study suggests that a desire to help the children is most dominant motivational factor.

It was found that a desire to help children was strongly influenced by the volunteer tourists' knowledge of the 2004 Boxing Day tsunami, which hit the southern region of Thailand. This tsunami is one of most devastating natural catastrophes of the twenty-first century that has had a long-term impact on the lives of people in the affected areas. Although it has been more than eight years since the tsunami, the memories of this event were still clear in the volunteer tourists' minds. This factor not only significantly influenced the volunteer tourists' altruistic motivations, but also played an important role in the selection of a place where they believed that their contribution could be the most meaningful and rewarding.

This study argues that the volunteer tourists' desire to help or give back appears to be strongly influenced by a disastrous event that occurred in the host country and the subsequent media coverage. The results suggest that the combination of a natural disaster in a developing country and media coverage has the potential to create a profound impression on individuals and has the potential to lead people, especially those in developed countries to have sentiments of guilt or selfishness. These sentiments are essential to creating the empathetic motivations for

volunteers to aid people to recover from the effects of a natural disaster, in the process gaining a high level sense of accomplishment and pride.

8.3.2. The potential of volunteer tourism to lessen the gap in understanding between Western volunteer tourists and local residents of a developing country

The findings of this study challenge the idea that volunteer tourism may reinforce inequality between developed and developing nations as well as deepen dichotomies of ‘them’ and ‘us’, instead of promoting true cross-cultural understanding between volunteer tourists and local residents, as argued by several scholars (Simpson, 2004; Brown and Hall, 2008; Barkham, 2006).

This study found that the perception of the Western volunteer tourists of the economic inequality between them and local people played an important role in influencing their motivation to participate in orphan volunteer tourism. The volunteer tourists held the view that they were more economically fortunate and had had better educational opportunities than the local people, creating a feeling of guilt on the premise of inequality and desire to share these benefits with others who are less fortunate. They subsequently felt that it was their responsibility, a moral duty, to share their privileges with these people. During their visit, their experiences made them more aware of their potential to help and inspired them to continue volunteering and contributing to society.

Alongside a desire to lessen inequality by sharing their privileges (e.g. donating money and teaching English to the children), the volunteer tourists also sought to learn values from the children at the orphanage, which they believed to be significant and applicable to their lives. Examples of such values include: love and caring for other people; respecting older people; appreciating the things one already has; and lending less importance to material needs.

The results suggest that the ‘hosts’ or local community were already aware of the economic and educational inequalities existing between them and the volunteer tourists, and that interaction with the volunteer tourists did not reinforce this inequality or make the perception of it larger. On the contrary, the hosts felt that volunteer tourism potentially lessened this gap because the volunteer tourism not only served as an effective mean of transferring wealth and knowledge but also promoted cross-cultural understanding. Whilst cultural differences did occur and caused issues of concern among some members of the community, these differences were not new to them. However, there was concern about how these issues may impact upon children who have less knowledge and experience of cultural differences.

8.3.3. The role of the children in orphan volunteer tourism.

The findings demonstrate that the children who live at the orphanage play a significant role in the volunteer tourists’ motivations and on-site experiences besides influencing residents’ perceptions of and attitudes toward the volunteer tourists. In terms of the volunteer tourists’ motivations, the notion of working at

an orphanage attracted people who possessed altruistic tendencies and wanted to help the children have a better life. For several, the desire to gain experience of working with children was also important, often in the context of personal development and possible career progression, for example, to become a teacher.

Participating in volunteer tourism at the orphanage and close interactions with the orphan children also provided an educative platform through which the volunteer tourists could learn a number of things from the children's lives (e.g. the values of love and the minimal importance of material possessions, etc.). Spending time and having intimate interactions with the children on a daily basis also induced positive and negative feelings within the volunteer tourists. The volunteer tourists were impressed by characteristics of the children at the orphanage, including their good behaviour and discipline, and felt often over-whelmed at the gratefulness of the children. However, the characteristic of human interaction and bonding between the volunteer tourists and children that is an integral part of the process was also found to cause sadness on departure. Whilst this sadness was felt in both parties, it has the potential for a particularly profound effect upon the children who may be subjected to a cycle of severed bonds as volunteer tourists come and go to the orphanage.

Participating in life at the orphanage also facilitated the volunteer tourists' learning about local culture. It was reported by the volunteer tourists that they had learnt more about Thai culture from the children than the adults because the children were more open with their responses. Adults often seemed considerate

and afraid of offending the volunteer tourists whereas the children were more straightforward.

In terms of the hosts' attitude toward the volunteer tourists, their positive attitude was primarily influenced by the perceived benefits that the volunteer tourists had provided for the children, especially in the form of an opportunity to study English with English native speakers. As for their concerns, these focussed on the well-being of the children because they were afraid that some of the behaviour of the volunteer tourists, such as the way they dress and showing affection in public may be a bad example for the children. They were also concerned that some performance of the volunteer tourists in teaching English (e.g. focusing their teaching more on English language used in daily life, rather than English grammar) might affect the academic results of the children.

8.4. Limitations of the Study

The study had certain limitations that must be addressed, which can be classified into six main groups: (i) generalisability of the research findings; (ii) the participants of the study; (iii) epistemology; (iv) data collection methods; (v) data analysis; and (vi) feedback from member checking.

8.4.1. Limitations relating to generalisability

The first limitation of this study is associated with the nature of its research methodological approach. This research is underpinned by an interpretive paradigm utilising qualitative research methods, and the research is based on only one case study and a small number of respondents not derived from probability

sampling. Moreover, this study is primarily based on the researcher's understanding and interpretation of the volunteer tourists' interpretation of their motivations and on-site experiences, and the hosts' interpretation of their attitudes towards the volunteer tourists, as well as the researcher's encounters with the volunteer respondents and the host respondents.

For these reasons, the findings are unique to the orphan volunteer tourism phenomenon at the Home and Life orphanage in Thai Muang sub-district and it is not possible to generalise its finding to other groups of volunteer tourists, nor local residents in other host communities, nor to conclude that the findings are directly applicable to other settings.

However, as discussed in Chapter Five, this study does not aim to generalise its findings because it is not applicable to a study of qualitative research. This study prefers to use 'transferability' as a criterion to ensure its rigour by providing thick description of the study's context and setting in order to ensure that its findings can be transferable to other situations if those situations are similar to the context of this study.

8.4.2. Limitations associated with the participants of the study

One of the limitations associated with the participants of this study involves their background, which may not be sufficiently diverse. Of the group of volunteer tourists, the majority came from the UK, are female recent university graduates and students, aged twenty to twenty-three years. Therefore, the limitation in the

diversity of backgrounds of the volunteer participants may not be sufficient to provide a better understanding of the volunteer tourists' motivations and on-site experiences.

Secondly, the length of their participation is quite short, around one to two weeks, so this may limit the breadth of understanding of their volunteer tourism experiences. However, this limitation was inevitable because at the time of conducting the study, the number of volunteer tourists participating in the volunteer tourism program at the Home and Life orphanage was quite small.

The same limitation in the diversity of the participants' backgrounds is also found in the group of hosts. The majority of host respondents belong to two main groups: staff at the Home and Life orphanage and teachers at Wat Muang Pracharam school. Therefore, the limitation in diversity of the host respondents' backgrounds seems to affect the findings of the hosts' attitudes towards the volunteer tourists. It can be seen that similar themes occur among the members of each group because they are likely to share similar experiences and interactions with the volunteer tourists. However, diversity in their perspectives can also be gained in detail.

The reason that the participants in the group of hosts were mainly limited to orphanage staff members and teachers is because volunteer tourism is still new in Thai Muang sub-district; therefore, there are only a few people who are in contact with the volunteer tourists or have an opinion about them. This limitation was

identified during the pilot study when the researcher tried to interview other groups of local residents, but found that they did not have rich information about the volunteer tourists to share with the researcher. Generally, they said that they liked to have these people in their community, but that was all they had said.

8.4.3. Limitations associated with epistemology

As noted in Chapter Five, Blumer (1962, cited in Jennings, 2001) suggests that the best way to understand multiple realities of the social world is to become one of the actors in that social setting. However, in this study, as there were two groups of respondents, the role of the researcher as an ‘actor’ in the setting being investigated had to shift between the volunteer tourists and the hosts.

Sometimes the researcher had to work as a volunteer tourist in order to gain a better understanding of their perspective, and sometimes she had to take on the role of a host by helping the staff of the orphanage support the volunteer tourists, for example explaining local culture to them. For this reason, she could not totally become the actor in either group, and this may limit the interpretation of the findings of the study.

In the case of the volunteer tourists, the researcher did not take on their role fully because she was aware that if she worked as a volunteer tourist, her presence would affect the experiences gained by the volunteer tourists. For example, as she speaks Thai and her English is quite good, she is more likely to be assigned to teach English to the students at the school than the volunteer tourists who could

not communicate with the students; therefore, the volunteer tourists would be assigned fewer hours to teach English. This did occur during the pilot study. Therefore, she had to limit her volunteer work to only helping the children with their homework in subjects apart from English.

The researcher seemed to do better at immersing herself with the group of hosts, because she shares nationality, language and culture with them, so she was often asked by the orphanage staff to support the volunteer tourists during their stay. However, she does not share the same experiences of being a host of the volunteer tourists, as other local residents of Thai Muang sub-district are, because she is not a permanent resident of this community. Additionally, she does not benefit from, nor is she affected by, the presence of the volunteer tourists in the same way as the local residents. For these reasons, other researchers or readers should be cautioned that this limitation may affect the understanding of the researcher regarding the issues being investigated.

Furthermore, as discussed in Chapter Five, different nationality, culture and age between the researcher and the volunteer tourists also caused some limitation in the understanding and interpretation of the perspectives of the volunteer tourists. However, the researcher believed that her knowledge of some Western cultures which she gained from her experiences during her studies helped her to interpret the data. In addition, the researcher coped with this limitation by employing a combination of qualitative data collection techniques as a mean to delve into the perceptions of the participants.

8.4.4. Limitations associated with data collection methods

The researcher found that conducting participant observation posed a challenge to her because there were two groups of respondents; therefore, the researcher had to be selective in her observation. Moreover, she was also aware that her presence may influence the respondents' experiences and how they discussed them in the interviews. However, the researcher found that it was impossible to conceal her role as a researcher because other data collection methods, such as semi-structured interviews and a focus group discussion, were used in conjunction with this method. However, this technique was used as part of the triangulation.

Secondly, the researcher also found difficulty in conducting the focus group discussions with both groups of respondents. For the group of volunteer tourists, the reason concerned the number of interviewees because generally there were only one or two volunteer tourists coming to stay at the orphanage at each week. However, the researcher had one opportunity to conduct a focus group with five volunteer tourists. The researcher did not have an opportunity to test the questions for a focus group before during the pilot study because at that time there were not sufficient participants for conducting a focus group.

Similarly, for the group of hosts, the situation also did not facilitate the conduction of the focus group. The orphanage staff and the teachers at the school were very busy and not available for the focus group discussion. Also, the construction men and parents of the children were very shy and not familiar with expressing their opinions in a group setting. For this reason, the researcher

decided not to carry out the focus group with host respondents during the main study.

The third limitation involves diary methods. The researcher faced the challenge that some respondents refused to write the diary because they did not like writing, or thought that they would not have time to write it, and some did not write it every day. However, this technique is part of triangulation.

8.4.5. Limitations relating to data analysis

The researcher faced some difficulties in transcribing the interviews with the volunteer tourists because they were in English. Although her English is quite good, English is not her mother tongue and she still has limitations relating to informal language and slang terms. In addition, some interviewees were speaking very fast. Therefore, the researcher had to seek assistance from her colleague, who is British, to transcribe some parts of the interviews which she could not catch and to check the accuracy of the transcription that she had already done. The researcher also cross-checked all the transcription against the recorded interviews to ensure their accuracy.

8.4.6. Limitations relating to feedback from member checking

As mentioned in Chapter Five, member checking was used to ensure credibility and confirmability. The researcher faced a challenge concerning the rate of feedback gained from the group of volunteer tourists. This was because the researcher finished summarising the main themes after the volunteer tourists had

already left the orphanage; therefore, she had to send these to them via e-mail. The response rate for the first e-mail was very low. After a week, the researcher had to re-send them and this time she received a greater response. The researcher had to re-send the summary of the main themes a third time to some volunteer tourists. The result of the three e-mails was that fourteen out of twenty-four volunteer tourists verified the main themes. Of the group of host respondents, eighteen out of twenty respondents verified the themes of the findings.

8.5. Suggestions for the Organisers of Volunteer Tourism and Other Related Stakeholders.

Based on the positive comments and concerns/negative comments expressed by the volunteer tourists and the local residents, together with the information gained from the researcher's own observation, this study provides a number of recommendations for the volunteer tourism organisers to ensure mutual benefits for both the volunteer tourists and the local residents. These recommendations are not limited to the volunteer tourism organisers at the Home and Life orphanage, but can be used for other orphanages or other settings which host volunteer tourism and share a similar context to the Home and Life orphanage. Some of these recommendations echo the points suggested by Barbieri *et al.* (2012). The recommendations are as follows:

- (i) There should be proper selection procedures for the volunteer tourists who would like to volunteer at the orphanage. Certain qualifications and skills should be set as criteria for selection. This is because the

volunteer tourism programme at the orphanage involves vulnerable children. Consequently, the volunteer tourists who are going to take on the role of care givers must have certain qualifications and skills in taking care of young children. In addition, as the volunteer tourism programme at this orphanage often involves teaching English at the school, the volunteer tourists must also have proper qualifications and skills in teaching so that the students can gain the most out of their contribution;

- (ii) Pre-training on how to take care of young children and information about each child at the orphanage which is not confidential (e.g. background, characteristics, problems) should be provided for the volunteer tourists prior to their arrival. This could help them prepare themselves for care giving. Pre-training on how to teach should also be arranged for the volunteer tourists, to enable them to teach English successfully at the school. This could be conducted prior to arrival or at the beginning of their participation;
- (iii) Tasks and activities for the volunteer tourists should be clearly planned beforehand and should be shared with the volunteer tourists prior to their arrival so that they have an idea of what they are expected to do during their participation. Along with this, detailed instructions or guidelines for conducting each task/activity should also be provided beforehand.

The tasks and activities for the volunteer tourists should be based on the genuine needs of the orphanage and other associated parties, such as the school. In this case, all the related parties should take part in identifying their needs for the volunteer tourists and how well the contribution from volunteer tourists can meet these needs. Many of the volunteer tourists in this study stated that they felt that they were underutilised or helpless because they were not assigned to do any activities during the day when the children went to school. They also said that they were very disappointed to just sit around and not do anything because one of the main reasons they came to volunteer was to work and help the children.

For these reasons, it is recommended that volunteer tourism organisers plan activities in order to keep the volunteer tourists occupied. These activities should be involved with the education and welfare of the children and cross-cultural exchange between volunteer tourists and local residents. The volunteer tourists may be assigned more days to teach English at the school, or the volunteer organisers could set times for language lessons for the volunteer tourists in which the local residents teach the volunteer tourists the local language or the volunteer tourists could teach English to the local residents.

Language lessons could also reduce the language barrier between the volunteer tourists and the local residents. In addition, the organisers could encourage the volunteer tourists to use their initiative by asking them to think about, and prepare for, special activities to be carried out during their participation, such as games or

special lessons for the children. This request should be made to the volunteer tourists prior to their arrival so that they have time and resources to prepare.

- (iv) On-going support should be provided throughout the volunteer tourists' participation;
- (v) Information about the local culture and 'dos and don'ts' should be provided for the volunteer tourists before arrival;
- (vi) Proper and detailed orientation should be arranged at the beginning of the programme so that all the important information about the tasks and activities and the local culture can be clarified with the volunteer tourists;
- (vii) The volunteer organisers should provide information to the volunteer tourists on how the fee paid by them would be used;
- (viii) All related parties (i.e. agencies, the orphanage) must ensure that the information they provided for the volunteer tourists is consistent;
- (ix) English-speaking staff should be provided for the volunteer tourists to support them during their activities. For example, when they lead a game with the children, the staff could translate what the volunteer tourists say to the children, as well as help them control the children;
- (x) Recognition of the volunteer tourists' contribution should be provided. This could be done in many ways, such as a certificate which the Home and Life orphanage had already done, reports of the children's progress in English language which could be done by sending the children's English results to the volunteer tourists after

they have left, or by encouraging the children to write a letter in English to previous volunteer tourists;

- (xi) One of the main concerns expressed by the teachers at the school is that the volunteer tourists came to teach for a short period of time; therefore, the students were faced with a lack of continuity in their English lessons. The study also found that such problems were unknown to the orphanage staff. Therefore, it is recommended that the school should discuss its concerns with the orphanage staff and find a solution for this.

This study is in agreement with the suggestion made by Barbieri *et al.* (2012) that the orphanage and school are advised to seek an educational partner to provide volunteer teachers on a long-term basis. Another option is that the school should make a clear syllabus for each lesson that they would like the volunteer tourists to teach. This syllabus should set clear topics and objectives. Then, this syllabus should be sent to the orphanage so that the orphanage can co-ordinate with the potential volunteer tourists who are going to teach that lesson.

In addition, the orphanage and/or the teachers should allocate specific people who will be responsible for the co-ordination of the volunteer tourists. These people will explain to the volunteer tourists what the students have already learnt from the previous groups of volunteer tourists and what they are expected to teach the students. It is also advisable that these co-ordinated people should be present in class so that they can ensure continuity in teaching by the volunteer tourists.

8.6. Suggestions for Future Research

Volunteer tourism is a rapidly growing sector of tourism globally; however, the study of volunteer tourism is still relatively new. This study identifies a number of opportunities for future research into volunteer tourism, which can be classified into three main groups, as follows.

8.6.1. The impacts of volunteer tourism on the orphans who are the direct aid-recipients of the volunteer tourists

The current study focused only on the perspectives of the volunteer tourists, on their motivations and their volunteer tourism experiences, and the perspectives of the local residents in the context of orphan volunteer tourism. Although the findings reveal some impacts, both positive and negative, of volunteer tourism on the orphan children, these are not the main topics being investigated in this study. More research focusing on the impact of volunteer tourism on the orphan children, who are the direct aid-recipients of volunteer tourism, is therefore needed.

Concerns about the impact of orphan volunteer tourism on the orphans have been raised. However, at the time of writing the thesis, there is still limited study on this topic. This topic can be investigated from the perspectives of people directly involved with the orphans, which include staff of the orphanage, parents of the children where they have a parent living, and teachers at the school the children attend. These people are close to the children and are in a better position to observe the impacts of the volunteer tourists on the children.

Moreover, the volunteer tourists can serve as another potential key informant for this topic because they act as care-takers and spend time with the children. Most importantly, the study can also be looked at from the perspectives of the orphan children themselves as they are direct aid-recipients of the volunteer tourists.

However, future study may have to be aware of the ethical issues involved in research with children. This can also be researched from the viewpoint of a grown-up orphan, or those who previously lived in the orphanage and were cared for by volunteer tourists. In addition, another group of people who could provide an insight into this topic are people who work in the area of child psychology.

8.6.2. The role of volunteer tourism in alleviating poverty in the host community

One of the key findings that emerged from this study is that some local residents in Thai Muang sub-district had enjoyed economic benefits from the volunteer tourists in the form of job opportunities and generating income. Although the scope of this study does not cover the role of volunteer tourism in terms of economic enhancement or poverty reduction, it does support the anecdotal conclusions made elsewhere (e.g. Wearing, 2001; Morgan, 2010; Gray and Campbell, 2007; McGehee and Andereck, 2009), who claim that volunteer tourism can enhance local economic development and can help alleviate poverty in the host community.

To date, it is still not yet fully understood as to what extent volunteer tourism can alleviate poverty and how it can be used for this purpose efficiently because this topic is still under-researched. For this reason, a study of the role of volunteer tourism in poverty reduction is recommended, especially in a developing country like Thailand where the majority of people are still facing the problem of poverty and volunteer tourism is increasing.

8.6.3. Changes in local residents' attitudes towards volunteer tourism

It was found in this study that the local residents of Thai Muang sub-district had very positive attitudes towards volunteer tourists. However, it is still uncertain whether these positive attitudes will change over time when volunteer tourism becomes more developed in the community, and when the number of volunteer tourists increases.

As suggested by the well-known Doxey's (1975) 'Irridex' model and Butler's (1980) destination life cycle model (see more in Doxey, 1975, Butler, 1980), local residents' attitudes change over time in a sequence of increasing irritation or become more negative as tourism becomes more developed and there are increased numbers of tourists coming to the community. Although changes in local residents' attitudes towards the development of mass tourism have been studied, this topic of study in the area of volunteer tourism has not yet been studied at the time of writing the thesis and is, therefore, needed.

This study could be conducted by carrying out a longitudinal study at one specific setting or by conducting a comparative study of the local residents' attitudes between those in a community where volunteer tourism is still new and those in a community where volunteer tourism has long been developed. The findings of such a study could provide evidence as to whether volunteer tourism is an ideal alternative form of tourism which provides reciprocal benefits that local residents and volunteer tourists can equally enjoy.

8.7. Conclusion

The five motivational factors of the volunteer tourists found in this study represent a mixture of altruistic and self-interested motivations, which demonstrate the 'reciprocal altruism' concept, as suggested by Söderman and Snead (2008). This study also found that these motivations were influenced by two main factors: (i) the context of the place where volunteer tourism took place, especially in relation to the 2004 Boxing Day tsunami; and (ii) the notion of inequality between the Western volunteer tourists and the children at the orphanage, which had caused a feeling of guilt among the volunteer tourists. In terms of the volunteer tourists' on-site experiences, the study suggests that the multidimensional nature of volunteer tourism was facilitated by: (i) the overseas context of the destination; and (ii) the unique nature of volunteer tourism that emphasises intense, engaging, and interactive encounters with the host community.

Regarding the hosts' attitudes towards the volunteer tourists, the findings of this study were not entirely consistent with social exchange theory because it found that in the context of orphan volunteer tourism, host respondents tended to seek benefits for the children and expected the volunteer tourists to have good conduct and performance, rather than seeking personal benefits from the exchange in tourism.

Moreover, it found that the lack of perceived personal benefits did not serve as a key factor leading the hosts to have concerns about the volunteer tourists. Factors that potentially affected the well-being of the children and working closely with the volunteer tourists were two main factors that led the host respondents to have concerns about the volunteer tourists. This study also suggests that some Thai values, including *bunghun* relationships, *numjai* or genuine kindness, the avoidance of confrontation; and *chai-yen* or cool heart behaviour, play a significant role in influencing the hosts' attitudes.

Additionally, interactions between the volunteer tourists and the hosts in Thai Muang sub-district were found to be made in a reciprocal manner, from which both the volunteer tourists and the hosts had enjoyed satisfactory benefits from one another: the volunteer tourist had a desired rewarding experience, and the hosts had gained benefits from the work of the volunteer tourists.

This study identifies three main areas of contribution to the development of knowledge in the context of orphan volunteer tourism, especially in Thailand. These include: (i) enhancement of the understanding of the motivations of

volunteer tourists in relation to a natural disaster that occurred in a host destination; (ii) contribution to the debate about the potential reinforcement of inequality between Western volunteer tourists and local residents of a developing country as a result of volunteer tourism by challenging this argument; and (iii) understanding of the role of children who live at the orphanage in the volunteer tourists' motivations and on-site experiences as well as in the hosts' attitude toward the volunteer tourists.

This chapter has also outlined the limitations of this study : (i) generalisability of the research findings; (ii) the participants of the study; (iii) epistemology; (iv) data collection methods; (v) data analysis; and (vi) feedback from member checking. Moreover, suggestions for volunteer tourism organisers and other related stakeholders have also been presented. Specifically, the study suggests that volunteer tourism programmes should be developed and implemented in a way that can ensure mutual benefits for both the volunteer tourists and the local residents in the host community.

Lastly, this chapter suggests three main areas for future research, which include: (i) the impact of volunteer tourism on the orphans, who are the direct aid-recipients of the volunteer tourists; (ii) the role of volunteer tourism in alleviating poverty in the host community; and (iii) changes in local residents' attitudes towards volunteer tourism.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Pictures of the study site

(i) *The Home and Life orphanage*



(a) Bedroom for children and members of staff (left) and the multipurpose room (right), where various activities are carried out, such as reading books, doing homework, praying and meeting



(b) The staff members' bedroom. Part of this building also serves as the shop, where bags and T-shirts painted by the children are sold



(c) This building is divided into two rooms:
the children's bedroom is on the left and the volunteer tourists' bedroom is on the right



(d) Inside the children's bedroom



(e) Inside the multipurpose room



(f) Inside the volunteer tourists' room



(g) The construction of the new building for the bakery and coffee shop, sponsored by previous volunteers

(ii) *Wat Muang Pracharam school, where the volunteer tourists teach English.*



(a)The classroom building



(b)The classroom building (left) and the multipurpose building (right)

(iii) Tourist attractions near Thai Muang sub-district, where the volunteer tourists are normally taken during weekends



(a) Poseidon beach

(b) Lampi Waterfall.

(Source: Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation (2004))

Appendix 2

Pictures of the activities performed by volunteer tourists during their time at the orphanage



(a) Teaching English and helping the children with homework at the orphanage in the evening



(b) Teaching English to the children at the orphanage and other children in Thai Muang sub-district every Wednesday.

This project is a co-operative project with the Teacher Volunteer Group from KhaoLak.



(c) Playing and spending time with the children



(d) Teaching English at the local school on Monday and Tuesday



(e) Helping the orphanage's staff doing housework such as cooking, ironing the children's clothes, gardening and cleaning



(f) Constructing the new building for the bakery and coffee shop



(g) Providing community services such as cleaning at a Buddhist temple and at a beach around Thai Muang sub-district



(h) Visiting nearby tourist attractions (sometimes with the children) during weekends

Appendix 3

Extracts from the researcher's reflexivity journal

The researcher's background

I am Thai, born and brought up in Thailand. I studied in Thailand until graduating from university. I also received education at Masters level in Australia (1997-1998) and in France (2005-2006). I have been working as a lecturer in the field of tourism in universities in Thailand since 1998. I am very interested in tourism development in Thailand, especially in terms of sustainability and mutual benefits. I realise that the economy relies mainly on tourism and that the country needs to find alternative forms of tourism that can bring benefits to the local community.

The issue of volunteer tourism first came to my attention when I saw news of Prince William taking his gap year by working as a volunteer in Chile in 2000. Later, I saw many celebrities doing voluntary work in different parts of the world. I was curious as to why these people were spending their time and money doing social work. That is why I decided to study volunteer tourism in Thailand when I had the opportunity to work towards a PhD.

The researcher's socio-cultural background, gaining access and interpreting data

During the pilot study, I learned that my socio-cultural background had implications for how I could gain access to the study site (the Home and Life orphanage) and collect the data. Being born a Thai person and living in Thailand

for almost my entire life paved the way for me to build rapport with the Thai local residents in Thai Muang sub-district, because they regarded me as belonging to the same culture and society.

Shared nationality also helped me to understand the culture and tradition of the local residents which, in turn, helped me to make a good first impression on them. For example, in Thai culture, respecting older people is very important; therefore, when I interviewed older people, I always showed respect to them. Also, when I interviewed the teachers, I addressed them as *Ajarn*, which means a teacher in Thai and is considered respectful.

In addition, I was a lecturer in a Thai university, which enabled me to gain trust and co-operation from the local residents. This is because in Thailand, a teacher or lecturer is one of those professions that have a much respected profile. Upon introducing myself as a lecturer, the local people referred to me as *Ajarn*. However, being Thai might introduce a bias arising from being over-assuming in interpreting the data gained from Thai respondents. This bias was managed by the use of ongoing researcher reflexivity, member checking and triangulation.

Moreover, speaking the same language as the local people also enabled me to understand and interpret the data in a more intensive way. However, when it came to the Western volunteer tourists, I could not enjoy the same benefit of sharing nationality and culture. I was aware of the limitations of understanding and interpreting data gained from them.

The age gap between me and many volunteer tourists was another aspect: I realised that I was sometimes treated as an ‘outsider’ because the majority of the volunteer tourists were aged eighteen to twenty-two years of age, while I am thirty-six. To deal with this, I followed the suggestion of Tie (2009, p.103), who suggested that one of the best ways to shift from ‘etic’ to ‘emic’ identity is to find ‘a context of commonality’ with the respondents which could help ‘bridge any perceived cultural gap’. I believed that the ability to speak English could help bridge the gap between me and the volunteer tourists.

Additionally, I believed that my education in Western countries could further reduce this gap. Upon introducing myself to the volunteer tourists, I also informed them about my educational background, that I had studied in Australia and France, and that I am currently studying at the University of Bedfordshire in the UK. This information helped me build rapport with some volunteer tourists, especially those who were from Australia and the UK and it helped to initiate conversation. Moreover, I found that knowledge of Western culture, which I had gained from my experiences during studying in Western universities, helped me interpret the data to a certain degree. For example, I understand the gap year tradition of British students, which is not understood by local people because it is not what Thai students do. In Thailand, entering into well-known government universities immediately after graduating from high school is considered one of the most important steps in life, as well as a goal of both high school students and their parents. Students who do not study in universities are generally regarded as not having a good educational level, and find it very difficult to find employment.

Therefore, the gap year is not normal in Thailand. With the understanding of the gap year, I had a better understanding of their motivation to engage in volunteer tourism when the volunteer tourists said that they were gap year students who would like to gain experience before going to university.

Another example of my Western knowledge is the high standard of living enjoyed by people in Western countries such as the UK, Australia, France, and other countries that I used to visit. Issues of inequality were mentioned repeatedly by many volunteer tourists during their interviews. This knowledge has helped me understand better their motivation to engage in volunteer tourism in Thailand. However, I am also aware that my knowledge is still limited, and that can pose limitations in interpreting data gained from the volunteer tourists.

Furthermore, I learnt that staying in the orphanage during the time of data collection enabled me to be immersed in the life of the orphanage and become an actor in the setting being studied. I also shared a room with the volunteer tourists, which enabled me to build rapport with them more easily. This scenario provided me with a very good opportunity to observe the activities and behaviour of both volunteer tourists and local residents; however, I sometimes had to choose to observe only one group.

Being a volunteer tourist

During the pilot study, I also took the role of a volunteer tourist, because I wanted to gain an understanding of life as a volunteer tourist. However, I was aware that my motivations to be a volunteer tourist might be different to those of the 'real' volunteer tourists. I also realised that the volunteer tourism experience that I would gain may not be similar to those gained by the 'real' volunteer tourists in some aspects, due to my socio-cultural background. For example, I am Thai and can speak Thai; therefore, I do not face the difficulties of a language barrier, cultural differences, hot weather and bugs.

My work as a volunteer tourist included teaching English at school on Mondays and Tuesdays, helping the children with homework, taking care of the children when they came back from school and during the weekends, and translating some documents from Thai to English for the orphanage. I liked helping the children with homework, and playing with them. It was really a good time for me because I do not have younger sisters/brothers or my own children. Some girls became attached to me and I found that, sometimes they were very sensitive and easily angered; they did not want me to pay attention to the others. Taking care of the children was very difficult sometimes and required a lot of patience and skill.

After staying and working at the orphanage for three weeks during the pilot study, I realised that being a volunteer tourist was not easy because I had to remind myself many times that I was not working for money. I have always been paid for things I have done, such as working as a lecturer in a university, being a guest

speaker in other universities, translating and writing books. But as a volunteer tourist, I had to work for free. This required attributes such as generosity, dedication, time, patience and, most importantly, a good heart. Many times, I felt tired after teaching at school because I have never taught young students before. They were totally different from university students, because they did not listen to me when I taught. I had to speak loud or sometimes shout, because they kept talking in the class and there was no microphone.

However, at the end, I felt that this experience was very good. I do not know how to describe the feeling it gave me. It was like the feeling which I have after making merit at the temple, or when I donate money or things to charity. I felt like I could do something good for others. I felt that I have the potential and ability to help others less fortunate than me. I have seen the lives of the children at the orphanage, and that reminds me that I am so lucky that I have both a father and a mother who always take care of me; I always had my parents when I cried, and they always support me in everything I do, especially in education. This made me feel sympathy for the children, and I wanted to help them have better lives. Although these children are under the good care of the orphanage's staff, the staff members are not their parents. This made me feel more sensitive towards them. I bought many toys for them and intended to give a scholarship to some of them who had good results in their studies and wanted to go to university in the future.

The perception of Thai people who get help from Western volunteer tourists

As a Thai, I know that in the general opinion of Thai people, knowledge of English language is extremely significant, because they are well aware that it is one of the most widely spoken languages in the world. English is compulsory for Thai students in primary and secondary schools. Those who can speak English can go everywhere. Therefore, in Thailand, those who can speak in English are generally perceived as being more employable. Ability to speak English is one of the qualifications sought by most of employers in many fields, especially in tourism and the hotel business. People who can speak English generally have better positions in companies and achieve higher salaries than those who cannot.

Moreover, in Thailand, there are still very few people who can speak good English, especially in rural areas. Therefore, it is not surprising that the local respondents of this study always emphasised the benefit that the children have received from the Western volunteer tourists in terms of an opportunity to study English with native speakers.

Generally, an opportunity to study English with native speakers is limited to only rich people who can afford to pay for expensive courses taught by native speakers. The children at the orphanage and many other students at Wat Muang Pracharam school are from poor families who cannot afford to send their children to study in private schools where there are native speaking teachers. Having Western volunteer tourists to take care of the children at the orphanage and to teach English at the school is seen as a very good opportunity for the children.

I come from a middle-class family, and feel that the children at the orphanage are very lucky in terms of having personal tutors in English who are native speakers. When I was young, I did not have such an opportunity because it was too expensive. However, studying English in Thailand focuses more on the knowledge of grammar than English used in everyday life. This is the main reason that Thai students think English is very difficult and why many Thai students cannot speak English well, even though they have studied the language for many years.

Secondly, I knew that for Thai people, *bunghun* is very significant. *Bunghun* refers to the relationship between helper and helped in which the latter is obliged to being grateful for the former and, when possible, he or she has to return the favour. Being grateful to people who help us is a must. Being grateful can be displayed by returning favours or by saying ‘thank you’. It is not surprising to find that all of the local respondents whom I met and talked to so far expressed their gratitude to the volunteer tourists.

Another issue is that Thai people generally think that Western people, whom they normally call *farangs*, are better than them in many ways. In their view, Western people are richer, have good knowledge, are more straightforward, more developed and more self-disciplined, especially in terms of punctuality and so on. It is normal to hear Thai people saying that “we have to do or to work like *farang*, they are better than us”. Although people in the countryside (in the areas that are

not tourist attractions) are scared of Western people because of language barriers and feeling shy, they also have the perception that the Western people are 'better' or 'more developed' than them.

Appendix 4

Ethical scrutiny

SECTION A To be completed by the candidate

Registration No: 0923497
Candidate: Raweewan Proyrungroj
Research Institute: Institute for Tourism Research (INTOUR)
Research Topic: Orphan Volunteer Tourism in Thailand: Understanding Motivations, Experiences and Interactions
External Funding: Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, Bangkok, Thailand

The candidate is required to summarise in the box below the ethical issues involved in the research proposal and how they will be addressed. In any proposal involving human participants the following should be provided:

- clear explanation of how informed consent will be obtained,
- how will confidentiality and anonymity be observed,
- how will the nature of the research, its purpose and the means of dissemination of the outcomes be communicated to participants,
- how personal data will be stored and secured
- if participants are being placed under any form of stress (physical or mental), identify what steps are being taken to minimise risk

If protocols are being used that have already received University Research Ethics Committee (UREC) ethical approval then please specify. Roles of any collaborating institutions should be clearly identified. Reference should be made to the appropriate professional body code of practice.

The followings ethical practices will be ensured for the all participants of the research:

- Participants will be made aware that participation is entirely voluntary and if they agree to participate in the study, they are free to withdraw from the study at any time they would like to without being required to give reasons for leaving;
- A schedule of interviews and focus groups as well as an information sheet will be given to all participants beforehand;
- Participants are advised that they will be free to refuse to answer any questions which they feel uncomfortable with;
- In order to collect data effectively, audio recording will be used. Therefore, participants will be asked for permission before recording, and they are free to request that taping be stopped at any time ;
- Participants will be advised that they will be able to review the recordings and if they wish, particular parts related to their information will be deleted.
- Anonymity and confidentiality will be assured by using only pseudonyms in any written and/or oral presentations;
- No individually identifying information for the participant and their volunteer activities will be presented in any form.

Answer the following questions by deleting as appropriate:

1. Does the study involve vulnerable participants or those unable to give informed consent (e.g. children, people with learning disabilities, your own students)?
Yes No
2. Will the study require permission of a gatekeeper for access to participants (e.g. schools, self-help groups, residential homes)?
Yes No
3. Will it be necessary for participants to be involved without consent (e.g. covert observation in non-public places)?
Yes No
4. Will the study involve sensitive topics (e.g. sexual activity, substance abuse)?
Yes No
5. Will blood or tissue samples be taken from participants?
Yes No

6. Will the research involve intrusive interventions (e.g. drugs, hypnosis, physical exercise)?
Yes No
7. Will financial or other inducements be offered to participants (except reasonable expenses)?
Yes No
8. Will the research investigate any aspect of illegal activity?
Yes No
9. Will participants be stressed beyond what is normal for them?
Yes No
10. Will the study involve participants from the NHS (e.g. patients or staff)?
Yes* No

If you have answered yes to any of the above questions or if you consider that there are other significant ethical issues then details should be included in your summary above. If you have answered yes to Question 1 then a clear justification for the importance of the research must be provided.

*Please note if the answer to Question 10 is yes then the proposal should be submitted through **NHS research ethics approval procedures** to the appropriate **COREC**. The UREC should be informed of the outcome.

Checklist of documents which should be included:

- × Project proposal (with details of methodology) & source of funding
- × Documentation seeking informed consent (if appropriate)
- ✓ Information sheet for participants (if appropriate)
- × questionnaire (if appropriate)

Signature of Applicant:

Date:

Signature of Director of Studies:

Date:

This form together with a copy of the research proposal should be submitted to the Research Institute Director for consideration by the Research Institute Ethics Committee/Panel

Note you cannot commence collection of research data until this form has been approved

Appendix 5

Research information sheet for volunteer tourists



Institute for Tourism
Research
Park Square Luton
Bedfordshire
United Kingdom
LU1 3JU
www.beds.ac.uk

Research Information Sheet (Volunteer Tourist)

You are being invited to participate in a research study entitled

Orphan volunteer tourism in Thailand:

Understanding motivations, experiences, and interactions

This research is part of my PhD dissertation at the Institute for Tourism Research (INTOUR), University of Bedfordshire, United Kingdom. The aim of the research is to investigate volunteer tourists' motivations and on-site experiences, hosts' attitudes towards the volunteer tourists, and the nature of the interactions between volunteer tourists and their hosts in Thai Muang sub-district, Phang Nga province, Thailand. It is conducted by using the Home and Life orphanage Phang Nga Foundation as the study site.

You are invited to participate in this study because you are participating in the volunteer tourism program at the Home and Life orphanage and possess valuable information on motivations and experiences of volunteer tourism. There are no known risks if you decide to participate in this study. The information you provide will help me understand the motivations and on-site experiences of volunteer tourists, which will consequently provide a valuable insight for all stakeholders on

how volunteer tourism can be developed, implemented and promoted appropriately and sustainably in Thailand.

Your participation in this project will involve:

(1) 45-60 minute individual interview and focus group discussions asking questions related to your motivations to participate in the volunteer tourism programme at the Home and Life orphanage and what on-site experiences you have gained. These conversations will be recorded only with your permission. During the interview, your demographic characteristics will be collected for further data research.

(2) In addition, you will be asked to keep a diary daily at the end of each day about your key observations, memories and feelings, as well as things you have encountered or learned during your stay.

Your participation in this study is voluntary; therefore, should you feel the need to withdraw from the study, you may do so without question at any time until 30th September 2011. If you do withdraw at any stage, any information you have provided will be destroyed. You can also refuse to answer to any questions that make you feel uncomfortable. The results of the study may be published. However, you are assured of the complete anonymity and confidentiality of your information, since only pseudonyms will be used in any written and/or oral presentations. All material collected will be kept confidential. No other person besides my supervisors and me will have access to your data. The dissertation will be submitted to the University of Bedfordshire and deposited in the University Library and the British Library. It is intended that one or more articles will be submitted for publication in scholarly journals. Interview and focus group transcriptions as well as diaries will be destroyed two years after the end of the project. If you agree to participate, please sign a consent form to acknowledge your voluntary participation in the study.

I will be very pleased to discuss any questions or concerns you have about your participation or your rights in this study. You may contact me at Raweewan.Proyrungroj@beds.ac.uk or at 66 (0)893819633.

Raweewan Proyrungroj

PhD student, Institute for Tourism Research, University of Bedfordshire.

Appendix 6

Research information sheet for host respondents



Institute for Tourism
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เอกสารที่แจ้งรายละเอียดในการศึกษาวิจัย

ท่านได้รับเชิญให้เข้าร่วมการวิจัยในหัวข้อ

โครงการวิจัยเรื่อง การท่องเที่ยวเชิงอาสาสมัครในสถานเลี้ยงเด็กกำพร้าในประเทศไทย :

แรงจูงใจและประสบการณ์ของนักท่องเที่ยวอาสาสมัคร และการปฏิสัมพันธ์ระหว่าง

นักท่องเที่ยวอาสาสมัครและคนในชุมชนท้องถิ่น

Orphan volunteer tourism in Thailand: Understanding motivations, experiences and interactions

งานวิจัยนี้เป็นส่วนหนึ่งของการศึกษาในระดับปริญญาเอกของข้าพเจ้า ณ สถาบันการวิจัยเพื่อการท่องเที่ยว มหาวิทยาลัยเบดฟอร์ดเชอร์ (The Institute for Tourism Research, the University of Bedfordshire) งานวิจัยนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์ในการศึกษาแรงจูงใจและประสบการณ์ของนักท่องเที่ยวอาสาสมัคร (Volunteer tourists) เจตคติของชุมชนท้องถิ่นที่มีต่อนักท่องเที่ยวเชิงอาสาสมัคร และการปฏิสัมพันธ์ระหว่างนักท่องเที่ยวอาสาสมัครและคนในชุมชนท้องถิ่นใน

ตำบลท้ายเหมือง อ.ท้ายเหมือง จ.พังงา ประเทศไทย โดยได้ทำการศึกษา ณ มูลนิธิ the Home and Life orphanage Phang Nga Foundation

การเข้าร่วมโครงการวิจัยนี้ไม่มีความเสี่ยงใดๆต่อท่านทั้งสิ้น ข้อมูลที่ท่านให้กับข้าพเจ้าจะทำให้ข้าพเจ้าได้เข้าใจความรู้สึก และความคิดเห็นของท่านเกี่ยวกับนักท่องเที่ยวยุติธรรมในตำบลท้ายเหมือง ซึ่งจะเป็นประโยชน์ต่อการวางแผนการท่องเที่ยวในลักษณะนี้ในอนาคต การเข้าร่วมของท่านจะอยู่ในรูปของการให้สัมภาษณ์ทั้งที่เป็นการสัมภาษณ์ส่วนบุคคล (ใช้เวลาประมาณ 45-60 นาที) คำถามในการสัมภาษณ์จะเกี่ยวข้องกับความรู้สึก และความคิดเห็นของท่านต่อนักท่องเที่ยวยุติธรรมที่จัดขึ้น ณ มูลนิธิ the Home and Life orphanage ทำให้สัมภาษณ์ของท่านจะถูกบันทึกเสียง และ/หรือบันทึกภาพและเสียงเพื่อประโยชน์ในการวิเคราะห์ข้อมูลสำหรับโครงการวิจัย

การเข้าร่วมโครงการวิจัยของท่านจะเป็นไปโดยความสมัครใจของท่าน ซึ่งท่านมีสิทธิที่จะถอนตัวได้ทุกเวลา ก่อนวันที่ 30 กันยายน 2554 โดยไม่จำเป็นต้องชี้แจงเหตุผลใดๆทั้งสิ้น หากท่านตกลงใจที่จะถอนตัว ข้อมูลที่ท่านเคยให้ไว้กับผู้วิจัยจะถูกทำลาย นอกจากนี้ท่านมีสิทธิที่จะปฏิเสธที่จะตอบคำถามที่ท่านไม่สะดวกหรือไม่สบายใจที่จะตอบ ผลของการวิจัยซึ่งได้จากข้อมูลของท่านจะได้รับการตีพิมพ์ในรูปแบบของรายงานการวิจัยที่ข้าพเจ้าจะต้องนำเสนอมหาวิทยาลัยเบดฟอร์ดเชียร์(The University of Bedfordshire) และจะถูกเก็บไว้ในที่ห้องสมุดของมหาวิทยาลัยฯ และห้องสมุดบริติช ไลบรารี (British Library) นอกจากนี้ยังอาจได้รับการตีพิมพ์ในรูปแบบของบทความทางวิชาการที่เกี่ยวข้องกับการท่องเที่ยวด้วยอย่างไรก็ตามการนำเสนอข้อมูลที่ท่านให้ทั้งที่เป็นลายลักษณ์อักษรและด้วยวาจาจะอยู่ในรูปของนามแฝงเท่านั้น

ข้อมูลของท่านจะถูกเก็บอย่างเป็นความลับ จะมีเฉพาะตัวของข้าพเจ้าและอาจารย์ที่ปรึกษาของข้าพเจ้า (ศาสตราจารย์ ดร.แอนดรู โสลดัน และดร.นาเซีย อลิ) เท่านั้นที่จะเข้าถึงข้อมูลของท่านได้ ข้อมูลการสัมภาษณ์ของท่านที่ได้รับการถอดความแล้วจะถูกทำลายในระยะเวลาสองปีภายหลังจากการวิจัยนี้สำเร็จเสร็จสิ้นแล้ว หากท่านยินยอมที่จะเข้าร่วมงานวิจัยนี้ กรุณาลงนามในแบบแสดงเจตนายินยอมเข้าร่วม โครงการวิจัย (CONSENT FORM) จะเป็นพระคุณอย่างยิ่ง

ข้าพเจ้าจะยินดีเป็นอย่างยิ่งที่จะตอบคำถาม และข้อสงสัยของท่านที่เกี่ยวข้องกับการเข้าร่วมโครงการวิจัยและสิทธิ์ของท่านในการให้ข้อมูล ท่านสามารถติดต่อข้าพเจ้าได้ที่ อีเมล Rawewan.Proyrungroj@beds.ac.uk หรือที่หมายเลขโทรศัพท์ 66 (0)893819633

ข้าพเจ้าขอขอบพระคุณท่านสำหรับความร่วมมือในโครงการวิจัยของข้าพเจ้ามา ณ โอกาสนี้

นางสาววิวรรณ โปรรุ่งโรจน์

นักศึกษาระดับปริญญาเอก

สถาบันการวิจัยเพื่อการท่องเที่ยว มหาวิทยาลัยเบดฟอร์ดเชอร์

(The Institute for Tourism Research, the University of Bedfordshire)

Appendix 7

Consent form for volunteer tourists



Institute for Tourism
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Bedfordshire
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CONSENT FORM (Volunteer Tourist)

Orphan volunteer tourism in Thailand: Understanding motivations, experiences and interactions

Researcher's information

Raweewan Proyrungroj

PhD student, the Institute for Tourism Research, the University of Bedfordshire

Contact details: Raweewan.Proyrungroj@beds.ac.uk or at 66 (0)893819633.

Participant Reference Number

Please tick box

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily.
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving reason.
3. I agree to take part in this study.

| | Please tick box | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| | Yes | No |
| 4. I agree to the interview / focus group being audio recorded | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. I agree to the interview / focus group being video recorded | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. I agree to the diary on volunteer tourism experiences being read by the researcher and her supervisory team | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. I agree to the interview/focus group/diary being used as data for this research study | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. I agree to the use of anonymised quotes in publications | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9. I agree that my data gathered in this study may be stored (after it has been anonymised) and may be used for future research | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

| | | |
|---------------------|------|-----------|
| | | |
| Name of Participant | Date | Signature |

| | | |
|--------------------|------|-----------|
| | | |
| Name of Researcher | Date | Signature |

Appendix 8

Consent form for host respondents



Institute for Tourism
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Park Square Luton
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United Kingdom
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แบบแสดงเจตนายินยอมเข้าร่วมโครงการวิจัย (CONSENT FORM)

โครงการวิจัยเรื่องการท่องเที่ยวเชิงอาสาสมัครในสถานเลี้ยงเด็กกำพร้าในประเทศไทย :

แรงจูงใจและประสบการณ์ของนักท่องเที่ยวอาสาสมัคร และการปฏิสัมพันธ์ระหว่าง

นักท่องเที่ยวอาสาสมัครและคนในชุมชนท้องถิ่น

Orphan volunteer tourism in Thailand: Understanding motivations, experiences and interactions

ข้อมูลของผู้วิจัย

นางสาววิวรรณโปรยรุ่งโรจน์

นักศึกษาระดับปริญญาเอกสถาบันการวิจัยเพื่อการท่องเที่ยวมหาวิทยาลัยเบดฟอร์ดเชอร์

(The Institute for Tourism Research, the University of Bedfordshire)

ข้อมูลในการติดต่อ : Raweevan.Proyrungroj@beds.ac.uk หรือที่หมายเลขโทรศัพท์

+66 (0)893819633

Participant Reference Number

กรุณาใส่เครื่องหมาย ✓ ใน

ช่องสี่เหลี่ยมท้ายข้อความ

1. ข้าพเจ้าขอรับรองว่าข้าพเจ้าได้อ่านเอกสารชี้แจงรายละเอียด
ในการศึกษาวิจัย (Research Information Sheet) ใน
หัวข้อข้างต้นอย่างละเอียดและมีความเข้าใจดีแล้วซึ่ง
ข้าพเจ้าได้มีโอกาสสอบถามประเด็นข้อสงสัยต่างๆ และ
ผู้วิจัยได้ ตอบคำถามต่างๆที่ข้าพเจ้าสงสัยจนข้าพเจ้าพอใจ
2. ข้าพเจ้าเข้าใจว่าการเข้าร่วมโครงการศึกษาวิจัยของข้าพเจ้า
ในครั้งนี้เป็นไปโดยความสมัครใจ ซึ่งข้าพเจ้าสามารถ ถอน
ตัวได้ทุกเวลา โดยไม่จำเป็นต้องชี้แจงเหตุผลใดๆ
3. ข้าพเจ้าตกลงใจที่จะเข้าร่วมโครงการวิจัยนี้

ใช่

ไม่ใช่

4. ข้าพเจ้ายินยอมให้การสัมภาษณ์ของข้าพเจ้าทั้งที่เป็นการ
สัมภาษณ์ส่วนบุคคล และการสัมภาษณ์แบบกลุ่มได้รับการ
บันทึกเสียง
5. ข้าพเจ้ายินยอมให้การสัมภาษณ์ของข้าพเจ้าทั้งที่เป็นการ
สัมภาษณ์ส่วนบุคคล และการสัมภาษณ์แบบกลุ่มได้รับการ
บันทึกภาพและเสียง

ใช่ ไม่ใช่

6. ข้าพเจ้ายินยอมให้มีการอ้างอิงคำพูดของข้าพเจ้าในระหว่างการให้สัมภาษณ์ เฉพาะในรูปของการใช้นามแฝงเท่านั้น โดยการอ้างอิงดังกล่าวจะสามารถเปิดเผยได้เฉพาะในรูปของรายงานการวิจัย และบทความทางวิชาการเท่านั้น
7. ข้าพเจ้ายินยอมให้ข้อมูลที่ข้าพเจ้าให้ไว้ในระหว่างการสัมภาษณ์ทั้งที่เป็นการสัมภาษณ์ส่วนบุคคล และการสัมภาษณ์แบบกลุ่ม ถูกเก็บไว้เพื่อประโยชน์ในการวิจัยด้านการท่องเที่ยวในอนาคต

ชื่อ-นามสกุลของผู้เข้าร่วมวิจัย

วันที่

ลายเซ็น

ชื่อ-นามสกุลของผู้วิจัย

วันที่

ลายเซ็น

Appendix 9

Full demographic details of volunteer tourists and information about interviews

| No. | Name | Gender | Age | Marital status | Education | Country of origin | Occupation | Duration of stay | Interview date | Interview duration |
|-----|------|--------|-----|----------------|-------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|------------------|----------------|--------------------|
| 1 | V01 | M | 18 | Single | A-levels | United Kingdom | Gap year student | 1 week | 04/06/2011 | 58 mins |
| 2 | V02 | F | 18 | Single | A-levels | United Kingdom | Gap year student | 1 week | 04/06/2011 | |
| 3 | V03 | F | 19 | Single | A-levels | United Kingdom | Gap year student | 2 weeks | 11/06/2011 | 35 mins |
| 4 | V04 | F | 18 | Single | A-levels | United Kingdom | Gap year student | 2 weeks | 11/06/2011 | 49 mins |
| 5 | V05 | F | 19 | Single | A-levels | United Kingdom | Gap year student | 2 weeks | 18/06/2011 | 48 mins |
| 6 | V06 | M | 18 | Single | A-levels | United Kingdom | Gap year student | 2 weeks | 18/06/2011 | 45 mins |
| 7 | V07 | M | 21 | Single | Bachelor's Degree | United Kingdom | Recent university graduate | 2 weeks | 03/07/2011 | 1 hr 2 mins |
| 8 | V08 | F | 21 | Single | Bachelor's Degree | Australia | Recent university graduate | 1 week | 03/07/2011 | 42 mins |

| No. | Name | Gender | Age | Marital status | Education | Country of origin | Occupation | Duration of stay | Interview date | Interview duration |
|-----|------|--------|-----|----------------|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------|------------------|----------------|--------------------|
| 9 | V09 | F | 21 | Single | Bachelor's Degree | United Kingdom | Recent university graduate | 2 weeks | 03/07/2011 | 50 mins |
| 10 | V10 | M | 23 | Single | Bachelor's Degree | United Kingdom | Recent university graduate | 1 week | 10/07/2011 | 55 mins |
| 11 | V11 | M | 43 | Married | Vocational | New Zealand | Engineer | 2 weeks | 16/07/2011 | 1 hr |
| 12 | V12 | F | 37 | Married | Bachelor's Degree | New Zealand | Teacher | 2 weeks | 16/07/2011 | 1 hr 2 mins |
| 13 | V13 | F | 21 | Single | Bachelor's Degree | United Kingdom | Recent university graduates | 2 weeks | 05/08/2011 | 1 hr |
| 14 | V14 | F | 21 | Single | Bachelor's Degree | United Kingdom | Recent university graduate | 2 weeks | 05/08/2011 | 56 mins |
| 15 | V15 | F | 22 | Single | Bachelor's Degree | Portugal | Recent university graduate | 1 week | 05/08/2011 | 1 hr 2 mins |
| 16 | V16 | F | 21 | Single | Bachelor's Degree | Portugal | Recent university graduate | 1 week | 07/08/2011 | 1 hr 6 mins |
| 17 | V17 | F | 21 | Single | Bachelor's Degree | Netherlands | Recent university graduate | 1 week | 07/08/2011 | 1 hr 13 mins |

| No. | Name | Gender | Age | Marital status | Education | Country of origin | Occupation | Duration of stay | Interview date | Interview duration |
|-----|------|--------|-----|----------------|--------------------------------|-------------------|------------------------------------|------------------|----------------|--------------------|
| 18* | V18 | F | 22 | Single | Bachelor's Degree | United Kingdom | Recent university graduate | 2 weeks | 18/08/2011 | 35 mins |
| 19* | V19 | F | 22 | Single | Bachelor's Degree | United Kingdom | Recent university graduate | 2 weeks | 18/08/2011 | 46 mins |
| 20* | V20 | F | 22 | Single | Studying/ Master's Degree | United Kingdom | Student/outdoor instructor trainee | 2 weeks | 19/08/2011 | 56 mins |
| 21* | V21 | F | 21 | Single | Bachelor's Degree | United Kingdom | Recent university graduate | 2 weeks | 19/08/2011 | 45 mins |
| 22* | V22 | F | 19 | Single | Studying/ Bachelor's Degree | United Kingdom | University student | 1 week | 19/08/2011 | 47 mins |
| 23 | V23 | F | 22 | Single | Bachelor's Degree | United Kingdom | Recent university graduate | 2 weeks | 03/09/2011 | 1 hr |
| 24 | V24 | F | 22 | Single | Bachelor's Degree | United Kingdom | Recent university graduate | 2 weeks | 03/09/2011 | 1 hr 2 mins |
| 25 | V25 | F | 19 | Single | Studying/ Bachelor's Degree | United Kingdom | University student | 2 weeks | 16/09/2011 | 52 mins |
| 26 | V26 | F | 18 | Single | Secondary school | Australia | High school student | 1 week | 16/09/2011 | 43 mins |

| No. | Name | Gender | Age | Marital status | Education | Country of origin | Occupation | Duration of stay | Interview date | Interview duration |
|-----|------|--------|-----|----------------|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------|------------------|----------------|--------------------|
| 27 | V27 | F | 22 | Single | Bachelor's Degree | New Zealand | Recent university graduate | 2 weeks | 17/09/2011 | 54 mins |
| 28 | V28 | F | 22 | Single | Bachelor's Degree | United Kingdom | Recent university graduates | 2 weeks | 17/09/2011 | 55 mins |
| 29 | V29 | F | 23 | Single | A-levels | United Kingdom | Taking career break | 1 week | 23/09/2011 | 1 hr |
| 30 | V30 | M | 23 | Single | A-levels | United Kingdom | Taking career break | 1 week | 23/09/2011 | 1 hr 2 mins |

Note

1. Gender : M = Male; F= Female
2. Nos. 1-2 gave an interview together.
3. All the interviews took place at the orphanage.
4. Nos. 1-6 are research respondents from the pilot study.
5. Nos.7-30 are research respondents from the main study.
6. Nos. 18-22 are also participants of the focus group interview which took place on 20th August 2011 at the orphanage. The focus group lasted 1 hour 43 minutes.

Appendix 10

Full demographic details of host respondents, and information about interviews

| No. | Name | Gender | Age | Marital status | Education | Occupation | Length of residence | Interview date | Interview Duration |
|-----|------|--------|-----|----------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------|----------------|--------------------|
| 1 | L01 | M | 37 | Married | Bachelor's Degree | Staff member at the orphanage | 6 yrs | 04/06/2011 | 54 mins |
| 2 | L02 | F | 42 | Married | Master's Degree | Staff member at the orphanage | 6 yrs | 05/06/2011 | 1 hr 2 mins |
| 3 | L03 | M | 23 | Single | High School | Staff member at the orphanage | 2 yrs | 07/06/2011 | 1 hr 19 mins |
| 4 | L04 | F | 52 | Married | Master's Degree | Teacher | 52 yrs | 08/06/2011 | 47 mins |
| 5 | L05 | M | 37 | Single | High School | Staff member at the orphanage | 6 yrs | 13/06/2011 | 52 mins |
| 6 | L06 | F | 31 | Divorced | Vocational | Staff member at the orphanage | 31 yrs | 20/06/2011 | 50 mins |
| 7 | L07 | F | 52 | Married | Bachelor's Degree | Teacher | 29 yrs | 04/07/2011 | 51 mins |
| 8 | L08 | F | 52 | Single | Bachelor's Degree | Teacher | 52 yrs | 05/07/2011 | 50 mins |

| No. | Name | Gender | Age | Marital status | Education | Occupation | Length of residence | Interview date | Interview Duration |
|-----|------|--------|-----|----------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------|----------------|--------------------|
| 9 | L09 | F | 49 | Divorced | Master's Degree | Teacher | 26 yrs | 05/07/2011 | 1 hr 10 mins |
| 10 | L10 | M | 45 | Married | Primary school (Grade four) | Freelance worker/fisherman | 45 yrs | 07/07/2011 | 30 mins |
| 11 | L11 | F | 45 | Married | Primary school (Grade four) | Freelance worker | 33 yrs | 08/07/2011 | 49 mins |
| 12 | L12 | F | 29 | Single | Master's Degree | Teacher | 29 yrs | 11/07/2011 | 1 hr 6 mins |
| 13 | L13 | M | 52 | Married | Master's Degree | Teacher | 52 yrs | 11/07/2011 | 1 hr 2 mins |
| 14 | L14 | M | 77 | Married | Vocational | Freelance worker | 43 yrs | 18/07/2011 | 43 mins |
| 15 | L15 | F | 27 | Married | Bachelor's Degree | Teacher | 4 yrs | 19/07/2011 | 58 mins |
| 16 | L16 | F | 43 | Single | Bachelor's Degree | Waitress | 1 yr | 21/07/2011 | 52 mins |
| 17 | L17 | F | 40 | Divorced | Primary school (Grade four) | Staff member of the orphanage | 40 yrs | 04/08/2011 | 52 mins |

| No. | Name | Gender | Age | Marital status | Education | Occupation | Length of residence | Interview date | Interview Duration |
|-----|------|--------|-----|----------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|----------------|--------------------|
| 18 | L18 | M | 43 | Married | Primary school (Grade four) | Freelance worker/fisherman | 43 yrs | 06/08/2011 | 32 mins |
| 19 | L19 | F | 30 | Married | Primary school (Grade four) | Freelance worker | 30 yrs | 04/09/2011 | 41 mins |
| 20 | L20 | F | 70 | Married | Primary school (Grade four) | Nil | 1 yr | 25/09/2011 | 36 mins |

Note

1. Gender: M = Male; F= Female
2. Nos.1-6 are the respondents from the pilot study and the main study

Appendix 11

Semi-structured interview questions (volunteer tourists): rationale for revision

| Pilot study | Main study | Rationale |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Volunteer tourists' motivations: main topics to be investigated | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivations for volunteering while holiday | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivations for volunteering while holiday • Reasons for selecting Thailand as the destination for the volunteer vacation • Reasons for selecting to volunteer at the orphanage • Reasons for selection Thai Muang sub-district as the destination for the volunteer vacation | <p>The original topic could generate only 'thin description' of the volunteer tourists' motivations because the volunteer tourists tended to provide the data about their motivation to participate in volunteer tourism in general.</p> <p>It was clear from some volunteer tourists during the pilot study that the contexts of Thailand, of an orphanage, and of Thai Muang sub-district were part of their motivations to participate in volunteer tourism; therefore, the topics of their reasons for selecting to volunteer at the orphanage, in Thailand, at the orphanage, and at Thai Muang sub-district were added.</p> |

| Pilot study | Main study | Rationale |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| General questions about the volunteer tourists' holiday | | |
| | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Can you tell me about your holiday? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1. How long is your total holiday? 1.2. Where did you go before coming here? 1.3. Where are you going after this trip? 1.4. How long is your volunteer vacation at this orphanage? 2. Have you been to Thailand before? | <p>These questions were added because they serve as a brief introduction to the interview and provide an opportunity for the volunteer tourists to talk about their holiday. This brief introductory conversation could also make the interview more relaxed for the volunteer tourists.</p> <p>It was found during the pilot study that when the researcher began the interview with questions about their motivations to participate in volunteer tourism, the volunteer tourists seemed to speak briefly and uncomfortably. However, when the researcher tried to ask them more about their holiday, they appeared more relaxed and eager to speak. This introductory conversation paved the way for a more informative and relaxing interviews. It creates the atmosphere of a 'casual conversation', rather than a 'formal interview.'</p> |

| Pilot study | Main study | Rationale |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| The volunteer tourists' motivations | | |
| 1. What made you participate in volunteer tourism? | 1. What made you choose to volunteer while you are on holiday? | The term 'volunteer tourism' was not familiar to some volunteer tourists; therefore, its use was avoided during the interview. |
| | 2. What are your reasons for choosing to volunteer: (i) in Thailand; (ii) at an orphanage; and (iii) in Thai Muang sub-district? | The questions concerning the volunteer tourists' reasons for selecting to volunteer in Thailand, at the orphanage, and at Thai Muang sub-district were added due to the reason mentioned earlier. |
| | 3. Regarding your motivations/reasons to volunteer while you are on holiday here, is there anything else you would like to share with me? | This question was added in order to encourage the volunteer tourists to speak more about their motivations, which they probably had not realised before, or information which was not covered by the questions and which they wanted to share. |
| 2. What do you expect to gain from your participation in volunteer tourism? | | Deleted because it is not sufficiently close to the research aims. |

| Pilot study | Main study | Rationale |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| The volunteer tourists' on-site experience: main topics to be investigated | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What they think they have gained/learnt from their volunteering experience here • Challenges/difficulties/culture shock which they have faced during their stay and coping mechanisms • The nature of interactions and relationships with the local residents of Thai Muang sub-district • For those that travelled with others (e.g. friends, family members), how their relationships have changed • The nature of interactions and relationships with other volunteer tourists • The volunteer tourists' feelings about their volunteer tourism experience | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What they think they have gained/learnt from their volunteering experience here • Challenges/difficulties/culture shock which they have faced during their stay and coping mechanisms • The nature of interactions and relationships with the local residents of Thai Muang sub-district • For those that travelled with others (e.g. friends, family members), how their relationships have changed • The nature of interactions and relationships with other volunteer tourists • The volunteer tourists' feelings about their volunteer tourism experience • <i>Their intention to volunteer, (on holiday or not) in the future</i> | <p>The topic about the volunteer tourists' intention to volunteer (on holiday or not) in the future was added. This is because it was found during the pilot study that some volunteer tourists mentioned their intention to volunteer and/or take a volunteer vacation in the future, which was a result of a satisfying experience they gained from their volunteer tourism vacation at the Home and Life orphanage. Therefore, this topic can give more data about their feelings as well as the factors influencing it.</p> |

| Pilot study | Main study | Rationale |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| The volunteer tourists' on-site experiences | | |
| | 1. Please tell me about the volunteering activities that you have done so far. 1.1. How do you like them? 1.2. Which activity do you like most and why? 1.3. Which do you like least, and why? | These questions were added to serve as a brief introduction to an interview. It was proved during the pilot study that these questions lead the volunteer tourists to speak more about their on-site volunteer tourism experiences. Additionally, they provided more information about the feeling dimension of the volunteer tourism experience. |
| 1. What do you think you have learnt/gained from your experience here? | 2. What do you think you have learnt/gained from your experience here? | Remained the same |
| 2. Have you faced any challenges/difficulties/culture shock during your stay here? If no, why? And if yes, what were they and how did you cope with them? | 3. Have you faced any challenges/difficulties/culture shock during your stay here? If no, why? And if yes, what were they and how did you cope with them? | |

| Pilot study | Main study | Rationale |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>3. Do you have the opportunity to interact with local people?</p> <p>3.1.If no, why?</p> <p>3.2.If yes, how often?</p> <p>3.3.Do you think you have good relationships with local people?</p> | <p>4. Do you have the opportunity to interact with local people?</p> <p>4.1. If no, why? <i>And do you want to have more opportunity to interact with them and why?</i></p> <p>4.2. If yes, how often? <i>Would you like to have more opportunity to interact with local people and why? What have you learnt from interactions with local people? What have you shared with them regarding your own knowledge?</i></p> | <p>The questions about the volunteer tourists' desire to have an opportunity to interact with local people were added in order to provide more insights. For example, in the case where they did not have an opportunity to interact with the local people but wanted to have such opportunity, this question could provide an insight into obstacles that limit such opportunities.</p> <p>The question 'do you think you have good relationships with local people?' seemed to make the volunteer tourists uncomfortable, because they were not sure whether their relationships with local residents were good or not. In addition, the question 'how often do you have interaction with the local residents?' seemed to provide sufficient detail about their relationship with local residents because the volunteer tourists did not only talk about how often they interacted with the local resident, but also explained the nature of their interactions and relationships with local residents.</p> <p>The questions 'what have you learnt from interactions with local people?' and 'what have you shared with them regarding your own knowledge?' were added because they could provide an insight into the nature of cross-cultural exchanges between volunteer tourists and local residents.</p> |

| Pilot study | Main study | Rationale |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 4. Do you have an opportunity to interact with other volunteer tourists? If no, why, and if yes, how often? | 5. Do you have an opportunity to interact with other volunteer tourists? If no, why, and if yes, how often? | Remain the same |
| 5. If you have travelled here with friends/family members, how does this volunteer experience affect those relationships? | 6. If you have travelled here with friends/family members, how does this volunteer experience affect those relationships? | |
| 6. How do you feel about the experience that you gain from participating in this volunteer tourism programme? | 7. What would you say is <i>your most memorable experience and why?</i> 8. What is <i>the least memorable experience and why?</i> | The original question was too broad to capture the feelings of the volunteer tourists and could provide only 'thin description'. Generally, the volunteer tourists said 'I like it,' or 'it is good'. On the other hand, the revised questions encourage the volunteer tourists to speak about their feelings, both positive and negative, and generate 'rich' description about their feelings as well as the factors causing their positive and negative feelings. |
| | 9. What are your suggestions regarding the volunteer tourism program provided by this orphanage? What should remain and why? What should be improved, and why and how? | These questions were added because they encourage the volunteer tourists to speak more about their positive and negative feeling which they might not mention in their answer to the previous question, especially their negative feelings, which many volunteer tourists seemed to be reluctant to speak about. They seemed to feel more comfortable to respond to a question that asks for suggestions to improve the program than a question that asks directly about their feelings. |

| Pilot study | Main study | Rationale |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | <p>10. Will you volunteer again in the future? If no, why? If yes, why and do you have any plans in mind yet? What do you think makes you want to volunteer again in the future? Does this volunteer experience play any role in your intention?</p> | <p>As mentioned earlier, these questions can give more data about the volunteer tourists' feelings as well as the factors influencing it.</p> |
| <p>7. How would your presence affect the lives of the children at the orphanage?</p> | | <p>Deleted because it does not relate to the research aims</p> |
| | <p>11. Regarding your experience here, is there anything else you would like to share with me?</p> | <p>This question was added in order to encourage the volunteer tourists to speak more about their volunteer tourism experience which they probably had not realised before, or information that was not covered by the questions and they wanted to share.</p> |

| Pilot study | Main study | Rationale |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Demographic details of respondent | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gender - Age - Marital status - Educational level - Country of origin/nationality - Occupation - Duration of stay at the orphanage | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gender - Age - Marital status - Educational level - Country of origin/nationality - Occupation - Duration of stay at the orphanage | Remain the same |

Appendix 12

Semi-structured interview questions (host respondents): rationale for revision

| Pilot study | Main study | Rationale |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Main topics to be investigated | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their perception of the similarities/ differences between volunteer tourists and other tourists • Their positive and/or negative attitudes towards volunteer tourists and volunteer tourism development in their community and the factors influencing these attitudes • The nature of interactions and relationships with volunteer tourists • The impact of volunteer tourism on the community • The potential of Thai Muang sub-district in the development of volunteer tourism • Their willingness to take part in the planning/decision-making of the development of volunteer tourism in their community | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their perception of the similarities and differences between volunteer tourists and other tourists • Their positive and/or negative attitudes towards the volunteer tourists and the factors influencing these attitudes • The nature of interactions and relationships with volunteer tourists | <p>The term ‘volunteer tourists’ was avoided during the interviews because not all of the local residents were familiar with this term. They referred to the volunteer tourists using the term <i>Ar-sa-sa-mak</i>, which is a Thai term referring to a volunteer, or using the term <i>farang</i> which means a Western foreigner.</p> <p>Moreover, all the topics about the local residents’ attitudes towards volunteer tourism in their community were deleted because it was found that not all of the local residents were familiar with volunteer tourism, because this type of tourism is still new in Thailand. Therefore, when asking the local residents’ opinion about this type of tourism, they stated that they did not know what to say. For this reason, the focus of the study related to the local residents’ attitudes were changed to focus only on their attitudes towards the volunteer tourists.</p> |

| Pilot study | Main study | Rationale |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. In your opinion, what are the similar/different aspects between volunteer tourists and other tourists? | 1. In your opinion, what are the similar/different aspects between <i>volunteers</i> and other tourists? | The terms ‘volunteer tourists’ was changed to ‘volunteers’ as above mentioned reason. |
| 2. Regarding the volunteer tourists, what do you think are the reasons that make them come to volunteer? | | Deleted because this question did not generate data concerning the hosts’ attitudes towards volunteer tourists |
| 3. What do you like about the volunteer tourists who come to do the volunteering activities here? And why? | 2. What are you <i>impressed by</i> about the volunteer who volunteer here? And why? (Please give examples) | Use the term ‘impressed by’ instead of ‘like’. This is because the words ‘like’ and ‘dislike’ in the Thai language have a strong tone, and so especially when asking the host respondents about what they dislike about the volunteer tourists, they appeared to feel reluctant to respond to this question. The term ‘impressed’ made them more comfortable to speak about their positive attitudes and/or their negative attitudes (if any) towards the volunteer tourists. |
| 4. What do you dislike about them? Why? And how have you coped with those issues? | 3. What does not <i>impress</i> you about them? Why? And how have you coped with those issues? (Please give examples) | |

| Pilot study | Main study | Rationale |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | <p>4. Do you want to have volunteers continuously coming to do volunteering activities at the orphanage/school?</p> <p>4.1. If no, why?</p> <p>4.2. If yes, why? And do you want to have more volunteers coming? Why?</p> | <p>These questions were added because they could provide additional information about the hosts' attitudes towards the volunteer tourists.</p> |
| <p>5. In your opinion, how could volunteer tourism benefit or affect you and/or the local residents in Thai Muang sub-district</p> | | <p>Deleted because, as mentioned earlier, not all of the host respondents were familiar with volunteer tourism and have no or limited opinion about these topics.</p> |
| <p>6. In your opinion, do you think Thai Muang sub-district has the potential for the development of volunteer tourism? If no, why? And if yes, what are those potentials?</p> | | |
| <p>7. Do you want to take part in the planning/decision-making process of the development of volunteer tourism in your community? If no, why? And if yes, how do you think you can help?</p> | | |

| Pilot study | Main study | Rationale |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | 5. Regarding your attitudes towards volunteer tourists, is there anything else you would like to share with me? | This question was added in order to encourage host respondents to speak more about their attitudes towards the volunteer tourists which they probably had not realised before or information that was not covered by the questions and they wanted to share. |
| Demographic details of respondent | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gender - Age - Marital status - Educational level - Occupation - Length of residency in Thai-Muang sub-district | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gender - Age - Marital status - Educational level - Occupation - Length of residency in Thai-Muang sub-district | Remain the same |

Appendix 13

Focus group interview questions (volunteer tourists)

1. To what extent do you agree that the motivations of volunteer tourists are not purely other-oriented/altruistic (or only for the benefits of other people), but they are also here to fulfil personal needs?
2. In your opinion, why do Western volunteer tourists engage in voluntary work during their holiday in a developing country?
3. In your view, what do the volunteer tourists gain from participating in volunteer tourism in terms of: (i) personal development; (ii) cultural learning; (iii) developing relationships with the local residents, with other volunteer tourists, and with those they come with, and (iv) positive/negative feeling?

Note

In question 3, the aspects of personal development, cultural learning, social relationships and feeling were added to the original version of the focus group interview questions after these four themes had been identified from semi-structured interviews.

Appendix 14

Guideline topics provided for diaries: rationale for revision

| Pilot study | Main study | Rationale |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Direction | | |
| Please tell me about your volunteering experience at the orphanage by using the following topics as a guideline. | Please tell me about your volunteering experience at the orphanage by using the following topics (<i>but not limited</i>), as a guideline | The phrase ‘but not limited’ was added in the direction so that the volunteer tourists did not feel that they are limited to share their experiences by following only the topics provided. |
| Guideline topics | | |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Activities you have done.</i> What do you think about the activities you have done? Do they make your experience meaningful? In what way? 2. What do you think you have learned/gained from this experience? | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Activities you have done.</i> What do you think about the activities you have done? Do they make your experience meaningful? In what way? 2. What do you think you have learned/gained from this experience? 3. <i>Do you have an opportunity to interact with local residents/other volunteer tourists? What have you gained/learned from the interactions with them?</i> 4. <i>Any problems/challenges you have faced and how you coped with/overcame those problems/challenges</i> | Topics 3 and 4 were added as a guideline so that additional data about the nature of relationship between the volunteer tourists and other people, and their feelings could be obtained. |

Appendix 15

Guideline topics provided for diaries (revised version)

Direction: Please tell me about your volunteering experience at the orphanage by using the following topics (but not limited), as a guideline

1. *Activities you have done.* What do you think about the activities you have done? Do they make your experience meaningful? In what way?
2. What do you think you have learned/gained from this experience?
3. Do you have an opportunity to interact with local residents/other volunteer tourists? What have you gained/learned from the interaction with them?
4. Any problems/challenges you have faced and how you coped with/overcame those problems/challenges?

Date

Time.....

Day 1 of the trip

Appendix 16

Summary of the main adjustments made to the research approach as a consequence of the pilot study

| No. | Revised aspects | Details | Reasons |
|-----|-------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | The respondents (the group of host respondents) | Three groups of host respondents were added : (i) the parents/relatives of the children at the orphanage; (ii) construction workers; and (iii) others (a waitress at the local restaurant, the mother of a member of staff at the orphanage) | These groups were not known before conducting the pilot study. |
| 2 | Criteria for selecting the respondents | (i) For the volunteer tourists: the length of their stay was shortened from two weeks to one week. (ii) For the hosts: the length of their residency in the community was shortened from three years to one year. | To cover the respondents who possess the direct and valuable experiences of the issues being studied |

| No. | Revised aspects | Details | Reasons |
|-----|----------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 3 | Data collection techniques | (i) Focus group discussion would not be used with host respondents, but might be used with volunteer tourists where appropriate | The situation did not facilitate the use of this technique with the group of the host respondents, whereas with the group of volunteer tourists, there remained a possibility to conduct it in case that there were enough volunteer tourists to attend. |
| | | (ii) The interview guide of the semi-structured interviews was revised. | Some questions could not yield rich data and some were not clear. Moreover, some questions were added to cover the research issues and objectives |
| | | (iii) The guidelines in the diary were modified. | The original topics were not clear. |

| No. | Revised aspects | Details | Reasons |
|-----|-----------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 4 | The focus of the hosts' perspective and research question no. 3 | It was revised from focusing on the volunteer tourists and volunteer tourism development to emphasising only the volunteer tourists. The revised question no. 3 is " <i>How do the hosts perceive the volunteer tourists?</i> " | Volunteer tourism is still new in Thailand and the host respondents were not familiar with it. |

Appendix 17

Extracts from field notes

Extract from field notes taken on 5th June 2011 at 9.23pm at the orphanage

In the afternoon, L02 invited me to come with her, L05 and L03 to pick up the children who went to visit their house in Kho Nok community during the weekend to come back to the orphanage. We went to Kho Nok community, which is not far from the orphanage. This community is where the minor group of people called Moken live. This is new knowledge for me because I thought that Morgan people only lived at Surin Islands in Phang Nga province.

These people are very poor and earn their living mainly from fishing. During the monsoon season when they cannot go fishing, they have to do other freelance work such as taking care of the plantations of other people. They suffered a lot from the Boxing Day tsunami and had difficulties in taking care of their children, so they sent them to stay at the orphanage.

I asked some parents how they felt about the progress of their children's study after they were sent to stay at the orphanage. They said that they knew that there were *farangs* coming to help the orphanage staff take care of their children and teaching them English, and said that they were very grateful to these *farangs* because their children could have knowledge of English, and that would help them in their future.

Extract from field notes taken on 3rd July 2011 at 10.45pm at the orphanage

This evening there was a farewell party for three volunteer tourists (V07, V08, and V09) who are going to leave; one left today after the farewell party, and the other two are going to leave tomorrow. During the farewell party, L03 asked V09 to say something to the children; she said that she was not going to forget her time here. Then L03 played music and asked all the volunteer tourists to dance with the children. All of them were dancing happily with the children. Some girls picked flowers and gave them to all the volunteer tourists. They also hugged the volunteer tourists for a long time. I noticed tears from V09's eyes.

Extract from field notes taken on 19th July 2011 at 1.30pm at the school

Today I have an appointment to interview with L15. I am waiting for her because she is teaching. She said she will be available in half an hour after giving an exercise to the students. While I am writing, there are some students walking past me, some of them asked me how many *farangs* had come to teach today. I answered them and asked them whether they would like to study with a *farang*. They said 'yes' because these *farangs* were very kind and always had things to give them in the class.

Extract from field notes taken on 15th September 2011 at 1.45pm at the orphanage

Today there was one issue that I would like to write down. Just half an hour ago, while I was reading a book in front of the bakery, V25 was making banana cake in the bakery. L17 came to see her but did not speak to her. Then L17 asked me to

ask V25 that what kind of banana she was using for making banana cake (L17 could not speak English). So I asked V25, and she was a little bit offended, for which I did not know the reason. She said that she was using bananas that she had bought herself from a supermarket. I thought she might think that I asked because I did not want her to use bananas of the orphanage. I told her that I was not the one who would like to know about this, but L17 asked me to ask her about this.

Then, I told L17 about the bananas. L17 went to the kitchen and I followed her. I asked her why she wanted to know. She said that she was not the one who wanted to know, but L06 wanted to know. At that time, L06 was also in the kitchen, and she heard my conversation with L17, she said that she was not worried whether V25 was using bananas of the orphanage or not. What she was worried was about the kinds of bananas that V25 was using because some kinds of bananas were not good for making banana cake and if that was so, it was a waste of time and other ingredients.

I noticed that L06 and L17 were not happy with the response of V25. Later L06 told me that she was not happy with some volunteer tourists, like V25, who did not understand how to perform the tasks properly according to the expectation of the orphanage's staff members. Sometimes, what they have done could not be used. I was surprised because she had not mentioned this issue during the interview with her.

Appendix 18

Sample interview transcript from the main study

(volunteer tourist)

Extract from an interview with V26

Interviewer: What made you come to volunteer during your holiday?

V26: *Well, my cousin came here before and she said it was lovely, it was a really good experience. I think it is a good idea to try. Before coming here I was a bit nervous, because it's hard going straight into all the Thai culture and here I knew there'd be, like, some English speaking volunteers, so at least I'd feel a bit better. I just want[ed] to see whether I could do it, do it by myself as well, instead of with Mum around all the time. So yeah, it's been, it's been really good as well.*

Topic: Volunteer tourists' motivations

Main theme: To gain personal development and growth

Sub-theme: To prove themselves (being capable of doing things on their own)

Interviewer: OK, and do you have any particular reasons to choose to volunteer at the orphanage?

V26: *Um. Just to help ease myself into Thai culture.*

Topic: Volunteer tourists' motivations

Main theme: To be immersed in Thai culture

Interviewer: And why Thailand, why is Thailand your destination for volunteer?

V26: *Well, Mum's Thai, so yeah, that's why I've come here.*

Interviewer: That's why you can speak Thai pretty good and know some of Thai culture. You must learn from your mum.

V26: *Not a lot. I know a little bit, and that's also another reason why I wanted to come to volunteer in Thailand. It is mostly just to help ease myself into Thai culture. I just know a little bit of Thai culture before coming here, so that's the reason why I wanted to come to Thailand. So I could learn, just absorb myself in everything Thai. [I want] to learn the language, to learn the culture, to get to know my family as well.*

Topic: Volunteer tourists' motivations

Main theme: To learn about/be immersed in Thai culture

Sub-theme: (i) Immersion in Thai culture, (ii) Want to know own culture, (iii) Want to learn language (get to know her Thai family)

Interviewer: Is this your first time that you come back to Thailand?

V26: *No I've been, I've been here before, but not for very long and we'd just do, just go to the beaches and stuff like that and so we'd meet up with family, but I never really got to know them very well and so, and they don't speak much English, so hopefully I can get my Thai better.*

Topic: Volunteer tourists' motivations

Main theme: To learn about/ be immersed in Thai culture

Sub-theme: Want to learn/improve language (get to know her Thai family)

Interviewer: Now let's talk about your experience here. In terms of the activities, what activities have you done, which activity do you like most and which one do you like least?

V26: *Cleaning, making bread, hanging clothes, teaching, a lot of things. I think, probably the hardest one would have been teaching, teaching the English at schools. Yeah, that was really difficult.*

Interviewer: So why do you find it difficult?

V26: *Well this was, we weren't really told what we were supposed to be doing, they just said OK, so you may have to prepare a lesson and – but there may be teachers there. So we didn't really know and then when we got to the school they said OK, you can teach the class about animals and the teachers just left, so oh it was..., I don't know.*

Topic: Volunteer Tourists' on-site experiences

Main theme: Feeling: concerns/negative feelings

Sub-theme: Factors causing concerns/negative feelings

Sub sub-theme: Lack of communication from the orphanage to the volunteer tourists (no idea about what to teach at school)

Interviewer: So you were alone in the class?

V26: *We had [V25], the other volunteer she was there as well, and [L06], she came with us. So she translated a little bit, but mostly left by ourselves. So we had no idea what they, how much English they knew.*

Topic: Volunteer Tourists' on-site experiences

Main theme: Feeling: concerns/negative feelings

Sub-theme: Factors causing concerns/negative feelings

Sub sub-theme: Lack of communication from the orphanage to the volunteer tourists (no idea about what to teach at school)

Interviewer: Yeah and which activity, that is the one that you like most?

V26: *Yeah, I enjoyed that the most.*

Interviewer: And the one that you liked the least?

V26: *The least? Probably the non-activity, because there's a lot of times when there was just not a lot to do, but yeah I guess it's that.*

Topic: Volunteer Tourists' on-site experiences

Main theme: Feeling: concerns/negative feelings

Sub-theme: Factors causing concerns/negative feelings

Sub sub-theme: Being underutilised/helpless (no or few things to do)

Interviewer: What have you gained or what have you learnt from your stay here?

V26: *It's helped me so much with speaking Thai because I live with Thai people. It's given me so much more confidence as well, I think I'm more confident about my Thai language. I might come and work up here as well. The kids are so great at teaching me Thai. They always eager to teach Thai language and correct me when I speak something wrong, or pronounce some words incorrectly.*

Topic: Volunteer Tourists' on-site experiences

Main theme: Cultural learning

Sub-theme: Improving Thai language/ being more confidence to speak Thai (living with Thai people, kids eager to teach Thai language)

Interviewer: That's interesting. Anything else you can think of?

V26: *I think, I guess the fact that the kids always respect older people, is also a huge thing I guess.*

Topic: Volunteer Tourists' on-site experiences

Main theme 1: Personal development/growth

Sub-theme: Learning of new values/perceptions

Sub sub-theme: The value of paying respect to older people (the children always pay respect to older people)

Main theme 2: Cultural learning

Sub-theme: Learning of Thai value

Sub sub-theme: The value of respecting other people (learning from kids)

Interviewer: Yeah, in terms of interactions with the local people, how often do you interact with the local people?

V26: *Not a lot actually. Just with people here and the kids. I'd like to have more because everyone is so interesting.*

Topic: Volunteer tourists' on-site experiences

Main theme: Social/relationships with other people

Sub-theme: Relationships with the local people

Sub sub-theme: Limited opportunity to interact with other local people. Want to have more

Interviewer: What have you learnt from interactions with people here?

V26: *I think some Thai culture. Because at least we are living with Thai people. If you're just a tourist then you go to the tourist destinations and hang around all the tourists. But hanging around Thai people, that [has] sort of changed our ways, help myself, to fit into Thai things, to help me like feel more at home kind of thing. And I know when Mum comes up here, she hates going to the tourist areas.*

Topic: Volunteer tourists' on-site experiences

Main theme: Cultural learning

Sub-themes: Learning Thai culture

Sub sub-theme: Factors facilitating cultural learning (living with Thai people)

Interviewer: And how about your relationship with other volunteer tourists?

V26: *Oh, yeah. I've met new friends here. The other girls are so nice. We've been spending a lot of time together. We are definitely going to keep in touch with each other. [V25] is going to come with me when my mum comes to pick me up.*

Topic: Volunteer tourists' on-site experiences

Main theme: Social/or relationship with other people

Sub theme: The relationship with the other fellow volunteer tourists

Sub sub-theme: Meeting new friends (going to keep in touch with each other)

Interviewer: Yeah, OK. And in order to improve the programme here for the future volunteers, do you have any suggestions like what should be remain, what should be improved in order to satisfy the volunteers?

V26: *No. I think everything here is amazing. No. I think I am really happy with it. The food is great. Everyone is very nice. It is all good.*

Topic: Volunteer tourists' on-site experiences

Main theme: Feeling: positive feelings

Sub-theme: Factors causing positive feelings

Sub sub-themes: (i) The food, (ii) The orphanage's staff members, and (iii) The children

Interviewer: What would you say is your biggest or most memorable experience and why?

V26: *I don't know. I think everything is just amazing. I guess, maybe the kids. They are so lovely and caring.*

Topic: Volunteer tourists' on-site experiences

Main theme: Feeling: positive feelings

Sub-theme: Factors causing positive feelings

Sub sub-theme: The children (characteristics of the children)

Interviewer: Regarding your experience here, do you have anything else to share?

V26: *Um...yeah about, I think, feeling with the kids. Well, my cousin, she was here before. When she came up here, she got really attached to them. She stayed for a week and then when she left she cried. She was very attached. But, yeah, I'm not quite sure. For me it's a bit different, because I am around here for six months, so I haven't really been thinking about how I'd feel yet, because I will just be coming back and forth. So I think when it gets to the end I will be, get quite attached and get quite upset.*

Topic: Volunteer tourists' on-site experiences

Main theme: Feeling: concerns/negative feelings

Sub-theme: Factors causing concerns/negative feelings

Sub sub-theme: An established bond with the children at the orphanage

Appendix 19

Sample interview transcript from the main study

(host respondents)

Extract from an interview with L12 (a teacher)

Interviewer: In your opinion, what are the similar and difference aspects between the volunteers and other tourists?

L02: *For those who come to volunteer, I think they are persons who are very dedicated because they don't just come to travel, but they also dedicate their free time and other things to help others. This is very different to other tourists who come to visit us and go. And not only that they volunteer their time, they also bring many things for the students. The students really like them.*

Main theme 1: Positive attitudes

Sub-theme: Influencing factor: the volunteer tourists' conduct

Sub sub-theme: Generosity and dedication to help (in terms of time, donations)

Main-theme 2: General opinion about the volunteer tourists:

Sub-theme: Being different to other tourists (in terms of helping/working/donating without seeking anything in return)

Interviewer: Are you willing to have volunteers coming to work in this community, especially this school?

L12: *Definitely. Because what they are doing [is] very beneficial for us, especially our students. I don't think there would be anyone who is not happy about them. They are doing good things for us.*

[Field note: the way L12 spoke about the volunteer tourists showed that she was very happy to have the volunteer tourists at the school.]

Main themes: Positive attitudes

Sub-theme: Influencing factor: perceived benefits

Sub sub-theme: Benefits for the children (students)

Interviewer: So, what are you impressed [by] about these volunteers?

L12: *What I am very positive about them is their friendliness. Whenever we meet each other, they always smile and say 'hello' to me. Unlike other farangs, they don't appear arrogant or having a frowning face to me and other teachers. This really makes me feel good and positive about them. And they also help us teaching English to the student, this makes the student like English language better. Children generally think that English is difficult to learn. But when they have an opportunity to study with farangs who have good teaching techniques like these volunteers, they are more interested to study. We aren't good at teaching English, therefore, we make it seem difficult for the students. But these volunteers are good at it and they know how to teach, so they make the student like it. And when they like English language, they may have positive attitudes towards it and, consequently want to continuously study it. As a result, they get better results in English subject. Some students may not [be] good in Thai or Math[s] subjects, but they may be good in English subject. They may discover that they are good in English when they study with farangs. This may inspire them to concentrate more in English subject and other things that involve English language.*

Main theme: Positive attitudes

Sub-theme 1: Influencing factor: the volunteer tourists' conduct/performance

Sub sub-themes: (i) Friendliness, (ii) Good performance (in teaching English-having good techniques)

Sub-theme 2: Influencing factor: perceived benefits

Sub sub-themes: (i) Benefits for the children (studying English with *farang* inspired to study), (ii) Personal benefits (getting helps in teaching)

Interviewer: In your opinion, why do the students like to study English with these *farangs*?

L12: *They motivate the students by using the rewards such as snacks or other small things. Or sometimes, they let the kids hug them. The kids like to hug them and kiss their cheeks. I have used their techniques in my class. I tell myself that it must be better to do some other things rather than just scolding the students. Not only the rewards, they have good teaching techniques like using games, singing, or drawing the pictures when they teach English vocabularies which are very interesting. I think the kids have gained benefits a lot from them in terms of learning English. The students like to study with them. They also say that they want Monday to come quickly.*

[Field note: the volunteer tourists come to teach English at this school every Monday and Tuesday. And for the class that L12 is responsible [for], the volunteer tourists come to teach on Monday afternoon. So that is why L12 said that the students told her that they want Monday to come quickly because the kids want to meet and study with the volunteers.]

Main theme: Positive attitude

Sub-theme 1: Influencing factor: the volunteer tourists' performance

Sub sub-theme: Good performance (in teaching English, having good techniques)

Sub-theme 2: Influencing factor: perceived benefits

Sub sub-themes: (i) Benefits for the children (learning English with *farangs*),
(ii) Personal benefits (learning teaching techniques)

Interviewer: Are there any other benefits for the kids?

L12: *I think there are a lot. From what I have seen, I think that they have made our students become more confident with the foreigners. This is what I really like about them. The students here aren't scared of the volunteers who come to teach here, but they are very familiar with them. It is contrary to me or the*

other people at my age. When we were at the primary school, when we saw farangs, we were very scared to talk to them. But the students here aren't like us, once they see the volunteers, they just go to greet them and hug them. And not only with the volunteers who come to teach here, the students are also enthusiastic to greet and talk to other farangs whom they meet elsewhere. These volunteers make them become more confident. This is another reason that makes me impressed about them. And the students also have an opportunity to learn their culture. Apart from wai that we do in Thailand, they also know to greet in other people in Western standard.

Main theme: Positive attitude

Sub-theme: Influencing factor: perceived benefits

Sub sub-theme: Benefits for the children (more confident with foreigners, learning their culture)

Interviewer: You have mentioned a lot about the benefits that the students have gained from the volunteers, and how about yourself. [Is]there anything that you personally benefit from them?

L12: *For me, I have more free time to do other tasks. They have relieved us of our own responsibilities a lot which is very good for our students because they have an opportunity to study with farangs. Normally, I have to teach every subject in my class including English, so I don't have times to correct the students' homework and have to do these at home. But now on Monday afternoon, the volunteers come to teach, so I have free time for one hour which I can use to correct students' homework or go to library.*

Main theme: Positive attitude

Sub-theme: Influencing factor: perceived benefits

Sub sub-theme: Personal benefits (get relief from the volunteer tourists)

Interviewer: And do you have anything that you aren't impressed [by] about them?

L12: *No, not at all. I can't think of any bad thing about them. I think many of them are still teenagers but they've come all the way from their countries to Thailand to help us without getting any money from us. They are very good people. I am not sure whether I can do just like them. I think I don't have anything which I am not impressed or dislike about them.*

Main theme: Positive attitude

Sub-theme: Influencing factor: the volunteer tourists' conducts

Sub sub-theme: Generosity and dedication (helping without seeking anything in return)

Interviewer: Do you want to have volunteers continuously coming to teach at the school?

L12: *Oh, yes. It would be very good that our school can have volunteers to teach English forever. But there is something about letting the volunteers to teach which is that they normally teach only vocabularies and English in daily life, they don't not teach English grammar. However, it is much better than if we have to teach by ourselves.*

Main theme 1: Positive attitudes

Sub-theme 1: General opinion about the volunteer tourists (a desire to have volunteer tourists continuously coming)

Sub-theme 2: Influencing factor: perceived benefits

Sub sub-theme: Personal benefits (getting relief from teaching English)

Main theme 2: Concern

Sub-theme: Influencing factor: the volunteer tourists' performance

Sub sub-theme: Performance in teaching English (not focus on English grammar)

Interviewer: Regarding to your attitudes towards volunteer tourists, is there anything else you would like to share with me?

L12: *What other teachers and I have seen is that one of the orphanage staff has been teaching English by himself and the volunteers just help him. I think I would be much better [if] the teaching tasks had been done by the volunteers because it is their own language and it is the main reason we let them come to our school.*

Main theme: Concern

Sub-theme: Influencing factor: the volunteer tourists' performance

Sub sub-theme: Performance in teaching English (do not teach, but only help the staff)

(The researcher's note: I think L02 did not mean that it is the mistake of the volunteer tourists)

Interviewer: So, you means that the orphanage staff [member] himself, not the volunteers, teach English every time?

L12: *Not every time, but sometimes. I think it would be better that he lets the volunteers teach every time. I want the students to benefit from native speakers.*

Main theme: Concern

Sub-theme: Influencing factor: the volunteer tourists' performance

Sub sub-theme: Performance in teaching English (do not teach, but only help the staff)

(The research's note: L02 thought that it was because the orphanage staff did not encourage or let the volunteer tourists lead the teaching, but only let them help him while he's teaching. This is consistent with the researcher's own observation that this staff member of orphanage sometimes does the teaching by himself and asks the volunteer tourists to help the students with exercises that he gives.)

Appendix 20

Sample focus group transcript (volunteer tourists)

Interviewer: In your opinion, why do Western volunteer tourists tend to engage in volunteer works during their holiday in a developing country like Thailand?

V19: *I think it's definitely primarily to do with wealth and [feeling] fortunate because our countries are stabilised, we have the skills, the infrastructures and everything. It's sort of arrogant in a way because we feel we have the skills because we're from a developed country and so we feel we have a lot to teach these people. I'm sure people in developing countries can learn a lot from us, especially in terms of English language. I think it's to do with wealth and the fact that we can even afford to come over to these countries and be there and help out. And I hope that their lives would become, more or less, better by our helps.*

Topic: Volunteer tourists' motivations

Main theme: To help the children

Sub-theme: Influencing factor: being more fortunate/wealthier

V18: *I feel like if you're in this world, you know, that has so many things wrong [with it], it would be really selfish, as a privileged person like we are, to not go and try and give some love and some help to the people who don't have as much as we do. With this you feel like you are less selfish, you feel much better about yourself.*

Topic: Volunteer tourists' motivations

Main theme: To help the children

Sub-theme: Influencing factors: to reduce guilty/feeling of being selfish/to feel better about themselves.

V20: *I think it is about [trying] to see how the rest of the world lives, especially in a country like Thailand which is located on the other side of the world. I think it's a lot to do with the fact that if we didn't do volunteer work, we would not have been able to learn and experience how Thai people live. For me, I'm sure I haven't got a full [grasp of the] reality of what it's like but without volunteering, I think it's very difficult for tourists to actually learn and see the culture and the lifestyle and day-to-day routines of these people.*

Topic: Volunteer tourists' motivations

Main theme: To learn about/be immersed in local culture

Sub-theme: To gain better understanding of Thai culture

Interviewer: **In your view, what do the volunteer tourists gained from participating in volunteer tourism in terms of personal development?**

V20: *I think I understand myself and my potential better. I've never ever thought I would be here teaching children, standing up in front of children. In the uni[versity] and college, I was terrified of talking in front of big groups of people, let alone just standing up and trying to teach people something. So I've definitely discovered that I can actually speak in front of the class and teach English to the children, and never, ever in a million years thought I could.*

Topic: Volunteer tourists' on-site experiences

Main theme: Personal development/growth

Sub-theme: The opportunity for self-reflection

V22: *I've always liked children but I am never sure whether I can actually teach them or make them understand what I am teaching. Now I've realised I'm quite good with children and I've enjoyed the teaching and that's the thing I want to do in my future that I hadn't really been sure about before. Teaching and being in front of the class and seeing how they responded to me was really nice, so it's something to consider for my future.*

Topic: Volunteer tourists' on-site experiences

Main theme: Personal development/growth

Sub-theme: An insight into career direction

V18: *I think we don't really see the poverty in the UK as much because that's where you live and that's where you are, whereas here it is easier to see. Then, this makes me realise that there's obviously this kind of problem in our country as well, it's a shame that's maybe a little bit overlooked.*

Topic: Volunteer tourists' on-site experiences

Main theme: Personal development/growth

Sub-theme: Gaining a sense of global citizenship

Interviewer: **So, do you think that the volunteer tourists have [a] better opportunity to learn about local culture than other tourists?**

V18: *Yes, I think we do. I think if people were to come on a volunteering kind of holiday rather than a touristy holiday, their behaviour and perspectives would be different. Some people just come thinking it's a place they can just get drunk and be in the sun, while some people see that this is the place where people live and this is food they eat. These all have the meaning and are interesting to learn from.*

Topic: Volunteer tourists' on-site experiences

Main theme: Cultural dimension

Sub-theme: gaining a 'real' or 'actual' insight into Thai culture (the difference between the volunteer tourists and leisure tourists)

Appendix 21

Extract from volunteer tourists' diaries

[Extract from V15's diary, 2nd August 2011]

Today we did some painting in the new building– I think we helped here because all of us did it quite quickly. It gave us a meaning and purpose to be there. We then dug up the ground and filled in the holes in the road. This was hard work but felt like we were really doing good [things] because they will use it every day.

Topic: Volunteer tourists' on-site experiences

Main theme: Feeling: positive feeling (meaningful and purposeful experience of doing things that are useful for others)

When the kids got home they played games with each other and had dinner. It would have been good to interact with them more. However, this is a problem with them being at school all day. Today I felt I helped around the orphanage quite a bit, however there was not much interaction with the children. At this orphanage I think the children are very used to Westerners, so it's not such a big deal to them. It is a very different experience from other parts of Thailand and Africa. I felt more needed and important in other places than here.

Topic: Volunteer tourists' on-site experiences

Main theme: Feeling: concerns/negative feelings

Sub-theme: Factors causing concerns/negative feelings

Sub sub-theme: Being unnecessary

Appendix 22

Summary of thematic analysis process

| Phases | Description of the process |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Familiarising with the data | Transcribing data; repeatedly reading the data; searching for meaning and patterns; taking notes; and marking ideas for initial coding |
| 2. Generating initial codes | Identifying codes; matching the codes with data extracts demonstrating those codes; and collating relevant data extracts together within each code in separate computer files |
| 3. Searching for themes | Reviewing all the identified codes and sorting them into potential themes; and collating all the relevant data extracts to each potential theme in separate computer files |
| 4. Reviewing themes | Reviewing all the identified themes by reading all the collated data extracts for each theme to consider whether they formed a coherent patterns, creating a 'candidate thematic map' and considering whether it is accurately represents the meaning of the data as a whole by re-reading the entire data |
| 5. Defining and naming themes | Identifying the 'essence' of each theme or what 'story' it tells; generating sub-themes and sub sub-themes to give structure to a large theme; organising collated data extracts for each theme to form an account of story that reflects that particular theme; and considering and giving names to the themes. |
| 6. Producing the report | Writing-up the report |

(Source: Braun and Clarke, 2006)

Appendix 23

Summary of techniques used to ensure the study's trustworthiness

| Criteria | Techniques used to enhance each criteria | Where these techniques are demonstrated |
|-----------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Credibility | Researcher reflexivity | Section 5.6 and Appendix 3 |
| | Triangulation | Section 5.10.5 |
| | Member checking | Section 5.10.1 |
| | Thick description | Sections 1.2 and 1.7; Chapter Five; Appendices 1, 2, 4, 9-16, and 22 |
| | Concealing a video-recorder while interviewing and trying not to get involved with the main activities of the participants | Section 5.10.1 |
| Transferability | Thick description | Sections 1.2 and 1.7; Chapter Five; Appendices 1, 2, 4, 9-16, and 22 |
| Dependability | Audit trails | Sections 5.3, 5.4, 5.7, 5.8, 5.9 and 5.9.4; Chapters Six and Seven; Appendices 3-22 |
| Confirmability | Member checking | Section 5.10.1 |
| | Researcher reflexivity | Section 5.6 and Appendix 3 |
| | Audit trails | Sections 5.3, 5.4, 5.7, 5.8, 5.9, and 5.9.4; Chapters Six and Seven; Appendices 3-22 |