

From the Teacher's Perspective: The Complex Nature of Facilitating
Volunteer Abroad Programs in Ontario Secondary Schools

By

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ABSTRACT

The following study has been designed to address gaps in the volunteer abroad literature with respect to this growing phenomenon within Ontario's secondary school system. Volunteer abroad programs at the secondary school level reflect a combination of attributes from study abroad, international service learning and volunteer tourism and are influenced by the rhetoric of global citizenship. As studies have shown that educators play an important role in shaping the volunteer abroad experience for their students, specifically in relation to how they choose sending and host organizations, integrate pre-departure training and facilitate reflection during and after the time abroad, this study includes an interpretive analysis of ten semi-structured interviews conducted with Ontario secondary school teachers who have facilitated volunteer abroad programs between the years 2006 and 2011. Interview responses have been critically analyzed through the lens of the global citizenship discourse, post-colonial studies and critical pedagogy theory in order to make sense of the nuances involved in how teachers conceptualize the volunteer abroad experience they provide for their students. Throughout this thesis I argue that teachers must engage in self-reflexive and collaborative practices in order to challenge their assumptions regarding the impacts of these programs on their students and host communities in the Global South.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Contextualizing the Study of Volunteer Abroad Programs in Ontario Secondary Schools

Sending volunteers from the Global Northⁱ to work in the Global South is a growing phenomenon in North America and Europe (Plewes and Stewart, 2007; Sherraden, Lough and McBride, 2008). With over a dozen Canadian non-profit organizations having sent an estimated 65,000 Canadian volunteers overseas since 1960 (Kelly and Case, 2007), some of the most significant growth in Canadian volunteer abroad programs is happening through the expansion of study abroad and experiential learning opportunities being offered at Canadian universities, colleges and secondary schools (Tiessen, Forthcoming). As such, the focus of this study is to explore the phenomenon of volunteer abroad programs offered by secondary schools in Ontario from the perspective of the teachers who facilitate them. Specifically, this study seeks to develop an understanding of how teachers, who have varied educational and personal backgrounds when it comes to cross-cultural understanding and international developmentⁱⁱ, conceptualize the purpose of these trips and how this influences the choices they make while planning and implementing these programs.

Although the concept of volunteering and service work is increasingly problematized within academia, the subject remains under-researched (Lewis, 2006; Tiessen, 2008) and lacking in a clear understanding of why we send young people abroad (Tiessen, 2008). The limited understanding of these programs is even more notable for secondary school offerings. Furthermore, Tiessen (Forthcoming, p.1) notes that the

increasing desire for experiential learning opportunities to take place in the Global South raises unique ethical dilemmas as a result of “economic disparities, cultural differences, historical circumstances and social situations”. As a result of the rapid growth and variety of volunteer abroad program options that have been made available to North American youth over the past decade, academic discussion on volunteer abroad can be found in subject areas that cover topics such as international development; intercultural or cross-cultural learning; study-abroad; experiential learning; volunteer tourism; global citizenship education; critical pedagogy; and post-colonial studies. In general, there are two key ways of thinking about the volunteer abroad experience. The first takes for granted the benefits of volunteer work for communities in the Global South, and as a result, tends to focus on the perceived benefits of these experiences on the personal growth of the volunteers. This way of conceptualizing the volunteer abroad experience tends to be represented in mainstream development narratives that represent those in the Global North as capable and willing helpers of those less fortunate in the Global South. The second way of thinking about these experiences is presented in various academic disciplines related to development studies and critical pedagogy, where the taken-for-granted benefits of volunteering abroad are questioned in relation to the role that power plays in framing relationships between the Global North and Global South. This form of critique leads to more critical questions about the possible negative impacts of these programs on both the host communities and the ways in which young people make sense of their experiences. That being said, it should be made clear from the outset that this study is not an evaluation of the phenomenon of volunteer abroad or the role that teachers play in facilitating it. Rather, this study seeks to gain a clearer understanding of how

teachers negotiate the growing desire for them to provide these experiences for their students with their own understandings of issues related to development, global citizenship, personal growth and experiential learning.

1.2 Gaps in the Literature on Volunteer Abroad Programs

There are several gaps in the literature on volunteer abroad programs that are central to this examination. The gaps result from: the diversity of programs available, the various ways in which programs are labelled or categorized, and the relationship between the internationalization of Canadian post-secondary institutions and the growth of volunteer abroad programs as part of that process. One of the challenges of studying volunteer abroad programs in Canada is related to the diverse array of program options made available to Canadian youth through educational institutions, government-sponsored programsⁱⁱⁱ and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in both the Global North and Global South. As a result, terms such as volunteer abroad, study-abroad, international internships, international service learning and volunteer tourism can all be used to describe a travel experience into the developing world whereby individuals volunteer some portion of their time to servicing the community, with the general understanding that they are participating in a form of experiential learning. Consequently, much of the literature that explores and critiques the pedagogical models associated with volunteer abroad and international education programs focuses on their facilitation through post-secondary institutions such as colleges and universities (Epprecht, 2004), leaving a significant gap in the academic literature with respect to how these programs are currently being implemented through the Canadian secondary school

system. Academic research points to the crucial role that educators play in facilitating the process of conceptual and experiential learning (Grusky, 2000; Billig and Root, 2006; O’Sullivan, 2008; Chieffo and Griffiths, 2009; Tonkin, 2011) yet most studies focus on the experience of the volunteer participants rather than on the educators who conceptualize, plan and facilitate the volunteer abroad experience for their students. As more and more Canadian youth have their first volunteer abroad experience facilitated through their secondary school^{iv}, the role that teachers play in setting the objectives of the trip, choosing sending and host organizations, and structuring the educational components of the program becomes increasingly important to consider.

1.3 Focus of the Study

My research attempts to address the gaps in the literature on volunteer abroad programs discussed above, while building on my personal experiences as an Ontario secondary school teacher and facilitator of short-term volunteer abroad trips. The purpose of this study is to explore the role that teachers plays in facilitating these types of experiences for their students. Specifically, this study seeks to answer the following research questions:

- How have Ontario secondary school teachers been prepared for their roles as facilitators of volunteer abroad trips to developing countries in both a professional and personal capacity?
- In their role as facilitators of volunteer abroad programs, how do teachers determine what methods and criteria they will use in order to choose a sending organization, establish learning goals and facilitate learning before, during and after a volunteer trip and what pedagogical models have come to influence their practice?

- How do the discourses around global citizenship education, critical pedagogy and development aid inform or influence the way Ontario secondary school teachers make decisions regarding the volunteer abroad programs they facilitate?

In attempting to answer these questions, this thesis is not meant to act as an evaluation of teachers who have taken part in such programs or of the programs themselves. Rather, the investigation identifies trends and themes across a range of programs from study participants with diverse backgrounds and experiences. My interest in critically analysing the answers to these questions stems not only from the lack of understanding as to why we send young people abroad, but also from the concern that the positioning of the Global South as a site of learning for individuals from the Global North poses a number of ethical issues (Epprecht, 2004; Simpson, 2004; Heron, 2005; Crabtree, 2008; Lewin, 2009; Zemach-Bersin, 2009). The assumption that a combination of immersion in another culture and participation in volunteer work will force students to develop a global perspective (Epprecht, 2004) must be deconstructed in order to better understand how this conceptualization of the volunteer abroad experience intersects with the arguments of scholars who claim that one of the most important roles a teacher can take is to encourage students to think critically about power relations in an increasingly globalized world (Warren, 1998; Spivak, 1999; Butin, 2003; Roman, 2003; Andreotti, 2006a; O'Sullivan, 2008; McQuaid, 2009; Tonkin, 2011). If teachers are to be seen as agents of social change (O'Sullivan, 2008) who have the potential to facilitate a transformational learning experience through a volunteer abroad program, then it would follow that they must question some of these shared assumptions around the value of volunteer abroad programming for Canadian youth and to think critically about the overall goals of these programs. Furthermore, as the concept of global citizenship education continues to grow

as a new area of educational research and practice (Evans, Ingram, Macdonald and Weber, 2009) researchers must expand the lens through which they deconstruct the practice of sending Canadian youth to volunteer overseas.

1.4 Overview of the Study

This study involved the use of an interpretive method of qualitative research to select ten teachers who have facilitated at least one volunteer abroad program in an Ontario secondary school between the years 2006 and 2011. Using a semi-structured interview technique, I interviewed each participant based on a set of fifteen questions. I then used a form of discourse analysis, informed by theories of global citizenship, post-colonial studies and critical pedagogy to deconstruct and critically analyse participant responses.

The findings of this study demonstrate that within the Ontario public and independent secondary school systems, volunteer abroad programs are taking on a variety of forms and structures that attempt to incorporate elements of experiential learning models. However, due to a combination of structural constraints within the education system and the influence of more mainstream thinking around the value of these types of experiences, these programs often fall short of offering the type of transformational learning experience called for by advocates of critical pedagogy. As such, I refer to these ‘trips’ or ‘excursions’ into the Global South as ‘volunteer abroad programs’ throughout this thesis in order to capture the wide array of volunteer abroad options made available to students throughout the secondary school system in Ontario. The goals and objectives that teachers cite as the rationale for these programs are influenced by varying

definitions and understandings of the term global citizenship despite minimal specific references to the concept in the Ontario secondary school curriculum. Just as there is a gap in our understanding of the impact of volunteer abroad programs and the role played by those who facilitate them, there is also a lack of common understanding about the definition, meanings and implications of global citizenship education as a guiding principle for these sorts of programs.

As a result of this seemingly haphazard evolution of volunteer abroad programs in the Ontario secondary school system, the ethical dilemmas associated with these trips are twofold. Firstly, we must consider the possibility that students from the Global North are learning at the expense of the host communities and organizations in the Global South. Secondly, we must reflect on our ethical responsibilities as teachers to push students to consider the ways in which their daily lives, and these trips, play a role in the conditions of inequality that they set out to observe, understand and potentially reverse. In this thesis I will build my argument in three parts. Firstly, I will argue that a volunteer abroad experience has the potential to be a transformative learning experience for Ontario's secondary school students only when grounded in a pedagogical model that accounts for the ways in which students learn through experience, as well as one that considers the potential ethical dilemmas that can arise from a volunteer abroad experience. Secondly, I will argue that a secondary school volunteer abroad program can most effectively avoid potential ethical issues when teachers reflect on the overall goals of the trip and the experiences they have encountered. This reflection must be done in a critical manner that attempts to deconstruct notions of global citizenship and the perceived benefits of volunteer abroad programs within the context of the post-colonial critique of relationships

between the Global North and Global South. Finally, I argue that because there is no established best-practice when it comes to facilitating a volunteer abroad experience at the secondary school level in Canada, teachers must engage in forms of critical reflection and deconstruction of the volunteer abroad experience in conjunction with colleagues and students by finding ways to connect the experience abroad to elements of the curriculum that can create a space to challenge some of the underlying assumptions embedded within discourses of development aid and global citizenship.

1.5 Outline of the Thesis

In order to build my argument, this thesis is organized into six chapters. In this first chapter I have contextualized the background of the study and discussed the purpose and objectives of the research. In Chapter Two, I review the literature on the array of models that can be categorized as volunteer abroad, the motivations that drive individuals from the Global North to want to volunteer in the Global South, and the perceived benefits, ethical and pedagogical issues associated with the many forms of volunteer abroad programs. In Chapter Three I discuss the usefulness of applying multiple analytical frameworks for critically analyzing the data collected in this study. I do this through an overview of the ways in which global citizenship discourse, post-colonial studies and critical pedagogy theory intersect in a manner that illuminates the nuances of how the research participants conceptualize and facilitate their respective volunteer abroad programs. In Chapter Four I introduce the qualitative research methods used in this study and address some of the issues regarding educational and volunteer abroad research agendas. In Chapter Five I combine the findings of the study with discussion

and analysis of the participant responses in relation to the academic literature discussed in Chapters Two and Three. Chapter Five is organized thematically, with discussion of the educational backgrounds of the participants, their understandings of global citizenship, how they rationalize, plan and organize the logistics of the programs and, finally, their perceptions of the impacts of these programs on their students and the host communities. Chapter Five concludes with an analysis of the pedagogical methods employed by the participants with a focus on the extent to which they are representative of experiential and transformational learning models. Finally, in Chapter Six I conclude the thesis with a summary of the findings of the investigation along with recommendations for future research

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

A study of the role that teachers play in conceptualizing and facilitating volunteer abroad programs lends itself to interdisciplinary research encompassing the fields of development, tourism, education and post-colonial studies. As such, this literature review begins with an exploration of the origins and evolution of these sorts of programs in order to establish the context within which volunteer abroad programs have grown within Ontario's secondary school system. The review then examines the literature on volunteer motivation, the perceived benefits of these programs and some of the ethical and pedagogical issues related to this form of experiential learning in order to establish a deeper understanding of this phenomenon in relation to its potential impacts on both the volunteer participants and the host communities.

2.1 Origins and Definitions of Volunteering

The birth of the 'modern volunteer movement' can be traced back to the creation of the Red Cross in 1864; a time when volunteering moved out of the realm of states, churches and communities and into the realm of independent organizations designed to organize volunteers for humanitarian assistance to alleviate suffering and poverty (Anheier and Salamon, 1999, p.45). While the desire to volunteer and contribute to society is considered a longstanding phenomenon of human nature, it is a relatively recent phenomenon to be able to fulfill that desire by travelling outside of one's own culture (Plewes and Stewart, 2007). International volunteering, with a specific focus on the developing world, emerged on a large scale in the 1960s with the creation of government-organized programs such as the Peace Corps in the United States, Canadian

University Service Overseas (CUSO) and Britain's Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) (Anheier and Salmon, 1999). This evolution of volunteering abroad has resulted in a "fluidity of categories", whereby volunteers may be participating in various forms of paid or unpaid work through programs that merge volunteer work with the achievement of academic credits, internships or research placements (Plewes and Stuart, 2007, p.5).

While the concept of volunteering is generally defined as a distinctive form of helping where unpaid volunteers provide help to unfamiliar people (Omoto and Snyder, 1995), the evolution of service learning as a unique form of educational experience has led scholars to distinguish between charity-based models of volunteering that tend to involve a one-way transfer of 'help' or 'giving' based on acts of altruism (Unstead-Joss, 2008) versus service-based models that require the volunteers and community members to be engaged in a mutually beneficial relationship that includes equal involvement in decisions made about the nature of the service to be performed (King, 2004). With the growing range of volunteer abroad programs being made available to individuals of the Global North, and the variety of models being used to facilitate these trips in Ontario secondary schools, the need for teachers such as myself to become critically self-reflective in relation to our roles as facilitators is crucial. Deconstructing our understandings of volunteering in relation to notions of charity, compassion, self-actualization and solidarity, and in light of our "deeply held images of how the world works", becomes essential to understanding how we make decisions related to our facilitation of volunteer abroad programs for our students (Plewes and Stewart, 2007).

2.2 Evolution of Volunteer Abroad Programs

2.2.1 Canadian Context

The origins of Canadian volunteer abroad programs can be traced back to the post-WWII era, when the nation was looking to situate itself as a ‘middle’ power in international affairs (Bond and Thayer Scott, 1999). As a result of this evolving role, combined with Canada’s recognition that development work was going to involve long-term efforts, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) was created in 1968 as an “integral part” of the Canadian government, sponsoring work by universities, NGOs and community colleges in the developing world (Bond and Thayer Scott, 1999, p.6).

Over the course of the 1960s and 1970s, connections between CIDA, CUSO and various NGOs continued to develop and diversify, as universities became increasingly internationalized (Bond and Thayer Scott, 1999) and funding for many of their development-related volunteer projects were funded through CIDA (Clark, 1999). As such, the relationship between universities, education and volunteer sending is described by Epprecht (2004, p.692) as being founded on a pedagogy that presumed that “honourable intentions, thorough preparation and cultural sensitivity will offset the difficulties and risk that come with the work-study experience” and it is only recently that some of these assumptions associated with volunteer abroad have come under scrutiny.

In more recent years, volunteer abroad has evolved into what is referred to in the literature as: long-term development work, short-term development work, study-abroad, international service learning and voluntourism. ‘Long-term’ development work is

considered to be a one to two year volunteer placement, while a three to six month placement is generally considered 'short-term' (Tiessen, 2012). Any trip or experience less than three months is generally considered voluntourism (Tiessen, 2012) unless it is being specifically run as a part of an international service learning program, where the service component of the program is meant to be a mutually beneficial community project that will provide students with a practical experience they can use to reflect on the theoretical material covered in a connected course (Crabtree, 2008). Despite the varying labels and timeframes associated with these multiple forms of volunteer abroad experiences, what they all have in common is their provision of an opportunity for individuals to participate in a development project (Tiessen, 2012).

2.2.2 Experiential Education

The experiential learning model which acts as the foundation of most study volunteer abroad programs was developed by American educational theorist David Kolb. In his book *Experiential Learning* (1984), Kolb builds on the work of American philosopher and educational reformer John Dewey, whose work in the early 1900s emphasized the central role that experience, inquiry and reflection played in the learning process (Giles and Eyler, 1994; Reiman, Sprinthall and Thiess-Sprinthall, 1997; Plater, Steven, Bringle and Clayton, 2011). The concept of reflection in the learning process is integral to Kolb's (1984) model and is also influenced by Brazilian educator Paulo Freire. Freire's (2000, p.80) critique of Western education models is based on his call for the rejection of what he describes as the 'banking concept' of education, whereby teachers 'deposit' information in their students, in favour of a 'pedagogy of the oppressed'. In his model of critical pedagogy Freire claims that the development of critical consciousness

occurs when the teacher presents materials or ‘problems’ to their students and together, they consider how they relate to these problems and to the world around them. This practice of relating to problems occurs through ‘praxis’, which Freire (2000, p.125) describes as follows:

...human activity consists of action and reflection: it is praxis; it is transformation of the world. And as praxis, it requires theory to illuminate it. Human activity is theory and practice; it is reflection and action.

In the most radical sense, Freire imagines that if education emphasizes the role that praxis plays in the way people learn, those in the world who are oppressed will begin to take on a fundamental role in the “transformation of the reality by which they are oppressed” (2000, p.125). Freire defines the oppressed as those who are subordinate to the “consciousness of the master” (2000, p.49) whereby hegemonic knowledge construction, paternalism and restricted access to political power work to give a minority of the population power over the majority – the oppressed. As such, Freire sees education as a realm within which the oppressed - teachers and students alike - can work together, through action and reflection, to transform their understanding of the world and hence transform the very knowledge base and structural systems which have sustained their oppression (2000, p.126). Kolb’s understanding of transformation of experience builds on Freire’s emphasis on reflection, as his model of experiential learning involves a cycle of learning that begins with students having a ‘concrete experience’ followed by reflection on that experience (Kolb, 1984). Based on this reflection, students will conceptualize and draw conclusions about their observations which will then lead them to experiment with different actions and behaviours (Kolb, 1984). Within this model Kolb (1984, p.28) argues that “one’s job as an educator is not only to implant new ideas but

also to dispose of or modify old ones”. Based on this understanding, we can see that the lens through which the educator views the world will play a key role in determining the materials they present to their students and the types of experiences they incorporate into their ‘experiential learning’ practice. This further justifies the need to examine how teachers adapt this model of learning in the context of volunteer abroad, and to explore the ways in which discourses such as that of global citizenship influence their teaching practices with respect to the facilitation of these programs.

2.2.3 Study-Abroad

Study-abroad programs that are conducted in the developing world can fall under the heading of volunteer abroad when they include an element of voluntary or service work related to the experiential component of the program (Haloburdo and Thompson, 1998; Heron, 2005). Because study-abroad programs often include a number of the same elements as other forms of volunteer abroad, such as connections to NGOs, cultural immersion and home-stays, the preparation and critical reflection components can be examined under the same lens as is used for examining the processes involved in sending other forms of volunteers overseas (Heron, 2005).

One of the main concerns raised by those who research study abroad (Haloburdo and Thompson, 1998; Boyd et al., 2001; Boyle, Nackerud and Kilpatrick, 2001) relates to the general assumption that experiential learning is an innovative approach to developing cultural understanding and global awareness, while improving the language and problem-solving skills of participants. Lewin (2009) notes that study abroad’s ‘obsession’ with the ‘authentic’ (p.xv) has led to a situation where “culture becomes the end in and of

itself rather than a means for understanding its relationship to the global forces surrounding it” (p.xvii). As a result, study abroad programs in North America are garnering increasingly critical attention from academics studying its evolving relationship to the concept of global citizenship (Zemach-Bersin, 2009). These types of findings account for the growing concern expressed by scholars regarding the potential for study abroad and other forms of experiential education within the developing world to become a form of “poverty tourism” that does little more than reinforce stereotypes of students and the culture whom they propose to serve (Simpson, 2004; Lewin, 2009). For example, Simpson (2004) argues that vague statements made by sending organizations claiming that participants will be able to meet unspecified ‘needs’ of the community reflects a way of thinking that situates all communities in the Third World as incapable of providing for their own needs, a feature that then becomes associated with the culture of those being served. The label poverty tourism is used to describe this phenomenon because there seems to be little attempt made by the organizations to provide an experience that goes beyond these surface observations or move towards a more critical understanding of relations between the Global North and Global South.

Finally, it is worth noting that the nature of study abroad has been changing over time, with an increasing number of very short-term options being made available to students for periods of just a few weeks (Chieffo and Griffiths, 2009; Bringle and Hatcher, 2011). This change is related to the desire of students to keep on track academically and to provide a less emotionally draining experience for students who are hesitant to leave family for long periods of time, however it also runs the risk of

providing students with less time to engage in academic material and activities related to the experiential learning process (Chieffo and Griffiths, 2009).

2.2.4 Service Learning

In order to fully understand the educational concepts related to international service learning, it is useful to examine the origins of domestic service learning as a unique form of experiential education that takes place in both secondary and post-secondary educational institutions. Service learning is generally understood to be a form of experiential education whereby students combine traditional classroom learning with participation in some form of service to their community (Reiman, Sprinthall and Thies-Sprinthall, 1997; Stukas, 1999; Simons and Cleary, 2005; Billig and Root, 2006; Bringle and Hatcher, 2011). Teachers and faculty play a key role in the service learning model by working with a host community to design a service-project that meets the needs of the community while providing an experience that will help students meet the specific academic goals of the curriculum (Stukas, Clary and Snyder, 1999; Simons and Cleary, 2005; Bringle and Hatcher, 2011). Through structured reflection activities designed by the teacher, students are expected to apply and critique theoretical concepts learned in the classroom in relation to their service-work experience in the community (Stukas, Clary and Snyder, 1999; Simons and Cleary, 2005; Bringle and Hatcher, 2011). Due to the limited scholarly research available on service learning, the model lacks an established set of 'best practices' in both the secondary and post-secondary school contexts, however, Butin (2003, p.1678) argues that:

...undergirding almost all conceptualizations of service learning are modernist, liberal, and radical individualistic notions of self, progress, knowledge, and power. This is the latent teleology that individuals are autonomous change agents

– that such agents can affect positive and sustained transformations, that such transformations are promoted by the more powerful for the less powerful, that this downward benevolence is consciously enacted, and that all individuals involved in such a transaction benefit from it.

This emphasis on the individual is prevalent within mainstream Western models of education and helps explain why the impact of the service learning experience on the student is generally privileged over that of the experience of the host community, where any form of service is generally accepted as beneficial to the community (Holdsworth and Quinn, 2011).

Authors who express concern over the lack of best practices related to service learning make the following recommendations in an effort to minimize the potential for negative impacts or unethical practices: clarifying of goals and motivations of institutions running service learning programs (Stukas, Clary and Snyder, 1999); increasing the length of service experience to a minimum of one semester (Reiman, Sprinthall and Thies-Sprinthall, 1997); refining of reflection practice, including additional teacher education (Reiman, Sprinthall and Thies-Sprinthall, 1997; Ash and Clayton, 2004); strengthening connections to course curriculums (Ash and Clayton, 2004) and establishing communal reflection activities involving both the students and community (Stukas, Clary and Snyder, 1999); deeper academic theorizing and understanding with regards to the non-reflective elements of learning that may be taking place (Kiely, 2005); and finally, greater emphasis on social justice issues with specific attention paid to historical, social, political, and class factors that shape power relationships (Crabtree, 1998; Warren, 1998). These recommendations help illustrate the extent to which an effort is being made amongst the academic research community to expand on the

assumption that a service learning model is automatically mutually beneficial, and to encourage a more critical understanding of how the practice of teachers, professors and instructors who use this model impact both the students and the host community.

2.2.5 International Service Learning

International service learning is described by Bringle and Hatcher (2011, p.14) as a form of education that borrows elements from service learning, study abroad and international education, as it has evolved in part as a response to concerns that study abroad was becoming increasingly neo-colonial in its emphasis on sending students to more ‘dangerous’, ‘authentic’ and ‘exotic’ places in the Global South (Crabtree, 2008). As educators began to look for more ethical and reciprocal relations with host communities in the Global South, they began to apply the domestic service learning model to an international context, whereby theoretical learning in the classroom is combined with the overseas service work experience (Crabtree, 2008). Tonkin (2011, pp.192-193) describes the fundamental premise upon which international service learning is built as follows:

Fundamentally, the process serves, or should serve, two groups: the service learners themselves and the population with which, to a greater or lesser degree, they interact. Behind the learners stretch the vast perspectives of educational theory and practice, institutional structures, and the like; behind the population served stretches the equally vast panorama of historical antecedents, cultural influences, public policy, concepts of service, and social structures.

Tonkin’s (2011) description alludes to the number of structural and systemic factors that shape the manifestation of international service learning, as he claims that in many cases, international service learning is not that far off from study abroad in the sense that it can present a simplified vision of the ‘world’ as a classroom, which, he argues, diminishes

any sense of reciprocity between the students and community. This is a valid concern, but one that Crabtree (2008) argues can be mitigated when international service learning educators acknowledge the relationship between their service projects and development work, while seeking to reflect on this relationship through the consultation of a multi-disciplinary range of theoretical literature in combination with high levels of cross-cultural participatory development strategies. According to Crabtree (2008) mutually beneficial relationships can only be built when educators move beyond a reliance on the ‘contact hypothesis’, which deems intercultural contact to be sufficient for producing cross-cultural understanding (Crabtree, 2008). Based on her work incorporating participatory development research^v with international service learning, Crabtree (2008, pp. 29-30) draws the following conclusion:

Increasingly, I have come to believe that relationships are the centerpiece of this work, whether ISL [international service learning] is conceptualized as teaching, development work, or a movement for social justice. At the end of the day, ISL projects are not about providing material support to our partners in developing countries and communities - after all, how much can we really do in the face of such extreme poverty and structural inequality? ISL is about producing global awareness among all participants, providing opportunities to develop mutual understanding, and creating shared aspirations for social justice and the skills to produce it.

This quote effectively summarizes one ideal vision of international service learning.

However, as will be explored further in the sections and chapters below, the execution of this vision is not easy and the idea that these experiences are transformational in nature is not directly addressed in Crabtree’s work. The causes of extreme poverty and structural inequality are complex, and the concepts of social justice, mutual understanding and ‘shared aspirations’ are not easily defined. When the majority of volunteer abroad experiences are being designed, facilitated, researched and critiqued by those in the

Global North, with limited input from the Global South, it becomes that much more challenging to flush out the potential impacts of these programs on all parties involved.

2.2.6 Voluntourism

Voluntourism is the most recent phenomenon to emerge as a form of volunteer abroad, and it tends to be the most heavily criticized. Stoddart and Rogerson (2004) describe voluntourism as a form of alternative tourism, appealing to travelers seeking more unique and personal experiences than can be offered by mass tourism.

Voluntourism generally combines traditional tourism-related activities with short-term, charity-based volunteer work on development or community-related projects (Stoddart and Rogerson, 2004; Tiessen, 2012), but can be facilitated by a range of organizations, some of which may be for profit (Stoddart and Rogerson, 2004). Voluntourism has emerged in response to a growing demand for reciprocally beneficial forms of travel and is generally perceived as increasing interaction between travellers and host communities, resulting in the development of cross cultural understanding between both the volunteers and host communities (Lyons and Wearing, 2008b; Raymond and Hall, 2008).

However, as was discussed above, a number of researchers (Epprecht, 2004; Simpson, 2004; Crabtree, 2008; Lyons and Wearing, 2008b; Raymond and Hall, 2008; Tiessen 2012) warn that simply facilitating contact with the ‘other’ cannot be assumed to produce the type of long-term international understanding and respect that may lead to more harmonious and equitable relationships between the Global North and Global South. Voluntourism is also subject to neo-colonial critiques that conceptualize this form of travel as an expression of Western privilege, reinforcing paternalistic notions of a

‘needy Third World’ that can only be saved by the good deeds of altruistic individuals from the First World (Simpson, 2004; Devereux, 2008; Higgins-Desbiolles and Russell-Mundine, 2008; Guttentag, 2009). It is also worth noting that Lyons and Wearing (2008b) claim that the “definitions and boundaries that constitute voluntourism are in flux, as new and existing intersections between volunteers and travel stake a claim to the voluntourism brand” (p.6). This claim results from their findings that many university based trips to the developing world are packaged and marketed as ‘service learning’, yet do not always embody the theoretical underpinnings related to reciprocity and reflection, and hence are better understood as a form of voluntourism (Lyons and Wearing, 2008b). This blurring of definitions is relevant to this investigation because many high school volunteer abroad programs contain overlapping elements of all of the volunteer abroad models discussed above.

2.3 Motivations for Volunteering

Motivations for volunteering have become a crucial avenue of investigation for research on the evolution of volunteer abroad programs and developing an understanding of these motivations helps to contextualize how teachers rationalize the purpose of sending young Canadians overseas. Volunteering is generally depicted as both a cultural and economic phenomenon and over time, volunteering has become less about the service to others and more tied to skill development and self-interest (Anheier and Salamon, 1999). Based on these trends, motivational factors specific to volunteering in an international context tend to reflect altruistic desires to do something good for others, the desire to gain new experiences and skills, and a quest to gain a better sense of self

(Rehberg, 2005; Hudson and Inkson, 2006; Lo and Lee, 2011). Consequently, definitions of volunteer work that frame it as an unselfish, altruistic act must be expanded to incorporate the evidence that points to personal growth as a major motivating factor.

The concept of personal growth takes a unique form within the international context of volunteering, as study abroad critics claim that the desire for programs to take place in more ‘exotic’ and ‘adventurous’ locations is related to the assumption that overcoming challenges in relation to travel in the Third World will increase the level of personal growth obtained through the experience. While this raises ethical concerns related to the neo-colonial images of the Global South that are invoked through this rationale (Heron, 2007), critics also theorize that the type of personal growth associated with the overcoming of these challenges amounts to a form of cultural capital. Cultural capital is described as a symbolic way of demonstrating “strength of character, adaptability, resourcefulness, sensitivity or even ‘worldliness’” (Mowforth and Munt, 2009, p. 121), which, it has been argued, makes individuals more able to transcend the structural inequalities they face on a daily basis, based on aspects of their identity such as class, race, gender, ethnicity and religion (Holdsworth and Quinn, 2011).^{vi} This type of theorizing demonstrates the subtle ways in which we can use various conceptual tools to more fully understand the complex nature of not only *who* benefits from volunteer abroad programs but *how* they benefit. While many would argue that there is nothing wrong with acquiring skills and overcoming challenges through an experiential learning experience, this study seeks to question at whose expense these gains in cultural capital are made.

In relation to altruistic desires to alleviate suffering and help others, Heron (2007) has conducted extensive research into the motivations driving Canadian women into the field of development work, providing a theoretical analysis of volunteer motivations through the lens of critical race theory, post-colonial studies, development studies and women's studies. Heron (2007, p.2) states that the Canadian understanding of development work as a 'life-changing', altruistic act worthy of praise is an effect of a discourse in Canada that understands development as something 'we' in the 'developed world' do to 'them' in the 'developing world'. Heron's (2007) work deconstructs this 'desire' amongst Canadian women to pursue volunteer work in the developing world in a way that moves beyond the simple classification of volunteer motivations. Heron's (2007) research finds that most Canadians involved in volunteer development work are white, middle-class women who situate themselves in the global context by "claiming a common humanity" and "wanting to redress injustice on a global scale" (2007, p.41). Based on these conceptions of their own identity and their place in the world, Heron (2007) argues that these women continue in the legacy of colonialism, where the third world becomes a racialized place upon which white women can assert their own value and moral worth by 'helping' the oppressed 'other', without ever acknowledging the role they play in creating the conditions of that oppression. Heron (2007) describes this phenomenon of combining altruistic motivations with a personal desire for self identity as the 'helping imperative', a concept that will be explored further in the following discussions of the perceived benefits and potential ethical issues related to volunteer abroad programs.

Finally, it is worth noting that studies conducted by Cook (2007), Unstead-Joss (2008) and Lo and Lee (2011) found that individuals are not only drawn to volunteer work in the Global South based on the ‘pull’ factors associated with altruism and personal growth, but are also influenced by ‘push’ factors relating to a desire to escape Western materialism and unfulfilling lives in their home countries. Again, these findings highlight the potential for volunteer abroad programs to invoke neo-colonial tropes that portray the Global South as a place that can offer those of us from the Global North an opportunity to immerse ourselves in what we may perceive to be a somewhat dangerous, yet romantic way of life, in the hopes that through the overcoming of challenges we will gain a better sense of self (Baaz, 2005; Cook, 2007; Heron, 2007). Finally, studies conducted by Simpson (2005) and Lyons and Wearing (2008a) stress the reality that many students are attracted to volunteer abroad programs, be it study abroad, international service learning or volunteer tourism, based on the promise of specific job-related skills development that will prove an asset in their future career development. As will be discussed in Chapter Five, a critical analysis of how these motivations intersect with the discourses of global citizenship and critical pedagogy will be useful for assessing how teachers conceptualize the benefits and potential ethical issues related to sending their students overseas.

2.4 Perceived Benefits of Volunteer Abroad Programs

In the academic literature on volunteer abroad, the impact of these programs is generally discussed in relation to the volunteers, while the impacts on the host communities tend to go unquestioned (Holdsworth and Quinn, 2011; Plater, Steven,

Bringle and Clayton, 2011). In the few studies that have examined the impact on host communities, economic benefits are cited in relation to volunteer donations and spending in the local community, while social benefits include increased opportunities for host community members to practice foreign languages, the removal of barriers related to the ‘mystique’ of interacting with foreigners (Palacios, 2010), an increased sense of pride in self-sustaining community development projects and a deepened understanding of how the personal experiences of the community members fit into a wider global context (Crabtree, 2008). However these benefits cannot be taken for granted and may not represent the experiences of all host communities in the Global South.

The benefits of volunteer abroad programs for the volunteers are cited as improvements in critical thinking skills, employability skills, maturity, self-confidence, self-awareness and self-reliance, along with the development of intercultural knowledge and increases in open-mindedness (Sherraden, Lough and McBride, 2008). When considered through the lens of experiential learning, the face-to-face contact between volunteers and host communities is thought to provide a richer form of learning about global issues than can be achieved through more traditional classroom based approaches, even those that maximize the use of internet technologies (Plater, Steven, Bringle and Clayton, 2011)^{vii}.

There is also a general belief that returned volunteers will, as a result of their experiences abroad, become more engaged and active citizens upon return to their country of origin, yet Sherraden, Lough and McBride (2008, p.406) note that “rigorous longitudinal or quasi-experimental designs which permit conclusions about impact are

relatively rare”, stressing that much of the evidence that backs these assumptions rely on the volunteers’ own perception of the impact of the experience on their daily lives. For example, Kelly and Case (2007) conducted a study where a survey sample of 1,150 returned CUSO volunteers found that these individuals were amongst the most active volunteers in Canada. However, the authors of the study concluded that international volunteering should be seen as part of a continuum of volunteering, as many of these individuals were already involved in domestic volunteer work before going overseas, yet came back with a broader global outlook and longer term commitment to local community development (Kelly and Case, 2007). That being said, studies conducted by CIDA, such as the 2005 review titled “The Power of Volunteering: A Review of the Canadian Volunteer Cooperation Program” concluded that returned volunteer participants were ‘profoundly’ affected by their overseas experience, with the effect lasting for the rest of their lives. What these study demonstrate is the ambiguity involved in trying to assess the extent to which any kind of experience can be deemed ‘life-changing’ and the challenges associated with trying to understand or measure the nature of the transformation that may or may not have occurred and how it is reflected in the actions of a particular individual.

Another way of understanding the potential benefits of volunteer abroad programs is presented by McGehee (2002) and McGehee and Santos (2005), who use social change theory and case study analysis of returned voluntourists to demonstrate that voluntourism may act as a potential catalyst for participation in social movements. Their studies argue that voluntourism offers participants a unique opportunity to develop a social network of individuals who are interested in similar causes and that the volunteer work they do

overseas, although for only a short period of time, can prepare participants for a lifetime of acting as an agent of social change (McGehee and Santos, 2005).

Intercultural learning, defined by Pederson (2010, p.77) as a form of education that “emphasizes a dynamic process toward the communication of meaning” is another potential benefit of volunteer abroad programs (Anderson, Lawton, Rexeisen and Hubbard, 2006; Pederson, 2010), yet, one that is also often taken for granted (Raymond and Hall, 2008). The rationale behind many volunteer abroad programs originates in the assumption that being “confronted with the realities of life in Third-World countries” (Kauffmann, Martin and Weaver, 1992, p.82) is necessary in order to “shakeup underlying assumptions and attitudes” about the developing world (CCIC, 1997, p.211). This way of understanding the impact of cross-cultural contact is reinforced by studies such as the one conducted by Lough, McBride and Sherraden (2009) on the perceived effects of international volunteering. Of the 218 returned alumni from the volunteer-sending organization Cross Cultural Solutions (CCS) who participated in the study, 75% claim that their “cross-cultural encounter was a transformational experience” (p.33), described by many as eye-opening and life-changing. The concept of a transformational learning experience is one that will be examined throughout this study, as concern has been raised over the lack of mechanisms available for substantiating the claim that an experience has been life-changing (Selby, 2008).

As intercultural learning theory stresses the need to go beyond simple facilitation of contact with another culture (Pederson, 2010), the creation of meaningful relationships between volunteers and host community members is considered by many researchers to

be an integral requisite of creating mutually beneficial experiences, and hence recommended as needing to be a central focus of any volunteer abroad experience (King, 2004; Rundstrom, 2005; Crabtree, 2008; Lyons and Wearing, 2008a; Raymond and Hall, 2008;). Teachers need to play a central role in this form of intercultural learning by intervening with specific intercultural pedagogical strategies (Pederson, 2010) and designing community-development projects in collaboration with the host community (Crabtree, 2008).

A final benefit of volunteer abroad which should not be overlooked is the relationship between volunteer sending and the promotion of a “kinder and gentler” image of Canada overseas (Tiessen, 2008, p.83). Tiessen (2008) argues that another key justification for sending Canadian youth to volunteer in the developing world relates to national self-interest, where volunteering abroad is seen as an effective means of developing employability skills that can be put to use within the Canadian workforce. By concluding that youth abroad programs are a “small but important part of Canada’s public diplomacy strategy” (Tiessen, 2010a, p.153), Tiessen raises key issues related to how the spread of global citizenship rhetoric is tied to government support for sending Canadian youth abroad.

2.5 Ethical Issues Related to Volunteer Abroad Programs

Ethics can be understood as “the principles of conduct governing an individual or group” (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2011) and are generally associated with morals, which are understood as “principles in right and wrong in behaviour” (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2011). Of course, morals and ethics are often culturally dependent and so the

application of ‘right’ and ‘wrong’ to the behaviours and actions of those associated with volunteer abroad programs is extremely complex in light of the fact that volunteer abroad programs take place in cross-cultural settings. Furthermore, as the majority of the literature on the subject is emerging from the canon of Western academic research, we must keep in mind that the potential ethical issues that researchers such as myself associate with volunteer abroad programs often emerge from some form of self-reflection on our previous experiences with these programs. With respect to this study, I position myself as one of those researchers whose experiences of facilitating volunteer abroad trips for my high school students raised questions about the overall purpose of these types of trips and the impacts they were having on my students and our host community members. As I use the research discussed in this literature review to discern the potential ethical issues related to these programs, I want to emphasize the lack of literature that accounts for the host communities and host organizations’ perceptions of these experiences. That being said, my focus on teacher-facilitators from the Global North addresses the call to begin the critique of relationships between development work and the growth of volunteer abroad programs by first engaging in self-reflective practices^{viii} (Baaz, 2005; Cook, 2007; Heron, 2007; Crabtree 2008).

While the more theoretical issues related to the relationship between volunteering and the development aid discourse will be discussed in the following chapter, there are a number of academics who highlight some of the more tangible ethical issues that result from sending volunteers into the developing world. While the building of meaningful relationships was emphasized in the literature on intercultural learning discussed above, Epprecht (2004, p.694) notes the potential for the development of temporary relationships

that may lead to ‘forgotten promises’ made to the host community, which he argues could possibly feed into the “very cultures of cynicism or victimization that international exchanges are supposed to assuage”, and potentially leading to ‘community burnout’.

Where a deeper level of intercultural learning is not achieved, there is a concern over the concept of ‘Westernization’, where differing value and belief systems may come into conflict (Epprecht, 2004; Simpson, 2004; Crabtree, 2008), or where the

...mere presence of healthy, relatively wealthy North American students in some contexts could, meanwhile, excite envious or admiring attention from the hosts and stimulate a naïve desire for Western values (Epprecht, 2004, p.699).

On a related note, Epprecht (2004) points to the ethical concerns related to the way money is spent by volunteers with respect to tourist-related activities. Although the economic contributions of the volunteers have been cited as a benefit to the community (Palacios, 2010), Epprecht (2004, p.721) argues that volunteers spending money on such things as souvenirs and tourist activities may be contributing to unsustainable environmental and/or labour practices (p.721), which he claims emphasises the one-sided flow of benefits towards the student. Concerns have also been raised in regards to the marketing of volunteer abroad programs, where the use of certain images of the developing world may reinforce notions of ‘otherness’ and ‘need’ (Epprecht, 2004; Simpson, 2004) which ultimately leads to what Gray and Campbell (2007) describe as the commodification of people and places for aesthetic consumption.

The value of this body of work is that it forces us to think about the impact of these experiences on the host communities and to examine some of the more micro-level, and admittedly more challenging, elements of cultural immersion, that must be examined when designing and implementing any type of volunteer abroad program. Other concerns

relate to the specifics of how the project is carried out, where community members might fight over project ownership (Crabtree, 2008) or the goals of the project may prioritize the interests of one section of the community over another (Matthews, 2008). It has also been noted that other neighbouring communities might wonder why they have not been chosen for a similar project (Crabtree, 2008) and that these projects might reinforce the notion that the host community is dependent on external benefactors to respond to their needs (Crabtree, 2008; Guttentag, 2009). Finally, concerns over local labour replacement, resource consumption by volunteers and gender and racial tensions between volunteers and host community members are cited by Lough, McBride and Sherraden (2009) as potential negative impacts on the community as a result of these programs.

On a slightly less tangible, but equally problematic level, Lyons and Wearing (2008a) and Palacios (2010) both discuss the concept of role ambiguity with respect to how the volunteers' identity takes shape once immersed in the context of a volunteer placement. Both authors note the potential for volunteers to be confused or unsure of what is expected of them in terms of work and behaviour while volunteering (Lyons and Wearing, 2008a; Palacios, 2010). This concept is extended by Pusch and Merrill (2008), who note that the use of young and generally inexperienced and unskilled Northern volunteers can send a message to the community that they lack qualified individuals in their community, furthering the extent to which the community is 'othered' through the presence of volunteers, and decreasing the ability of the volunteers to connect with the host community in a meaningful way. It has also been noted that putting the volunteers in a role of 'expert' helper puts pressure on young volunteers to perform in an area or skill-set in which they are generally unqualified, resulting in a negative impact on the

volunteer's overall experience (Palacios, 2010). Based on this finding, Palacios (2010) argues that in order to decrease the negative impacts on the host community, short-term volunteer abroad experiences should focus on intercultural learning goals rather than the achievement of development work. Here we see evidence of some of the conflicting findings within the current research on volunteer abroad, as Crabtree (2008) emphasizes the need to acknowledge the relationship of these programs to the context of development. It is not to say that Palacios (2010) refutes the need to discuss experiences in relation to development, but he argues that the project should not be represented as development work. Yet to ignore the relationship of volunteer abroad programs to the development discourse would be to ignore the reality that these programs base their intercultural learning on an interaction between individuals and communities who exist in different and unequal socioeconomic conditions, which must be addressed in relation to structural inequality and global power dynamics rather than cross-cultural difference alone.

In light of the potential and perceived benefits discussed above, it is also important to note that many of the authors (Epprecht, 2004; Baaz, 2005; Heron, 2005; Cook, 2007; Guttentag, 2009) who raise concerns about the ethics of volunteer abroad programs do not reject entirely the use of volunteers within the development aid context, but that they advocate for deeper, more critical and theoretically founded research into the complex nature and impact of sending volunteers overseas. On a slightly different note, Lyons and Wearing (2008b) encourage those studying volunteer abroad to expand their conceptualization of the host community as being in a permanently 'dominated position', as they claim that this is also a stereotypical vision of these communities. In

order to avoid this ‘dichotomous view’, Lyons and Wearing (2008b) recommend that researchers expand their neo-colonial approach to the study of volunteer tourism, acknowledging the ability of communities to resist domination. As has been noted above, there are many ways in which the volunteer abroad experience can be conceptualized and because of the rapid growth in the number of organizations and institutions involved in facilitating these programs, both in the Global North and Global South, it is impossible to paint a black and white picture of the nature of either the benefits or the potential negative impacts to the parties involved.

2.6 Pedagogical Issues

With the rapid growth of volunteer abroad programs within educational settings, the pedagogical issues related to these programs are gaining attention from a number of researchers in the fields of study abroad, international service learning, global citizenship education and critical pedagogy. For example, based on his overview of the potential ethical issues that may arise through a volunteer abroad experience, Epprecht (2004) argues that discussions of these issues should not paralyze educators into stopping their practice entirely, but rather should encourage us to

...ask pointed questions about course structure and evaluation, marketing, the nature of pre-departure preparation, fundraising, the placement itself, and re-entry and follow-up, and possible political engagement beyond the institutional cocoon of the program (p.704).

These observations direct us toward three common themes that emerge in relation to the pedagogical issues associated with volunteer abroad programs: the specific role that educators play in facilitating the volunteer abroad experience, the methods and subject

materials involved in pre-departure preparation and the role that reflection plays in helping the volunteers make sense of their experience.

2.6.1 The Role of Educators

If, as Grusky (2000) and Tonkin (2011) argue, the role that educators play is critical to the success of a volunteer abroad program, it stands to argue that we must develop a more comprehensive understanding of how teachers conceptualize these experiences, how they define ‘success’ in relation to the overseas experience, and the pedagogical models and practices they use in order to make that happen. Research on educators who facilitate volunteer abroad programs and global citizenship education finds that they have a mix of research, travel and educational goals and experiences (Grusky, 2000; Pike and Selby, 2009; Tonkin, 2011). Studies have also found that teachers may approach global citizenship education and volunteer abroad programs with some degree of uncertainty, based on having had limited experiences in the host country, limited knowledge of global issues or limited experience with the pedagogical models associated with experiential learning or international service learning models (Grusky, 2000; Larsen and Faden, 2008; Pike and Selby, 2009; Bringle and Hatcher, 2011). However, it has also been argued that just because an educator has had personal experiences in the developing world does not necessarily mean they will be able to effectively design a pedagogically sound model for a volunteer abroad program (Tonkin, 2011). These findings reinforce the notion that as educational institutions are subjected to increasing pressure to internationalize and promote discourses around global citizenship, there is a need to critically examine the processes by which faculty members become learners, how they may be adapting their courses; curriculum and teaching approaches to incorporate

different cultures; values and ways of knowing (Bond and Thayer Scott, 1999); how they make decisions regarding the logistics of planning a trip abroad (Pike and Selby, 2009); and the extent to which they are able to critically reflect on the factors that constrain or steer their practices (Bottery, 2006, p.106).

While these calls for critical self reflection amongst the teachers and educators who facilitate volunteer abroad programs are one of the most important ways in which ethical issues may be understood and hence avoided, it should also be noted that the growing pressure, and desire, to take students into an increasingly globalized and complex world through experiential learning opportunities puts increasing demands on educators. Chieffo and Griffiths (2009) note that course instructors travelling abroad with students tend to receive little compensation for the additional roles they play as “disciplinary, tour director, conflict resolution expert, accountant and substitute parent” (p.370). Furthermore, any model of service learning in a high school setting is considered to be less predictable and more time-consuming for the teacher than a regular course, while also requiring more flexibility and confidence in handling the unknown (Billig and Root, 2006). These are significant factors to consider in this study of the role that secondary school teachers play in facilitating volunteer abroad programs, where we find ourselves planning and programming for students who are still under the legal guardianship of others. As facilitators of volunteer abroad programs we take on significant personal and professional risks when travelling abroad with our students and this must be accounted for using the available literature on the subject of volunteer abroad to critically analyze the nature of these trips and our roles within them.

2.6.2 Pre-Departure Preparation

Boyle, Nackerud and Kilpatrick (2001) note that pre-departure preparation is considered crucial to the volunteer abroad experience yet there are differing conceptualizations of the overall goal of this type of preparation. Some argue that preparation is necessary due to the stressful nature of cultural immersion (Boyle, Nackerud and Kilpatrick, 2001) while others note that the current trend in Canadian NGO preparation sessions is to focus on security and risk management related to health and crime issues (Heron, 2005). However, both Baaz (2005) and Heron (2005; 2007) note that this common focus of pre-departure training on the impact of ‘culture’ shock and ways to remain safe and healthy while abroad can have the effect of conjuring up neo-colonial images of danger and fear about what to expect in the host community, resulting in the juxtaposition of a dangerous and unsafe ‘other’ against an image of the volunteer as a “heroic, daring, capable Self” (Baaz, 2005, p.144). As a result, these forms of preparation fail to challenge dimensions of eurocentrism that are often negatively associated with the development aid industry (Baaz, 2005).

Heron (2005) suggests that some of these negative aspects associated with preparation tactics could be combated by incorporating an educational element that encompasses the topics of “colonization, globalization, third-world debt and identity and diversity/anti-oppressive theory” (p.791). Specifically, Heron (2005, p.790) argues that preparation tactics should stress that local people are subject to the same risks as foreigners; that historical processes have created global economic and political conditions that contribute to these risks; that local people would not choose these conditions for themselves; and that members of the host communities do not have access to the same

resources that foreigners do to protect themselves from potential risks or harm. Tiessen (2008) recommends the inclusion of non-Western teaching materials as one means of developing a pedagogical environment in which students can more critically assess, and potentially nurture, a deeper, longer lasting form of global citizenship premised on the need to take action on issues related to social justice and inequality. All of these recommendations speak to the benefits of having a volunteer abroad program embedded within a course or curriculum that affords teachers and students the time to learn about the underlying factors that cause the conditions that may pose a risk to both themselves and members of the host communities.

2.6.3 Reflection

The need for critical reflection both during and after the volunteer abroad experience is also essential for facilitating learning and for avoiding some of the ethical issues discussed above (Ash and Clayton, 2004). Tiessen (2008, p.82) notes that while most students return from volunteer abroad experiences “well positioned to challenge stereotypes and racism”, some may return with “too simplistic” an assessment of Canada’s role abroad or with a “bloated sense of self importance and ability to solve other people’s problems”. It is for this reason that researchers such as King (2004) stress the importance of offering multiple opportunities for reflection to be theorized and problematized in connection to issues of power, history and agency. Distinctions have been made between various forms of reflection, with ‘critical’ reflection relating to the ability of the individual to reflect on the experience in relation to structures of power and hegemonic knowledge construction such as King suggests (Brookfield, 2000). King (2004) evokes Freire’s concept of praxis when arguing that critical reflection is best

facilitated when pedagogy is moved out of the traditional realm, where knowledge is conferred from teacher to student, and into the realm of critical pedagogy, where students and volunteers are encouraged to reconcile and respond to contrasting information and experience. Reflection in this sense can be conceived as students being able to describe an experience, analyze it in relation to relevant categories of learning and then being able to articulate the outcome of their learning (Ash and Clayton, 2004, p. 140).

2.7 Other Considerations Regarding Volunteer Abroad Programs

2.7.1 Duration of the Time Abroad

There are a number of other relevant considerations being raised in the literature on volunteer abroad, the first being that of the duration of the time spent abroad. Trip length is a contested issue (Sherraden, Lough and McBride, 2008), with some researchers claiming that the specific design of the volunteer abroad experience may be more important than the duration of the experience in the host community (Haloburdo and Thompson, 1998). Others claim that a six month to two year time frame is necessary for an individual to really understand the perspective of the local organization and host community with whom they are volunteering (Epprecht, 2004; Unstead-Joss, 2008) and that only when this happens can the volunteer truly be a part of the process of change (Unstead-Joss, 2008, p. 17). Another point of view is offered by Palacios (2010), who argues that a shorter time frame generally means that the volunteers have less responsibility than during a long-term placement and will therefore be less likely to be perceived through a neo-colonial lens that deems them to be ‘experts’ filling a gap in the host community, and more free to share and spend meaningful time with members of the

host community. This lack of consensus regarding the impact of the time frame on both the students' learning and the host community reflects conflicting conceptualizations of the overall purpose of the various learning models associated with these programs.

2.7.2 Language Acquisition

The need to learn the language of the host community in order to effectively engage with community members and host families has also been stressed as the key to developing a deeper understanding of the cultural systems within which the students are living and volunteering (Kauffmann, Martin and Weaver, 1992; Caron and Tousignant, 1999; Keesbury, 2003). The extent to which students do learn the language has not been a focus of this study, but it is a relevant point to consider when discussing some of the challenges encountered by the participants while overseas, especially when teacher-facilitators are not fluent in the local language themselves.

2.7.3 Group Travel

Finally, issues raised in regards to the nature of group-based volunteer abroad programs are particularly relevant to this study, as the majority of the programs discussed by the participants in this study were group-based. The primary concern with group travel is that the group may act as an inhibiting factor for the interaction of volunteers with the members of the host community should the group become a realm of retreat from the host families and culture (Kauffmann, Martin and Weaver, 1992; Sherraden, Lough and McBride, 2008). On the other hand, Boyle, Nackerud and Kilpatrick (2001) claim that the group also has the potential to provide ongoing support for each other during times of challenge. Again, these contradicting notions of the impacts associated

with the structure of volunteer abroad programs speak to the types of issues teachers must consider when making decisions regarding program structure.

2.8 Summary

This review of the multi-disciplinary body of literature covering the nature of volunteer abroad programs emerging from the Global North provides a framework for understanding the issues that must be considered in an investigation of those who facilitate these programs in Ontario secondary schools. The literature reflects a trend whereby volunteer abroad programs are evolving in ways that incorporate elements of the once distinctive models of study-abroad, service learning and voluntourism. However, as the demand for these sorts of programs grows, North American educational institutions develop programs that fit into the systems and structures of their various educational systems, sometimes working in direct relationship with communities and host organizations in the Global South and sometimes through intermediaries such as sending organizations working out of the Global North. Nevertheless, all of these various forms and models of volunteer abroad programs share a fundamental assumption that they are providing an experiential learning experience for Canadian youth that will benefit their personal growth, employment skills and their understanding of the world around them.

Motivations and rationales associated with these assumed benefits are increasingly called into question by critics who doubt the extent to which these programs adhere to experiential or transformational learning models. Furthermore, concerns are raised over the potential for these sorts of experiences to create neo-colonial relations that position the Global South as a place in which students can consume a learning experience

that may have potentially negative effects on the host community, all of which contribute to structures of global inequality. It has been acknowledged that there are minimal studies that assess the costs and benefits of these programs on communities in the Global South, and as such, this study responds to call for self-reflection on the part of those of us who facilitate these experiences for Canadian youth by asking critical questions related to the influence of global citizenship rhetoric, post-colonial studies and critical pedagogy on our practice.

CHAPTER 3: ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

Many authors writing about global citizenship education and volunteer abroad claim that much of the academic research on the subject needs to be more deeply grounded in theoretical frameworks associated with development studies (Baaz, 2005; Crabtree, 2008; Heron, 2007) post-colonial studies (Heron, 2007; Andreotti 2006b; Holdsworth and Quinn 2011; Kahn, 2011; McQuaid, 2009) and critical pedagogy (King, 2004; Andreotti, 2006b; O'Sullivan, 2008; Tonkin, 2011). While the complex nature of volunteer abroad programs has been discussed throughout the literature review above, the critiques of these programs tend to divide themselves into two camps. The first group is comprised of those authors who use a post-colonial perspective to develop a critical understanding of volunteer abroad programs as a potential site of neo-colonialism, where privileged white youth from the Global North foray into the Global South for an 'experience' which is advertised as an opportunity for personal growth and skill development. These authors argue that this type of experience contributes to a simplified understanding of poverty and life in a Third World country (Simpson, 2004) and may occur at the expense of those whom the volunteers purport to serve (Simpson, 2004; Cook, 2007; Heron, 2007; Bringle and Hatcher, 2011; Holdsworth and Quinn, 2011; Tonkin, 2011). On the other hand, there are those who argue that these programs have the potential to be mutually beneficial, transformational learning experiences contributing to social change (CCIC, 1997; Haloburdo and Thompson, 1998; Grusky, 2000; Boyd et al., 2001; Boyle, Nackerud and Kilpatrick, 2001; Kiely, 2004; King, 2004; McGehee and Santos; Crabtree, 2008; Lyons and Wearing, 2008a). However, as my findings will demonstrate, these two understandings of volunteer abroad fail to account for the

complexities involved in the day-to-day actions and thought processes involved in the rationalizing, programming, planning and facilitating of these programs. With respect to this study, there is no one theoretical model or framework that can adequately explain the ways in which volunteer abroad programs are evolving within the Ontario secondary school system, nor explain the nuances of how individual teachers conceptualize these programs in terms of their relationship to development studies, educational theory or the specific needs of their students. As such, the purpose of this investigation is not to evaluate the study participants and the role they play in facilitating volunteer abroad programs, but to develop a more nuanced understanding of how teachers conceptualize the purposes and impacts of these programs and how this reflects the complexities and contradictions found in current notions of global citizenship circulating within Canadian society. To this end, I respond to the callings for a more theoretically grounded analysis of volunteer abroad programs by using a postmodern approach to justify the use of three different, yet intersecting theoretical frameworks to help analyse the findings of this study.

3.1 Postmodern Analysis

Postmodern thought is heavily influenced by the work of Michel Foucault and his concept of discourse, defined by Parpart and Marchand (1995, pp.2-3) as a “historically, socially, and institutionally specific structure of statements, terms, categories and beliefs” which is “considered to be the site where meanings are contested and power relations are determined”. Postmodernism can be thought of as a philosophical movement characterized by thinkers who “reject universal, simplified definitions of social

phenomena, which, they argue, essentialize reality and fail to reveal the complexity of life as a lived experience” (Parpart and Marchand, 1995, p.4). As this study will demonstrate, teachers’ knowledge systems are influenced by their educational backgrounds, previous experiences travelling, working and volunteering in the Global South, and their day-to-day experiences working within Ontario’s education system. Consequently, their conceptualizations of volunteer abroad evolve in complex ways that demonstrate how a range of factors and discourses influence their decisions in regards to program planning. Yet at the same time, their decision-making capacity is restricted by structural constraints imposed through curricular and institutional factors. In order to interpret and analyze the participant responses in this study, I adhere to the postmodern rejection of broad generalizations and simplified definitions of social phenomena (Parpart and Marchand, 1995, p.4) to ensure that I do not try to fit my analysis of the relatively new phenomenon of high school volunteer abroad programs into a pre-established theoretical model. Instead, I choose to make use of three intersecting frameworks to illuminate the complexities of the day-to-day experiences teachers in Ontario have had as facilitators of volunteer abroad programs, and to explore how this influences their conceptualization of the purpose of the trips, as well as the impacts of these experiences on students and host communities.

The three intersecting frameworks I use in this study are: the construct of global citizenship; post-colonial studies; and critical pedagogy. Although global citizenship is a contested concept, it is through a deeper understanding of how the rhetoric of global citizenship has infiltrated the Ontario secondary school system that we can more clearly understand how teachers rationalize and understand the volunteer abroad experiences

they are facilitating for their students. Secondly, by applying a post-colonial lens to the development aid context in which volunteer abroad programs are ultimately embedded, I attempt to assess both the perceived benefits and potential ethical issues related to the nature of volunteer abroad experiences occurring through the Ontario secondary school system, as experienced by the interview participants. Finally, I apply a critical pedagogy approach to deconstruct the nature of these trips in order to assess the extent to which they can provide a transformative learning experience resulting in more critical analysis of power relations and sources of inequality between the Global North and Global South.

3.2 Notions of Global Citizenship

To understand the rise of international volunteering, it is crucial to explore the impact of globalization and the resulting emergence of ‘global citizenship’ as a notion that is influencing the use of Northern volunteers in the developing world. As Cook (2008) points out, the concept of global citizenship is being increasingly invoked within the realms of academia and the development industry, yet rarely in a manner which questions Western hegemony and sources of global power. The term global citizen finds its historical roots in concepts of cosmopolitanism, which emerged amongst Greek thinkers such as Socrates and continued to be discussed and most heavily influenced by Immanuel Kant during the Age of Enlightenment (Bowden 2003; Schattle, 2009). These individuals emphasized a shared moral responsibility for the well being of all human beings and considered themselves to be citizens of the world rather than citizens of a particular nation-state (Bowden, 2003; Schattle, 2009). This conceptualization of citizenship receded during the twentieth century as a result of two world wars and the

following Cold War, yet, according to Schattle (2009), re-surfaced with the “promises of an emerging global society” that were predicated on the fall of the Soviet Union and its satellites, as well as advances in technology and telecommunications. These advances in technology and communications are seen to make the world a more interconnected and ‘smaller’ place, and are often associated with the concept of globalization, which, although a contested term in itself, is described by Lewin (2009, pp.xiii-xiv) as follows: “Boundaries between nations are blurring; the production, marketing, and delivery of goods and services have become borderless; the nation-state is fading as the principal site of identity construction.” However, others take a more critical perspective when defining globalization, arguing that globalization is a ‘project’ that has taken place since the 1970s, involving the liberalization of trade and investment rules, privatization of public goods and services and the privileging of corporate rights over the “social contract”, all of which have resulted in a redefinition of development as a “private undertaking” (McMichael, 2008, p. 21). These debates are important to the context of this study because authors such as McMichael (2008) force us to question the power relationships embedded within the phenomenon of globalization, reminding us that it is not a natural process, but one that results from the structural relationships of inequality that have evolved over the past two hundred years, and as such, we must account for this perspective when attempting to understand the emerging debates around the concept of global citizenship.^{ix}

Some of the negative effects associated with globalization are cited as poverty, unemployment and social disintegration, all of which have contributed to calls for new forms of sustainable development (Nelles, 1999). These calls have, in turn, influenced

emerging understandings of the concept of global citizenship and the use of volunteers within the development aid industry. The Canadian Council for International Cooperation (CCIC)^x (1997, p.206) defines sustainable human development as

...a process that enhances the capacity of people to share visions and values, to deliberate together on the common good, to define goals collectively, and to build strategies to reach them. At its heart is the belief that human beings are the agents of change – that people must define their own development.

The CCIC (1997) goes on to claim that this form of sustainable human development can be encouraged through a reorganization of the relationship between the Canadian public, nongovernment organizations (NGOs) in the North, and their partner organizations in the South, based on a form of global citizenship that emphasizes “interdependence and connected destinies” (p.207) rather than benevolence. While this framing of global citizenship could be interpreted as a response to the critique of a charity-based model of aid, it is this emphasis on the role that individuals can play in working towards a common good masks what some argue to be a more nationally focused agenda related to the promotion of Canadian values overseas (Tiessen, 2008) and an underlying premise that government-funded^{xi} volunteer abroad programs for Canadian youth will create actively engaged returned volunteers who will have learned about global political and economic issues through their travels and volunteer work abroad (Kelly, 2007; Plewes and Stewart, 2007). The growth and diversity of international volunteering programs in Canada can be attributed to the supportive climate created by the channelling of Official Development Assistance (ODA) funds towards various CIDA, DFAIT, NGO and Association for Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC) volunteer abroad initiatives for Canadian youth (Plewes and Stewart, 2007; Tiessen, Forthcoming)^{xii}. I raise these points in order to develop a clearer understanding of how the rhetoric of global

citizenship has come to rationalize this channelling of government funds towards volunteer abroad initiatives that are specifically targeted at Canadian youth (Tiessen, 2010). While these funds are not yet being directed towards volunteer abroad programs facilitated through the secondary school system in Ontario, it is useful to consider how recent changes in the Ontario curriculum attempt to incorporate elements of the global citizenship discourse that are influenced by the construct of global citizenship as defined through more internationally focused government bodies such as CIDA and DFIAT.

In more general terms, constructs of global citizenship are noted to take on many overlapping forms, combining elements of reform, mobility, environment, economics, political consciousness, transnational activism and education, resulting in uneven and potentially conflicting images of the concept (Falk, 1994; Schattle, 2009). Like the literature on volunteer abroad, literature on the subject of global citizenship tends to be divided into two camps: one that promotes the discourse as an inherently good thing and a second that expresses more critical concerns over the universalizing tendencies of the discourse and the greater impacts of its influence within the development aid industry and education systems.

Those who promote the discourse tend to conceptualize global citizenship as a form of self-awareness that revolves around the desire of individuals to take up concerns related to the promotion of a universalized set of values, rights and responsibilities that are deemed applicable to all of humanity (Schattle, 2009). This way of thinking about global citizenship is seen to be rooted in values and attitudes (Davies, 2006; Tiessen,

2010) which tend to revolve around a sense of moral obligation (Schattle, 2009) empathy and altruism (Golmohamad, 2009; Cabrera, 2010).

Those who take a more critical stance on the subject raise concerns over the potential for the discourse to become a “totalizing concept deriving from the West” (Falk, 1994, p.140) where the promotion of these universal values, rights and responsibilities derive from Western notions of democracy, moral obligation and individuality. Others express concern that because there is no international body related to global citizenship, the responsibility to define the rights and obligations of a global citizen is left up to the so-called global citizens themselves (Lagos, 2001). Concern has also been expressed over the potential for the discourse of global citizenship to be levied by global powers such as the International Monetary Fund and World Bank to promote the role of civil society as an intermediary between citizens, states and international financial institutions while decreasing political accountability. In this sense, the notion of global citizenship as a means of fighting social injustice and global inequality can become lost within a neoliberal form of global governance that uses global civil society and voluntary labour as a means of replacing formerly state provided public services (Lacey and Ilcan, 2006).

The points raised by these authors demonstrate the need to examine more critically how public and academic constructs of global citizenship influence the rationale of sending youth overseas to participate in community development projects. In relation to this context, Davies (2006) and Tiessen (2012)^{xiii} draw our attention to the tensions that emerge between understandings of global citizenship that are rooted in values and attitudes versus those that are predicated on behaviours that reflect the need to take an

active role in reversing social injustices in the world. Davies (2006) claims that the unresolved task regarding global citizenship is how we can move people out of the realm of thinking and reflecting and into the realm of acting “to make the world a more equitable and sustainable place”^{xiv} (Davies, 2006, p.7). This question is of great relevance to this study, as the sending of volunteers overseas to participate in a variety of volunteer abroad programs is increasingly seen as the answer. Yet as discussed above, the act of volunteering does not necessarily reflect a change in attitudes or full embracement of the concepts associated with social justice and may in fact contribute to social injustices. The danger in interpreting global citizenship as inherently good would be to overlook the deeper ethical issues that many researchers are exploring in relation to the effect of volunteer abroad programs on both the volunteers and their host communities in the developing world. Through this exposure of the complexities and contradictions inherent in the global citizenship discourse, I attempt to move beyond the taken-for-granted good intentions generally associated with becoming a ‘global citizen’ in an effort to challenge researchers and teachers like myself to critically examine our attitudes and actions in relation to education and the facilitation of volunteer abroad programs in Ontario.

3.3 Global Citizenship Education

The long-standing recognition of education as an instrument for social change (Golmohamad, 2009) inspires much of the thinking and theorizing about the relationship between education and Western concepts of global citizenship. To contextualize the emergence of global citizenship within an educational setting, it is important to note that

citizenship education and global education have, up until recently, been two separate, yet evolving domains of education in countries such as Great Britain, Canada and the United States (Davies, Evans and Reid, 2005; Davies, 2006; Pike, 2008; Evans, Ingram, Macdonald and Weber, 2009; Cabrera 2010). Evans, Ingram, Macdonald and Weber (2009) stress the importance of studying the evolving relationship between citizenship education and global education, describing their evolving, multidimensional relationship as one that is

...filtering into educational policymaking, curriculum design, professional learning, and classroom teaching and learning. As well, these influences on global citizenship education have been interpreted through diverse conceptual lenses, resulting in differing conceptual emphases and orientations causing a certain degree of ambiguity with regard to which learning goals and practices ought to be and/or are implemented in school curricula. Certainly, theoretical characterisations associated with the global dimension of citizenship education include a variety of foci, ranging from the study of global themes and issues to sophisticated theoretical perspectives. These complex approaches examine global themes and issues more critically and deeply by taking into account the influence and impact of power relations within and across nation-states and international structures. (p.20)

This passage helps us see how many of the debates regarding the concept of global citizenship have trickled down into the education system, whereby the lack of a general definition or understanding of exactly what a global citizen is leads to uncertainty regarding how to implement the notion of global citizenship into a curriculum and/or into the every day practices of the average teacher.

Davies (2006) claims that the insertion of 'citizenship' education, which has traditionally rested within the domain of local activism, has added a new dimension of social justice to the more "minimalist interpretations of global education" (p.6) which, as noted above, she describes as being more focused on *awareness* of issues than inspiring

action on those issues. For Davies, the infusion of citizenship education into global education requires teachers and students to ask themselves if they can “act to make the world a more equitable and sustainable place” (p.7). The relationship between theory and action is also reflected in the work of O’Sullivan (2008, p.95), who claims that whether “implicitly or explicitly”, global citizenship education theory often assigns to the classroom teacher a role as an agent of social change, despite the preparedness of teachers who find themselves in these positions.

As Evans, Ingram, Macdonald and Weber (2009) point out above, attempting to grasp these various manifestations of the global citizenship discourse within the context of education is a difficult task. For example, Golmohamad (2009) argues that global citizenship education involves challenging western notions of citizenship in an effort to understand the identity of a global citizen as one that listens to and engages with “varied perspectives, thereby enabling better understanding and respect for differences in a plural society” (p.522). When this occurs, Golmohamad (2009) believes that global citizenship can have transformative influences for “challenging inequality and promoting justice by virtue of the fact that all are, a priori, citizens of the world, members of a single polity” (p.523). To this end, we see Golmohamad drawing on the cosmopolitan notion of universal human rights and the moral imperatives associated with ensuring that those rights can be exercised by all of humanity, ultimately leading him to advocate for a form of global citizenship that combines empathy for others with forms of altruism. Altruism and empathy are also emphasized in the work of Cabrera (2010, p.243) who argues that when “individuals are provided with information that helps them to understand the life circumstances, actions, and motivations of those others, it can promote a willingness to

adopt their perspective, to develop concern for them and to be more inclined to aid them”. Cabrera (2010) labels this relationship between empathy and altruism as the “empathy-altruism” hypothesis which he claims is useful for understanding how individuals come to relate to others in a way that increases their desire to aid them. He then goes on to argue that this hypothesis provides a foundation upon which education for global citizenship should be based, advocating for increased understanding of others through expanded ‘trans-border’ experiential learning programs that provide more concrete opportunities for engaging with the ‘other’ (Cabrera, 2010). Similarly, Golmohamad (2009, p.524) notes that it is “only when individuals are allowed to encounter differences that they can then consider what distinguishes unity and diversity” and therefore global citizenship education should create learning environments that provide students with a “space to critically engage with others and the world”. I have chosen to explore the work of these two authors in this depth in order to demonstrate how concepts of justice, empathy and altruism, along with physical encounters with difference, become wrapped up in a construct of global citizenship that educators then attempt to foster within the confines of a Western educational system. Based on the understandings of global citizenship as discussed above, volunteer abroad programs can then be understood as opening up a space in which these transnational encounters can take place under what are generally perceived as mutually beneficial conditions. Yet it is this form of theorizing about North-South relations that invokes critiques such as Heron’s (2007), where the ‘helping imperative’ is represented as a form of neo-colonialism.

3.4 Development Studies and Post-Colonial Studies

In order to understand the relationship between development studies, global citizenship education and post-colonial studies, it is necessary to explore the concept of development itself. Contemporary notions of development find their origins in the post-WWII era, where the concept of modernization was depicted as a linear transition from tradition to modernity, or undeveloped to developed (Gidwani, 2008). Ferguson (2005, p.167) describes the concept of modernization that emerged after World War II as a set of processes that would lead to the development of a universal “package of elements”, including industrialized economies, scientific technology, liberal-democratic politics and secular world-views. He further explains that the principle behind modernization theory rested on the belief that during this process, “poor countries would overcome their poverty, share in the prosperity of the ‘developed’ world, and take their place as equals in a worldwide family of nations” (Ferguson 2005, p.167). Based on this understanding, mainstream development narratives have continually represented Western society as the ideal model of modern development – a society that also has the knowledge, skills and expertise necessary to ‘help’ undeveloped nations move along this so-called path. The notion that ‘developing’ countries are at least taking steps in the right direction towards ‘catching up’ with the West remains in tact in many academic circles and popular consciousness, however, this teleological model of development, based on capitalist economic growth, has not succeeded in relieving the world of poverty and fails to account for uneven development both between and within national borders (Sanyal, 2007).

In many cases in the Global South, the past thirty years have been marked by development models based on market-led growth combined with the roll-back of the

welfare state and as a result, an international network of NGOs has evolved to fill the gaps in the delivery of services such as health, education and welfare, many of which embody an ethos of volunteerism (Ehrlich, 2001; Lacey and Ilcan, 2006)^{xv}. The role that NGOs and civil society play in delivering these services brings us back to the concerns discussed earlier in this chapter relating to the potential use of the global citizenship discourse to rationalize the use of voluntary labour within the context of development aid. This relationship between voluntary labour, NGOs and development helps prove that despite the various terms and labels associated with volunteer abroad programs, the very act of travelling to the Global South and taking part in service or volunteer work makes the separation of this work from the context of development studies almost impossible. Furthermore, many of the relationships between donor agencies and local/host NGOs are framed within the discourse of ‘partnership’, which has been deconstructed through a post-colonial lens by Baaz (2005), who argues that although the notion of partnership is supposed to bring volunteer development workers into an equal relationship with the ‘partner’ organization, where work revolves around ‘shared goals’, the discourse actually serves to reinforce the idea of aid-dependence and a stereotypical image of the aid recipients or ‘partner’ organization and employees as a ‘passive other’^{xvi}. I raise this point here not only because the partnership discourse is one that is invoked by the participants in this study, but also as a segue into a discussion of how postcolonial studies approaches the concept of development and how this approach has come to influence more critical understandings of global citizenship education.

Post-colonial theory is relevant to the study of volunteer abroad because it provides a critical framework for understanding how the relationship between the Global North and Global South is conceptualized in mainstream thinking about globalization, education and development. More specifically, postcolonial theorists argue that assumptions that depict First World and Third World encounters as taking place on an even playing field are based on an ahistorical understanding of the world that negates the material and cultural advantages the Global North has derived from the Global South as a result of imperialism and colonialism (Andreotti, 2007; Kapoor, 2004; Spivak, 1990). Post-colonial theorists apply this critique to the current era of globalization, depicting globalization as a continuation of the historical processes that incorporated the colonies into an international division of labour that started a process of global inequality and socioeconomic impoverishment for the Third World (Andreotti, 2007). This understanding of global relations acts as a sort of jumping off point for educational theorists who then apply this lens to the study of global citizenship education. A leading researcher in this domain is Vanessa Andreotti (2006b, pp.1-2), who describes post-colonial studies in relation to education as an inter-disciplinary approach for providing:

... links with practices of resistance: from grassroot struggles for independence to intellectual activism. However, as there are many strands within the field, postcolonial theory is best described as a set of debates rather than a coherent theory as such. These debates question North-South modes of thought and power relations, as well as their effects on identities, social relations, politics and the distributions of labour and wealth in the world.

Andreotti (2006a) uses this understanding of post-colonial theory to develop her argument for the need to take a more critical approach to global citizenship education that addresses issues of social justice not simply through the discourse of ‘making a difference’, but through a more analytical understanding of global power dynamics and

their historical origins. More specifically Andreotti (2006a) claims that if we, as educators, do not address the economic and cultural roots of inequality, we may inadvertently be encouraging students to “take up the ‘burden’ of saving/educating/civilising the world”, which has the potential to reproduce “power relations and violences similar to those in colonial times” (p.1). This concern resonates with the concept of the ‘helping imperative’ discussed in Chapter Two. Based on these types of post-colonial critiques, Andreotti (2006a, p.6) argues for a more ‘critical’ form of global citizenship that encourages learners to analyze and critique “the relationships among perspectives, language, power, social groups and social practices” in an attempt to understand the origins of hegemonic assumptions and their potential implications. Here we see the term ‘critical’ being employed in a similar fashion to that of Brookfield (2000), where the use of the term in relation to reflection or learning represents the incorporation of power into the analysis. Applying this distinction is essential for analyzing the ways in which the participants in this study frame the volunteer abroad experience and to tease out some of the potential ethical issues that may arise from the influence of a ‘soft’ approach to global citizenship education.

Post-colonial studies also provide a more theoretical framework for understanding the relationship between volunteers and members of the host community by drawing our attention to a process of ‘othering’ that can take place within the context of volunteer abroad. The origins of this type of theoretical analysis can be traced back to Edward Said’s publishing of *Orientalism*. Through an analysis of an array of nineteenth century French and British novelists, poets, politicians, philologists, historians, travelers and imperial administrators”, Said theorized that their collective work made up a discipline,

which he named 'Orientalism', "by which European culture produced and managed the "Orient" (Bayoumi and Rudin, 2000, p.xxiv). Said's work is concerned with the ways in which those who held power over systems of representation during the colonial era were able to carefully construct a base of knowledge about the Middle East that formed a base upon which those in the West came to understand their own role in the world. Said (1979, p.300) describes Orientalism as a complex system of representation that depicts "absolute and systematic difference between the West, which is rational, developed, humane, superior, and the Orient, which is aberrant, undeveloped, inferior." This juxtaposition of the West in relation to the Orient contributes to homogenous representations of landscapes, people and culture in the Middle East as the unknown 'Other'. By bringing together Antonio Gramsci's philosophy of hegemony, understood by Said as the

...extensive influence of a particular idea... operated not through the brute application of force in nontotalitarian societies, but by consent a tacit, unwritten agreement often passed off as conventional wisdom or common sense (Bayoumi and Rudin, 2000, p.67)

and Foucault's philosophy of discourse, Said describes Orientalism as a discourse by which "European culture was able to manage – and even produce – the Orient politically, sociologically, militarily, ideologically, scientifically, and imaginatively during the post-Enlightenment period" (Said, 1978 cited in Bayoumi and Rudin 2000, p. 70)^{xvii}.

Heron (2007) applies the concept of Orientalism and 'othering' to her work on Canadian women development workers by arguing that volunteer development work has the tendency to circulate colonial tropes of 'exotic', unknown places full of 'others' in need of Northern intervention. Heron (2007) claims that this process of othering serves

to normalize the centering of the development worker's self-perception in relation to other peoples' needs, rather than recognizing the ways in which they, as Canadian development workers, are "implemented in processes of globalization that underlie these needs". In a similar fashion, Simpson (2004) also applies Said's concept of Orientalism to her study of the growing British 'gap year' volunteer abroad phenomenon, noting that in a similar fashion to the European creation of an 'Oriental' space, the development industry is currently creating a simplified geographical understanding of the Third World as a homogenous, apolitical, ahistorical place full of people in need (Simpson, 2004). As a result of this representation, Simpson (2004) argues that these volunteer experiences reinforce the notion that development is something that can be done by unskilled volunteers who are willing to 'help' those in 'need'. While Simpson (2005) argues that volunteer abroad programs that are embedded in courses provide a more structured educational experience and therefore are less likely to contribute to the creation of a 'geography of need', Cabrera's (2010) emphasis on the role that the empathy-altruism hypothesis can play in framing global citizenship and transnational experiential learning practices shows us that we can not take for granted that the discourse of global citizenship or the use of experiential education models will necessarily break down the contradictions or potential ethical issues that emerge as a result of the 'helping imperative'.

The concept of Othering also sheds light on the complex relationship between volunteer abroad and intercultural learning. Concerns are raised in the literature over the potential for an emphasis on cultural difference to inhibit the breakdown of stereotypes (Guttentag, 2009) and/or lead to the rationalization of poverty, which Simpson (2004,

p.688) describes as “the tale of ‘poor-but-happy’” locals where “material deprivation equates to social and or emotional wealth”. Roman’s (2003) work on education and the contested meanings of global citizenship demonstrates how these concepts of Othering have come to play a central role in recent attempts to internationalize educational curriculum, ultimately leading to ‘binary oppositions’ that reinforce difference:

While they exaggerate and reify ‘difference’ as ‘international’, ‘foreign’, Third World’, or ‘non-Western,’ educational experiences of intellectual tourism freeze in time and space particular stereotypes of what such differences mean. Such experiences are conceived as voluntary, enacted in the service of acquiring more sensations of inter-cultural exchange, whether the intellectual tourism takes place as actual travel or virtual or imaginary curricular tours or visits. (p.274)

Roman’s (2003) analysis of the construct of global citizenship education in the Global North demonstrates how this discourse intersects with a postcolonial framework by reminding us that a focus on difference and intercultural learning tends to reinforce the us/them dichotomy that is prevalent within the development aid discourse (Baaz, 2005), rather than making attempts to explore the origins of this binary way of understanding the world.

Warren (1998) also expresses concern over the central focus on intercultural learning or diversity, but from a slightly different angle than Roman. Warren (1998, p.136) notes that frameworks for service learning based solely in diversity or intercultural learning are based on the idea of ‘different but equal’, which, she argues, does not address the issues related to social justice education, which she claims is defined by the understanding that we must “recognize that some social groups in our society have greater access to social power” than others.

As educators, we must recognize the value that post-colonial studies offers for illuminating assumptions we hold about the world around us, and to heed the call to engage in self-reflexive practices that would move us towards an awareness of the ‘whispers’ of colonialist thinking that have the potential to enter our practices and perceptions when facilitating volunteer abroad programs (Kahn, 2011; McQuaid, 2009). However, we must also acknowledge that day-to-day experiences related to the facilitation of volunteer abroad programs within the confines of a formalized education system requires a more nuanced understanding than can be provided by a post-colonial framework of analysis alone.

3.5 Critical Pedagogy and Transformative Learning

Critical pedagogy finds its origins in the work of Freire and his concepts of critical consciousness and praxis, as discussed in the literature review above. In his final publication before his death, Freire (2004, p.19) argues that the “capable and serious progressive educator must, not only teach his or her discipline well, but he or she must also challenge the learner to critically think through the social, political and historical reality within which he or she is a presence”. This foundational understanding of the role of the teacher within an educational setting sets the groundwork for many of the educational theorists and researchers who are currently trying to make sense of the role that experiential learning plays in an international context, specifically in relation to the nature of volunteering abroad. What is especially useful in Freire’s (2004) final work is his observation that a desire to change the world is not sufficient to bring about change, but that human beings must intervene in the world in a way that is reflective of a desire to

make the world a more ethical place - a concept which is reflected in both Davies (2006) and Tiessen's (2012) emphasis on the need for a global citizenship discourse that is defined by the taking of a course of action to redress social injustice. Furthermore, Freire (2004) notes that during this process, one may contradict their own practices and may even potentially create obstacles to change. I use this as one of the critical starting points for exploring the role that teachers in Ontario have embarked on through their facilitation of volunteer abroad programs, because we must be open to the process of critical self-reflection without fearing that this will expose flaws in our teaching practice. Instead we must use self-reflection as a means of acknowledging the nuances and complexities of engaging in ethical teaching practices and the multiple points of view upon which these ethics can be established. Again, this speaks to the use of multiple frameworks to help us understand how decisions regarding volunteer abroad programs are made on a day-to-day basis by teachers and to begin to understand how the needs of students, school boards, organizations and host communities are negotiated throughout the planning process.

Spivak's theories on education relate to those of Freire's with respect to her focus on the need for self-reflexivity and deconstruction of the binary modes of thinking that lead to an 'us' versus 'them' way of understanding the world (Kapoor, 2004). Spivak talks about 'unlearning one's privilege as loss', summarized by Kapoor (2004) as a 'transformation of consciousness' based on the recognition and origins of one's own prejudices and the refusal to think of oneself as better or fitter than another. Spivak claims that this can be achieved by 'learning from below' which involves unlearning dominant systems of knowledge and representation and instead listening to, and learning from, the subaltern^{xviii} (Kapoor, 2004). The influence of Spivak's work and the concepts

of critical pedagogy can be found in the definition of transformative learning developed by the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto (2011):

Transformative learning involves a deep, structural shift in the basic premises of thought, feelings, and actions. It is a shift of consciousness that dramatically and permanently alters our way of being in the world. This shift includes our understanding of ourselves and our self-locations and our relationships with other humans and with the natural world. It also involves our understanding of power relations in interlocking structures of class, race and gender, our body awareness, our visions of alternative approaches to living, and our sense of possibilities for social justice, peace and personal joy.

This definition helps illustrate, once again, the intersection between postcolonial studies and theories related to critical pedagogy, whereby the deconstruction of power relations become a central theme shaping the transformative learning process.

A key concept in transformational learning is critical reflection, however Brookfield (2000) notes that despite reflection and reflective practice being amongst the most “commonly invoked terms in the world of educational theorizing today” (p.125) they are not, by definition, critical. As discussed earlier, Brookfield (2000) argues that the process of ‘critical’ reflection or ‘critical’ analysis, must engage in “some sort of power analysis of the situation or context in which the learning is happening” (p.126) as well as attempting to challenge hegemonic assumptions. As Said did in 1978, Brookfield also invokes Gramsci’s concept of hegemony in order to frame his understanding of how certain ways of knowing and understanding the world become so deeply embedded in our day-to-day lives that we are often unaware of how these ideas and knowledge systems are constructed:

...the term *hegemony* describes the process whereby ideas, structures, and actions come to be seen by the majority of people as wholly natural, preordained, and working for their own good when in fact they are constructed and transmitted by powerful minority interests to protect the status quo that serves these interests so

well. The subtlety of hegemony is that over time it becomes deeply embedded, part of the cultural air we breathe... the ideas and practices of hegemony become part and parcel of everyday life... (2000, p.138)

To this end, Brookfield (2000) claims that the processes of critical reflection involved in learning can only become 'transformative' when they take on the task of challenging hegemonic assumptions. In the case of volunteer abroad, we have seen that authors such as King (2004) and Heron (2007) have argued that true critical reflection during or after a trip would involve a form of self-reflexivity that attempts to deconstruct personal motivations alongside an analysis of global power dynamics that have led to a world where students from the Global North are able to travel to the Global South, while a reverse flow of travel would most likely be impossible.

However, challenging hegemonic assumptions and working for structural change can be an exhausting endeavour and often invokes negative consequences brought down by those who have vested interests in maintaining power and authority (Brookfield, 2000). For example, a teacher who attempts to challenge dominant ideology and worldviews held by colleagues, parents and school administrators may find him/herself teaching concepts that conflict with established curriculum expectations and hence may find themselves being challenged by parents, isolated from colleagues or reprimanded by administrators. This is an important point to consider in light of this study, as, has been mentioned above, the point of this research is not to evaluate the participants but to use these frameworks to understand how teachers negotiate this complicated terrain and to expose the contradictions between the perceived benefits and potential ethical issues that emerge as a result. It is not to say that the potential consequences of challenging policy, curriculum or practice in the current education system should prohibit a teacher from

reflecting on their practice and attempting to make the most ethical decisions possible, but it reminds us that a neo-colonial critique of volunteer abroad is too simplistic for analyzing the role that teachers play in facilitating volunteer abroad experiences, as they must meet the needs and demands of students, parents, colleagues and administrators while attempting to remain true to their own value systems.

O'Sullivan (2008, p.98) asks one of the most pointed questions that can help shed light on the complexities involved in the analysis of teacher-facilitators of volunteer abroad programs in Ontario: "What are the prospects for combining teachers' concerns for realizing each child's potential cognitively and emotionally, socially and personally with the planet's pressing need for social, political and environmental change?" The reason this question is so difficult to answer is because, as both O'Sullivan (2008) and Crabtree (2008) point out, the conceptual understanding of experiential education revolves around individual student transformation without accounting for social context. Both authors (Crabtree, 2008; O'Sullivan, 2008) argue that personal and social transformation is not mutually exclusive, and, as O'Sullivan points out, one cannot occur without the other:

Pedagogical strategies designed to prepare students for collective social engagement, when such strategies are not fused with curricular strategies designed to promote personally transformative change, are highly unlikely to have a transformative impact, be it personal or political. (2008, p.99)

As noted earlier, O'Sullivan (2008) argues that models of critical pedagogy involving transformational learning tend to centre on the socially conscious teacher, a model which he claims has not been successfully integrated in elementary or secondary schools in Canada, where teachers have been professionally encouraged to stress individual growth

in the virtual absence of critical discussions of the “social”. Furthermore, recent studies have shown that Canadian teachers tend to prioritize learning goals related to knowledge acquisition over more politically controversial and potentially transformative elements of national and global citizenship education (Evans, 2006; Richardson, 2009). For example, in a 2006 study of teachers involved in citizenship education, Evans (2006) found that developing an understanding of core concepts such as rights, duties and civic involvement, along with the development of thinking, inquiry and collaboration skills were emphasized as central learning goals by Ontario teachers, while instructional practices related to the exploration of beliefs, values and/or “notions of social justice underpinning civic decisions and actions” (p.422) were less prevalent, highlighting what Evans describes as a gap between theory and practice within the realm of citizenship education. In this discussion of the potential role teachers may play in implementing a model of transformational learning it is important to remember that in order to challenge hegemonic assumptions, teachers must be aware that they hold these assumptions in the first place. Again, I see this as further rationale for why the analytical frameworks constructed through the use of post-colonial studies and critical pedagogy are not fully sufficient for understanding the day-to-day reality of facilitating volunteer abroad programs, as well as further justification of the need for a study of this nature. Without exposure to some of the theoretical arguments presented in a study such as this one, it is difficult to assess the extent to which some teachers in the Ontario secondary school system would have access to the type of materials that would illuminate some of the neo-colonial or hegemonic elements that circulate within the education system and wider public discourses around globalization and development. Some of these concerns are

addressed in the limited literature available on global citizenship education in Ontario. For example, O'Sullivan (2008) places the responsibility for increasing teacher engagement with critical and transformative pedagogical practices on the minority of teachers who already employ these practices, while Evans, Ingram, Macdonald and Weber (2009) call for additional research in conjunction with curriculum, instructional and professional development.

Finally, Brookfield (2000) further complicates the role of the facilitator within a transformative learning model by noting that measuring the 'transformation' of a student is difficult and may lead teachers to harbour a sense of guilt over the extent to which they can accomplish this goal. In his foundational work on transformational learning in the context of adult education, Meizrow (2000) describes a transformational learning experience as one where the learner makes an "informed and reflective decision to act on his or her reflective insight" (p.23), noting that this "decision may result in immediate action, delayed action, or reasoned affirmation of an existing pattern of action" (p.24). This description demonstrates how difficult it is to assess the learning in a transformational or critical pedagogy model of learning, especially from the perspective of a secondary school teacher, who may not see the direct impact a volunteer abroad experience has had on a student if that transformation and subsequent action occurs once the trip is over and the student has graduated. Furthermore, when volunteer abroad programs are not connected to some form of curriculum or course-work, the need for assessing learning outcomes is not formally embedded in the program and hence the measurement of the transformation is made that much more difficult.

3.6 Summary

The purpose of this chapter has been to make use of a post-modern approach to design an analytical framework that allows us to see how the nuances of the day-to-day practices of facilitating volunteer abroad in Canadian high schools are too complex to fit into one theoretical model alone. Through an exploration of the discourses around global citizenship, development studies, post-colonial studies, critical pedagogy and transformational learning, I have attempted to show how each framework offers insight into the multiple ways in which volunteer abroad trips can be conceptualized, and the ethical issues that may arise when the benefits of these experiences are taken-for-granted.

The concept of global citizenship has proven to be one that has evolved into many forms, yet one that is generally considered as a desirable goal that may be achieved through involvement in a volunteer abroad program. However, more critical writing on the practice of global citizenship education demonstrates how post-colonial studies and critical pedagogy theory have the potential to move this form of education into a realm that takes into account the power structures that contribute to inequality and social injustice in the world. While the post-colonial critique is deemed insufficient for understanding how teachers attempt to balance the desire for volunteer abroad experiences to enhance the inter and intrapersonal skills of their students with the needs of host communities, it clearly adds depth to the arguments made by advocates of transformational learning theory, who encourage a form of experiential learning that has the potential to cause deep shifts in the way students perceive themselves and the world around them.

The need for teachers such as myself to engage in critical self-reflection in regards to our own knowledge and value systems, along with the ways in which we conceptualize the purposes and impacts of the volunteer abroad programs we facilitate, is considered an essential first step in understanding how and why these programs have evolved within the Ontario secondary school system. It is only through our own attempts to apply a more critical framework to the phenomenon of volunteer abroad and global citizenship education that we can begin to assess our moral and professional obligations to apply pedagogical models that will work to alleviate, rather than contribute to, global inequalities.

CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY

Based on an overview of literature related to the use of qualitative research in the social sciences, as well as specific methodologies related to researching education and international education models, an interpretive, interview-based method of inquiry was deemed most suitable to meet the objectives of this study. Although a quantitative study may have been suitable for gathering data on the number and nature of volunteer abroad trips being run through Ontario secondary schools, a qualitative approach was taken in order to determine not only the forms that these programs take, but to ask the study participants *why* they run these programs and *how* they have come to understand their potential impacts.

4.1 Interpretative Research Methodologies

Glesner (2011, p.5) notes that every qualitative research study is informed by higher-level theory, which she describes as a research paradigm that acts as a “framework or philosophy of science that makes assumptions about the nature of reality and truth, the kinds of questions to explore, and how to go about doing so”. Interpretivism is the research paradigm most closely associated with an attempt to gain a deeper understanding of complex social issues, with a specific interest in finding out why and how humans do what they do and how these decisions and processes are then infused with meaning (Denzin and Lincoln, 2008; Fontana and Frey, 2008; Glesner, 2011; Marshall, 1996; Sherman and Webb, 1990). Interpretivism is often associated with other terms or labels such as constructivism, naturalism, phenomenological and hermeneutical, while generally being associated with theorists or philosophers such as Immanuel Kant, George Hervert

and Jurgen Habermas (Glessner, 2011). Both Denzin and Lincoln (2008) and Glessner (2011) note that it is difficult to define and differentiate between the various terms, labels and methodologies associated with interpretivist analysis, such as those mentioned above. Consequently, Denzin and Lincoln (2008) claim that no single methodological practice should be privileged over another and Glesner (2011) encourages researchers to think of them as “philosophies in dialogue with each other” (p.24).

4.2 Use of the Semi-structured Interview

In order to address the overall objective of an interpretive study, which focuses on understanding multiple perspectives on an issue (Glessner 2011), the semi-structured interview was chosen as the primary tool for qualitative data collection in this study. Using a semi-structured interview method allowed me, the primary researcher and interviewer, to follow a set of prepared interview questions while still providing the flexibility to enter into a dialogue with participants about their experiences facilitating volunteer abroad programs. As part of the interview technique, participants were, at times, probed for more detailed responses to pre-set questions, while also encouraged to pursue various points of interest that arose during our conversations. This technique enabled me to gain similar information from all participants in relation to the more logistical elements of planning and facilitating volunteer abroad trips, while also engaging in dialogue regarding their reactions to particular events or situations they described throughout the interview (Bernard and Ryan, 2010; Glessner, 2011).

4.3 Positionality of the Researcher

Theoretical considerations related to the use of interviews as a method of data collection centre on the notion that the researcher, who often acts as the interviewer, as is the case in this study, is not simply a neutral or objective observer (Denzin and Lincoln, 2008; Fontana and Frey, 2008; Glesner, 2011). As such, I had to keep in mind that as I entered into dialogue with the interview participants, our conversation could be interpreted as a site of power, where attributes of race, gender and class act as filters through which experiences are retold (Denzin and Lincoln, 2008). Being aware of the subjectivity of participants and realizing that those subjects are “seldom able to give full explanations of their actions or intentions” (Denzin and Lincoln, 2008, p. 29) can also serve to remind the researcher of their own subjectivity and positionality in relation to their research participants. This was an especially crucial consideration for me during this study, as I found myself in situations where I was interviewing colleagues who had engaged in experiences very similar to those of my own while facilitating volunteer abroad programs in the Global South. Knowing that the objectives of this study have evolved out of my own reflections on my experiences not only as a teacher-facilitator of these programs, but also my experiences participating in volunteer tourism activities and travelling in the Global South, it was imperative for me to reflect on the ‘sociocultural-political context’ in which I was asking questions of my research participants (Glesner, 2011, p. 151). This reflection involves an acknowledgement, on my part, that my time spent studying in a graduate program oriented towards the study of global development issues has familiarized me with issues and ways of examining the world that I had not been exposed to in my undergraduate degree, teaching training or involvement in

professional development activities during my career as a secondary school teacher. I raise this point in order to emphasize that while this study attempts to situate the participant responses within the broader debates on the issues surrounding volunteer abroad, it is has never been my intention to place myself outside of the critique, as I can hear my own thoughts on the subject echoed in the voices of the study participants. Furthermore, because objectivity is not the intended goal of a qualitative study such as this one (Glessner, 2011), my aim throughout this thesis is to confront difficult questions and offer critical analysis related to the experiences presented in the interviews, as I continue to position myself alongside my participants in an attempt to deepen our understanding of why we send young people to volunteer in the Global South and to consider the potential pedagogical and ethical issues that might arise from our involvement in these activities.

4.4 Situating the Methodology within the Literature on Researching Education

As the objective of this study is to better understand the phenomena of volunteer abroad programs within the educational setting of Ontario secondary schools rather than to evaluate or judge the motives, program structures, beliefs or practices of the teachers who facilitate them, it is worth exploring the concept of curriculum criticism, described by Ross (1999, p.152) as a “multidisciplinary approach to the study of educational materials and settings”. As will be discussed in the following chapter, there are elements of the Ontario secondary school curriculum that must be examined in their historical context in order to deepen the analysis of the research participants’ responses, especially with respect to the concept of global citizenship and some of the Forthcoming critical

analysis of how secondary school volunteer abroad programs might be examined through a critical lens of global development studies. Drawing on the work of Ross (1990), Rudduck (1993) and Brookfield (1995), all of whom stress how difficult it is for teachers to question the structures and systems within which they are so deeply intertwined through their teaching practices, this study is an opportunity to incorporate an element of curriculum criticism that involves raising questions that teachers may not otherwise consider (Eisner, 1979 in Ross, 1990) or feel comfortable raising themselves.

The study presented here also provides educators with an opportunity to “consider and develop understandings about the educational process rather than focusing solely on educational outcomes as is characteristic of much research” that takes place within education (Ross, 1990, p.171)^{xix}. However, this is not an easy task, as Brookfield (1995) argues that despite many teachers’ desire to ‘change the world’, often what they think are “democratic, respectful ways of treating people can be experienced by them as oppressive and constraining”. Brookfield (1995) claims that misunderstandings regarding the impact of their teaching practices often stem from teachers’ assumptions or ‘taken-for-granted’ beliefs about the world and Day (1999) also notes that in the busy lives of most teachers, there is little time made available for the undertaking of any type of in-depth inquiry or reflection on those assumptions, either on an individual or collaborative level. Based on the premise that questioning these assumptions requires engaging in a process of critical reflection, both Brookfield (1995) and Day (1999) stress that for teachers to become critically reflective, they must extend beyond the mantra of learning by experience and engage in educationally related research and critical conversations with colleagues. Brookfield (1995) suggests that these types of interactions, will “help us realize the

commonality of our individual experiences” (p. 141) and help us find ways of anchoring our practice in values of justice, fairness and compassion. To this end, the comparison of participant responses, in relation to the above mentioned theoretical frameworks meets one of the main criteria of curriculum criticism, as described by Ross (1990, p.171):

Essentially, this means the criticism must have sufficient depth to reveal subtle qualities and reveal the underlying complexity of the phenomenon studied... comparison of the information presented to other knowledge, provides clues about the significance and usefulness of the criticism. If the criticism broadens, or makes more apparent, the practical significance of theory, the criticism has met the criterion of significance.

As such, it is my hope that these interviews, which Rudduck (1993, p.10) claims can “go some way towards helping teachers construct a different perspective” (p.10), represent one step towards Brookfield’s concept of critical reflection - a first-step along a potential continuum of critical conversations Ontario secondary school teachers might engage in with their colleagues regarding their roles as facilitators of volunteer abroad programs.

4.5 Situating the Methodology within the Literature on Researching Volunteer Abroad and International Service Learning

Within the more recent scholarly literature on international service learning, calls are being made for a more a clearly defined research agenda (Crabtree, 2008; Kiely and Hartman, 2011; Tonkin, 2011). In a similar vein to the work of Brookfield (1995) discussed above, Crabtree (2008) argues that the various pedagogical models that can be applied to international service learning all require teachers to engage in reflexive and recursive practice because of their position as co-learners with their students. Because we know little about the impacts of these programs on the host communities (Crabtree, 2008; Kiely and Hartman, 2011; Tonkin, 2011) it is suggested that much of the research

to be done should focus on the pedagogical and ethical issues related to sending youth to ‘learn’ from host communities in the developing world, specifically addressing the ways in which the philosophy of service learning is (or is not) incorporated into the various manifestations of programs that go by the name of international service learning or volunteer abroad (Tonkin, 2011, p.198).

Furthermore, the fact that faculty members that facilitate international service learning at the post-secondary level are seen increasingly as holding a pivotal role in the conceptualization and implementation of volunteer abroad programs, there is a need to research faculty attitudes and assumptions about global issues as well as pedagogy (Grusky, 2000; Tiessen 2008; Tonkin, 2011). It is this need to investigate the role of faculty at the post-secondary level that I extend to the study of secondary school teachers who facilitate various models of volunteer abroad and international service learning programs in Ontario, as well as why the semi-structured interview was chosen as the most useful tool for allowing teachers to share their personal experiences and feelings related to why they became involved in their roles as facilitators, how they work with other teachers and organizations, how they structure their programs and how they rationalize the very concept of sending youth to volunteer in the developing world.

4.6 Participant Sample Selection

A ‘judgement’ or ‘purposeful’ sampling technique was chosen for this study based on the premise that when the objective of a study is to understand complex psychosocial issues it is not necessary to study whole populations (Marshall, 1996). A judgement sampling technique involves the researcher “actively select[ing] the most

productive sample to answer the researcher question” (Marshall, 1996, p.523). While a random sample is useful in providing a more generalized understanding of the population under study, it can be problematic because sampling errors can be quite large when taking into consideration the small-scale nature of qualitative studies such as this one (Marshall, 1996). Furthermore, due to the limited amount of current research on the phenomenon of volunteer abroad programs in the secondary school system in North America, it was impossible to know the characteristics of the whole population or whether or not they were normally distributed, and therefore impossible to recruit a truly random sample (Marshall, 1996). As there is no central clearing house of information available listing all the overseas programs available to teachers and students in Ontario high schools, a more selective process was more realistic for a study of this nature.

Finally, based on Marshall’s (1996, p.523) assertion that: “Qualitative researchers recognize that some informants are ‘richer’ than others and that these people are more likely to provide insight and understanding for the researchers”, a judgement or purposeful sampling technique allowed for the recruiting of participants who were known to be involved in a diverse range of volunteer abroad models, which I decided would deepen the analysis and understanding of how and why these programs are evolving within Ontario secondary schools. Knowing that I had personal contacts within two different school boards and two different independent schools, combined with the limited information available on the range of programs offered within Ontario, I decided that a snowball technique would be the most practical means of purposefully recruiting participants.

4.7 Recruiting Parameters

A judgement or purposeful sample involves “developing a framework of the variables that might influence an individual’s contribution” (Marshall, 1996, p.523) based on a combination of the researcher’s practical experience in the area and the available literature and evidence on the subject. In the case of this study, due to the lack of literature and studies that have focused specifically on volunteer abroad in the secondary school context, the variables were determined through an assessment of volunteer abroad and international service learning literature examining post-secondary school options, combined with my own personal understanding of how these trips were manifesting themselves within school boards and programs known to me at the time. Because of the recent and rapid expansion of these programs (Lewin, 2009), it was decided that a teacher would qualify for participation in the study if they had facilitated a volunteer abroad program within the past five years (2006-2011).

The decision to recruit participants from both the public and independent school systems in Ontario was made in order to widen the range of practices and experiences being discussed within the sample. Another key parameter was how to define ‘facilitation’ of a volunteer abroad program. As the literature suggests, a volunteer abroad trip requires a significant investment of time with respect to planning, collaborating with colleagues, preparing students and debriefing them afterwards, and, by definition, an international service learning trip involves a relationship to a course or curriculum. As such, one of the participants was involved in the planning and preparation of an international service learning trip yet did not travel with the students. After conducting the interview it was clear that this participant could make a significant

contribution to the study with respect to how these trips are rationalized, how some schools are attempting to embed them within curriculum and how a sending organization is chosen. Finally, the original plan for the study was to recruit teachers certified by the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT). This definition proved to be an oversight of the original recruitment parameters, as it came to my attention that independent school teachers do not always hold an OCT certificate and can be employed in a variety of capacities within the independent system. Two of the participants, each from a different independent school, were not OCT qualified, yet were hired by their schools in a capacity that specifically related to their role as a facilitator of volunteer abroad. Their inclusion in the study adds further depth to our understanding of how these programs are being facilitated within the Ontario secondary school system.

Formal applications to conduct external research were submitted to three Southern Ontario school boards. One application was denied based on a missed deadline of the board's external review committee. Two applications were accepted and teachers were recruited using two different variations of the snowball technique. The original applications had proposed sending a board-wide email to recruit teachers who met the parameters of the study, however, institutional structures can affect data collection methods (Glessner, 2011) and, in the case of both school boards, policies were in place that restricted the use of sending board-wide emails. Consequently, both school boards recommended a snowball technique as the most appropriate alternative method for participant recruitment. In one school board, permission was granted to make initial contact via direct email to teachers already known to be involved in facilitating volunteer

abroad programs. These individuals were sent an email outlining the study and, upon agreement, times were arranged to conduct the interview and an informed consent form was signed at the beginning of each interview. These participants then recommended other teachers known to them and a total of five teachers from this board participated in the study. In the other school board, permission was granted to contact teachers via the school principal. Recruitment packages were mailed to all principals and follow-up emails were sent two months later based on the limited response received. At the time that the study was complete, no teachers from this board had expressed interest in participating. Permission to interview teachers at independent schools was granted by independent school principals or the administrative staff person responsible for external research. Recommended teachers were sent the same email outlining the purpose of the study and signed the same informed consent forms as those participants from the public system. A total of three teachers and two alternative staff facilitators from five different independent schools were interviewed. As was agreed upon in the informed consent forms signed by both the study participants and myself, and in agreement with the guidelines set out by the Queen's University General Research and Ethics Board, the names of all school boards, schools, research participants, host organizations, and sending organizations have been omitted from this study in order to protect privacy and confidentiality.

4.8 Data collection

Data was collected by recording the face-to-face, semi-structured interviews I conducted with each of the research participants. Interviews lasted approximately 35

minutes to 75 minutes in length and were transcribed using basic word-processing software. Each participant was sent a copy of their final transcript via email and was provided with the opportunity to request their removal from the study or to remove any selection of the interview transcript they felt compromised their privacy or felt might misrepresent their thoughts or feelings on a particular issue. None of the participants chose to either remove themselves or any portion of their transcript from the study.

4.9 Textual analysis

The analytical technique used in this study is known as thematic analysis (Aronson, 1994), whereby the researcher examines and compares the data in an attempt to merge their understanding of the data with prior theoretical knowledge of the subject (Bernard and Ryan, 2010). Throughout this process, the researcher draws comparisons between participant responses, while looking for similarities and differences in an attempt to flush out the “underlying complexities” and tensions that exist among participant experiences (Glessner, 2011, p.1888). In order to do this, the interview transcripts were read in an attempt to generate patterns of experiences that could then be organized into themes and sub-themes. Once a list of themes and sub-themes had been established, the data was cut and sorted into the various categories, each of which was then analyzed in relation to the theory and literature discussed in Chapters Two and Three (Bernard and Ryan, 2010). Throughout the discussion and analysis of the findings, a method of discourse analysis was employed in order to demonstrate the influence of global citizenship rhetoric on the participants’ conceptualization of the volunteer abroad programs they facilitate and to assess the extent to which these programs are facilitated in

a manner that can provide a transformational learning experience. In this sense, the method of discourse analysis involves the deconstruction of language and discourse in order to interpret how it is used in the construction of meaning (Parpart and Marchand, 1995).

4.10 Summary

In closing, the methods of this qualitative research study have been designed to address the research agendas advocated by those who suggest a need for more critical self-reflection on the part of teachers, specifically in relation to how they conceptualize the volunteer abroad programs they plan and implement for their students. In order to gain data on both the structure and forms these programs are taking, along with the ways in which discourses of global citizenship, development and personal growth intersect with teachers' understandings of experiential learning models, an interpretive, inquiry-based method using discourse analysis was deemed most suitable for this study.

CHAPTER 5: RESULTS, DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

As a result of the relatively small sample size used for this study, and the general nature of qualitative interpretive research, I have decided to compress the results, discussion and analysis into one chapter. The benefit of this way of presenting the data is to be able to contextualize the emergence of various themes that emerge from the participant responses in light of the literature discussed in Chapters Two, Three and Four, while being able to demonstrate how the nuances of the responses makes it difficult to draw generalized analysis and conclusions. The quotes used in each section are useful not only for illustrating the findings of the study, but also for capturing the complexities of the roles teachers play as facilitators of these programs and how they conceptualize the potential benefits, challenges and ethical dilemmas associated with these experiences. This chapter is organized into eight thematic sections, with sub-themes used where necessary. The chapter begins with an overview of the participants' backgrounds and how they came to be involved as facilitators of volunteer abroad at their particular schools. I then discuss and analyze the participant responses regarding their understanding of global citizenship, alongside a brief exploration of the type of global citizenship rhetoric that can be found in provincial curriculum documents. This is followed by an overview of the logistics of the types of volunteer abroad programs being run by the participants, leading into a discussion of the ways in which concepts of development and social justice are used to frame the volunteer abroad experience. The discussion then moves to an analysis of how the participants' rationalize the programs, which then leads into a more general discussion of the teachers' perspectives of how the students benefit from these experiences. The pedagogical models associated with the

various volunteer abroad programs discussed by the participants are then considered, specifically in relation to the concept of how students are prepared and how reflection is facilitated throughout the various programs. Finally the chapter ends with a discussion of what the participants perceive to be the challenges associated with running volunteer abroad programs and the extent to which they collaborate with other teachers who are involved in similar types of programming.

5.1 Educational Backgrounds and Experience

5.1.1 Educational Backgrounds

A total of ten teachers were interviewed for this study. All of the teachers who participated in the study have an undergraduate degree from a Canadian university and were working in an Ontario secondary school at the time they fulfilled their role as facilitator of a volunteer abroad program. Three participants have undergraduate degrees related to physical education, two majored in international development, and five participants majored in a social science such as geography or history. Eight out of the ten participants have teaching degrees, six of them obtained in Ontario, one in Scotland and one in Australia.

5.1.2 Current Positions

At the time of this study, five of the participants were working in Ontario's public school system and five were working in Ontario's independent school system, one of whom has recently resigned from her position to pursue other interests. The two participants without teaching degrees completed Master of Arts programs in fields related to education – both were employed in the independent school system in director positions

that involved a combination of administrative and teaching work. For the purpose of this study, any references to the participants as ‘teachers’ is meant to include all ten participants. Three of the public school teachers have formal additional qualifications in fields related to experiential education.

5.1.3 Personal Experiences in the Developing World

All of the participants had experiences travelling, volunteering or working in the developing world before becoming facilitators of a volunteer abroad program at their respective schools. There was a general consensus among the participants that the desire to travel originated in a natural curiosity about the world around them and that they valued their previous experiences abroad. For example, one teacher attributed his choice to focus on international issues in teacher’s college to his ‘natural interest’ in travel and referred to an assumed value or benefits of experiences abroad:

So I had a natural interest in being outside of Canada and having those kind of cultural experiences, or just saw value in it. (P9)

Another teacher described her love of travelling as directly influencing her decision to become a teacher and, more specifically, to seek out work in the independent or private school system:

...and when I finished university I literally put on a back-pack, went to a cruise ship for three months and so I didn’t come home. And I think that kind of led me to teaching... [and] once I was in teaching, I went the private school system route because they have a lot of trips abroad, and a lot of opportunities to get kids to go elsewhere. So I think basically my passion for travelling is really what led me to teaching and working with kids. (P3)

The notion that travel abroad is inherently valuable and something for which a person can develop a ‘passion’ is explored by Wearing, Deville and Lyons (2008) in their work on the relationship between volunteer tourism and the conceptualization of ‘self’. Wearing,

Deville and Lyons (2008) describe the act of travel as one where the individual, removed from the familiarity of their home surroundings, must interact with new people, customs and landscapes in an effort to “learn new forms of behaviour and develop appropriate coping mechanisms, sometimes as a matter of survival” (p.67). Wearing, Deville and Lyons (2008, p.68) note that while some forms of travel are related more closely to the desire for rest, relaxation or escape, travel that is motivated by a “renewed quest for meaning outside the confines of one’s own society” is a distinctive form of leisure that is generally associated with the desire to have ‘authentic experiences’ whereby travellers feel the potential for personal transformation. The participants’ responses are reflective of this understanding of how interactions with new surroundings cause individuals to become more aware of their own behaviours, attitudes, values and actions. This heightened self-awareness is related to experimentation with representations of the self during the travel experience, which is then considered to have the potential to lead to deeper, longer lasting forms of personal transformation (Wearing, Deville and Lyons, 2008). This way of theorizing about the impact of travel helps us understand how the participants in this study (I include myself in this group) have come to understand travel as inherently valuable, while also shedding light on why they have chosen volunteer abroad programs as a more desirable form of travel for their students than more Western-oriented study abroad trips within North America or Europe. Wearing, Deville and Lyons (2008) go on to explain that volunteer tourism provides an easily accessible platform for creating ‘experiences’ based on interaction with the ‘other’, while also creating group situations that have the potential to foster intimate relationships between group members. As a result, various forms of volunteer abroad programs can be understood as forms of

travel that enhance the potential for fostering personal transformation. If teachers such as the participant above feel that their own experiences abroad have transformed them in a way that has led them to choose a particular career path, it is easy to see how they would associate travel with personal transformation and hence want to provide their students (whose personal growth and learning is their prime responsibility) with these types of experiences as well.

Two participants had participated in longer term development work (6-12 months) as a component of their undergraduate degree in international development studies and two participants had been previously employed as facilitators of volunteer abroad trips with organizations outside of a formal education system. One of the participants described some of her experiences working with other volunteer-sending organizations as 'disastrous' noting that this led her to ask critical questions about the impact and nature of service work in both a domestic and international context and how this impacts her current work as an independent school director responsible for organizing a number of annual volunteer abroad trips:

I felt as though, I'm not really doing anything here, or contributing anything here... and then we would have these celebrations every single day, of ourselves, and I felt as though I was the really negative one... it's not necessarily that I'm negative per se, but I do have a lot of critical questions about the nature of what we're doing, who we're helping, whether we even should be helping, etc. So, anyway, I was kind of sparked by that, and then kept going on more service trips, as a participant, and then started to begin to facilitate them, and I would choose a different organization every single time to see how their model looked like and how it was different. (P8)

The backgrounds of the teachers in this study align with Grusky's (2000) findings that teachers who become involved in volunteer abroad programs have a wide array of experiences both in terms of their educational backgrounds and their experiences in the

developing world. It is clear that the past experiences of the participants play a crucial role in their conceptualizations of the value and nature of the programs they facilitate and quotes such as the one above indicate that for some, the benefits of these programs cannot be taken for granted.

5.1.4 How Teachers Become Involved in Volunteer Abroad Programs at their Schools

While the types of trips these teachers facilitate varies, it is important to note that seven out of the ten teachers take on the role of facilitator on a voluntary basis. That is, they are not contractually obligated to plan, prepare or offer these trips to their students and are not financially compensated. The cost of the teacher's travel is incorporated into the student participation fees and teachers generally use their holiday time to travel with students, as school board and independent school policies limit the time students and teachers are away from class by running these programs over spring, winter or summer breaks. In terms of teachers who are compensated for their roles as volunteer abroad facilitators, two of the participants were employed in the public school system to facilitate international cooperative education programs in Latin America and one participant, as mentioned above, was employed by an independent school to direct their global education program. The focus of this participant's role as director was to form partnerships with organizations throughout the Global South in order to facilitate student 'excursions' that combine a component of community work with tourism-related travel. With respect to becoming involved in volunteer abroad programs, half of the participants first became involved in running volunteer abroad programs through their own initiatives to design and implement programs, while the other half became involved in pre-established programs.

One element that appears to set the secondary school context apart from the post-secondary context relates to the trend found in this study that all of the participants became involved as facilitators because they saw value in these experiences and took it upon themselves to either start programs at their respective schools or get involved in trips or programs that were already running. However, these findings are reflective of the conclusions drawn in Chieffo and Griffith's (2009) work, where the authors found that as study abroad programs become increasingly short-term, the workload on teachers is increased due to the added responsibility of not only organizing the trip, but travelling with the students in a role that sees them as their primary caregivers during that time. Following this theme of increased workloads, the two financially compensated teachers in the public school system who run credit-bearing programs noted that because these programs require so much more time and effort than regular courses they can be seen as unsustainable. This alludes to the fact that these individuals created these programs out of their own belief in the value of this form of education, and because they have continued to be the only teachers directly involved in their facilitation, there is a sense that they are somewhat of a personal project, despite board support, as both participants doubted the programs would continue to run if they were ever unable to continue in their roles:

..and I guess in the past, we keep trying to get people involved for sustainability – because if he gets sick, and if I'm not available to do it, then there's no one there to run it – and the problem is – we get lots of volunteers, but then they realize how much work it is and then they don't want to do it – and they disappear. (P1)

The general conclusion that can be drawn here is that in the majority of the cases in this study, rather than external or institutional pressure to run volunteer abroad programs that

will create global citizens, as is the trend in post-secondary institutions (Lewin, 2009), the teachers in this study become involved in volunteer abroad through their own initiative, which tends to grow out of their perceptions of the inherent value of these types of experiences.

An interesting distinction was made between travelling within the Global North versus the Global South when two teachers noted that their involvement in trips to Europe and North America led them to seek out what they described as more meaningful and challenging trips involving a combination of volunteer work and travel within a developing country:

...and we would go over to Europe and... I saw the impact that it had on the kids, but I thought something was missing – cause its kind of like, it's a trip – and they were talking about how life changing it was and I don't know, I wanted more for them right? (P1)

Although it is not made explicit, this participant seems to imply that she is personally surprised that a student would describe a tourist excursion to Europe as life-changing, as there is little to adjust to in terms of living conditions and cultural immersion. This desire for a more meaningful form of travel is reflective of Wearing, Deville and Lyons's (2008) distinction between the various forms of travel. While the participant does not directly explain what 'more' she wanted for her students, her suspicion of the ability of a European-based history trip to be life changing alludes to the notion that without some form of real engagement with the host culture, there are limits to the extent to which a travel experience can be 'life changing', or transformative. As this participant runs a program that involves host family living and a strong focus on cross cultural exchange, the 'more' that she is referring to is likely linked to her understanding of the volunteer

abroad experience as one that poses more significant, yet ultimately beneficial, challenges that students must overcome as they try to negotiate the day-to-day tasks of living in a different culture with limited knowledge of the local language. For example, when discussing host family living arrangements, this participant went on to say that the students “need to struggle – because that’s how they’re growing” (P1). While this concept of overcoming challenge in order to grow will be discussed in greater depth further on in this chapter, what we can learn from this participant is that teachers do reflect on the experiences they share with their students and that this influences the types of programs they choose to become involved in at their respective schools.

5.1.5 Feeling Prepared to Facilitate the Volunteer Abroad Experience

When asked if they felt as though their educational backgrounds were sufficient for facilitating volunteer abroad programs, all of the participants said yes, they felt prepared either based on their own experiences travelling in the Global South, or based on the subjects they had studied in university. However two did note that it would be helpful to have a deeper understanding of the history, politics, socio-economic conditions and cultural norms of the countries or regions they were visiting. Additionally, five out of the ten noted that learning how to facilitate these types of experiences was an ongoing process, where one always had to be prepared to face unforeseen challenges and to continually adjust and learn ‘on the fly’ (P3). Only one of the seven participants who did not have formal training in the field of experiential education noted that she would have felt better prepared to facilitate reflection on the trip had they done some form of workshop or professional development around how to lead a volunteer abroad trip.

These findings speak to the complexity of trying to determine how to prepare teachers for their roles as facilitators of volunteer abroad programs, as there are clearly a number of pedagogical elements to be considered. The desire to have a deeper understanding of factors affecting the host country reflects findings in the literature that speak to the challenges associated with facilitating cross-cultural or global education when teachers have had little to no direct exposure to a particular country or culture (Grusky, 2006; Pike and Selby, 2009). As such, I would argue that the acknowledgement of this desire to learn more is evidence of the type of reflection on the goals of international service learning advocated for by Tonkin (2011), which provides evidence that there is a desire among some teachers to be able to move beyond simple observations of cultural differences to a deeper understanding of how their students' experiences in the host country fit within a wider picture of the country's history. While many would argue that this type of knowledge should be a pre-requisite of any type of trip abroad (Heron, 2005, 2007; Baaz, 2007; Crabtree, 2008; Tiessen, 2008), this study has found that this is not always the case, as will be discussed in more detail below, especially with respect to the two week volunteer trips that take place as extra curricular activities outside of an academic course. As such, those teachers who wish to be able to incorporate a deeper understanding of the conditions of the host country show evidence of a desire to bring these trips out of the realm of a personal growth experience and into the realm of a more critical understanding of the conditions that impact various elements of the day-to-day lives of the host families and communities within which they are immersed, even if only for a short period of time. This observation, like that of the desire expressed by one of the participants to increase her experiential education training, speaks to O'Sullivan's (2008)

argument that these types of experiences, should they be able to embrace theories of transformational learning, place the ‘socially conscious’ teacher in the center of the model, a form of learning that has not been successfully integrated into Canadian classrooms, as teachers have been encouraged to prioritize their focus on the individual rather than on the social. As such, a teacher who feels that they are prepared to facilitate the individual personal growth of students through these trips may never have been exposed to the type of critical pedagogy theory that would help them think more critically about the overall purpose of these programs and the role they could play in creating the conditions for a potentially transformational experience through which their students might gain a deeper understanding of social and structural issues impacting the conditions they observe during their time abroad. Again, this speaks to wider structural issues related to teacher training, professional development and curriculum development within the Ontario education system.

That being said, a theoretical understanding of the issues is not the only factor that the participants saw as important to their ability to facilitate these programs – for example one of the participants who has extensive international development experience as well as additional qualifications related to experiential education noted that:

...you have to understand some concepts of development, some concepts of cross-cultural sensitivity to run programs such as this. And yet at the same time, I think practice is a great teacher.... when you go there with a group of students and you kind of think, there’s all kinds of hiccups along the way – so I think that yes, my theoretical background has helped, a respect for other cultures, which is primordial in trying to run a cross cultural exchange, some understanding of development concepts... and what do you do with inequality between rich and poor and stuff, yet at the same time, I think a lot of high school level, it’s not highly theoretical, analytical stuff, its how do you connect with people, what are the tricks you have to support people? (P6)

While Tonkin (2011) argues that just because a staff member has personal experiences travelling or working in the developing world does not necessarily imply that they will be prepared to facilitate a volunteer abroad program, this participant's comments help us understand the complexity of factors that must be considered when attempting to define what it means to be 'prepared' to facilitate this type of experience for youth.

Acknowledging this complexity of factors reinforces Pike and Selby's (2009) argument that study abroad programs need to focus on more than just content, emphasizing the importance of creating a learning environment that fosters democratic decision making based on mutual respect, consultation and collaboration between staff and students. This is similar to the concerns raised by Tiessen (2008) who noted that, especially at the post-secondary level, faculty who become involved in study or volunteer abroad programs may be well-trained in their academic field yet not fully prepared to support students' personal or emotional growth during their time abroad. This complexity of factors is captured by the participants' recognition that as educators we must be able to combine our theoretical backgrounds with interpersonal skills related to supporting and working with students, parents, school administration, host organization and host community members.

5.2 How Teachers Understand and Use the Concept of Global Citizenship

Although questions about global citizenship were generally posed to the participants after they had discussed the logistics and rationale of their trips, I have chosen to introduce a discussion and analysis of the findings related to this theme early on in this chapter in order to establish the ways in which the rhetoric of global citizenship

can be used to forge a deeper understanding of how teachers conceptualize the purpose of the volunteer abroad experience and how this influences decisions they make in regards to program planning and implementation.

5.2.1 Global Citizenship Education in Ontario

I begin this section with an attempt to connect the broader understandings and varying conceptualizations of global citizenship discussed in the literature review with the limited literature available on global citizenship education within secondary schools in Canada^{xx}. In relation to the specific evolution of various provincial curriculums, recent literature on the subject suggests that the global citizenship discourse still tends to present global themes as matters of national self-interest and is explored in relation to the institutional structures of the nation-state (Schweisfurth, 2006; Evans, Ingram, Macdonald and Weber, 2009). It has also been noted that current Canadian curriculums are grounded in Western views of global issues with little room made for the ‘views’ or ‘visions’ of the South, including a lack of alternative conceptualizations of global citizenship that may be emerging from other parts of the world (Evans Ingram, Macdonald and Weber 2009). The Canadian version of global citizenship is closely linked with the work of CIDA, which has recently initiated a project titled “In the global classroom initiative”, resulting in a number of teaching-related documents targeted at both the elementary and secondary school levels. The CIDA initiative emphasizes how teachers can prepare Canadian youth to become ‘global citizens’ who are “informed about and engaged in global issues so that they understand and value Canada’s international efforts” (CIDA, 2011). Through this emphasis on understanding the value of Canada’s international efforts, we can see that one of the main driving forces behind

global citizenship education in Canadian elementary and secondary schools originates with the federal government's interest in projecting a particular image of Canadians as well-informed citizens who care for their international neighbours and whose individual choices and actions may impact those in the global community. This rhetoric is representative of liberal ideas, rooted in Western culture, claiming that individuals can act as agents of social change, while leaving little room for the possibility of alternative visions of the concept, nor discussion of what causes inequalities across the globe (Butin, 2003). So despite the fact that provincial curriculums across Canada do not necessarily embrace a common definition of the concept, the CIDA initiative, along with publications that produce global citizenship resources for all teachers across a range of subject areas (Evans and Reynolds, 2010) provides evidence of the ways in which the global citizenship discourse is informally infiltrating Canadian schools.

The most official inclusion of global citizenship education in the Ontario secondary school system can be found in the Civics curriculum that was implemented as a mandatory Grade 10 course across the province in 1999. The course profile produced by the Public District School Board Writing Partnership (2003, p.3) breaks the course into three units, one of which is titled "Democracy: Global Perspectives" and is described as providing students with an opportunity to "demonstrate their understanding of the role of citizenship in defending and promoting human rights as the basis of democracy in the world community" (2000, p.3). Below are listed three curriculum expectations from the revised curriculum guide that are relevant to developing an understanding of the form that global citizenship education is taking in Ontario:

- Explain what it means to be a “global citizen” and why it is important to be one.
- Summarize the rights and responsibilities of citizenship within the global context, as based on an analysis of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989);
- Evaluate civic actions of individuals and non-governmental organizations that have made a difference in global affairs (e.g., Cardinal Paul-Emile Léger, Nelson Mandela, Mother Teresa, Jody Williams, Craig Kielburger, David Suzuki, Stephen Lewis; International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Doctors without Borders/Médecins Sans Frontières, YWCA/YMC and YWHA/YMHA, Greenpeace, Inuit Circumpolar Conference)

(Ontario Ministry of Education, 2005a, pp.65-66)

What is interesting to note is that there is no specific definition of the term global citizen.

The expectation is that as a result of investigations into suggested individuals and organizations that the curriculum writers have deemed to embody the types of actions that have ‘made a difference’ in the world, students will be able to arrive at their own definition of the term global citizen. Schweisfurth (2006) also brings our attention to the fact that the list of significant individuals and organizations is overrepresented by Canadians, which he claims is evidence of the Canadian preoccupation with national identity that “suffuses all areas of the curriculum” (p.44). In addition to this observation, it should also be noted that the list is Eurocentric, seeming to imply that solutions to world problems emanate from the West, while leaving little room for students to conceive of individuals or organizations from the Global South as embodying the characteristics of global citizenship. These observations provide further evidence of the need for teachers to think more critically about the concepts and practices that are encouraged through mainstream curriculum documents and thinking about relations between the Global North and Global South. One participant in the study made a similar observation with respect

to her school's use of the term global citizenship in relation to the volunteer abroad program:

I think if you really look at what it means to, if you really look at the sites where global citizenship is presumed to be learned or carried out, they're places where power is playing out in a really hierarchical and raced sort of way... The thing is, that I always wonder, how come no one ever presumes that the kids in Ghana that we worked with, how come no one talks about them becoming global citizens?
(P7)

This is the type of critical thinking that I hope the findings of this study will help encourage amongst more teacher facilitators of volunteer abroad programs in Ontario.

The language used in these curriculum expectations embodies the ambiguities regarding the concept of global citizenship discussed in Chapter Three (Falk, 1994; Davies, 2006; Schattle, 2009; Heron and Tiessen, 2010) and helps us understand how the concept infiltrates teacher and student thinking, yet often has no concrete application outside this one specific course. It is also worth noting that while there is reference to 'global interaction' and 'global connections' in the both the applied and academic streams of the Grade 9 Geography of Canada (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2005a) curriculum guides, there is no specific reference to the concept of global citizenship in those curriculums; nor is the term used in the Grade 12 University Preparation course titled "Canadian and World Issues: A Geographic Analysis" (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2005b). Furthermore, neither of these documents appear to situate the concepts related to global issues or global citizenship within a wider framework that addresses what Andreotti (2006a, p.1) describes as the "economic and cultural roots of the inequalities in power and wealth/labour distribution in a global complex and uncertain system" (2006a, p.1). In this sense, Andreotti's work on the difference between 'soft'

versus ‘critical’ global citizenship aligns with the work of Hovland, Musil, Skilton-Sylvester and Jamison (2009) and Richardson (2009), who similarly question the potential for global citizenship education to take a form that can be truly transformative through an engagement with issues related to power, identity and privilege. These questions of whether or not concepts of power and inequality should be included in a secondary school curriculum that seeks to incorporate global citizenship education are central to the ethical and pedagogical issues addressed in this study.

What is left open to debate, according to Andreotti (2006a), is how willing global citizenship educators are to critically reflect on their own beliefs and practices. As such, Andreotti (2006a) identifies a gap in our understanding of the greater implications of the more mainstream or ‘soft’ global citizenship rhetoric. This study can then be understood as a response to her call for educators such as myself and the participants in this study to carefully analyze the context of our work in relation to the “risks and implications of the options available in order to make responsible pedagogical choices” (p.2). As discussed in Chapter One, this study is exploratory in nature. Consequently, this study has been designed to shed light on where these assumptions can be found within the participants’ responses, in an attempt to not only understand their origins, but to also acknowledge the structural barriers that might inhibit teachers from even recognizing them as assumptions in the first place. I consider the willingness of teachers to participate in this type of investigation as evidence of their readiness to engage in reflection on the roles they play as facilitators of volunteer abroad programs.

It is through this lens that I attempt to deconstruct and understand how the participants in this study have come to understand the discourse of global citizenship and how it influences their conceptualization of the volunteer abroad experience. It is this more critical perspective on the potential for global citizenship education to incorporate elements of post-colonial theory related to the questioning of systemic structures of power that contribute to inequality in the world that I argue might lead to more truly transformative learning experiences through the conduit of volunteer abroad. As discussed in Chapter Four, it is this intersection of the literature on global citizenship education, post-colonial theory and critical pedagogy that can help us move away from mainstream thinking around the global citizenship rationale as an inherently good thing, and lead us instead towards a more critical understanding of the potential ethical issues related to the phenomenon of volunteer abroad in general.

5.2.2 Participant Understandings of Global Citizenship

When asked about their familiarity with the term global citizenship, the majority of participants identified it as a concept that they were familiar with yet not one that was explicitly used in the framing of the volunteer abroad program or experience. For three of the participants, the term was considered one that could be used interchangeably with other phrases such as ‘global mindedness’ (P8, P9), ‘globally capable’ (P8) or ‘world leadership’ (P5). Interestingly, all of the participants were able to articulate their own understanding of the concept; however, seven of the participants did not feel confident in providing an explicit definition and four could not explain exactly where their knowledge or understanding of the concept originated. This finding reflects the evolution of global citizenship into a variety of forms and models (Falk, 1994; Davies, 2006; Evans, Ingram,

Macdonald and Weber, 2009) that are then invoked in various contexts including government documents, NGO and educational institutional mandates and popular culture. For example, the following two participants made reference to the concept as a ‘buzz word’ or one that ‘floats’ around:

Yeah, it totally resonates with me, but I’m, not even sure where that comes from. If that’s just one of the buzz words that I have now attached to. (P8)

... the language is floating around – I haven’t really pinned it down for anyone to say exactly what it meant or when it was happening, or any of that, but it was just around. (P7)

In general, there were two distinct ways that the participants described their understanding of global citizenship. The first group alluded to general characteristics of a global citizen in relation to being open minded and connected to the world around them, considering it a concept that could be used as a framework for making sense of the experience:

I take back destination actually, because it’s not, in my mind certainly not finite, like check mark, you win, I am a global citizen, I have the certificate that proves it right, I did this many trips therefore. I think it’s a process so I think of it more in terms of, maybe goal would be an appropriate word, or something to think about, or to pack into your multiple identities I guess... I feel like it’s a term that kind of just collects many other things within it, so I would say around, I would say there’s something around curiosity, and wanting to know outside of your context. I would say that there’s something around, and I’m never sure of the term to use for this, whether it’s an appreciation for other cultures or whether it is a, I’m not entirely sure, but at least a curiosity. (P8)

The second group spoke about the concept in more concrete terms, describing the volunteer abroad programs as having the specific goal of creating global citizens, which alludes to an orientation towards thinking of global citizenship in the way the participant above refutes. For example, one participant described the overall purpose of her program as follows:

I don't know if this is too broad, but I think it is to have truly global citizens. So when they look at that definition, they can check off all of those things – like yeah, I am outraged by social injustice, and I actually know things about the economics and politics and social aspects of other places...and I do contribute at a local level, a global level and a national level. I think my ultimate goal is to truly, not to just pay lip service, but to make them real global citizens, and to be passionate about it and to maybe have careers in it. (P1)

These two conflicting conceptualizations of global citizenship come from two participants who were both very familiar with the Grade 10 Civics Curriculum discussed above, yet P8 noted that there were a “lot of improvements that the civics curriculum could endure” while P1 based all of her programming around this curriculum, drawing heavily on the OXFAM definition of global citizenship, which is designed as a checklist of qualities that revolve around the ability of individuals to ‘make a difference’^{xxi}. When we find within the Ontario curriculum definitions of global citizenship that centre around making a difference, we can start to understand how levelling a post-colonial critique such as Andreotti’s (2006a) directly at the teachers who facilitate volunteer abroad would be unfair. Rather, this critique could be more fairly applied to the system that creates the curriculum that teachers are obligated to implement. This is not to say that spaces do not exist for teachers to make use of a post-colonial lens when teaching various subjects, but that to expect that this would be the natural order of things is unrealistic in light of our current education system.

Differences in the participant’s understanding of global citizenship can also be understood through the lens of ‘soft’ versus ‘critical’ global citizenship described by Andreotti (2006a). For example, one participant reflected a form of ‘soft’ global citizenship through his description of a global citizen as someone who does good for others:

... what's the best thing about being a global citizen – it's about doing something nice for your neighbours, doing something for others, being empathetic of what others go through everyday. And that's exactly what you're doing when you're out there, you're living that, trying to experience that and people find it very tough to go and see the poverty and then come back and watch their big screen television – that might be an example. That's what being a global citizen is all about, feeling those things, feeling that that affects you, that's all that we can ask. (P5)

In retrospect, and in the context of this analysis, it would have been interesting to ask the participant why we cannot ask students to go beyond 'feeling' that there is a difference between their lives and those of the host community members, however, the literature helps draw answers to this question in relation to some of the more mainstream ways of thinking about volunteer abroad as a personal growth experience. What also needs to be considered in this participant's response is the extent to which the comment is referencing the age, maturity or previous experiences of the student participants on the trip. While there is not sufficient literature available to draw a distinction between the application of critical global citizenship education in a post-secondary setting versus a secondary school setting, Andreotti (2006a) does acknowledge that perhaps these encounters with poverty and recognitions of inequality are an important first step in developing a young person's orientation towards issues related to social justice. Although Andreotti (2006a) argues that this first step must be followed by a second step where the experience is deconstructed through a post-colonial lens, the ability of secondary school students to absorb this type of theoretical understanding of the world was questioned by two of the participants in the study.

Evidence of 'critical' global citizenship was found in the responses of two participants, who, without prompting, discussed the concept in relation to rights and

responsibilities while claiming that it needed to be used in conjunction with an exploration of issues related to power:

I think it's an important concept, it's a concept, like development, that is bantered around, and people have heard of it but they don't quite know what it means. So I think it's important that it's dealt with, so I do use it in a framework, not on a daily basis, but we do talk about being a global citizen and what that means, but I think for me, it comes back to, as a definition, sort of what students do with the power that they have. Each year we look at the concept of power, and we come up with a definition of power... And the definition that we come up with more or less on a regular basis is the ability to influence one or more people or situations. And so then the challenge to the students is how can you exercise your power to do some good, to use it in a positive manner? And that's pretty broad, but I think it links to being a global citizen and global citizenship. What do you do that says you take responsibility in some way for what's going on in the world and look at what kind of power you have, and then what do you do with that? (P6)

As will be discussed in more detail further on, while this way of thinking about power does not fully embrace the post-colonial stance because it does not get at *why* the students have power in the first place, it is still a step in the right direction, as Andreotti (2006a) notes that the boundaries between 'soft' and 'critical' global citizenship education are in flux and must be adapted to particular sites of learning.

Finally, one participant stood out as challenging the entire concept of global citizenship, placing it, I would argue, outside of the realm of either 'soft' or 'critical':

So what I'm starting to see is that global citizenship is really a project of whiteness, its linked to mobility, and mobility is always linked to whiteness, and race is always about being pinned, and incarcerated and boxed in, in various ways metaphorically, and very real, completely. So I basically see it as an expression of privilege, the ability to travel and the ability to presume a role in other people's communities that would be ludicrous for other people to imagine here, that would never be accepted, right? (P7)

The rejection of the concept of global citizenship is especially interesting in this case, because it has led this participant to question her role as a facilitator of these programs.

The participants thought process reflects the work of Bringle and Hatcher (2011), who

argue that as learning models such as international service learning become more prevalent, the most fundamental question that should be asked by their facilitators is “what right do you have to enter this community?” (p.20). However, like the participant above, Bringle and Hatcher (2011) do not reject the possibility of a volunteer abroad program to be a site of transformational learning, yet claim that it is how differences in the privilege of the student travellers over those of the host community are “approached, embraced, analyzed or questioned [that] provides educators with opportunities to help students explore issues related to community, human rights, citizenship, values, social responsibility and social justice” (p.21). It is these sorts of questions that must be asked by facilitators of volunteer abroad if we wish to proceed in the most ethical manner possible when planning our programs.

5.3 Logistics: How Volunteer Abroad Programs are Structured

The volunteer abroad programs described by the participants fall into two categories – credit-bearing programs linked to an Ontario curriculum and those that are non-credit bearing and take place outside of the student’s and teacher’s regular academic course load. Despite this distinction, considerable variety can be found in the way trips are structured and facilitated in each category.

5.3.1 Credit-Bearing

All of the credit-bearing programs involve a minimum of three weeks spent overseas, with the longest being the thirteen-month international cooperative education program. It should be noted that according to the participant who facilitates this program, there are only a few other schools in the province that offer a similar type of volunteer

abroad program. The international co-op program is unique in the sense that students spend eight months preparing for their three month placement in a South American country. During their time abroad, students are placed in different communities, where they live with a host family and work with various local businesses or organizations. Students are under the supervision of the host organization for the first six weeks of their time in the host country, at which point the teacher-facilitator travels to meet with students, host families and work placement supervisors.

As part of the program, students complete independent and classroom-based academic work in order to achieve three grade 12 university preparation credits and three cooperative education credits. The ‘volunteer’ or ‘service’ work in this program is modeled after the regular Ontario cooperative education model where employers agree to have the student work under the guidance of an assigned workplace supervisor in order to gain work experience in a field of interest. In this international program, placements are arranged in fields related to health care, education and agriculture. It was noted by the participant who facilitates this program that students are generally given more responsibility in these placements than they would in similar placements in Canada. For example, some students are given a primary English-teaching role in schools that cannot afford a full-time English teacher, or students in health care clinics are given opportunities to perform procedures that would require significant medical training and certification in Canada. These roles are filled by the students on a short-term (three month) basis and students receive what could be described as on-the-job training which varies from placement to placement. During this program, students spend an entire semester preparing for their time abroad, continue to submit reflection assignments

electronically while in the host country, and take part in a week long excursion with their teacher mid-way through the trip where they take part in classroom-based activities. Upon their return to Canada, the program ends with a combination of classroom-based reflection activities along with independent culminating assignments. The other two credit-bearing programs discussed in the study involve classroom preparation before the trip abroad, a three week overseas experience involving a group-based volunteer project and no classroom-based activities upon return to Canada.

In terms of the credit-bearing programs, the international co-op program stands out as a model that represents elements of both study abroad and international service learning because it includes course work to be completed before, during and after the students' time abroad, while using the volunteer/work experience portion of the trip, along with host family living, as the foundation for developing an understanding of the culture and socioeconomic conditions of the host country. This program does not strictly fit Crabtree's (2008) definition of international service learning because the 'volunteer' component is not framed as either service work or community development work. However, when students are being placed in schools and given the responsibility of independently teaching English classes because there is no budget for an English teacher, it is impossible to divorce the work experience from the reality of the socioeconomic conditions of the country within which the experience is taking place. The nature of this program illuminates the challenges of trying to fit particular models of volunteer abroad programs into particular categories, however it also demonstrates that the literature on study-abroad, international service learning and volunteer tourism all raise important points of consideration that can be used to deepen our understanding of how teachers

conceptualize, design and implement various volunteer abroad programs in secondary schools.

For example, both Lewin (2009) and Zemach-Bersin's (2009) argument that study abroad's focus on the 'authentic' and 'challenging' experiences can limit the learning through a simplified focus on cross-cultural learning without consideration for greater structural causes of inequality, reflects a common way of thinking about travel in the Global South, yet does not necessarily hold when we examine the ways in which the facilitator of the international co-op program speaks about the rationale of the program over the entire course of the interview. In the following passage, it would be reasonable to apply Heron's (2005) post-colonial critique regarding the ways in which a focus on the benefits of overcoming challenges and hazards while abroad ignores the fact that locals are subject to these same risks on a daily basis, and as such, confirming Lewin's (2009) and Zemach-Bersin's (2009) arguments:

Here, [in Canada] you know here, okay, it's agh, a matter of cursing the bus for being a few minutes late, and then finding out when the next bus come and finding the exact minute when it's supposed to come by and probably pretty close to, in [name of country omitted] it's an adventure. Its okay 'where am I going? What colour is the bus? How do I know which one it is? Does it stop here or how do I stop it? Do I wave my hand? How much is it going to cost? Are they going to rip me off? You know, all these different questions – it's just a bus ride! By the time you get into the bus, you're exhausted. You've put in about eight hours worth of emotional energy just to get *on* the bus. (P6)

Furthermore, when the participant goes on to talk about the impact of overcoming this challenge in terms of student empowerment, it would also be possible to levy Tonkin's (2011) critique that the focus of these sorts of programs is on the benefits to the students:

I think you can go sweeping across a whole bunch of different realms, but I think consistently, there's a great sense of empowerment. And that comes from an 'I did it' sense of satisfaction of 'I faced a lot of challenges and I overcame them'. I

think partly because of the support the program provides and partly from that whole impetus of saying that you ‘make of this what you want’. There’s a real sense of ‘Wow! I feel good about myself, I feel good about what I did, I feel accomplished’. And that I think, when I look at human development, that upward spiral of self-confidence, self-confidence breeds self-confidence. And self-confidence breeds taking more risks and succeeding in going on from there.... (P6)

While these critiques are certainly valid, these comments must not be taken outside of the context of further comments made by this participant, where he went on to discuss how he incorporates the notion of power into his debriefing and reflection activities with the students in order for them to develop a more critical understanding of their position as Northern volunteers or travellers within the Global South:

I think there’s tremendous understanding in sensitivity to others, and part of it is respecting another culture. One of our guiding questions throughout the course, and particularly focused on in February, is, in simple terms, why do people do the things they do? But it’s culturally focused, what is the cultural basis by which someone does what they do? Each year we look at the concept of power... And the definition that we come up with more or less on a regular basis is the ability to influence one or more people or situations. And so the challenge to the students is how can *you* exercise your power to do some good, to use it in a positive manner. (P6)

While this example does speak to Tonkin’s (2011) concern that this framing of the learning that takes place while abroad can reduce the host community or host country to nothing more than a ‘classroom’ that provides a learning experience for the students, the participant’s acknowledgement that this type of learning should be combined with discussions of power and the ability to take action based on that power, speaks to Crabtree’s (2008) observation that many international service learning programs have evolved in an attempt to add a more theoretical level of understanding of the experience students have in developing countries, by encouraging them to reflect on their experiences in light of their understanding of the socioeconomic conditions of the country

as well as greater global forces that impact those conditions. In this sense, the participant addresses the calls made by Andreotti, (2006a) to engage in a more critical form of pedagogy and global citizenship education that seeks to address inequality and issues related to power as well as Davies' (2006) and Tiessen's (2008) assertion that a change in attitudes or values must be reflected through action. This also speaks to the overall purpose of experiential education, which, according to Kolb's (1994) and Meizrow's (2000) models, should end with some form of decision related to the individuals' pattern of action. I do acknowledge here that the participants' comments about power might not be at the level of challenging the underlying causes of the power inequalities to which he refers, as is advocated by post-colonial theorists such as Kapoor (2004) and Spivak (1999), or educational researchers such as O'Sullivan (2008), however, as the interviewer, I cannot interpret what the participant means by using it in a positive manner and so cannot comment on the level to which this program challenges hegemonic understandings of global relations. That being said, for this particular discussion of power to enter into the realm of critical global citizenship education and transformational learning, discussions of why the students have power in the first place would be a prerequisite to a transformation that would result in a form of action that would seek to address the sources of these global power imbalances.

While this quote could fit into the analysis of a number of the following sections in this discussion, I chose to include it early on in order to expose the intricacies of analyzing the comments of the participants in this study while trying to fit them into various themes and categories, all while applying the various analytical frameworks discussed in Chapter Four. What this quote shows is that the participants' thinking about

these programs is nuanced and balanced between the needs of their students and those of the communities, yet, as will be discussed in greater detail below, the balance between the two ebbs and flows, based on each the participant's personal, educational and professional experiences, the particular structures of their programs and the culture of their schools.

Finally, it should be noted that while the international co-op program is not a CIDA funded initiative, it does speak to Tiessen's (2008) argument that one of the key justifications for sending Canadian youth to volunteer in the developing world is based on the potential for developing employability skills. Both of the international co-op programs, which are the only two public school-board funded programs, are directly related to a cooperative education curriculum that is based on improving a student's employability skills, while being linked to courses that focus on global elements of geography, politics, economics and citizenship.

Of course, the international co-op program is the exception when it comes to the programs discussed in this study. The structure of the shorter-term credit-bearing programs fit even less easily into the models of study abroad and international service learning, and instead lend themselves more towards the voluntourism model because of their short time frames, the group-based nature of the volunteer work and the additional elements of tourist-related activities (Lyons and Wearing 2008a). However, the short times frames for these programs does reflect the trend observed by Chieffo and Griffiths (2009) for North American post-secondary study abroad programs to become increasingly short term in nature. In terms of international service learning, these

programs do not fit the model because the teachers in this study are not directly involved in the design of a community service project that will meet the specific needs of the community as well as the academic goals of the course, nor providing an extended period of critical reflection after the trip. However, we must keep in mind that, as noted by Billig and Root (2006), the application of the domestic service learning model in high school settings is extremely challenging for the teacher because it takes a considerable investment of time and energy beyond the every-day demands of being a teacher. When this experiential learning model is then extended to experiences in the Global South, the reality of a full-time secondary school teacher working in participatory-style development projects, as is advocated as a best-practice by Crabtree (2008), is unrealistic. As one participant noted, teachers are not trained development workers and hence their role in facilitating programs that are ultimately tied to community ‘development’ projects is problematic:

I mean I think that if you look at these trips as development work, it kind of highlights that most teachers are not equipped to facilitate development work. I wasn't equipped, that's a particular skill set that I think is very far off from the world of teaching, in a lot of ways, but in a lot of other ways, it's actually where teaching should be, right? Because teachers should be able to highlight things around power and relationships between Global North and Global South and how people are racialized and gendered or classed – but its just not the way our educational system is set up. We just don't have those bodies and those rules.
(P7)

This participant captures the essence of the type of program advocated for by those researchers who argue for refined models of service learning, especially those who call for the need for increased teacher training in relation to designing and facilitating service learning models (Ash and Clayton 2004) and greater emphasis on issues related to social justice and factors that impact global power relations (Crabtree, 1998; Warren 1998).

Furthermore, simply framing these trips outside the discourse of development, as will be discussed below, is also problematic, because it often leads to a mentality that claims that if we are not trying to pretend that these experiences are related to development then we do not have to think about the socioeconomic differences between the students and the host communities. If this approach is taken, I would argue that the potential to have students self-reflect on their own positionality in relation to the host community is greatly diminished. It does not mean that the project has to be labelled as ‘development work’, but to ignore the relationship of these programs to the history or context of development, as the majority of the participants seemed to do, makes it impossible to frame these trips as an opportunity to develop a more critical understanding of why volunteers in the Global North are in the position to volunteer or ‘serve’ those in the Global South and how this relationship can be seen as perpetuating inequality in the world rather than alleviating it.

5.3.2 Non-Credit-Bearing Programs

As noted earlier, the non-credit-bearing programs tend to be approximately two weeks in length and do not include extensive classroom-based learning prior to, or after departure. These trips tend to involve group meetings scheduled outside of regular school hours and while attendance is encouraged, it is not mandatory, as teachers recognize that students have a number of conflicting extracurricular obligations. It should be noted that this was expressed as a source of frustration by two teachers in particular, yet both seemed to accept that this was the nature of running extracurricular activities within their schools. This is an interesting point to consider, especially with respect to the ways in which these programs tend to emphasize the value of the

‘experience’ abroad, in and of itself, while the preparation and reflection activities receive less attention.

In terms of naming the programs, four of the participants used the term ‘service learning’ and one used the term ‘service leadership’, however in each of these cases, the programs they were describing did not fit with definitions of international service learning. While there were elements of preparation and reflection in each of these programs, only one of the programs was embedded within a course, yet even in that case, the follow-up component was minimal and not all of the students on the trip were taking the course. In order to fit the model more closely, all of the students on the trip would have to be taking the same course and the purpose of the volunteer or service work would have to be to deepen their understanding of how theoretical understandings of social reality mesh with their personal experiences. The trend towards applying the term ‘service learning’ to volunteer abroad programs that do not have theoretical underpinnings, structured reflective components or reciprocal relations with host communities is noted by Lyons and Wearing (2008a) and is reflected in the following participant’s comment regarding how the term evolved out of its original application to a local volunteer project:

Service learning, as a term, has now grown out of that, it’s something that you’re hearing more and more, I’m sure you have, but back then, it wasn’t so much, it was just that we were looking to sort of give kids a really authentic experience that would hopefully impact them in pretty strong way, and because we all know that there’s value in that. We had always been tied to the [local camp name omitted] so there was that local piece. (P9)

While this participant’s programs do include preparatory activities that familiarize the students with the places they will be visiting, the emphasis remains on the value of the ‘experience’ rather than the type of learning that may arise from reflecting on the

experience in relation to what has been learned in the classroom and hence is more closely aligned with a volunteer tourism model than a service learning model. However, the fact that these programs are being facilitated by teachers and run through secondary schools again complicates attempts to fit them into specific categories, as all of the participants showed evidence of conceptualizing these programs as a site of experiential learning that could have profound positive impacts on the personal development and growth of their students.

5.3.3 Choosing Student Participants

Students are generally chosen to participate in the programs through some form of application process. Five out of the ten participants noted that they were looking for students who were going for the ‘right reasons’ (P9), which they tended to identify through a list of factors such as having a desire to make a difference, wanting to participate in a team and wanting to have a learning experience. The emphasis on these three factors demonstrates the extent to which the most common motivations associated with volunteering abroad (Anheier and Salomon, 1999; Rehberg, 2005; Hudson and Inkson, 2006) are emphasized by teachers as being the ‘right’ reasons. The participants seemed to value these motives specifically over students who simply wanted to ‘have a good time’ (P3) or ‘pad their resumes’ (P4). This finding that teachers set the agenda for what motivational factors are deemed more valid than others reinforces Pike and Selby’s (2009) argument that we must consider and reflect on the backgrounds, values and roles of those who are in charge of facilitating volunteer abroad programs as they are responsible for making critical decisions that shape the participants’ experiences, and in this case, decide who is allowed to participate and for what reasons. However, decisions

about who should or should not be allowed to go were not taken lightly, as one of the participants expressed concern over how to discern which students were applying for the reasons she and her colleagues deemed more valid than others, noting that in the end, it was their personal judgement of the student's motives that would be used to decide if they participated in the trip or not:

...but it's almost getting to the point where it's so big that if you haven't done it, it's like, where's your community service? So the meaning is starting to get lost, and you don't want that happening, and if there was some way of preventing that from happening I think that would be important, because we definitely had kids that were applying just because it looks good to have it on their resume. So that's always tough, you just have to bank on the fact that you make the right judgement. (P4)

This was especially prevalent amongst the independent school teachers, who noted that a service learning or volunteer abroad trip is becoming an expected experience for students to have on their resume when filling out post-secondary school applications and scholarships. These responses resonate with Simpson's (2005) argument that British youth see value in these trips beyond the altruistic or personal growth elements, as experience with some form of volunteer abroad is becoming increasingly incorporated into formal education systems along with various employment structures and institutions (p.448). The participant's comments demonstrate that Canadian teachers are also witnessing this phenomenon and that it complicates their role in choosing participants for their programs.

5.3.4 Tourist Related Activities

Although all of the participants described the trip portion of the program as centring on the volunteer work, all of the programs incorporate some element of tourism activity as a means of exploring the surrounding area and providing some 'down time' for

students, including such things as excursions to an urban centre, days at the beach, visiting nature reserves or historical/educational sites. The addition of tourist-related elements, and the rationale for their inclusion, also complicates the potential of these trips to reflect truly reciprocal relations with the host communities, as participation in the tourist activities was discussed as an activity that students and teachers took part in outside of the host community. It is this combination of volunteer work and mass tourism activities (regardless of their educational value) that raises concerns amongst the critics of some forms of study abroad (Epprecht, 2004; Chieffo and Griffiths, 2009) and voluntourism (Simpson, 2004; Gray and Campbell, 2007; Mowforth and Munt, 2009). For example, Epprecht (2004, p.717) captures the potential for seemingly benevolent tourist activities to pose an ethical concern:

No one expects work–study to be monastic and, indeed, a good case can be made that sightseeing and fun are necessary to the successful work–study experience. By its nature, however, tourism is not only highly wasteful of resources financially and environmentally but it also obscures power dynamics and shelters tourists from unhappy or unpleasant realities.

As such, if the privilege of students to take part in activities that are cost-prohibitive to the communities within which they are interacting goes unexplored or unquestioned, the potential for a truly transformational learning experience that might deepen students' understanding of their own privilege in relation to that of the host community is then lost. One participant expressed her concern over the tourist activities as follows:

I think it's more very typical tourist stuff, from what I've seen, because it's then, the idea that kids need time off, and need time to rest. But also, that stuff isn't really debunked either, in terms of what it means to be a tourist, and the gaze of a tourist, and that's a part of it, too, that doesn't get taken up... I was so disturbed to see the treatment of the elephants on the fun tourist day... I was actually pissed off that the other leaders, because they thought it was totally fine, and I went back to the school basically and said that I didn't think this was appropriate to support, for one thing, and they just thought I was being a pain in the ass, right? So there

were things like that that did affect my relationship with other teachers on the trip too. (P7)

These comments speak to a host of issues that emerge from a specific concern over the treatment of animals at one of the pre-planned tourist activities during the trip, the first being that of what it means to be a tourist in the Global South. For example, without discussions that explore the tourist gaze with respect to how tourism has the potential to exoticize the ‘other’ and emphasize binary differences between the Global North and Global South (Roman, 2003; Guttentag, 2008;), there is limited evidence of an engagement in a critical form of global citizenship education that seeks to deconstruct power relations between the First and Third World, as advocated for by authors such as Andreotti (2006a, 2007) and Roman (2003). Furthermore, the participant’s perception of how she was received by her colleagues as a nuisance for raising these issues speaks to the arguments made by McQuaid (2009) and Kahn (2011) in relation to the need for the teaching profession as a whole to be engaged in a form of self-reflective learning that questions relationships of power and knowledge construction. I would argue that this participant exhibits elements of the type of professionally related critical reflection advocated for in the literature on critical pedagogy (Brookfield, 1995; Tonkin, 2009), while her representation of her colleagues as individuals who were unwilling to engage in that same type of reflection is representative of Brookfield’s (1995) and Day’s (1999) claims that teachers have misunderstandings regarding teaching practice that often stem from taken-for-granted assumptions or beliefs about the world and are rarely challenged due to time constraints and the lack of space created for in-depth inquiry or reflection on these assumptions. Finally, the frustration expressed by this participant when trying to

engage with her colleagues is evidence of Brookfield's (2000) claim that structural and relational barriers exist that make it difficult for teachers to challenge the status quo.

Of course, the issues related to the inclusion of tourism in these types of experiences are not black and white and even when discussions of power are included in reflective exercises around tourism, the extent to which they challenge global power dynamics remains in question. For example, the following participant reflects on a discussion he had with his students about power in relation to the leakage of tourist dollars out of the host country and the differences between spending money on 'mass tourism' versus 'local tourism':

So I think you look at something like that with students, and they get a better understanding of 'oh, okay, if I have power, and I can choose where I spend my tourism dollars, cause I'm going to spend tourism dollars, I'm going to travel again, whether its with my family or by myself as a backpacker or whatever, how can I use that power? I think a lot of people don't understand that they have power in the first place – the shirt you wear, where does it come from? The chocolate you buy, is it child labour chocolate or is it fair trade chocolate? What does that mean? (P2)

In this case, the reality of students or individuals from the Global North continuing to travel to the Global South is acknowledged, and the participant addresses the concept of power, as advocated for in the literature on global citizenship education, yet from a stance that is more directly related to individual consumption patterns, rather than as a challenge to global power dynamics and hegemonic knowledge construction. As such, the notion that students hold power is not questioned or deconstructed (based on the participant's explanation – I cannot to speak to whether this is addressed at a later time in the course of the program), and it is what they do with that power that is challenged, rather than why they have that power in the first place. When this quote is considered in the context of

this particular participant's belief that the secondary school system is not structured in a manner that fosters theoretical learning, it becomes clear that there are limits, be they self imposed or structurally imposed, to the extent to which a deeply critical or theoretical understanding of global relations can be used to deconstruct power dynamics. This speaks to Andreotti's (2006b) observation that global/development education tends to focus on practice at the expense of theory and as such, fails to engage in the type of postcolonial critique that would challenge ahistorical understandings of the world.

5.3.5 Fundraising and Providing Donations

The findings of the study showed that students take part in two types of fundraising in advance of going on the trip – the first involves raising funds to off-set the cost of the trip, which applied to all of the programs discussed in the interviews, while the second related to the accumulation of community-requested resources that students bring and distribute to the host community. Four out of the five independent school teachers mentioned that bringing resources with them was part of the program, however only one of the public school teachers mentioned doing this. The other four public school teachers did not participate in this type of fundraising with their students, as the focus for all four of these teachers was more centred on the cross-cultural exchange and community project. Three of the participants noted that they tried to bring resources that were specifically requested by the community, two of whom emphasized the desire for technology-related supplies such as computers. There were two ways in which the donating of resources to the host community was framed by the participants, the first emphasizing it as a charitable act that teaches students about the differences in access to material goods, as reflected in the passage below:

We brought down a bunch of donations – we bring down ten computers, they’ve never had that before – we go to that facility, they help us paint it – they get the computers all set up, we give them all of our donations that the kids gave and then they have basically a barbeque/party for us – and the learning that happens there – there’s nothing like that – the emotion of opening up a hockey bag full of soccer balls for a group of kids that play with a rubber tape ball, and seeing their faces, and watching our guys – there’s nothing like that. (P5)

This participant’s comments are reflective of what Heron (2007) describes as the ‘helping imperative’, as she argues that motivations to volunteer in the developing world that are based on altruism are actually contingent on the ‘other’ being available to be changed or improved by Northern subjects who perceive their desire to redress social injustice on a global scale through the lens of a common humanity. Heron (2007) claims that this form of helping or giving can be understood as a continuation of colonial or imperialist thinking because it positions the Global South as a place for Northerners to develop an identity as altruistic heroes rather than considering the ways in which their Northern lifestyles contribute to the conditions which they attempt to redress through these acts of giving. Simpson (2004) argues that it is this way of thinking that contributes to a ‘geography of need’ (p.686) which creates an image of the Global South as a series of communities whose needs are best met by short term volunteer projects carried out by unskilled youth.

While these authors raise a number of very important points that must be considered in relation to volunteer abroad programming, especially in terms of its relationship with global citizenship education, to levy these types of critiques against one individual is unfair. I make this argument because it is evident from the vast array of literature on global citizenship education that empathy and altruism are seen as integral components of this emerging form of education and although not all teachers may be

using this concept directly in their programs, the ways of thinking of First and Third World relations are heavily influenced by the rhetoric that seems to be emerging from different spheres, including the Canadian government. Furthermore, the recent work of Golmohamad (2009) and Cabrera (2010) emphasizes a form of global citizenship education that is rooted in empathy and altruism, both of which the authors argue should be developed through experiential learning opportunities that facilitate contact or engagement with others. These competing ways of understanding the desire to help or aid others exposes the complexities involved when trying to understand the ways in which global citizenship rhetoric shapes the way teachers implement and facilitate volunteer abroad programs, as their understanding of global relations and structures will shape the way they conceptualize the volunteer abroad experience in general.

That being said, even when teachers try to address Andreotti's (2006a) concerns regarding how educational processes can be designed to move learners away from this type of helping imperative, we see that there are still challenges/obstacles that are difficult to resolve. The second way of viewing fundraising and donations was captured by one participant who noted that it complicated her school's desire to be seen as a 'partner' to the host organization:

We want to get away from the gifting or charity perspective, but at the same time, if they have the resources and can provide something that the community could really use, so we don't really have a hard and fast rule about that, but it's something that I'm always kind of in flux about because as much as we are very much about partnership and relationships, there is still often a socioeconomic difference between who is going on the trip and the community. (P8)

These comments illustrate the arguments made by Kapoor (2004) and Baaz (2005) that changing the name of the relationship between sending organizations (in this case the

school) and host organizations to that of ‘partnership’ is not sufficient for truly changing the power dynamics between those who provide aid and those who receive it. While this participant noted that the trips she facilitates are referred to as ‘excursions’, and that they do not frame the work component as ‘service’ or ‘volunteer’ work, I would argue that Kapoor and Baaz’s arguments still apply, as we can see that the participant does acknowledge the socioeconomic differences between the students and the host community, and as such, it is ultimately impossible to separate these experiences from the overall context of development studies and the reality that these trips involve privileged students from the Global North visiting and working with less privileged individuals in the Global South¹. That being said, this participant did provide examples of projects that were designed in collaboration with the host organization, which were more representative of the type of mutually beneficial participatory development model advocated for by Crabtree (2008).

5.3.6 Working with Sending and Host Organizations

In terms of working with sending and host organizations, there appears to be a distinct difference between the public and independent school systems. All of the public system programs were run through a board-approved sending organization who then partnered with an organization in the host community. Conversely, all of the participants working in the independent system described direct relationships with small-scale organizations within various host countries.

¹ It should be noted here that this participant provided a list of six countries in which her school was facilitating ‘excursions’ that included a community project and all but one was located in the Global South.

Some of this difference can be accounted for by the more formalized proposal process that must be followed in the public system, where teachers must be able to show links to Ontario curriculum (even if the trip is non-credit-bearing) and set out clear rationale and educational value associated with the trip. Furthermore, the process of approving a carrier-organization is generally more formalized in the public system and as a result, larger-scale carriers are generally preapproved to run international excursions thereby limiting teachers' choices when planning a volunteer abroad program. However, time and energy is still invested in choosing a carrier, as one of the public school participants described his decision-making process:

P2: What we did basically was set up a little matrix and gave different values and weights to what we thought was important. So with a high school trip, safety was number one. That just had to be very heavily weighted... And number two was flexibility... you can switch locations for safety reasons and stuff like that. Number three, maybe number three on our list, but number one on the board list, was board approval. There's a layer of bureaucracy where they have their own criteria, which I think has a lot to do with money and insurance... And then we were looking for – I think the term we used was 'authentic experience' – so, its sort of a relative term, where there's a lot of judgement involved in that. But after interviewing and going down and meeting with some of the travel agencies, we were getting a feeling of what the students were going to do, what they were told they were going to do and accomplish, and then our feelings on what was most beneficial. So, there was an organization that was maybe going to Africa where they were going to build a school, or a hospital. There was physical construction involved. So the presentation was, they were really going to change the lives of the people in this village. While they're there, they can feel – they can actually see the progress of walls going up, a roof going on, so there was a real sense of accomplishment –

Q: For the students?

P2: For the students – yeah, that's really important. And it's a sales pitch, for all the travel carriers there's a financial bottom line.

Q: Like even if they're an NGO?

P2: Yeah, like it has to make sense. An NGO's not going to be sending kids and footing the bill, so they need to get customers, or volunteers, or whatever the term

is, so if they go to Africa and they have this great experience – the travellers, the students from [name of school board omitted]. So they build this school and they put up four walls, and windows and maybe screens and a cement foundation and a roof. We had a lot of trouble, there was a real disconnect, or we had trouble finding out, who is staffing this school, what kind of facilities, who's going to be paying the utilities?... So, it's almost like you were being sold an aid trip, when we were looking for a volunteer trip. We didn't want to sell to the students here an aid package, where we're going to change a community. With a little bit of research, we could not justify that, we could not find the evidence or data that would back that up. [Name of NGO omitted] on the surface would have more smaller impact, cleaning up reserve areas, working on soccer fields, painting – those are all jobs that would get done anyway, but hopefully the host community's receptive, and (hesitates) happy I guess to have students come in and volunteer their time. I think it's also made very clear, I hope it's made very clear to the community, that students and the staff from [name of school board omitted] are not coming in to make their life better, or (laughs) – there's no revolution, there's no – that kind of stuff.

I include a passage of this length once again to demonstrate the nuances involved in some of the participants' thinking around the nature of the programs they facilitate and to emphasize the important role that their understandings of development, aid, sustainability and host community impacts play in shaping the decision making process. This participant's discussion of the structural elements related to board policies that constrict his choice of sending organizations speaks to Bottery's (2006) call for educators to engage in professional self-reflection in an attempt to be more aware of the institutional factors that impact their practices. In fact, this participant is not only aware of institutional factors at the school board level, but demonstrates evidence of reflection on the entire aid industry and its use of volunteers. This teacher's use of a 'matrix' to determine the pros and cons of various organizations demonstrates a high degree of planning and foresight and illustrates the extent to which his values and priorities will shape the overall experience being offered to students. Although this participant's program takes on many of the features of volunteer tourism, his explanation of the

decision making process reflects a high degree of critical thinking around how volunteers are used in the developing world, as well as the complexity and implications of using a term such as an 'authentic experience'. While the critics of study abroad such as Zemach-Bersin (2009) equate the concept of an 'authentic' experience with that of an 'exotic' experience and critique this from a post-colonial perspective that serves to 'other' the host community, I would argue that this participant uses the term in relation to the service work, whereby the work is understood to be more authentic if it is actual work the community needs done and would do regardless of whether the students were there or not. Finally, the desire to have it made clear to the community that the students are not coming in to 'make life better' speaks to the bigger issues discussed by Heron (2007) in terms of the helping imperative and how Global North volunteers are positioned in relation to the members of host communities in the Global South. To make it 'clear' to the community that saving or changing them is not the volunteer's intent would be to imply that the community may be in need of help or changing by others. I do not level this form of analysis directly at the participant, because I would argue that he is referring to a more general perception of how volunteer abroad programs are often framed, but I do feel it is important to be aware of the ways in which good intentions, when expressed using certain forms of language, continue to reinforce a particular type of oppressive understanding of global relations, even when this may be the opposite of what we are trying to convey.

When looking for both sending and host-country organizations to partner with, six of the participants from both the independent and public systems noted that safety and liability were a primary consideration for both themselves as teachers as well as for the

schools and school boards. Heron (2005, p.790) applies a post-colonial critique to this institutionally embedded focus on potential risks associated with travel to the developing world, by arguing the “notion of risk to Canadian students implicitly references old colonial tropes” such as the fear of contagion, and can diminish the potential for students to develop a sense of injustice in regards to the reality that the locals they encounter during their time abroad are equally vulnerable to these risks. Again, we can see how the post-colonial lens helps illuminate some of the potential ethical issues that arise from generally unquestioned policies and procedures that emerge from within the structures or institutions within which teachers work. The fact that only one participant expressed concern over the emphasis in preparatory sessions related to this topic demonstrates that these types of more theoretically based ethical issues tend to fly under the radar of the average teacher facilitator of volunteer programs in Ontario.

The advantages of using a sending organization were cited as offering assistance with the logistics of planning the trip, being able to offer alternative locations if an unexpected crisis or situation arose in the original destination, and providing the confidence for teachers that the organization was working in close contact with the host communities. Although the independent schools are unique in their use of direct school-to-host organization arrangements, considerable differences were evident in how the workload for planning these trips is distributed. As mentioned earlier, one of the independent schools has a specific position designed for facilitating these partnerships and has a budget set aside for sending staff members to various countries in order to complete site-assessments, establish contacts and plan the community project and tourism-related excursions. On the other hand, some independent schools treat the trips

in a similar fashion to the non-credit-bearing trips in the public school system, where they are considered an extra-curricular activity for which teachers are not compensated. This is worth noting because without the use of a third-party sending organization, the workload for the teacher facilitator is increased.

5.3.7 Time Frames and Locations for Volunteer Abroad Programs

When asked if they thought the time frame for the various trips they had facilitated was suitable, most teachers considered two weeks to be the minimum amount of time needed for an overseas experience. In general, the time frames went unquestioned because of the need to fit them into holiday periods such as spring, winter and summer breaks, however one participant noted that she did not feel a change in the time frame would address some of the concerns she had with the programs run at her school, which tended to focus on the lack of critical analysis of global inequality or power relations:

Would I suggest that it's longer? I don't know that a greater amount of time would really speak to any of the things that we've talked about today, you know?
(P7)

Most of the participants were quite comfortable with the time frames of their trips, citing two main reasons: the first being that short time frames make the trips more accessible to students who have other extra curricular commitments; and the second being that after two to three weeks abroad, students might come down off the 'high' of travelling and being in a new place. For example, one participant acknowledged that two or three weeks away might seem like a short time frame for travelling to places so far away and so culturally different, yet felt confident in her assessment that two weeks was the most appropriate time frame for her students:

It doesn't sound like a long time, but it is when you're getting up at the crack of dawn and for the students it's tiring, you know they get tired too, as human beings you can only process so much information. So it's not just a long work day that you're faced with, you're faced with different food, you're away from home, you can't call home, you can't use email, you can't understand the language half the time, so all that thought process is difficult... I think two to three weeks is ideal but I think anything longer than that, you get burnt out, and the meaning kind of starts to, you just get so consumed. I mean even for an adult, I think we were in Africa for just under a month and you think, why would you go to Africa for four weeks? And why would you send a student to Kenya for three weeks? But I get it, too long is not good. (P4)

The participant's reference to a loss of meaning as a result of an extended time frame counters much of the research over the growing trend towards short-term volunteer and study abroad programs, claiming that longer periods are needed for language acquisition, relationship-building, cultural adaptation and intercultural learning (Epprecht, 2004; Heron, 2005; Unstead-Joss, 2008; Chieffo and Griffiths, 2009), yet speaks to the findings of researchers such as Haloburdo and Thompson (1998) who argue that more important than the time frame is the specific design of preparation activities and intensity of the learning while abroad. However, as will be discussed in more depth below, the fact that most of the two/three week trips described by the participants did not include extended preparation activities related to the socioeconomic conditions or history of the country, nor included highly structured reflection activities while abroad or upon return, makes concerns about the time frame of the trip seem less relevant than the pedagogical aspects associated with the trips in general. This is one area where the gaps in the literature are important to recognize, as travel in the developing world could be understood to have different impacts on individuals based on their age or maturity, and we must keep in mind that the participants are discussing the impacts of these programs on adolescent youth, many of whom will be travelling without their parents or guardians for the first time.

5.5.8 Further concerns that arise from the limited time frame

The one to three week time frame in which all of these programs, with the exception of the international co-op program, take place lends itself to group-based travel and volunteer work and limits the opportunity for students to master the local language and hence communicate on a deeper level with those in the host community. Not only is not having a mastery of the local language prohibitive in terms of developing a deeper form of cultural understanding (Caron and Tousignant, 1999), it can also create situations of miscommunication that may be difficult for the teacher facilitator to resolve:

There were some challenges – some of the students didn't know Spanish very well and had a hard time communicating with their host mothers – you know I had to go in and talk to them – and kind of smooth things over – there was a bit of a miscommunication and one mother got upset. (P3)

When asked how the issue was resolved in light of the fact that the teacher had limited knowledge of the local language herself, the participant explained:

The guide helped a lot, she explained her concern to him first, and then he came and talked to me, and then I talked to the kids, and then we went with the kids to talk to the mother – so there was a combination of everyone communicating. (P3)

While this situation seems to have resolved itself in a reasonable manner, the potential for cross-cultural misunderstanding exists and raises concerns over the practicality of having teachers who do not speak the local language acting as the primary facilitators of these types of programs. In this sense, the concerns raised by Grusky (2000) that programs run through educational institutions are likely to have facilitators who are not overly familiar with the local language and culture can be applied to the secondary school context as well. It is also interesting to note that while all of the participants alluded to having a host country counterpart, this is one of only four passages in all of the interviews where

specific mention of the counterpart is discussed in relation to working through any kind of dilemma or facilitation of learning while abroad.

Group-based travel was also associated with a number of the participants' descriptions of varying degrees of isolation from the community, in some cases because of work projects that did not involve students working side by side with community members and in others because of segregated group-style accommodation. Only one participant expressed the type of critical concern expressed by Kauffmann, Martin, and Weaver (1992) and Sherraden, Lough and McBride (2008) both of whom warn that the group may become an inhibiting factor when it comes to interaction with the host community. When asked about the degree of interaction between the students and the host community the first participant described the experience as follows:

So we'd be working with [name of cultural group omitted] on the work site and then living with [name of cultural group omitted] families in their homes and there would be basically, the group would eat alone. It's really funny, I love thinking about this in terms of geography, it was like a tent, with a Canadian flag on it, and an [name of independent secondary school omitted], flag on it and table, and we'd eat there... so there was a weird kind of invisible barrier around this space, that people may or may not be invited into so. (P7)

What this puts into question then is the degree to which teacher-facilitators desire interaction with the host community and their reasons for or against. Those teachers facilitating programs that involve host family living emphasized the cross-cultural elements of the program and did not express the concern raised by Kauffman, Martin and Weaver (1992) or Sherraden, Lough and McBride (2008) with respect to the students using the group as a retreat from their host families.

But the decision of whether or not to stay with host families is not solely based on a desire for increased intercultural interaction, but rather on a range of practical, theoretical and personal factors. For example, one participant described concerns over the sustainability and impact of using host families:

Like in India we stayed with host families the first time and they had to buy all plates and bedding and all these things, hoping that this would become an annual event – and is that fair to them? (P5)

Again we can see it is not a simple case of one model being better than another, or one learning goal being more important than another. Teachers make decisions regarding the structure of their volunteer abroad programs based on the country they are visiting, the sending and host organizations with which they are working, all while being influenced by their previous experiences and personal preferences:

I personally love the host family experience, probably because my first trip was in a host family, and because I felt, in some ways, that my only major take-away was the relationship that I built and to actually spend quality time with local citizens and to learn about their lives and share mine with them. So, I tend towards a billeting situation, but it's not the case on all of our trips, it varies depending on who we have our connections with. (P8)

In terms of where in the developing world these trips are taking place, the participants indicated that they had conducted programs in: India, Thailand, Tibet, China, Kenya, Martinique, Ghana, Tanzania, Ethiopia, South Africa, Dominican Republic, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Peru, and Ecuador. Based on this list, there does not seem to be a greater representation of programs in one continent over another, while the length of the trip, time zones, language, sending organization suggestions, perceived safety of the country, personal contacts and personal preferences all play a role in determining the choice of location. The notion of providing a challenging experience for the students that would expose them to not only cultural differences, but socioeconomic differences was

specifically noted by one of the participants who has run a number of programs in Costa Rica:

But the reason we chose Costa Rica versus - I mean I really wanted to go to Honduras, or Nicaragua or somewhere I felt was less vacationy, less developed, less perceived as 'rich', you know, I wanted them to have - not to develop stereotypes obviously - but I thought it would be more impactful for them - but we did kind of informal surveys of different parents, and different communities in schools, and parents seem to want Costa Rica, because their perception of the safety, and they just knew more about it. Whereas part of the impetus of this program is that we want to get kids interested younger in this type of programming, to potentially go on to our [longer term program] or other programs, so we decided to go with the perceived safer program that parents will allow their kids to be part of, so that once they're kind of hooked, then we can send them on the more difficult of our programs. (P1)

Based on these comments, we find evidence of the ways in which teachers must balance the interests of forces they cannot control, such as the parental perceptions of safety, with their own understandings of the purpose or rationale of these programs in the first place. Furthermore, there is evidence of the contradictions that exist not only in combining volunteer activities with tourism, but adding a learning component that is essentially defined by the teacher. This participant wants to create a distinction between the perceptions of this trip as an impactful learning experience versus a vacation, yet hesitates to overtly say that a country with lower standards of living or socioeconomic development would provide a more impactful experience. Further complications arise in the overall rationale of the program when she notes that the short-term program she runs in Costa Rica is designed to 'hook' students into wanting to participate in longer term programs run by the same school board. Competing rationales and competing perceptions of the countries being visited must be negotiated by the teacher, reinforcing Chieffo and Griffith's (2009) argument that the individuals making the decisions regarding volunteer abroad programming is of critical importance.

Furthermore, the participant shows evidence of self reflection on the decisions she makes, and the greater theoretical implications of her rationalizing that a country perceived as 'poor' might be evidence of her stereotyping different countries in Central America, yet emphasizes throughout the interview that she wants her students to become 'enraged by social injustice' (P1), as outlined in the OXFAM definition of global citizenship, in the hopes that they will become more engaged and global active citizens in the future. In this case, the participants' experiences in Costa Rica have not, according to her perceptions, pushed the students to this level of 'enragement' This is an interesting conundrum, as studies related to social change theory conducted by McGehee (2002) and McGehee and Santos (2005), along with the educational research conducted by Golmohamad (2009) and Cabrera (2010) all emphasize the need to have a tangible experience with the 'other' in order to understand the difference encountered, and to therefore be moved to work towards a more socially just world. This concept is echoed in this participant's comments, yet researchers such as Simpson (2004) would argue that the type of contact that emerges in a volunteer tourism model simply represents a form of poverty tourism, where the desire to observe and interact with impoverished places actually reproduces a sense of distance and separation as poverty becomes the means by which the students differentiate themselves from the host communities. However, the findings of a study conducted by Raymond and Hall (2008) showed that while Simpson (2004) raises many relevant arguments, when individuals are directly immersed in the community through host family living arrangements, even on very short term trips, there is the potential for long lasting friendships between volunteers and host community members and that with structured reflection activities, trivialization of the poverty being

observed can be avoided. The participant discussed above did express the desire to incorporate more reflective activities into her programs, as she felt this was the key to moving students away from a helping imperative and into a deeper form of intercultural learning that would account for the history, politics and socioeconomic conditions of the region, which ultimately reflects the recommendations made by Pusch and Merrill (2008), however she felt constrained by structural barriers related to the time frames allotted for these sorts of programs.

The independent schools that are not using sending organizations appear to make contacts with host organizations through alumni connections, personal connections established by teachers during their summer travels, or internet searches for unique opportunities or new places. Four of the participants claimed that they preferred to return to the same destinations in order to establish relationships with the host community and host organizations, while two claimed that it was reassuring for parents to be sending their children to places familiar to the teacher facilitators and allowed the teachers to facilitate a deeper form of learning when they became more familiar with a particular place. This type of rationalizing in regards to location choice aligns with the recommendations made by Crabtree (2008), who concludes that over her extensive period of time implementing international service learning programs in Nicaragua, she has come to see relationship building as the centre of the type of learning that will create mutual understanding amongst the students and host communities, leading towards what she describes as “shared aspirations for social justice” (p.30).

One participant in particular noted that although she had a personal desire to see new places, she recognized that extra time commitment it required to change locations and how this led to a more haphazard approach to the teaching and reflection elements during preparation and while abroad. She also noted how this might be overcome by returning to ‘similar’ locations:

Personally, I would like to go to somewhere different, just to go somewhere different, but I’d like to go somewhere similar so that I could actually pick things out that I can get the students to notice and have richer discussions with them as opposed to the first time going, where I felt like I was flying by the seat of my pants a few times because it wasn’t as planned – and as a teacher, this is on top of your normal workload, cause I had to find the time to pack, get ready, get all the kids ready, by the time I finally go there, the last thing I had on my mind was the educational component. Yeah, like I just didn’t have time. (P3)

This quote speaks to the added complexity of teachers giving up their personal vacation time to facilitate these experiences. As this study shows, teachers come to be involved in these programs based on their personal desire to travel and explore the world, so when these trips become an uncompensated, additional workload, the balance between providing students with what teachers conceptualize as a valuable experience, with their own desire to travel becomes tricky to negotiate, however it is clear that many of the participants are conscious of this and make concessions to their personal desires in light of what they believe is in the best interest of their students. For example, another participant expressed the ways in which her own perceptions of a particular place complicated the choice of location for the trip:

I mean even though it’s beautiful and the people are beautiful, but I mean, it’s not challenging enough for me... But then again, we’re looking at it through adult’s eyes, and a lot of travelling. And that’s why I’m always shocked because I still think; because the [longer term] program is so challenging and so enriching and I just kind of think how can you be a changed person? Like when they tell me that I almost still don’t believe them – but then they all email me and tell me ‘oh, that changed my life’ – ‘Really’? (P1)

Again, we see evidence of self-reflection through an acknowledgment that her perception of the experience, as a facilitator, is different from that of her students and that decisions regarding the location of the programs must take this into account.

5.4 How Teachers Use Concepts of Development and Social Justice to Frame the Volunteer Abroad Experience

When participants were asked if they used the concept of ‘development’ to frame the volunteer abroad experience or the specific projects they take part in while overseas, all of the participants said no. Although all of the participants framed the work as central to the focus of the trip, they described it in terms of ‘service work’ or a ‘volunteer’ or ‘community’ project. The general avoidance of the use of the term development is reflective of Simpson’s (2004) findings that the volunteer tourism industry in Britain avoids the language of development in favour of phrases such as ‘making a difference’ or ‘doing something worthwhile with your time’ and is reflected in the following participant’s response:

So it’s hard to describe development, I think you have to live it and there’s nothing better than experiential education to make that happen right? So the wording of it, it’s tough, it’s not easy – so we like to use service leadership as our key word – so you’re going to do something – what’s the classic – what’s a hero for example – someone that does something good for someone else, who doesn’t look for anything in return – so that’s the kind of wording we use – you’re going to do something good for someone else without looking for a reward and you’re going to be surprised at what that actual reward is after the experience – that’s kind of how we talk about it. (P5)

Simpson (2004) argues that this way of talking about the experience creates a “distinct brand of development discourse” that frames development as something that can be ‘done’ by “non-skilled, but enthusiastic, volunteer-tourists” who are outsiders to the

community and as such, “can then be seen as ‘modelling’ a way of living, a lifestyle of cultural and material values” (p.685). Once again, I argue that to levy this type of postcolonial critique at one or more participants is unfair, as Simpson herself acknowledges that this way of conceptualizing the volunteer tourist experience is embodied by the industry as a whole. Furthermore, the notion that the main goal of community service is to provide students with a learning opportunity is embedded in the language around Ontario’s mandatory community involvement hours for secondary school students: “The requirement will benefit communities, but its primary purpose is to contribute to students’ development” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 1999, p.9)^{xxii}. This type of language is reflective of critiques raised in the service learning literature regarding the privileging of the student experience over that of the host community, as well as the taken-for-granted notion that any type of service is beneficial to the community (Holdsworth and Quinn, 2011). As such, this phenomenon is further evidence that to levy a postcolonial critique on individual teachers is too harsh, as the system within which they are embedded reinforces this conceptualization of service.

There was evidence found amongst four of the participants’ responses that reflected understandings of the complexity of development related issues, especially in terms of how development theory fits into wider understandings of relations between the Global North and Global South and global distributions of wealth. While one participant got around these issues by framing the trips as ‘excursions’ rather than ‘volunteer’ or ‘service’ work, as was discussed earlier, two other participants identified specific challenges with the use of development theory to structure the learning activities they facilitated as part of their volunteer abroad programs. Both of these participants framed

development issues in relation to inequality rather than the more mainstream way of conceptualizing development in terms of poverty, which is reflective of the calls made by Roman (2003), Andreotti (2006a) and O'Sullivan (2008) for more critical forms of global citizenship education. However, the participants provided two different reasons for shying away from framing their volunteer abroad programs within the context of development studies. The first participant alludes to structural elements of Ontario's secondary school system that inhibit the type of analytical thinking that would accompany a more critical or postcolonial analysis of the relationship between volunteers and their host communities:

So I think part of running these programs is finding the practical stuff through the experience of what works, you can't just talk about theory of development, it doesn't mean anything to the students, what do they see at their base level, in their [host] community? What does it mean when a shoeshine boy is not going to school – he's shining shoes instead, or he does night school so he can shine shoes during the day? How does that relate to *concepts* of development? (P6)

The comments made by the second participant demonstrate the complexities associated with the expectation for teachers to act as agents of social change or challengers of hegemonic assumptions (O'Sullivan, 2008). This participant demonstrates a critical understanding of development theory and acknowledges the arguments made by post-colonial theorists that to talk about development is to acknowledge that some countries or individuals become rich at the expense of others (Andreotti, 2007; Heron 2007; Spivak, 1990). This is not a concept found in the Ontario curriculum, likely because it is one that challenges hegemonic understandings of the world and relationships between the Global North and Global South. This reality is reflected by the way that the participant hesitates

in his explanation of why his personal conceptualization of global relations is not one that he uses in his teaching practice:

...development is a progressive term, so that means you're moving out of something and into something, so that being possible, you'd have to agree that there are some richer countries out there that are under developing – there's only so much pie on that plate – so by definition for someone to become less poor, someone has to become less rich.... And I don't see that happening, like any kind of system in the world to do that – well I do, but – okay, let's stay off that topic for now, but I don't – so just by choosing the term development, it would be very difficult to work around that with students. I'm not saying it can't be done; I'd probably enjoy doing that. (P2)

His comments seem to frame the notion that the potential for a world system that results in more equal distribution of wealth is a radical one, and that although he may believe this is possible, it is not a concept he could tackle with his students. In retrospect, it would have been useful to probe this participant further with respect to why he chose not to incorporate alternative ways of conceptualizing relations between the Global North and Global South into his program, as he raises the possibility of this a second time when attempts to explain why his program opted to use the language of social justice rather than development to frame the volunteer abroad program:

But we choose social justice because to me that's just making a positive change, so then you can acknowledge that there's this rich-poor gap, it exists in communities, in countries, and globally – so if you're talking social justice, one of our premises is, 'Can I change the status quo?' Well yeah, you can, personally you can. You can choose to be part of that 'development' equation yourself, you can choose to have less yourself and help others get more, on an individual scale. So there are beliefs out there that if people did that – problem solved. But that's a whole other kettle of fish, so social justice is useful in terms to teach in high school. I mean I could talk development all day, so that's a tough one, but basically it's a philosophical belief system.... (P2)

Again, I chose to include a lengthy quote here to show that even teachers who have been educated in development studies find the notion of challenging global systems that entrench inequality proves to be too complicated, theoretical and controversial to take on

at a high school level. These findings also complicate the claims made by O'Sullivan (2008) and Evans, Ingram, Macdonald and Weber (2009) that pedagogical approaches to global citizenship education could be made more critical through additional teacher training. In the case of these two participants, their responses show evidence of the type of critical understanding of the global relations and power structures that are advocated for in the literature on critical pedagogy and critical global citizenship education, however their hesitation for approaching the volunteer abroad experience through this lens appears to centre on challenges related to the ability of students to engage in this type of thinking. I would argue that this is reflective of the gaps in the literature on global citizenship education and volunteer abroad programs with respect to secondary school-aged students. Both of the participants emphasize that these concepts are too big to tackle for *high school* students, and hence they adjust their expectations of what can be realistically achieved through the volunteer abroad experience, in relation to their own understandings of development theory and its influence on their conceptualization of global relations. Finally, based on these findings, I would then ask, how realistic is it to expect teachers who do not come from this background to challenge the assumptions embedded in mainstream conceptualizations of the benefits of community service, travel abroad and intercultural exchange?

5.5 Trip Rationale and Perceived Benefits

When participants were asked about the overall rationale for the trip, their responses reflected the trend that the impact of volunteer abroad programs is generally discussed in relation to the benefits to the volunteers (Guttentag, 2008; Raymond and

Hall 2008; Plater, Steven, Bringle and Clayton, 2011; Tonkin, 2011). In general, the participant responses reflected what I would describe as a spectrum of perceptions of the benefits of the programs to the students, including feeling good about helping others; appreciating other cultures; development of interpersonal skills; learning more about oneself as a Canadian and finally to the transformation of perspectives on the world around them. Throughout the responses, the benefits to the community are pushed to the background, reflecting the Ontario Ministry of Education's conceptualization of the benefits of community service as discussed above, and the general consensus in the service learning and voluntourism literature that describes the benefits to the community as either understudied and therefore unknown (Holdsworth and Quinn, 2011) or taken-for-granted (Raymond and Hall 2008; Plater, Steven, Bringle and Clayton, 2011;)

The participants tended to explain the rationale of the trip in terms of providing an experience to students that expands their worldview in a way that standard tourism or travel cannot, which aligns with mainstream understandings of the benefits of voluntourism (Guttentag, 2008; Raymond and Hall, 2008). This notion is captured by one participant who refers to his program as an alternative form of travel that has the ability to change the students:

So the way we word it is this is an alternative to a spring break trip. Do you want to do something substantial for a community that doesn't have a lot – do you want to feel good about your trip and still experience something in a new trip – then lets go and do that... They come back changed. (P5)

This comment reflects one end of the spectrum, where the benefits to the students are based on them feeling empowered by their choice to participate in a trip that is

conceptualized as doing good for others rather than a purely vacation-oriented trip that is perceived as strictly benefiting the vacationer.

In the middle of the spectrum is an acknowledgement by one participant that the students might come to recognize their privilege and be more appreciative of their material wealth – although it should be noted that, based on my own interpretation of the response, she is not referring to privilege in terms of the difference between the Global North and Global South, but rather in terms of their position within Canadian society, as students who attend a fee-based independent school:

And although it sounds kind of corny or hokey, the experience they get from it, they are different people and you see a side of them you've never seen before. And probably the most important thing is that it opens their eyes to another culture, and another way of life. And not a slam against these students at all, but they're privileged, they have lots of money, they've got a nice way of life, so it really makes them appreciate what they have. (P4).

This notion of an eye-opening experience appears to be used by the participants in a manner that alludes to what happens when students are exposed to a society where socioeconomic conditions and/or culture are different from their own. In many cases, the teachers did not specify what exactly it was about the experience that was eye-opening – this could be interpreted of as an avoidance to talk about the reality that in many cases, these trips expose students to impoverished places across the Global South and how this can, in many ways, be interpreted as a form of 'poverty tourism', as theorized by Simpson (2004).

In order to understand more clearly how teachers conceptualized the relationship between 'eye opening experiences' and changes they observed in their students, I asked the participants to elaborate on their understanding of the phrase 'personal growth'. It

was through this question that responses began to fall into the other end of the spectrum, where there was discussion of a form of empowerment that was not solely related to doing good for others, but rather through having to work through challenges or problems in a more independent manner than they would at home:

I think there's a great improvement in maturity and that comes from problem-solving, not relying on your parents to solve your problems, not having your parents, which is a blessing for many kids, they get a bit of freedom. There's lots of well-meaning parents out there who choke their kids and don't let them take the responsibility they're very capable of taking. (P6)

These references to accomplishment, self-confidence, and problem-solving skills all reflect the generally perceived benefits of volunteer abroad related to the volunteer's development of interpersonal skills (Sherraden, Lough and McBride, 2008). These responses also demonstrate that the participants' thinking around these experiences in some ways reflects the notion that students need to be confronted with the so-called realities of the Global South (Kauffmann, Martin and Weaver, 1992), but not with the intent that this will force them to question global power structures that contribute to inequality, but rather to encourage them to develop a greater sense of self, and in some cases, to become more appreciative of the privileges associated with living in Canada.

For example, one participant noted that,

It's all value based and I think it's really important that people look at what's the reason behind the values. So an increased sense of cultural sensitivity and an increased respect for people in general. Respect for parents in Canada and what they've done for them, a respect for and an appreciation for Canadian health care, Canadian education. (P6)

While it would be difficult to claim that there is anything wrong with teaching Canadian youth to be respectful and appreciative of their families or some of the benefits of living in Canadian society, Simpson's (2004) arguments related to the potential for this way of thinking to lead volunteers to develop a form of 'lotto logic' must be considered.

Simpson (2004) argues that when students focus on their own position in relation to the various forms of poverty they encounter while abroad, they run the risk of associating this difference with the “luck of being born in one place rather than another”, which, she argues, decreases the opportunity for students to question the structures and systems within which we all live, that contribute to these conditions of inequality. As I have emphasized throughout this chapter, this post-colonial perspective on global structures does not present a mainstream understanding of the world in Canada and hence it would require system-level changes to infuse this type of thinking into the theorizing around volunteer abroad programs at the level of those who facilitate these programs.

The concept of transformation is used in various ways by the participants, in some cases referring to elements of personal growth and, in fewer cases, referring to ‘shifts in perception’ (P8). In one particular case, it was invoked in a way that was reflective of the OISIE definition of transformational learning cited in Chapter Three, with the emphasis being placed on shifts of consciousness and related changes in behaviour, resulting from a fundamental change to one’s understanding of their place in the world in relation to power structures:

But I struggle with that too, because like I said before, I think the journey is different for every single person and I don’t think we get to dictate the direction of personal growth.... I would say adaptable, in that your perceptions going in might not be – like you need to be willing to be changed, essentially, or have your perceptions shifted, sometimes gently, sometimes not. So those, I feel like that’s grey... (P8)

The most critical take on the concept of personal growth is reflective of the relationship between liberal ideas that centre on the individual and theories of experiential learning that focus on individual transformation (Butin, 2003) and the assumptions that anything that leads to personal growth is a good thing, which tends to push to the background the

impacts of these programs on the host communities (Bringle and Hatcher, 2011; Holdsworth and Quinn, 2011; Tonkin, 2011). These ideas were reflected in the following participant's response:

The personal growth is important and I wouldn't want to deny that piece, but the minute that you said that, a whole bunch of red flags go up for me, because, in that kind of framing, a lot of times bodies can be used as objects for other people's personal growth and I think that happens a lot, particularly in a racialized sort of context, where it's about your own humanity, or the student's humanity, and it's presumed that because it is about personal growth that it's good. And that you don't really have to look at what's happening....But I think that it's the way that we fail to set the conditions, and the way that we fall into the neoliberal project of self-realization as being the ultimate goal and it's so atomized, so individualized, do you know what I'm saying?... So I think, okay sure, we can talk about personal growth, but is that personal, is that just about you? And who does that include and who does that exclude? And why? And what is your growth at the expense of? You know? I think you could do it in a way that's more contextualized for example. (P7)

This participant sets herself apart from the others in this study by expressing the most theoretical concerns related to the ethics of these sorts of programs and the role that teachers can play in shaping a volunteer abroad experience that attempts to not only create a transformational learning experience for their students, but also one that remains open to the possibility that there are multiple ways of conceptualizing these experiences, some of which are less likely to cause the sorts of ethical issues discussed throughout the literature on the subject.

However, even if participants did not necessarily discuss transformation in terms of shifts of consciousness, participants did equate personal growth and the impact of these trips with more long term impacts with respect to changes in behaviour or action related to social justice or global issues:

But then to see that transform itself into a student that then takes that upon themselves, and has their own initiative to give back, then I think that's a program that's been successful. (P9)

Yeah, I think that's like anything in high school – you've got teenagers, adolescents, even if they're young adults. How do you – it's more like seed planting, you're really laying a foundation, I hope, you know so, it's hard if you never hear back from them. But we've got students like Jane Smith, going off to medical school, she's finished her second or third year at (name of university omitted) and that's one you hear back from. And they've started they're own dinner at (name of university omitted) for the prison. They've been doing a holiday dinner, so they've taken a local example, so it hasn't changed her career focus, but global citizenship might change the context of why I'm a physician or what I'm doing as a physician – I don't know (laughs). (P2)

This quote is interesting because when the participant laughs it seems to signal to me the challenges that arise from trying to measure or assess the level of impact these experiences have had on the students. The theory behind both experiential (Kolb, 1984) and transformational learning (Meizrow, 2000) models claim that the learning process should culminate with some evidence of a conscious decision to either make a change in attitudes or behaviours or not. Because the evidence of these changes may not be immediate (Kolb, 1984; Meizrow, 2000) teachers must rely on their own perceptions of the changes that occur within their students and rely on anecdotal evidence from those few students who do keep in contact with them to confirm the beneficial impact these programs have on their students. The participant above not only considered the impact a trip had on one student's choice to stay involved in social justice-related activities on a local level, but also commented on the impact that same trip had on another student with respect to improving her social-emotional stability through an increased sense of self worth. This speaks to some of the more complex theoretical arguments put forth in the work of Baaz (2005) and Heron (2007), both of whom emphasize that volunteer work in the developing world is more about the search for self-identity, through providing help to

others, than it is about challenging the sources of the inequality that creates the conditions that enable one individual to perceive themselves as helping others. Whether these theories can be applied to students at such a young age is outside the scope of this paper, but it is important to point out the many ways that the phenomenon of volunteer abroad can be interpreted and understood on both a practical and theoretical level, and to expose the ways in which these points intersect.

One of the themes that stood out when asked about the rationale and perceived benefits of the program was the emphasis placed on intercultural learning by the four participants who had facilitated volunteer abroad programs that included host family living arrangements. While the focus remained on what the students gained from the experience, the type of learning that was described centred on how the host family became the reference point for learning about wider issues related to the politics, history and socioeconomic conditions of the host country:

So there's lots of different scenarios, but the host family thing has actually turned out to be a very very strong – probably one of the strongest actually - post-trip discussion pieces. So when students come back and you want them to talk a little bit about, free trade, or you want to talk a little bit about the biodiversity aspect, they will, but its usually in context of the host family. (P2)

Here we see the evidence of the potential for this type of experience to create the kind of 'face-to-face' connection that might engage students in a way that classroom learning cannot (Plater, Steven, Bringle and Clayton, 2011). If this type of experience is then combined with the type of post-colonial preparation tactics and elements of critical reflection advocated for in the literature, we see that there is some potential for a transformational learning experience to take place. Of course, the extent to which this type of learning can take place in a short time frame is up for debate.

Finally, two of the independent school teachers referred to the role that running volunteer abroad programs played in branding the school and how this influenced the rationale of the programs in general. One participant noted, “I guess from the sales and marketing perspective, it’s like a value added” (P9). The acknowledgement that these programs also produce a monetary benefit to the school in the sense that they help attract new students and give the school a competitive edge over other independent schools reflects the growing pressure at the post-secondary level for educational institutions to internationalize in an effort to address the growing consensus that educational institutions should strive to create global citizens (Lewin, 2009). Furthermore, as was discussed above, the reality that these types of volunteer abroad programs are becoming an expected experience to be found on a post-secondary or job application adds strength to concerns in the literature over the ways in which participation in these trips becomes a form of cultural capital that actually serves to strengthen the position of those who already have the privilege of being able to afford the time and money needed to participate in the first place (Mowforth and Munt, 2009; Holdsworth and Quinn, 2011). If trends in the growth of these programs continue, this concept cannot be overlooked as a factor that might influence teachers’ decision-making processes.

5.6 Pedagogy

While many pedagogical issues have already been brought to light in previous sections of this chapter, this part of the discussion focuses specifically on the preparation tactics and reflection activities that the participants incorporate into their programs. The pedagogical components of the various volunteer abroad programs discussed by the

participants tended to be constrained by the time frames within which the programs had to operate, exceptions being the full year international co-op program. The international co-op program, with its connection to a variety of academic and cooperative education credits, stands out as providing the deepest connections between the course material and the work experience and reflects the greatest opportunity to create the conditions for transformational learning. This program has the lengthiest amount of preparation time, covers the widest range of issues and subjects discussed in relation to the course work and the experience abroad, the longest period of structured post-trip reflection and debriefing, and incorporates discussions of development, global citizenship, power and inequality.

While the month long credit-bearing trips have either monthly or week-long classroom-based preparation, when the credits being earned are attached to interdisciplinary courses, it seems that teachers have the flexibility to explore the geography, history, politics and economics of the place they will be visiting and one participant noted that this model allowed the teacher and students to explore more deeply what they were doing and what motivated them.

So when it's for a high school credit it's a lot easier to give a substantial – this is why we're doing it, this is what you're getting marked on, this is what you need to learn – these are basic little things that you have to go through. (P5)

While this statement provides evidence of course connections being made to the trip, it does not necessarily reflect elements of a transformational learning model.

When asked how students were prepared for the non-credit-bearing trips, the general model was that of weekly or pre-scheduled meetings to go over issues related to

health and safety while travelling, cultural differences, student expectations, emotional preparedness and fundraising. The focus on these topics, in the absence of discussions related to how geopolitical, historical and socioeconomic factors of the host country are influenced by various relations of power, illustrates a lack of critical pedagogy when it comes to program implementation. For example, one participant noted the sending organization was primarily responsible for preparing the students, describing the pre-departure session as follows:

Yeah, actually she did and she showed a lot of pictures, like very raw graphic what you are going to see, kids living in a garbage heap, old people with no teeth, kind of the shock value that you need to give teenagers so they know where they're going. And I mean it was tough on them, but I don't think any of them was underprepared. (P4)

This preparation tactic can be interpreted in one of two ways. First off, it could reflect the mentality that students need to be prepared for the shock of being immersed in an impoverished place, but that through this exposure, they gain some sense of common humanity and a desire to help others (Golmohamad, 2009). However, it could also be seen as a way to de-sensitize students to the misery of other people's lives and as such, may work to diminish the sense of 'enragement' associated with the desire to act out against social injustice. Yet regardless of how this tactic is perceived, the bottom line remains that without any acknowledgement of what contributes to these conditions of poverty, nor what conditions allows these students the privilege to be able to afford to participate in the volunteer abroad experience, this type of preparation can be considered Orientalist, in the sense that it represents the host country in a one-dimensional manner, depicting it solely in terms of poverty and need (Simpson, 2004).

However, one participant did express a similar concern as that of Heron (2005) in regards to the implications of a focus on health and safety in the preparation activities organized by other teacher facilitators at her school:

So that piece disturbed me, because I found a lot of it, like the very first things kids on the trip had to do, and faculty too, was get their inoculations and to me that framed it around the whole level of invasion, of potentially, just on the level of sickness and harm physically, when I didn't feel like, I felt that the teachers really supported that framing of it... (P7)

Another participant talked about preparation tactics in a manner reflective of the emphasis placed upon relationship building as the centrepiece of a mutually beneficial experience (Crabtree, 2008):

So looking at things like context: who are we expecting to visit with? How do we build good relationships? How do we make them sustainable? How do we remain reciprocal in our dealings? How do we share versus necessarily coming in and giving? We do a lot of work around that perception, and again, particularly as an independent school. (P8)

This type of thinking before a trip is more reflective of critical pedagogy tactics that involve critical self-reflection on why participants want to be involved in these types of programs and how they conceptualize their relationship with the host community, as has been recommended by Heron as a first step in breaking down the helping imperative (2007).

In terms of how teacher facilitators are prepared for their roles in the programs, two of the independent school teachers who held director positions explained that they would run an initial orientation seminar for staff and students and then supervisory teachers for each trip would take over from there. Both indicated that there was minimal training or formal expectations for these teachers, beyond issues related to risk-assessment. One of these participants expressed concern not only over the availability of

students to participate in after-school pre-departure sessions but also over the preparedness of other teachers to facilitate these sessions:

Exactly, and then the kids have to get excused from co-curricular, and some kids can't miss the game that day and then all this, it's so complicated. And then a lot of the stuff is assigned as homework and a lot of kids come and they haven't read anything about [host country] and then the teachers are trying to facilitate the conversation but they don't know anything about [host country]. So it's, so yes, there was more infrastructure, was there a lot more to gain from that? I'm not really sure. (P7)

These comments are reflective of O'Sullivan's (2008) notion that when teachers are placed at the centre of the transformational model of learning, their professional preparedness in terms of understanding models of experiential education, combined with their political orientation, play a crucial role in determining the extent to which they may choose, or in some cases, be able to facilitate a truly transformational learning experience that is reflective of a more critical form of pedagogy. It also demonstrates that the day-to-day realities of operating within a secondary school system means that putting certain elements in place does not guarantee that they will be executed successfully.

Furthermore, the analysis here must be complicated by the fact that critical global citizenship is not emphasized in the Ontario secondary school curriculum, and when teachers are found to be inhibited by structural barriers such as these, it is not fair to say that they 'choose' not to follow the model discussed above, as this more critical way of understanding the world through a post-colonial lens may not be something many teachers have ever been exposed to. As such, the arguments in the literature calling for teachers to be provided with more time to collaborate, receive professional development and to critically reflect on their practices must be acknowledged as a very real need

should we desire that these volunteer abroad programs avoid the ethical issues discussed throughout this thesis.

As discussed earlier, reflection is deemed to be one of the most important aspects of any experiential learning model, transformational or otherwise (Kolb, 1984; Brookfield, 2000; Meizrow, 2000; Ash and Clayton, 2004; King, 2004). When these models are applied to contexts involving relations between the Global North and Global South, where the differences in socioeconomic conditions are related to global power structures that privilege those in the Global North over the Global South, the need to reflect on the experiences within this context cannot be understated. When asked about the role that they played in facilitating learning and/or reflection during the trip, the three participants who facilitate credit-bearing trips noted that reflection was very important to the program. However, based on Brookfield's definition of 'critical' reflection as one that incorporates some analysis of power relations, the following participant's description of reflection stops short of being 'critical' because there is no discussion of the sharing of observations in relation to a specific course content that addresses issues of power:

Reflection is one of the things I value most. Being able to talk about and being able to say, what did you see versus what did I see. We reflect on all those things. They keep a trip journal to reflect as well – there's all that type of reflection... They experience it, they go as deep as they are willing to, and they bring back what they need. So it's really neat, that it's not something that I have to check off the list, or check it off the curriculum, like okay, they know that because they can regurgitate two plus two, but they take back something. What it is they will describe in their debriefs and in their reflections and how much they bring back will be up to them so it's a neat way to teach. (P5)

Clearly this participant is knowledgeable about cycles involved in experiential learning models and recognizes that the learning that takes place cannot be assessed in the same

ways that many classroom-based teaching methods can. This leads me back to my argument that a lack of discussions around power reflects a wider failing of the education system to embrace approaches to course content and experiential learning models that would delve deeper into the structural inequalities that shape our world.

In the non-credit bearing programs, it appeared that the teachers with experiential education backgrounds placed a great deal of importance on structured reflection activities, while those who did not share this background or were facilitating trips for the first time noted that they were overwhelmed by the day-to-day logistics of managing students and less focused on the potential educational components of the trip. For example, one participant specifically discussed the barriers to her ability to facilitate reflection while on the trip:

... if I'd had time to plan ahead and know exactly what I was focusing on, I think it would have been a bit easier to teach the students something while we were there.

This comment is highly reflective of Chieffo and Griffith's (2009) concern that teachers who facilitate volunteer abroad take on a number of roles while abroad and that without proper training, not all teachers will be able to fulfill all of these roles all of the time.

On the other hand, another participant expressed a strong desire to move her volunteer abroad programs into the realm of critical pedagogy by incorporating discussions of power into the reflection activities, yet expressed frustration at how she could go about doing this:

...reflection is good, and the idea of experiential education is good, but how much does it become a naval gazing exercise. Like when does it get to issues of power? And I just find that, it just takes so much time, and so much knowledge,

knowledge isn't the right word, but so much sensitivity to structure these things in a way that it does get to power? (P7)

Her concern evolved out of the observation that reflection that was based on sharing the experience with others encouraged students to adopt a particular 'narrative' of their experience that did not necessarily fit with the ways in which she conceptualized their time abroad:

I find it really bizarre how they then took it up when they got back, it was almost like there was this narrative, like they knew the story. With the before, and the middle and now with how they're expected to talk about it afterwards. Which makes the reflections more difficult, they know the words, they know the whole story and they're just telling you the story. **Q: And what's usually at the centre of that, do you think?** P7: It's their own subjectivity as someone who makes a difference. Someone who does good in the world. And so a lot of the tensions and ambiguities and contradictions are elided in that story. (P7)

Again, this quote provides evidence of the need for teacher training and professional development exercises to explore the possibilities of developing volunteer abroad models that might be influenced by more critical forms of global citizenship education (O'Sullivan, 2008).

Of course, assessing the extent to which the participants were facilitating 'critical' reflection versus noncritical reflection is not easy. Furthermore, as the purpose of the study is not to evaluate the participants, it is more useful to focus the discussion on some of the challenges experienced by teachers when trying to facilitate reflection in general. The most prevalent concern raised by the participants in relation to reflection centred on the barriers to facilitating post-trip debriefing. Four of the participants specifically noted that when the trips were not embedded in course-work, it was often difficult to get students to attend post-trip debrief meetings. The framing of post-trip meetings as a celebration of the experience was mentioned by three of the participants, with one noting

that this was used as a tactic to have the students commit to showing up, at which time she would be able to engage in the type of reflection she thought was essential to her understanding of an experiential learning model. This is yet another example of how the participants must negotiate their theoretical understandings of educational models with the realities of the day-to-day challenges of operating within a particular educational system and with students whose actions they cannot control. While it would be reasonable to critique the notion of a debrief meeting as a ‘celebration’ of evidence of reinforcing notions of self-importance upon return from overseas (Tiessen, 2008), the fact that some teachers use this rationale to implement the type of teaching methods they feel are most important to the overall success of the trip emphasizes how important it is for researchers to avoid sweeping generalizations about the motives, choices and actions of those who facilitate these programs. Finally, one teacher noted he and his colleagues struggled with the issue of getting male students in particular to reflect, noting that this was a common frustration amongst teachers at his all-boys school. This is another interesting avenue of investigation that could be addressed through the lens of gender-differentiated instruction techniques, yet it is not one that I have come across in any of the literature that is specific to volunteer abroad or international service learning. Once again, this demonstrates the need for further investigations and studies into the phenomenon of volunteer abroad within the secondary school system in Ontario.

5.7 Perceived Challenges

During the interviews, the participants were never directly asked about ethical issues related to their programs. Rather, I asked them to discuss some of the challenges

they faced while facilitating these trips or potential drawbacks of volunteer abroad programs in general. This question was designed to explore whether or not some of the ethical issues discussed in the literature were on the ‘radar’ of the participants in this study. I felt that to ask the participants directly about ethical issues would be to imply that these issues existed in the first place, and while this may be true, the point of this study is to explore how teacher’s conceptualize and experience these trips, and so I chose to use terms such as ‘challenges’ and ‘drawbacks’ because they are less threatening and created more room for the participants to explore their own feelings towards their practices. In general, the participants answered this question in relation to the challenges faced by students, such as adjusting to a new culture, staying safe and healthy while abroad and overcoming language barriers, all of which reinforce the findings in the literature that point to the ways in which these experiences are researched and conceptualized in relation to the experiences of the volunteers (Plater, Steven, Bringle and Clayton, 2011). However, what I think is most interesting to explore in this section are the discussions that evolved in relation to the challenges of assessing the impact of these programs on the host community.

To begin, all of the participants acknowledged that the community had to benefit from the experience in order for it to be a worthwhile endeavour, yet three specifically mentioned their uncertainty as to how to go about assessing these benefits. For example one participant addressed a concern similar to that raised by Epprecht (2004), whereby the volunteers have their experience in the community but then move on, which may invoke negative feelings amongst the community:

You go to Kenya and you meet these students who are exactly the same age as you and they put on a huge dramatic production at the end that is unbelievable and you don't want to leave and you don't want to say good bye and everyone's crying – but then you realize that those students that are in that scenario in Kenya – they have to do that again – three weeks later, with another group – and is that healthy? There's so many things that come with volunteerism that are good – but who does it benefit? Is it us? (P5)

In this response, the participant raises the types of questions that current literature on international service learning claims are the most crucial for educators to be asking of themselves (Bringle and Hatcher, 2011; Tonkin, 2011). This notion of community burnout was also expressed in relation to host family living situations, where two participants thought that there needed to be continual re-evaluation of the benefits of these arrangements to the family. Again, this is further evidence of the type of critical reflection that has the potential to assess the power dynamics that might exist between host family and students, yet one that is difficult for a teacher facilitator to assess unless they are actively engaged in the program planning, which was only the case in the international co-op program.

Another participant raised questions over the type of preparation the community received, a question that is difficult to answer when the teacher works through a sending organization located in the Global North:

I think too, we get a lot of education on our end, but does the community where these trips are taking place in, did they get any information about who these people are, why they are doing it, what they gain from it. So I think it's probably more on the other end, like what do they think when a bunch of white kids show up and start fixing their stuff... I'm sure there are communities that get helped that don't really want, or need - it must be frustrating for some people who are like, why are you coming to our country or sending kids to our country? But it's an interesting question. (P4)

Again, this is evidence of the types of questions critics of volunteer abroad would encourage facilitators to be asking, and, as mentioned earlier, demonstrates how dialogue amongst colleagues has the potential to encourage more critical ways of thinking about these experiences.

5.8 Collaboration amongst Volunteer Abroad Facilitators and Professional Development

The final section of this analysis focuses on the extent to which the participants have been involved in professional development activities or collaboration with colleagues in relation to their roles as facilitators of volunteer abroad programs. When asked if they had ever participated in any formalized professional development on the topic of volunteer abroad programs eight out the ten teachers said no, they had not. Three of the participants working in the independent school system noted that they had attended independent school-specific conferences related to experiential education and global education, and that they were able to apply some of this learning to the context of volunteer abroad or service learning. Most of the teachers in both the public and independent systems mentioned informal networks for the sharing of resources and ideas related to the topic, as well as informal debriefing with other teacher facilitators during or after their trips. There is some collaboration amongst schools when trips pull students from multiple schools, yet teachers who facilitated these types of trips noted that most of the collaboration between themselves and other teachers occurred in advance of the trip and was purely logistical in nature. When asked if they would benefit from additional training or collaboration on the topic of volunteer abroad, most of the participants felt this would be beneficial, but two of the more experienced facilitators questioned whether a

standardized course such as an additional qualification on the topic would meet their needs.

While some of the participant responses in this study have demonstrated that teachers do engage in critical self-reflection in terms of how they conceptualize these programs, the inconsistencies that have emerged in terms of labelling these experiences as transformative despite the limited emphasis on approaches that take into account discussions of power, give weight to the recommendations made in the literature (Larsen and Fade, 2008; O’Sullivan, 2008; Evans, Ingram and Macdonald, 2009; Tonkin, 2011) that teachers need to engage in collaboration, professional dialogue and professional development related to global citizenship and critical or transformative pedagogical practices in order to produce the types of learning experiences that force us to ask the big questions related to why they have the privilege to travel and volunteer in these communities in the first place.

5.9 Summary

As was discussed in the literature review, models of volunteer abroad that are embedded within course curriculum hold the most potential for the type of programming that might bring about a more transformative learning model. However, as seen throughout this discussion, the influence of the global citizenship discourse that seems to be infiltrating Ontario secondary schools is generally founded in Western notions of individualism, where the gains to be achieved through volunteer abroad relate more to how young Canadians will embody the attributes of global citizens who are aware of the

world around them and are motivated to make a change through altruistic acts such as volunteering.

Furthermore, the reality of being able to design and implement these programs is complicated based on structural restrictions related to time, policies and the very nature of the curriculum within which teachers may choose to embed the volunteer program itself. As such, most of the programs discussed by the participants were two/three week long, non-credit bearing trips that combined a volunteer work project with tourist activities. These models reflect the voluntourism model, yet because they are embedded within educational institutions, teachers make attempts to prepare the students with educational material and conduct reflection activities during and after the trips. The credit-bearing trips are also short term in nature, with the exception of the international co-op program, which stands out as having the most potential to be classified as a potentially transformational learning experience. The short-term credit bearing trips suffer from the same time constraints that the non-credit bearing trips do, especially in relation to the lack of structured reflection activities at the end of the programs.

In general, the trips are not framed within the language of 'development' because development studies is not a topic covered in the secondary school curriculum in Ontario and one that most teachers felt was too complex to deconstruct with their students. As such, these programs tend to emphasize the personal growth that students will gain through their participation in these trips, while the benefits of the community tend to be taken-for-granted, and, when questioned, were left unanswered as teachers expressed that they were not in a position to speak on behalf of the host communities.

Some teachers introduce elements of critical pedagogy and transformational learning by raising issues related to power, yet these discussions tend to remain situated within the context of the students, where privilege or power is seen to be something they possess, and hence have a responsibility to use in a way that is seen as more just, fair or sustainable. While those participants who do discuss issues of power recognize that there are significant geopolitical and structural issues related to global power inequalities, they feel that these are concepts that are too theoretical for high school students to grasp and hence focus on the types of discussions they feel will resonate most effectively with the experiences abroad.

Finally, Ontario teachers who facilitate volunteer abroad programs do not appear to engage in collaboration or professional development in relation to the roles they play in planning and implementing these programs, yet agree it would be beneficial to their practice if more forms of collaboration and professional development were made available to them.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

The purpose of this thesis has been to explore the diverse array of interdisciplinary literature available on the volunteer abroad phenomenon, in an attempt to both identify and fill a gap in the literature in relation to the growth of volunteer abroad programs within the Ontario secondary school system. This thesis involved an investigation into how the teachers who facilitate volunteer abroad programs conceptualize these experiences and was designed to identify trends and themes across a range of programs from study participants with diverse backgrounds and experiences. As has been mentioned throughout this thesis, as an Ontario secondary school teacher myself, and previous facilitator of volunteer abroad programs for senior high school students, I have positioned myself alongside the study participants and am grateful for their participation in this attempt to engage in a collaborative form of critical self-reflection. This thesis is meant to be a starting point in addressing calls within the academic literature for a more critical form of personal and professional self-reflection that involves challenging our assumptions and breaking through hegemonic systems of knowledge that tend to position communities in the Global South as being in need of help or assistance from those in the Global North. Paulo Freire (2004), one of the key founders of critical pedagogy theory, encourages us as teachers to challenge both ourselves and our students to think through the social, political and historical reality within which we live, and as such, reminds us that in order to truly engage in a transformative process of learning we must be willing to recognize that our own assumptions about the world we live in might inhibit our ability to see how our actions may actually contribute to the oppressive conditions we wish to reverse. As this study

has shown, this is not an easy process when it comes to our roles as facilitators of volunteer abroad programs, because mainstream thinking, institutional structures and curriculum and policy documents act as barriers to our ability to see the conditions by which Freire would argue we are oppressed.

However, this does not mean that we should give up on the possibility that we can intervene in the world in an ethical manner that seeks to redress social injustice. Even the greatest critics of volunteer abroad do not advocate for an end to these programs, but rather they stress the need to engage in dialogue around the overall purposes of these experiences and the pedagogical methods upon which we base our practice. As such, I have argued throughout this thesis that a volunteer abroad experience has the potential to be a transformative learning experience when it is embedded within a pedagogical model that reflects an understanding of experiential and transformational learning theory and connects to a curriculum or subject material that attempts to explore the volunteer experience in relation to issues of global inequalities and structures of power. Although I have acknowledged the difficulty in assessing the full extent to which an experience can be deemed transformational, for the purpose of this thesis, a transformational volunteer abroad experience has been defined as one whose purpose is to shift students' perceptions of their own positionality within an unequal world, whereby they might come to a deeper understanding of the historical, political and socioeconomic factors that occur at global, national and local levels and which contribute to unequal distributions of power and wealth within our world. By moving the focus away from vague concepts of personal growth and 'making a difference' and onto more theoretical and critical understandings of global relations, teachers will be better equipped to avoid the potential ethical issues

raised throughout the literature and focus on the ways in which these trips may set the foundation for creating future action amongst their students. This form of action would go beyond the gestures associated with the helping imperative, and instead, would focus on addressing the root causes of the social injustices the students have come to learn about through their experiences participating in the program. That being said, I have argued throughout the thesis that teachers' ability to incorporate issues of power into their teaching practice, and to design volunteer abroad programs that can be seen as mutually beneficial to the students and host communities, is constricted by structural systems related to time constraints, school board policies, parental expectations, personal knowledge and experience of global development issues and, finally, teachers' perceptions of the ability of adolescents to engage with complex theory. The desire and possibility for teachers to work through these constraints remains an avenue for further study.

6.1 Summary of the Research Structure

This thesis has been organized into six chapters, beginning with an introduction that contextualized the growth of volunteer abroad programs in Canada. This introduction established a clear connection between CIDA funded development initiatives and volunteer abroad programs being run through Canadian post-secondary institutions and organizations. The pressure for Canadian post-secondary institutions to internationalize and create so-called global citizens was cited as a key factor in the growth of volunteer abroad programs at that level, yet little to no research has been

conducted in regards to how this phenomenon has infiltrated the Canadian secondary school system.

In Chapter Two the literature review provided an overview of the various forms of volunteer abroad programs that have evolved within Western educational systems over the past forty years, which demonstrated some of the specific concerns being raised in relation to study abroad, domestic and international service learning and volunteer tourism. All of these volunteer abroad models draw on experiential learning theory and show evidence of overlapping characteristics, making it difficult at times to differentiate one model from another. The most useful distinction that could be applied to this study was the definition of international service learning as being a model of experiential learning that specifically combines the experience of working in the host community in the Global South with classroom based theory. Because many of the participants in this study apply the term service learning to their programs, it was of utmost importance to note that this model sees the community service work as the site upon which students can apply classroom based theory and use methods of reflection to better understand how theory does (or does not) help them make sense of social reality. This understanding of the definition of service learning shed light on the areas in which the volunteer abroad programs being run in Ontario fall short of meeting some of the most fundamental objectives associated with the service learning model.

The literature review also illuminated the fact that international volunteers are found to be motivated by a combination of altruistic and personal growth factors, both of which were reflected in the teachers' explanations of how they choose students to

participate in their programs and what they understood to be the overall purpose of participating in these types of trips. The literature also emphasized that the benefits of volunteer abroad programs generally focus on what the volunteers gain, while the benefits to the host community are generally taken-for-granted or not discussed at all. This leads to concerns raised by scholars who feel that this narrow focus on the volunteers can lead to ethical issues related to the potential negative impacts a host community might experience while hosting privileged Canadian youth who may or may not be encouraged by their program facilitators to consider the greater implications of using a community in the developing world as a site for learning about themselves. This becomes especially relevant in light of the post-colonial critique that claims that without discussion of the power imbalances inherent in this learning model, the Global South becomes situated in a position of need, which can supposedly be filled by inexperienced, unskilled youth.

Chapter Three provided an overview of the analytical framework used to make sense of the data collected through the interview process, which was based on the postmodern rejection of universal or simplified definitions of social phenomenon. As such, varying concepts of global citizenship were discussed in relation to post-colonial studies and critical pedagogy theory in order to demonstrate how each of these lenses provides insight into our understanding of how teachers conceptualize the volunteer abroad experience. Mainstream notions of global citizenship and development tend to represent interventions in the Global South, on the part of individuals from the Global North, as an inherently good thing, and, as such, fail to heed the call of post-colonial theorists who advocate for a more critical understanding of the historical factors that have

led to a world characterized by unequal distributions of wealth and power. Exploring these issues helped us gain a sense of why some pedagogical theorists call for a form of transformational learning that would result in a shift in students' perspectives so that they learn to take these issues of power into consideration when trying to make sense of their experiences within the world. At the core of this model of learning is the ability of teachers to be aware of their own hegemonic assumptions and hence find ways to work alongside their students in an effort to challenge these assumptions.

Chapter Four then explained the methodology employed in this study, which involved an interpretive form of qualitative research, where a purposeful sample of study participants was collected through a snowball recruitment technique. Participants were recruited from both public and independent schools and were involved in facilitating a range of volunteer abroad models within their respective schools. The semi-structured interviews involved a set of fifteen open ended questions and provided space for extended discussions on the topics that were of most interest to the interviewer or research participant at the time of the interview.

The following sections of this final chapter draw conclusions in regards to the discussion of the findings of this study, all of which were presented in Chapter Five. This chapter then concludes with a discussion of the limitations of the study and recommendations for future research.

6.2 Conclusions Drawn in Response to the Research Questions

As presented in the introduction of the thesis, the research questions guiding this investigation were as follows:

- How have Ontario secondary school teachers been prepared for their roles as facilitators of volunteer abroad trips to developing countries in both a professional and personal capacity?
- In their role as facilitators of volunteer abroad programs, how do teachers determine what methods and criteria they will use in order to choose a sending organization, establish learning goals and facilitate learning before, during and after a volunteer trip and what pedagogical models have come to influence their practice?
- How do the discourses around global citizenship education, critical pedagogy and development aid inform or influence the way Ontario secondary school teachers make decisions regarding the volunteer abroad programs they facilitate?

In response to the first question, the general findings of the study show that teachers facilitating volunteer abroad tend to have a diverse array of educational backgrounds, yet none had been specifically trained in their undergraduate degree or teacher's training to become facilitators of global citizenship education or volunteer abroad programs. This is reflective of volunteer abroad as a relatively new phenomenon in the secondary school system and also speaks to the findings that the participants all took up their roles as facilitators out of their own desire to become involved in providing this type of learning experience for their students. One of the most interesting things to come out of this study was the finding that even teachers with international development degrees, who question the mainstream understanding of development, suggested that it was too radical or too difficult to teach in a way that could begin to challenge hegemonic assumptions related to the construction of global power systems. It is this finding that helps capture the reality of how teachers negotiate their own knowledge and value systems within the structures of a Western model of education that relies on provincial curriculum that is infused with a

sense of national pride. Based on this finding, it becomes easier to understand how the helping imperative and the notion of 'doing good for others' becomes wrapped up in concepts of social justice and global citizenship and then becomes the primary rationale for facilitating these trips. Finally, the participants in this study seemed to accept that much of the professional learning that occurs with regards to how to facilitate these trips happens on the 'fly', especially in unpredictable learning situations related to experiential learning models. However, each participant did agree that some form of critical dialogue or professional development would be useful in exploring the nature of volunteer abroad programs and some of the challenges that were discussed in each interview.

In response to the second research question, it appears that the participants conceive of the type of learning experience that takes place in the Global South as one that will 'open the eyes' of their students to the world around them. In terms of a more general understanding of the experiential learning model as described by Kolb (1984), these programs do show evidence of the cycles of learning that involve a concrete experience followed by reflection (which generally takes place during the experience itself), however the emphasis proves to be on the experience portion of the program itself. What is difficult to assess, based on these short-term volunteer abroad programs, is the degree to which the teachers of these programs are able to 'transform' their students' understanding of the world in order to reach the point in the cycle where the conclusions they draw from their reflection will lead to experimentation with different actions and behaviours (Kolb, 1984; Meizrow, 2000). From the perspective of a secondary school teacher myself, I see this as one of the real challenges of evaluating any model of experiential or transformational learning. Not only is it difficult to assess the lens

through which a teacher is facilitating the volunteer abroad experience and the extent to which they challenge hegemonic knowledge constructions about the world, but it is also extremely challenging to track or measure the ways in which these experiences might lead to changes in a student's actions or behaviours – as this might take place outside of the space or time available for teachers to interact with their students.

What did stand out amongst the participant responses was the emphasis on safety and liability issues, how this shaped their choice of sending and host organizations, and how it framed a considerable amount of the pre-departure preparation teachers did with their students. As more and more educational institutions offer up these experiences for their students, the focus on liability is becoming a central issue in all program planning and one that raises serious concern over how this focus ends up framing the entire experience as a dangerous encounter with 'the other'. This issue, combined with the reliance on struggle and intercultural contact to create the conditions for personal growth, are the most serious concerns that emerge from this study, and the ones that I believe can most easily be addressed by the teachers themselves.

Finally, in response to the third question, the discourse of global citizenship does not play as overt a role in the secondary school context as the literature suggests it does in the post-secondary context. Rather, the findings of the study do reflect the ways in which the rhetoric of creating global citizens, as conceptualized by the Canadian government, has infiltrated teachers' thinking and rationalizing around the volunteer abroad experience, whether they use the specific term or not. Furthermore, the notion of creating global citizens as a rationale for sending youth overseas seems to draw volunteer abroad

away from the development aid discourse, which, I argue needs to be discussed in order for students and teachers to more critically reflect on what gives them the right and/or privilege to intervene in a community that is not their own. As one participant noted,

So I basically see it as an expression of privilege, the ability to travel and the ability to presume a role in other people's communities that would be ludicrous for other people to imagine here, that would never be accepted, right? (P7)

I argue that these are the types of questions that teachers must ask of themselves if they wish to move into the realm of providing a transformational learning experience for their students through volunteer abroad. It is not to say that we can resolve all of the challenges related to assessing the extent to which an experience is transformational, but I do believe that the literature, and some of the participants in this study, make a convincing case for the need to go beyond the taken-for-granted assumptions of these experiences as mutually beneficial, which should then lead us to question why we feel entitled to use these communities as learning sites for our students. As this study has attempted to prove, it is only through critical self-reflection and critical thinking about curriculum, institutional structures and restraints, and our own professional development and education that we can, as both individuals and as a professional group, embark on the process of determining the most ethical ways in which we can engage our students in the world around us. To do this, we must, as teachers, avoid reinforcing the apolitical nature of much of the curriculum and global citizenship discourse discussed throughout this thesis and find spaces within the system to challenge the taken-for-granted benefits associated with volunteer abroad, intercultural learning and the desire to make a difference in the lives of others.

6.3 Limitations of the Study

The major limitations to this study are related to the small sample size used to investigate the nation-wide phenomenon of volunteer abroad programs being facilitated through secondary schools. The decision to focus the study in Ontario was related to the need to narrow the focus of the study and to contextualize the relationship between global citizenship education and volunteer abroad in relation to a single provincial curriculum. Furthermore, as a teacher employed in Ontario, the process of starting the snowball sample was easier to begin in my home province, where I had some preliminary understanding of the types of programs being implemented and had a few personal contacts to begin the sample. Of course, ten participants is still only representative of a small percentage of the total teachers involved in volunteer abroad programs in Ontario, however, as no database exists on the number of programs currently being offered, it is impossible to say how representative the sample in this study is of the greater trends that exist across the province. School board application processes also limit the number of school boards that can be included in a study, as school boards receive hundreds of applications each year to conduct external research and they must be selective in order to ensure that these studies do not pose a burden on the system. Furthermore, school board policies that restricted the recruitment process to a snowball technique also limited my ability to open the study to all teachers in the school board who might be involved in facilitating volunteer abroad programs.

6.4 Research Recommendations

As was emphasized in the methodology section of the thesis, an interpretive study using postmodern discourse analysis does not try to draw generalized conclusions nor

seek to provide all-encompassing recommendations. It is crucial to note that the participants expressed a diverse array of views on their experiences facilitating volunteer abroad programs, with some being much more critical of the phenomenon than others. As such, I think one of the most important recommendations that can come out of this study relates to the need for more professional development or collaborative learning opportunities for teachers who facilitate these programs. It is only through these types of forums that teachers can engage each other in critical self-reflection and deeper, more critical theorizing about the goals and purposes of volunteer abroad programs and the pedagogical models they use to facilitate them. If I were to envision an extension to this study it would be to present the interview participants with some of the literature on the ethical and pedagogical issues related to volunteer abroad and to then lead a focus group discussion that would create the space to discuss the relevance of these issues to their own experiences. With more time and resources, I believe this type of dialogue would provide a more complete view of the extent to which teachers in Ontario are willing to critically self-reflect on their own assumptions. It might also provide them with an opportunity to speak to the reality of being able to implement pedagogical practices that work within the mandated curriculum yet also challenge hegemonic conceptions of the relationship between the Global North and Global South. As has been noted throughout this thesis, it can be easy to offer a theoretical critique of a particular social phenomenon, but understanding the complexity of day-to-day life and the reality of changing practices that are embedded in institutional, national and global structures can be extremely difficult. To this end, it is my hope that this thesis will act as a critical starting point in

the expansion of academic studies and literature on the role that teachers play in facilitating volunteer abroad programs across Canada's secondary school systems.

ⁱ The terms 'developed', 'First World' and 'Global North' are used throughout this literature review to refer to those countries that reflect higher levels of socio-economic development. The terms 'developing', 'Third World' and 'Global South' are used to refer to those countries that reflect lower levels of socio-economic development. The use of the terms 'North' and 'South' do not reflect strict geographical divisions.

ⁱⁱ While the term development has come to mean different things to different authors and professionals in the field of development studies, for the purpose of this paper I will use the term to refer to the goal of achieving a relatively equal distribution of the world's wealth and resources amongst the global population, whereby no one lives in a state of poverty or marginalization. In this case, the term 'uneven development' signals an unequal distribution of the world's wealth and resources amongst the global population.

ⁱⁱⁱ An example of a government sponsored program is the International Youth Internship Program, sponsored by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

^{iv} To date, there is no comprehensive data available on the total number of Canadian secondary schools running volunteer abroad trips for their students. A quick internet search shows the prevalence of organizations that are offering volunteer abroad trips for high school students in Canada and evidence can be found of program modifications being made to suit the specific needs of secondary school students. Lewin (2009) notes that in the United States, more than half of all high school seniors express a strong desire to study abroad in college, demonstrating how the perceived value of travel, study and volunteer work abroad are infiltrating the secondary school system in North America.

^v Crabtree (2003, pp.23-24) describes the form of participatory development she combines with service learning projects as one where participation of the community and local organizations in the design of development-related projects is seen not only as an end in itself, but rather as a process that challenges the root causes of underdevelopment through the facilitation of cross-cultural collaboration between students, faculty and host community members.

^{vi} Bourdieu claims that social classes are in constant struggle and use their consumption patterns as a means of differentiating themselves from other social classes. The need for a particular social class to dominate is translated into routine social behaviour, which struggles to accumulate cultural and symbolic capital through the consumption of particular goods and services which symbolize status (Mowforth and Munt, 2009).

^{vii} Sherraden, Lough and McBride (2008) note that the impacts of these programs are "based largely on evidence from retrospective, case study, and cross-sectional studies, which capture variation and inform the range of possible outcomes" (p.406), further noting that research is telling us more about the impact on volunteers than it is about either the host communities in the developing world, or the sending communities in the developed world. One example of the weaknesses of volunteer impact study can be found in the work of Boyd et al. (2001), who conducted an impact assessment study of a 4-H youth exchange program with a community in Mexico based on a self-assessment rating scale, where both the returned volunteers and their family members were asked to assess the perceived impact of the program on the participants and those around them. Both the returned volunteers and their family members rated themselves as having increased sensitivity to other cultures, increased interest in global events and increased involvement in community activities at home upon their return (Boyd et al., 2001). However, Kauffmann, Martin and Weaver (1992) note that these types of studies and their related findings are problematic because concepts related to notions of personal growth, such as 'self-confidence' and 'self-reliance' are difficult to define and can be interpreted in a number of ways, making these types of studies dependent on the individual

interpretation of each returned volunteer, thereby inhibiting the ability to draw comparisons between studies.

^{viii} In her book *The Paternalism of Partnership*, Baaz (2005) provides a useful explanation of the challenges associated with the inclusion of voices from the Global South in critiques of development aid discourse and practice. In her study of the power dynamics embedded in the conceptualization of development work as a 'partnership' between a 'donor' organization in the Global North and a 'recipient' organization in the Global South, Baaz (2005) notes that the exclusion of the 'recipient' voice from the study runs the risk of "creating a one-sided picture of the partners as merely products, or passive 'recipients', of 'donor' images and interventions". However, Baaz (2005) claims that her positionality as a white woman development worker means that even if she were to include the voice of the recipients in her study, their responses would be influenced by the development aid relationship which she characterizes as one defined by unequal power relationships and conflicting and competing interests.

^{ix} For a more in-depth overview of competing understandings of globalization see Davies and Pike (2009).

^x The CCIC defines itself as a coalition of Canadian voluntary sector organizations working globally to achieve sustainable human development. http://www.ccic.ca/about/events_e.php

^{xi} The rhetoric of global citizenship and its importance to Canadians can also be found in former Minister of Foreign Affairs Lloyd Axworthy's 2004 book titled *Navigating a New World*. In it, Axworthy (2004) invokes the image of Canadians as international peacekeepers whose values, as expressed on the international stage, can help define what it means to be Canadian in an increasingly globalized and homogenized world. For Axworthy (2004), being a global citizen means being both morally responsible and obligated to fulfilling the interests of the global community, as well as those of the nation, and he advocates for Canadians to take on a "special kind of leadership in helping manage a world dominated by the power and influence of our continental neighbour" (2004, p.6). While the purpose of this thesis is not to dispute Canada's role in international affairs, it is important to note that comments such as Axworthy's invoke an image of Canadians as gentle, compassionate people, which critical race theorist Sherene Razack (2007) argues encourages Canadians to "continue to maintain a wilful blindness about our collective history, unable to call up, for example, anything that might show us how we are implicated in the West's power over the non-West" (p.390).

^{xii} With funding from the Government of Canada channelled through the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the Students for Development Program alone included a commitment of \$15 million for the first two years (Government of Canada, 2005b). In other government-funded programs, over \$300 million have been invested in youth employment strategies since the late 1990s including opportunities to participate in CIDA's International Youth Internship Program (IYIP) or DFAIT's Young Professionals International (YPI) program (Government of Canada, 2005b). (Tiessen and Heron, DIP paper, Forthcoming)

^{xiii} Tiessen's understanding and definition of global citizenship was developed in collaboration with Associate Professor Dr. Barbara Heron in the School of Social Work at York University. Dr. Tiessen and Dr. Heron are Co-Principal Investigators on the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) funded project titled "Creating Global Citizens? The Impact of Learning/Volunteer Abroad Programs" (2007-2011)

^{xiv} Davies is quoting one of the criteria of global citizenship listed by Oxfam in: Oxfam (1997) *A curriculum for global citizenship* (Oxford, Oxfam)

^{xv} Manji (1998) notes that many NGOs have anti-imperialist origins as supportive institutions in the struggles for independence yet have been transformed through the discourse of development. Manji (1998, p.5) claims a "gradual shift took place where concerns about rights and justice were replaced by concerns about 'development', casting 'poverty', rather than rights and freedom, as the main problem facing

‘developing countries’”. As a result, Manji (1998) argues that these NGOs adapted to the new language of the development discourse, their work being framed within notions of “charity, technical expertise, neutrality and a deep paternalism” (p.12). As a result of this transformation, NGOs have become deeply embedded within the development aid industry, with volunteer organizations flourishing in the 1980s and 1990s as they came to represent more grassroots and participatory approaches to development and ultimately influencing wider conceptualizations about the central role of volunteerism in development work (Ehrlich, 2001).

^{xvi} According to Baaz (2005), volunteer development workers revert to stereotypical accusations of their host country partners during moments of frustration or tension during their work and daily life experiences within the community. Baaz (2005) notes that these stereotypes are usually related to ‘cultural’ aspects, which moves the location of difference out from within the realm of race, and into the realm of culture, creating a new form of cultural racism. Based on this understanding, Baaz (2005) concludes that stereotyping is the result of a form of insecurity on the part of the volunteer, who can feel simultaneously justified and guilty about making these accusations. Furthermore, Kapoor (2004) argues that changing the semantics of the ‘us/them’ dichotomy through the use of terms such as ‘partner’, ‘client’, and ‘underdeveloped’ does not actually “change the discourse or dismantle the us/them power relationship” (p.629) and that our efforts need to be more closely focused on what factors lead us to see the world in such binary terms.

^{xvii} In an ‘Afterward’ to a 1994 publication of his original work, Said describes how the concept of Orientalism can be applied to any construction of identity: “Each age and society re-creates its ‘Others.’ Far from a static thing then, identity of self or of ‘other’ is a much worked-over historical, social, intellectual and political process that takes place as a contest involving individuals and institutions in all societies.” (p.322)

^{xviii} Spivak defines the subaltern as those individuals who are “removed from lines of social mobility” (2004, p. 531)

^{xix} While Ross (1990) stresses that the quality of curriculum criticism is enhanced when multiple pieces of evidence are gathered and compared - for example, the combined practice of interviews and observations is a common technique associated with interpretivist study and allows for triangulation of data (Ross, 1990; Denzin and Lincoln, 2008) - this study involves semi-structured interviews as the sole data-collection tool due to the nature of the educational phenomenon being studied. While observing teachers in the pre-trip, trip and post-trip phases of facilitating a volunteer abroad program would have been beneficial to this study, it would have required a much more extensive and longitudinal component, as well as significant financial resources to travel with the groups. Because the topic of volunteer abroad programs at the secondary school level is virtually absent from the literature on volunteer abroad and international service learning, and the time frame available for conducting the research, this study is decidedly exploratory in nature and more heavily focused on situating the responses of the participants within the multiple theoretical frameworks related to experiential education and global development studies

^{xx} The origins of public education in Canada can be found in the early 1900s, where the focus was on preparing young people for their role as well-informed, ‘good’ citizens of a newly emerging Canadian society (Evans et al. 2009). As discussed above, the 1970s through to the 1990s saw the re-emergence of a cosmopolitan understanding of citizenship and this brought the global dimension of citizenship into the Canadian schooling context through such initiatives as peace education, development education and environmental education, all of which were conceptualized as global issues (Evans et al. 2009).

^{xxi} According to the OXFAM website (2011), “Global Citizenship is a way of thinking and behaving. It is an outlook on life, a belief that we can make a difference”. OXFAM provides the following checklist of qualities associated with being a global citizen:

- is aware of the wider world and has a sense of their own role as a world citizen;
- respects and values diversity;

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- has an understanding of how the world works economically, politically, socially, culturally, technologically and environmentally;
 - is outraged by social injustice;
 - participates in and contributes to the community at a range of levels from local to global;
 - is willing to act to make the world a more sustainable place;
 - takes responsibility for their actions.

(Oxfam 1997) http://www.oxfam.org.uk/education/gc/what_and_why/what/

^{xxii} It should be noted here that changes to the language used to describe the mandatory community involvement hours were implemented in the 2011 policy and program requirements document produced by the Ontario Ministry of Education . The specific reference to the benefit to the students has been omitted and the description now reads: “The purpose of this requirement is to encourage students to develop an awareness and understanding of civic responsibility and to the role they can play and the contributions they can make in supporting and strengthening their communities. (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2011, p.60). Because this is such a recent change, I have chosen to include the older reference in the main body of this thesis as evidence of the type of thinking that has been influencing the system and teacher practice over the past decade.

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Appendix 1: General Research and Ethics Board Approval Letter

January 20, 2011

Ms. Kathryn Fizzell
Master's Student
Department of Global Development Studies
Queen's University

Dear Ms. Fizzell:

GREB Ref #: GDEVS-015-11

Title: "The Role of Teacher Facilitators in Volunteer Abroad and International Service Learning Trips"

The General Research Ethics Board (GREB), by means of a delegated board review, has cleared your proposal entitled "**The Role of Teacher Facilitators in Volunteer Abroad and International Service Learning Trips**" for ethical compliance with the Tri-Council Guidelines (TCPS) and Queen's ethics policies. In accordance with the Tri-Council Guidelines (article D.1.6) and Senate Terms of Reference (article G), your project has been cleared for one year. At the end of each year, the GREB will ask if your project has been completed and if not, what changes have occurred or will occur in the next year.

You are reminded of your obligation to advise the GREB, with a copy to your unit REB, if applicable, of any adverse event(s) that occur during this one year period (details available on webpage <http://www.queensu.ca/ors/researchethics/GeneralREB/forms.html> – Adverse Event Report Form). An adverse event includes, but is not limited to, a complaint, a change or unexpected event that alters the level of risk for the researcher or participants or situation that requires a substantial change in approach to a participant(s). You are also advised that all adverse events must be reported to the GREB within 48 hours.

You are also reminded that all changes that might affect human participants must be cleared by the GREB. For example you must report changes in study procedures or implementations of new aspects into the study procedures on the Ethics Change Form that can be found at <http://www.queensu.ca/ors/researchethics/GeneralREB/forms.html> - Research Ethics Change Form. These changes must be sent to the Ethics Coordinator, Gail Irving, at the Office of Research Services or irvingg@queensu.ca prior to implementation. Mrs. Irving will forward your request for protocol changes to the appropriate GREB reviewers and / or the GREB Chair.

On behalf of the General Research Ethics Board, I wish you continued success in your research.

Yours sincerely,



Joan Stevenson, PhD
Professor and Chair
General Research Ethics Board

c.c.: Dr. Rebecca Tiessen, Faculty Supervisor
Dr. Richard Day, Chair, Unit REB
Michelle Knapp-Hermer, Dept. Admin.

JS/gi



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APPENDIX 2: Informed Consent Form

Project Title:

The Role of Teacher Facilitators in Volunteer Abroad Programs for Secondary School Students

Researcher:

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Purpose of the Study:

Volunteer abroad and international service learning programs for Canadian youth are growing in popularity and school boards are increasingly providing students with the opportunities to participate in these types of trips. The purpose of this study is to explore how teachers prepare students for their experience, how they manage the students while they are on the trip and how they lead students through a process of critical reflection after the trip.

Expectations of Participants:

Description of Participants: You will qualify to participate in this study if you are a certified teacher in Ontario who has helped plan and facilitate a volunteer abroad program for high school students.

Participant Selection:

If more than ten teachers express interest in participating in this study, participants will be selected in an attempt to represent an even distribution across participating schools and/or school boards.

Time Commitment and Frequency of Contact: Participation in this study will involve setting aside approximately one hour to be interviewed over the phone or in person. The interview will be conducted by myself, Kathryn Fizzell, a Master of Arts graduate student in the Global Development Studies Department at Queen's University (I would also like you to be aware that I am a secondary school teacher currently on a leave of absence from the York Region District School Board). You will be contacted by email or phone to set-up a convenient time for the interview.

Nature of the Interview: The interview will be approximately one hour and you will be asked a number of semi-structured questions. You may be asked to elaborate on certain points you make in order to further investigate key themes that emerge during our discussion. In particular, you will be asked about how you:

- choose a sending organization
- prepare the trip proposal for school board approval
- prepare students for their departure
- deal with any problems that arise during the trip
- facilitate discussion and critical reflection during the trip
- facilitate the follow-up and/or debriefing sessions after the trip

The purpose of this interview is NOT to evaluate you, your teaching practices or the validity of your role in facilitating these trips. You will be allowed to stop the interview at anytime should you choose to do so and any information you ask to have removed from the study will be destroyed.

Recording Devices: The interviews will be recorded onto audio cassettes. Any information you ask to have removed from the study will be destroyed.

Possible Risks to Participants:

As we will be discussing your personal and professional experiences facilitating volunteer abroad programs for high school students, your answers may evoke an emotional response. Should this happen, an appropriate referral will be made and I will be available for further contact via phone or email should you have any questions or concerns.

Anonymity:

Precautions will be taken to protect your identity and those of your colleagues. No real names of participants or organizations to which you have been affiliated will be used in any reports or publications resulting from this study, nor will any other information that might identify you be used.

Privacy and Confidentiality:

The audio tapes and written notes will be stored in a locked unit during the study and will be destroyed two years after the completion of the study. Additionally, interview notes will be transcribed onto a password-protected laptop computer which will also be stored in a locked unit. Only I and my research supervisor, Rebecca Tiessen, will have access to this material.

Possible Benefits of the Study:

This research provides opportunity for you to discuss and reflect upon the processes involved in planning and facilitating volunteer abroad trips for your students. By participating in this study you will be contributing to a better understanding of the specific roles that teachers play in the growing phenomenon of volunteer abroad programs for Canadian youth.

Remuneration/Compensation

There will be no remuneration or compensation for participation in this study.

Right to Refuse to Participate

You have the right to refuse to participate or withdraw from this study at any time. Any information or material you ask to have removed will be destroyed.

Ethics Clearance Statement: This study has been granted clearance according to the recommended principals of Canadian ethics guidelines, and Queen’s University policies.

Problems or Concerns: Any questions about study participation may be directed to the Kathryn Fizzell at kathryn.fizzell@queensu.ca or 613-532-5195. Any ethical concerns about the study may be directed to the Chair of the General Research Ethics Board at chair.GREB@queensu.ca or 613-533-6081.

Consent:

I have read the explanation of this study. I have been given the opportunity to discuss it and my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I realize that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time. I hereby consent to take part in this study.

(Participant Name – Printed) (Participant Name – Signature) (Date)

(Researcher Name – Printed) Researcher Name – Signature (Date)

I agree to allow the interview to be audio-taped. Yes____ No____ Initial _____

I give permission to use direct quotes. Yes____ No____ Initial _____

APPENDIX 3: Letter of Information

Dear [school board name omitted] Secondary School Teacher:

Have you helped plan and facilitate a volunteer abroad or international service learning trip with your students in the developing world? Would you like to participate in a study regarding the impacts of international volunteers programs on both students and the communities of the developing world who host these programs? If so, I would like to invite you to participate in the research I am conducting for my MA in Global Development Studies at Queen's University. My research addresses the role that teachers play in providing Canadian youth with a volunteer experience in a developing country and how these experiences contribute to their growth as 'global citizens'. I am specifically interested in the role that teachers play in the following processes:

- choosing a sending organization
- connecting the goals of the trip to ministry curriculum
- preparing the trip proposal for school board approval
- promoting the trip within the school, school board and wider community
- preparing students for their departure
- dealing with any problems that arise during the trip
- facilitating discussion and critical reflection during the trip
- facilitating the follow-up and/or debriefing sessions after the trip
- dealing with challenges that arise before, during or after the trip

I am seeking to interview ten Ontario secondary school teachers who have planned and facilitated an international service learning trip with their students between the 2006/2007 and 2010/2011 school years. Interviews will last approximately one hour and will be conducted over the phone or in-person, at your convenience. Your identity, your school and the names of any sending organization with whom you have worked will be kept strictly confidential. This study has been granted clearance according to the recommended principals of Canadian ethics guidelines, and Queen's University policies.

If you are interested in participating in this study, or would like more information, please contact me at the phone number or email address below. I look forward to hearing from you soon,

Sincerely,

Kathryn Fizzell
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APPENDIX 4: Interview Questions

1. What is your educational background? (i.e. Undergraduate Degree, Bachelor of Education; Additional Qualifications)
2. What types of experiences have you had leading or participating in volunteer abroad or international service learning trips in the past?
3. Do you feel that your educational background is sufficient for preparing, leading and debriefing students throughout their participation in an international service learning program? If not, is there any type of additional training that you would find useful?
4. Do use the term 'global citizenship' in any of your promotional, course, prep or reflective materials? Is so, what does this term mean to you? Do you remember when you first started using this term?
5. Why do you believe students should participate in volunteer abroad and international service learning trips?
6. What criteria did you use to choose a sending organization? What processes were involved in creating those criteria?
7. If you were involved in writing the trip proposal for school board approval, with whom did you collaborate and what resources did you consult in order to formulate the rationale, purpose and curriculum connections?
8. Do you have specific or defined goals relating to the purpose and/or outcome of the trip? If so, what are they and how do you measure those goals?
9. What do you see as the benefits for students as a result of their participation? Have you ever perceived there to be any negative impacts on the students as a result of their participation?
10. Have you ever encountered any challenges with your students, the sending organization, receiving organization or host communities? If so, how have you attempted to resolve these problems?
11. Is critical reflection a component of the trip or the debriefing process upon return? If so, in what ways do you facilitate this process? If not, do you believe it is something that would add value to the experience for the students?
12. How would you describe the 'personal growth' of the students who participate in these trips?

13. Do you have any concerns over the length of the time of the trip or the inclusion of 'academic tourism' while you are abroad? If so, what are they and how have you attempted to resolve them?
14. Have you collaborated with teachers from other schools to discuss your roles as facilitators of volunteer abroad trips? If so, was it beneficial? If not, is it something you think would be beneficial to both you and your students? Why or why not.
15. Are there any other elements of your role as a teacher facilitator of volunteer abroad trips that you would like to discuss at this time?