THE PERCEIVED IMPACT OF AN INTERNATIONAL SERVICE-LEARNING PROGRAM ON THE LONG-TERM MORAL DEVELOPMENT AND BEHAVIOR OF ITS PARTICIPANTS

by

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ABSTRACT

The goal of raising moral, productive and engaged citizens has remained consistent throughout the history of education. Service-Learning is a pedagogical tool that is increasingly being used by educators to challenge students to interact and engage meaningfully with the world around them. The object of this case study was to examine the perceived impact of an International Service-Learning (IS-L) program on the long-term moral development and behaviour of its participants.

In this study, participants of IS-L trips at the Mennonite Educational Institute (MEI) Secondary School between 1995 and 2005 were invited to share their perceptions through surveys and interviews and through historical document analysis. Responses were viewed through a triadic framework comprised of three elements that constitute moral development: situating oneself, practicing moral action and engaging in reflective dialogue. Participant responses, combined with a comprehensive literature review were used to attempt to answer the research question in this study.

Many study respondents described the transformative effects of their IS-L experience. Responses showed evidence of moral growth and development and of subsequent and sustained moral action. The seven themes that emerged in participant descriptions of how these trips had impact were: enlarging worldviews, causing cognitive changes, invoking self-discovery, developing a sense of otherness, inspiring faith development, struggling to re-enter and inspiring further involvement. Perceived shortcomings of the IS-L program were also identified by respondents and discussed in this study.

As educators seek continuous improvement through program revision, these recommendations could be instrumental in strengthening the IS-L program at MEI. By nature, this case study is not necessarily generalizable and points to the need for further research regarding the nature and retention of the effects of this transformative experience.

Keywords: Service-Learning; International Service-Learning; Educating for Citizenship; Moral Development; Moral Education.

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This project would not be possible without the courage of MEI Secondary students as they have stepped out to serve in countries around the world. I am grateful for their participation, for their trust and for their willingness to share their perceptions, beliefs and most of all their stories. I found their responses, memories and anecdotes to be profound. I was sobered in moments and inspired in others. I laughed and I cried as I read what has happened in their lives during and after their travel, and as I considered the many people whom they have clearly touched – people all around the world. I am so thankful for the work that God does in and through us.

The IS-L program at MEI depends on the support of alumni and friends around the world who open their lives and homes to MEI teams each year. Living abroad, these faithful hosts do not necessarily see the impact their contribution has on the lives of young people. May the stories in this dissertation encourage them.

I am indebted to my professors and to those who have advised and guided me in this journey. Dr. Geoff Madoc-Jones started it all and encouraged me to keep going! Dr. Fred Renihan has remained a constant encouragement and inspiration through this process. Dr. Sharon Bailin and Dr. Maureen Stout have commented on multiple drafts and shared much wisdom as they guided me through to completion.

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1.1 Situating Service-Learning: The Purpose of Education in a Global Context

The purpose of schooling has long been considered and debated. John Goodlad (2008) called upon community leaders, educators and policymakers to agree on the democratic purpose of public schooling and to work together toward its advancement. This unity appears to be elusive as the public's agenda for schools continues to expand while resources simultaneously decline. The intended and desired outcomes of our education system are, instead continuously evolving as educators wrestle with the scope and sequence of curriculum to be delivered.

Despite the broad stroke swing of the educational pendulum from one initiative to perceived innovation and back, something has remained constant. The call to raise moral, productive and engaged citizens has remained a consistent thread in the history of education. Methods and strategies may have changed, but the mission to educate students to be knowledgeable, responsible, socially skilled, caring and contributing citizens remains intact. Societies seek to create generations of actively engaged people of influence.

So how are we, as educators, achieving this shared vision? Having contributed to our educational system for eighteen years as first a teacher and now as an administrator, I would be remiss if I did not carefully consider whether our graduates are engaging productively at local and global levels. Numerous authors from Alexis de Tocqueville (1830) through Putnam (2000) have commented on unprecedented levels of individualism, apathy and materialism as well as an apparent "civic decay" (Putnam, 1996) as the younger generations decline connection and shun civic engagement in modern society. A 1998 report from the National Commission on Civic Renewal cautioned that many of us "lack confidence in our capacity to make basic moral and civic judgments...and to make a difference", and cautioned that we are in danger of becoming "a nation of spectators" (p. 4). Bellah et al. (1985) further commented that we have a growing propensity towards individualism and toward joining exclusively with others like

ourselves, while the world is moving in the opposite direction, calling for new levels of cooperation and involvement. Our "lifestyle enclaves" destroy community as they divide age, interests, race, economic status and faith. These authors subsequently called for increased moral education within our schools.

A withdrawal from the public sphere into one's own world and interests is indeed problematic at a time when the world is becoming increasingly globalized with the rapid expansion of technology and economic trade. Researchers characterize globalization as a coming together into one: Albrow (1990) defines globalization as the "processes by which the peoples of the world are incorporated into a single world society, a global society" (p. 7), and Robertson (1987) characterizes globalization as "the crystallization of the entire world as a single place" (p. 38).

Demands are high in this globalized and fast-changing world. Indeed, the world is "shrinking" as countries interact with each other on unprecedented levels, eliciting a clear call to world or global citizenship, rather than individualism (Legrain, 2002). As educators are preparing students for engagement with this increasingly complex world economy, it becomes imperative that education prepares students for new levels of global understanding and interdependence. O'Byrne (2003) believes that contemporary society requires that we take our former concept of citizenship consisting of membership, rights, duties and participation and transpose that notion to a global level. He calls for a shift towards "the public sphere of humanity" with a view to national rather than regional duties, coupled with direct, discursive participation on a world level. Nussbaum (1997) believes that we owe our allegiance to the worldwide community of human beings rather than just ourselves or our local community of birth. She says, "Like it or not, we live in a world in which the destinies of nations are closely intertwined with respect to basic goods and survival itself" (p. 12).

This increased interdependence brings new challenges that must be acknowledged inside and outside of our classrooms. With this unprecedented level of interaction comes conflicting human rights, issues of justice and sovereignty claims. Zhao (2009) comments that humans have a natural tendency to separate people into "us" and "them" and says "globalization has the potential to both increase the likelihood and scale of destructive conflicts and help reduce the possibility of conflicts" (p. 172). Benhabib (2002) also suggested this, asserting that globalization has not created the "cosmopolitical order" or perpetual peace envisioned by Immanuel Kant; but rather, has

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brought to a head many claims of self-determination and human rights. She describes the world as having "porous borders" – where human cultures constantly change imaginary boundaries. There is a call (Delve et al., 1990; Bibby, 2009) for relationship building and dissolution of the barriers that support isolation and excessive competition. Stanton (1987) remarks that issues like:

> peace in the face of growing gaps between the rich and poor nations, nuclear proliferation, equal opportunity for and effective integration of minority populations, poverty and economic stability – are very complex and deeply ingrained in our social fabric...If we are to respond effectively to these issues, we need a citizenry with a broad understanding of the interdependence of people, social institutions and communities and an enhanced ability both to draw upon and further develop this knowledge as they confront human problems. We need people with a strong commitment to act out ethically and thoughtfully (p. 3).

It is in this milieu and with this agenda that we are called to educate. So how do schools instil such ethical and thoughtful commitment?

Service-Learning (S-L) is one pedagogical tool that is increasingly being used by educators to challenge students to interact meaningfully with the world. S-L calls students to apply their learning and simultaneously, to gain further knowledge in authentic "real life" settings by taking them out of the classroom into authentic life situations. Students seek to meet the needs of a people group through service, and are subsequently challenged to grow personally through the acts of serving and reflection. Schools are engaging in S-L both locally and abroad. As someone who has facilitated a number of International S-L (IS-L) experiences, I have long wondered whether these programs have long-term benefits and whether they equip students to contribute productively in a globalized setting. This study will examine the perceived impact of one school's IS-L program.

1.2 The Context: Mennonite Educational Institute (MEI)

"Equipping Students for Life and Forever": This is the mission of the Mennonite Educational Institute (MEI). Located in Abbotsford, MEI is the second largest Independent School in British Columbia and offers an educational program for 1590 students from Preschool to Grade 12 in Elementary, Middle and Secondary schools. MEI follows the BC Curriculum and receives Group 1 Provincial funding. A group of people with vision for Christian Education founded MEI Secondary School in 1944. An

Elementary School was added in 1993 and a Middle School in 2003. Founded on Anabaptist tradition, the school is now owned by thirteen local Mennonite churches that provide board governance and work closely with the school's Superintendent. In contrast to the original classes at MEI, which were composed entirely of students from supporting churches, school demographics look quite different. In 2009-10, 52% of MEI students came from supporting churches. A further 27% were from non-supporting churches. Additionally, 21% of our students were from minority backgrounds. Nestled in the Fraser Valley, the school now has a multi-cultural composition including a growing International program.

MEI is committed to "excellence and integrity in all areas of its work" and the organization's core values further express that the school "values a holistic educational focus aiming at educating students as a complete person – academically, spiritually, socially, emotionally and physically". MEI's educational objectives include:

- Enlarging the students' capacity to relate to others with sensitivity and respect and to form meaningful relationships.
- Promoting responsible citizenship and respect for law and authority.
- Creating the desire in students to use their talents, abilities and skills in the service of God.

The concept of service is an important construct and educational objective within MEI schools. The school wishes to develop students who express leadership in service. As MEI has grown, an intentional effort has been made to teach students how to serve and to provide opportunities for service and involvement throughout their years in the school system. Students are intentionally exposed to and encouraged to work in their own schools and communities as well as those in developing countries. For example, in 2010, outreach focussed on relief efforts for earthquake-stricken Haiti. Students across MEI campuses raised $65,000, which was then matched by the federal government to provide a total of $130,000 in relief funds.

The MEI Elementary School (Kindergarten through Grade 5) is very involved in a partnership with an orphanage and school complex in Haiti, providing on-going financial support and professional development with fund-raised support exceeding $30,000 in the year before the earthquake. Various elementary classes visit local seniors' homes, partner with another public local elementary for buddy reading, make quilts for the Salvation Army, serve at the local Food Bank, pick up garbage in the community and

contribute to Union Gospel Mission. A team of teachers recently travelled to the Haitian school to provide professional development for teachers.

MEI Middle School also has an intentional focus on local and global outreach. In 2009, Middle School students raised and contributed over $10,000 to cancer research, gifts for the homeless in Abbotsford, an orphanage in Thailand, and International Justice Mission. MEI Middle annually hosts a Christmas lunch for Abbotsford's homeless and produces a complimentary outreach concert of their spring production for the elderly. Families in need within the school community are regularly provided with gift cards, gift baskets and meals funded by student-raised monies and support from our Parent Advisory Council. Grade 6 students are responsible for the in-school recycling program, and serve in various other ways around the school. They often send gift packages to children in other countries that are associated with the international teams that go out from MEI Secondary. In Grade 7, all students participate in a Service Exploratory (elective) class in which they help out in the community: at a local Senior's home; at the Salvation Army; at the Food Bank; at the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Warehouse; at the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA); and at a local grocery store where they bag and carry out groceries for customers. In Grade 8, students have been involved in a local community outreach centre for homeless youth, and they annually raise support to fund projects for each of the secondary school International Service-Learning (IS-L) teams (additionally raising between $12,000 and $20,000 annually).

S-L at MEI culminates when secondary students are invited to participate in the International Service-Learning (IS-L) program in Grades 10-12. The high school also offers a missions-focused class that serves regularly in the community and on the east side of Vancouver.

These corporate school initiatives are in addition to individual school-wide seasonal drives for the local Food Bank and Christmas Bureau, making shoeboxes to send to children around the world through Operation Christmas Child, providing disaster relief when tragedy strikes around the world, and working on unique projects such as supporting a particular school in Africa. Special projects occur at all three school levels on an on-going basis throughout the school year. Clearly, MEI has pursued S-L as a means to provide experiential and meaningful education that elicits the virtues or

goodness of students in caring for others. It is the desire of MEI to produce students who live well with and for others.

1.3 International Service-Learning

In 1994, one of the then Secondary administrators along with three teachers (including me, the researcher) established the International Service–Learning (IS-L) Program for high school students. Our dream was that students would have an opportunity to live and work among people of another country in a reciprocal relationship. We would attempt to meet needs, help and provide in small ways, and hope our students would see, experience and be shaped as their worldview was enlarged. The interactive program was founded with several goals related to citizenship:

- to develop student compassion for human need and concern for global issues
- to cultivate student respect and sensitivity for other cultures and values
- to show the value of work and of being personally challenged and stretched
- to increase the students' sense of and pursuit of social justice
- to encourage further life-long service learning/humanitarian relief work

It was hoped that the program would help students connect with and understand the interrelatedness of education, work, service and personal development as well as allow them to grow in and share their faith. Sawyer (1991) suggests that:

> Service-Learning is a powerful educational experience where interest collides with information, values are formed and action emerges. The learning part has two dimensions: an inner dimension; learning about yourself, your motivation, your values and an outer dimension; learning about the world, its ways and the underlying cause of the problems that service work addresses (p. 8).

It was our desire to turn classroom learning and faith-related beliefs into practical action that propelled the S-L program. Kolvenbach (2000) asserted, "when the heart is touched by direct experience, the mind may be challenged to change". Personal involvement with "innocent suffering and with the injustice others suffer is the catalyst for solidarity which then gives rise to intellectual inquiry and moral reflection" (p. 41). The IS-L program seeks to integrate the cognitive with the affective. Where once compassion may have been viewed exclusively as an emotional characteristic, society is now recognizing that there is an intellectual and educational component underlying its initiation and the subsequent action that springs from it:

> While compassion implies passion, pathos and deep caring arising from the bowel and guts, it also implies an intellectual life. Ideals come from ideas after all, and are important. Just as there can be no justice without ideas and an intellectual life, so there can be no compassion without an intellectual life, for compassion involves the whole person in quest for justice and a mind with ideas in an obviously significant portion of any of us…Compassion, being so closely allied with justice making, requires a critical consciousness, one that resists all kinds of keptness, including that of kept academics and kept intellectuals. It implies a going out in search of authentic problems and workable solutions, born of deeper and deeper questions (Fox, 1990, p. 125).

It is precisely this marrying of cognitive with affective that legitimizes moral education forming part of the curriculum in our schools. Teaching students to see beyond themselves and to work for the common good is part of this. Students need not only academic skills but also social skills and they need to be taught how to care and interact on a global level. It is my belief that morality is difficult to teach in a classroom. Rather, it is best learned through authentic experience, where students are exposed to authentic life issues and situations. An emphasis on such authentic problem-solving and response is reminiscent of Dewey's call to experiential education. Dewey (1938) believed that knowledge enables people to participate in the life of a community and to work both individually and collectively to better society. He advocated pursuing authentic learning situations. Damon & Hart (1988) suggested that children have an innate moral sense, which must be nurtured by parents and schools and suggested that moral development is a result of the interaction of psychological and social forces. IS-L situations provide an opportunity for these forces to interact in authentic situations. As students live amongst people in third world and developing countries, they step into the daily lives of others, they interact with the people in their homes and try to in some small way to assist or meet their social and physical needs.

1.4 The IS-L Program at MEI – History and Context

The first IS-L team, consisting of seventeen students and three staff members, travelled to Haiti over the Spring Break of 1995. I was part of that team. In Haiti, we worked with an MEI family who was involved with the Canadian Foundation for the Children of Haiti. They were helping at an orphanage/nursery while establishing the first paediatric hospital in Port-au-Prince. It was my first experience overseas, my first IS-L experience, and my first time leading a team of this nature.

Overwhelmed by the very nature of this program, we quickly learned that many issues must be considered when taking teenagers overseas. The early years of the MEI IS-L program resulted in continuous programmatic evolution as we learned from our successes and mistakes, wrote policy and implemented systems. However, unlike many educational initiatives and despite some ebb and flow, this program continues to draw the interest and participation of many students at MEI.

1.4.1 Leadership

Since 1995, MEI has sent teams to multiple destinations each spring break, with the exception of 1996 in which staff interest was low. These trips require a significant level of commitment from the fall to spring in a school year and also require a staff member to relinquish spring break and leave family to travel with a team of teenagers over a holiday time that is held sacred by most educators. In 1995, staff members personally funded their trips and it became apparent that requiring teachers to do this year after year was not feasible. The first team arrived home at 2:00 in the morning of the first day back after spring break. Students stayed at home that first day, unlike their teachers and team leaders who struggled to teach a mere seven hours later. Subsequent program changes in the area of finances and travel itineraries revived staff interest and willingness and made these trips again workable. In 1997, the MEI Board agreed to fund a portion of the trip and has since made a number of changes to support the program – teachers' travel costs are now entirely covered by the program, spring break has been extended to two weeks and teams are given a further two days for training and orientation.

Two leaders are assigned to each team. One must be an MEI staff member who can make decisions on behalf of the school and the other may be a second staff member or parent/community member. Ideally, each trip is led by a female and a male leader; however, the organizational contact at the destination may serve as leader of the opposite gender if necessary. Veteran leaders are paired with rookies to provide training and to promote program sustainability.

1.4.2 Destinations

Since 1995, MEI has sent teams to a variety of locations each spring break. The number of teams going out is limited only by student demand and leadership availability

and has varied greatly throughout the years. Table 1.1 shows the number of teams that have served and the destinations to which they departed each year.

Table 1.1   **MEI Service Learning Destinations by Year**

Year	Destinations
1995	Haiti
1997	Philippines (2 teams); Hong Kong; Los Angeles; Mexico; Haiti
1998	Montreal; Winnipeg; Philippines; Venezuela; Honduras; Abbotsford
1999	Montreal; Haiti; Honduras; Ukraine; Philippines, Kenya
2000	Los Angeles; Haiti; Honduras; Ukraine; Abbotsford
2001	Haiti; Ukraine; Costa Rica; Mexico; Seattle; Baker Lake, Nunavut
2002	Haiti; Ukraine; Toronto; Halifax; Abbotsford
2003	Argentina; Germany; Haiti; Ukraine; Mexico; Abbotsford
2004	Argentina; Costa Rica; Czech Republic; Mexico; Montreal, Germany; Ukraine: Philippines; Abbotsford
2005	Argentina: Costa Rica; Germany; Thailand; Mexico; Montreal; Abbotsford; Ukraine
2006	Argentina; Costa Rica; Ukraine; Thailand; Mexico
2007	Argentina; Costa Rica; Ukraine, Thailand; Mexico
2008	Argentina; Cambodia; Costa Rica; Thailand; Ukraine; Mexico, Abbotsford
2009	Argentina; Cambodia; Costa Rica; Thailand; Ukraine; Mexico; Abbotsford
2010	Argentina; Cambodia; Philippines; Thailand; Ukraine; Mexico, Abbotsford

In total, 990 students have been involved in the S-L program at MEI between 1995 and 2010. Table 1.2 indicates the breakdown of these service assignments. Six hundred and twelve students and staff members have travelled to thirteen countries in addition to Haiti: Ukraine, Philippines, Kenya, Argentina, Costa Rica, Honduras, Thailand, Cambodia, Mexico, Hong Kong, Venezuela, Germany, and Czech Republic.

Table 1.2 Program Participation by Destination

	INTERNATIONAL	LOCAL	
Argentina 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010	75		
Cambodia 2008, 2009, 2010	30		
Costa Rica 2001, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009	102		
Czech Republic 2004	7		
Germany 2003, 2004, 2009	28		
Haiti 1995, 1997, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003	91		
Honduras 1998, 1999, 2000	31		
Hong Kong 1997	9		
Kenya 1999	11		
Philippines 1997, 1998, 1999, 2004, 2010	46		
Thailand 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010	69		
Ukraine 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010	103		
Venezuela 1998	10		
Abbotsford/Intercessory 1998, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005,2008, 2009, 2010		112	
Baker Lake 2001		8	
Halifax 2002		12	
Los Angeles 1997, 2000		26	
Mexico 1997, 2001, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010		119	
Montreal 1998, 1999, 2004, 2005		45	
Seattle 2001		29	
Toronto 2002		18	
Winnipeg 1998		9	
TOTALS	**612**	**378**	**990**

As outlined in Table 1.2, the school has also deployed service teams involving an additional 378 students to destinations in Canada and the United States including Toronto, Montreal, Halifax, Winnipeg, Nunavut, Seattle, Los Angeles and our hometown of Abbotsford. These Canadian/American destinations along with the Mexico trips are considered entry-level trips for Grade 10 students or for those individuals wishing a

lower cost experience. Students must be in Grades 11 or 12 to travel to the overseas destinations for a cross-cultural experience. All MEI service trips range in length from one week (local destinations) to two-week spring break or three week summer trips.

Each year after considering flight costs and costs at each destination, two prices are set – an international trip fee and a local trip fee. This process has evolved as well. Originally, each trip was costed and charged independently. We found that cost was the driving factor behind student choice in many cases and so we moved towards averaging the cost for all international trips. Now international trip costs are averaged and the cost borne equally by all participants, as are domestic trips. Students are responsible for covering the cost of their trips including airfare and out of pocket expenses. This has also changed as the program has evolved. Early teams embraced program fundraising initiatives, but students are now primarily responsible to raise the cost independently. However, teams still have the freedom to take on fund-raising projects if they so desire.

There is no end to destinations that are considered as possible placements for our students. However, wherever possible, MEI endeavours to partner with MEI alumni who are working in various parts of the world to utilize their support and skill in helping to organize and facilitate these trips. In selecting destinations, the school considers whether the area is safe, what the need may be in that location and whether there are sufficient opportunities for meaningful service. Also, in an effort to develop relationships with organizations and nationals in other countries, a desire to annually send MEI teams to the same locations has developed. The furthering of international relationships as MEI teams annually visit an area is seen to be a positive aspect of the IS-L program.

1.4.3 Team Selection Process

Students apply for the IS-L program in the fall of each school year, filling out a detailed application form on which they may indicate preferences in terms of types of service and locations. A committee of staff members meets to determine destinations, number of teams and to structure the teams, seeking to balance gender, student gifts, abilities and interests. Teams are formed and begin meeting each fall. They meet once or twice a week for training and preparation until the spring. Preparation usually includes language and drama training, activity preparation, travel and immunization clinics, fund-raising, team building activities and local service endeavours. Three days prior to departure, a school-wide commissioning service is held and the teams depart to participate in a two

day orientation camp which provides more intense teaching on issues such as cultural sensitivity, team dynamics and serving. When teams arrive in their country of destination, the hosts normally provide additional cultural and historical orientation. Frequently the trips include a tour of prominent sights and locations in the countries they are visiting so students gain an understanding of the context in which they are serving. During the trips, the teams meet daily for "team time" to reflect and debrief the happenings of each day, and team members are encouraged to journal their daily reflections as well. The trips conclude with team debriefings and once back in Canada, are followed by a programmatic evening of celebration and sharing which brings all the MEI S-L teams back together.

1.4.4 Types of Service Projects

Students play a variety of roles at different Service-Learning locations. Table 1.3 summarizes the service opportunities with which MEI teams have been involved and the partnerships that the S-L program has formed.

Table 1.3 Service Destinations, Partnerships and Descriptions

Place	Organization	Service Description
Argentina	Garden Ministries – Doug and Leana Janzen (MEI alumnus)	Worked with a church plant, visited orphanages and schools. Did Canada presentations and led English conversation. Did visitation to hospitals, jails, and homes for the elderly. Painted.
Cambodia	Victory Church of Cambodia – Joel Reimer (MEI alumni)	Worked with a church plant. Did children's programs, home and hospital visitation.
Costa Rica	Pura Vida	Did construction, evangelism and worked with children.
Czech Republic	SEND International – Doug and Lynn Harder (MEI alumnus)	Taught English in public schools, led youth programs, worked with Salvation Army.
Germany	Mennonite Central Committee (MCC)	Worked with immigrants from Kazakhstan, Russia and Ukraine. Involved in youth programs, worked with a community centre.
Haiti	Canadian Foundation for the Children of Haiti – John and Carolyne Neufeld (MEI parents) Heart to Heart	Helped set up Haiti's first paediatric hospital, worked in slums, an orphanage, nursery, home for handicapped, assisted in dental clinics and with child sponsorship programs, worked in Port-au-Prince, Bouva and Grand-Guave.
Honduras	Eastern Mennonite Missions	Did Hurricane Mitch relief work and construction. Worked with children.
Hong Kong	St. Stephen's Society	Worked with recovering heroin addicts and with teen street kids. Delivered rice to poor.
Kenya	Samaritan's Purse	Travelled to villages and built water filtration systems, painted a preschool, ran kid's programs and taught English as a Second Language (ESL).
Philippines	SEND International Camp Jabez/Home of Joy Manna Ministries	Worked with church plant, provided respite and painting for an orphanage, assisted in medical clinics.
Thailand	MBMSI – Ricky and Karen Sanchez (MEI alumnus)	Did Tsunami relief work, worked with church plant, worked with children who are HIV+ in an orphanage.
Ukraine	Good Shepherd Foundation	Worked with children in private and state orphanages and public schools. Did Canada presentations and participated in ESL discussion groups.
Venezuela	Mennonite Central Committee (MCC)	Did construction and worked with street kids on a ranch for street kids, visited juvenile detention home.
Baker Lake, Nunavut	Glad Tidings Church	Worked in community centre and high school with teens. Did community service projects.
Mexico	Stoney Creek – Rob and Brenda Wall (MEI parents)	Built one or two houses each year for a family. Did children's programs, worked with migrant workers.

Place	Organization	Service Description
Halifax	Gateway MB Church	Worked with inner city teens, the poor and disadvantaged. Worked in soup kitchens, did street drama and worked with church youth.
Montreal	MCC Voluntary Service/Columbia House/Nazareth House	Cleaned apartments for the elderly, worked in soup kitchens and halfway houses.
Toronto	Youth Mission International	Worked at the Food Bank, worked with Salvation Army and Evergreen street mission.
Abbotsford	Gleaners, MCC, Union Gospel Mission, Salvation Army	Served in soup kitchens, prepared food to be gleaned, worked in MCC warehouse.
Winnipeg	North Winnipeg Vineyard	Worked with people on the streets. Served food to poor.
Los Angeles	Centre for Student Missions	Fed homeless, visited shelters and helped in soup kitchens. Ran children's programs, helped in school in Watts.
Seattle	MCC	Worked in soup kitchens and community centres.

The notion of partnership and reciprocal contribution is prevalent in MEI's program. In fact, the program was originally called the MEI Missions program but underwent a change in name to the Service-Learning program when as Dave Loewen, past Director of MEI Programs, explained:

> Over the years, students signed up and participated in this program with somewhat unrealistic expectations of what they would accomplish. This is not to say that our students, with God's help and direction, have not accomplished much. However, there has been a pervasive mind-set that we (MEI Missions teams) are going to effect significant changes and that we have something to bring/offer that is new. In most cases, our students serve in a supportive role and learn/gain much more than they anticipate. There is often little anticipation that we also go to learn – to broaden our horizons in such a way that we can become more effective as kingdom workers at home. The name is intended to communicate to students that this is a reciprocal relationship, which is intended to equally benefit both parties – MEI students and destination hosts. Furthermore, the title is also more encompassing in that it embraces a wider understanding of what "missions" at MEI looks like – from elementary students filling health kits or picking up litter to secondary students travelling to faraway Thailand to help rebuild homes.

As one of the founders of the IS-L program at MEI, I have travelled on spring break trips every year since 1995, leading sixteen teams involving 163 students to destinations such as Haiti, Philippines, Ukraine and Argentina as well as a summer trip to Kenya. The MEI school community has invested a tremendous amount of energy and resources in the S-L program as participation has grown and objectives, vision and policy have

been developed and refined. Student verbal response and feedback immediately following the trips has generally been positive; however, no one has ever done long-term follow-up to investigate whether there is an enduring impact of short-term IS-L at our school. Similar questions of long-term impact reverberate in the literature, although specificities are not always clearly articulated or identified. Studies seem to indicate that S-L has value to those who participate. However, there is little research on the long-term impact of high school service learning or about the relationship between Service-Learning and youth-adult transitions (Kielsmeier et al., 2006).

In its initial years, the S-L program faced considerable opposition from staff members at MEI and local churches in our constituency. For several years, the program was carried by a nucleus of teachers who were annually willing to give up their spring break and who were then accompanied by non-staff individuals (alumni/parents). Gradually, and with MEI Board support, the program has gained general acceptance in the MEI community and a greater range of teachers are involved each year. Local churches are also showing greater acceptance, although there are still some congregations who feel that in providing these trip opportunities, the school is infringing on or conflicting with the role of the church who also run youth S-L trips. This argument of church and school conflict is somewhat difficult to justify as few churches offer S-L opportunities during the spring break period, but rather usually run trips over the summer. Students have also indicated a desire to travel with their school friends.

Over the years, the MEI Service-Learning program has become a distinguishing feature of the school. In 2005, The Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) recognized MEI's S-L program as an exemplary school program. Long-term relationships with overseas organizations have been formed as MEI teams return to some destinations annually. MEI now runs a child sponsorship program in Ukraine, providing food, shelter and education for 30 students as a result of this program. But does this program impact individual student participants as they move out of their adolescent years and into adulthood?

1.5 Introduction to my Study

The focus of my research is that of listening to and understanding participant perception. With 990 students having participated in both domestic and international trips over the past 15 years and 656 of those students having travelled between 1995-2005, I decided

to limit study participation to the 442 students who travelled internationally within MEI's IS-L program during the years of 1995-2005 inclusively. This number was further reduced by 40 students who went on more than one IS-L trip, leaving a potential of 402 candidates to locate and then survey/interview. Figure 1.1 illustrates the distribution of student participants through the 1995-2005 period. Table 1.4 illustrates the destination and program participant numbers during the years 1995-2005. I have limited my study to those who travelled internationally because I believe that an international experience adds a significant component to S-L and this is focal to my research. It is important to note that these students may have travelled more than once in our program if they participated in Grades 10 or 11 as well as Grade 12. These IS-L trips ranged from two to four weeks and included the following destinations: Ukraine, Philippines, Kenya, Argentina, Costa Rica, Haiti, Honduras, Thailand, Cambodia, Mexico, Hong Kong, Venezuela, Germany, and Czech Republic. Mexico is considered "an entry-level domestic trip" at MEI; however, I have decided to include it in this study as it is by definition an international destination and the trip provides a similar cultural experience to the overseas trips.

Figure 1.1 International Program Participation by Year 1995-2005
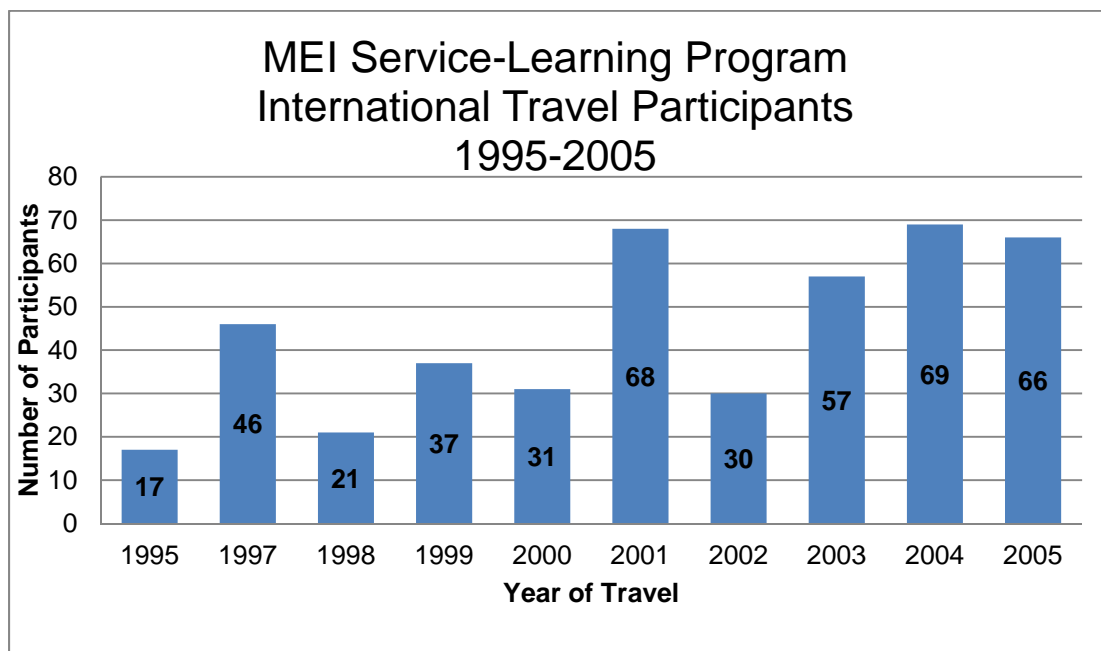
Table 1.4   Destination and Total Program Participant Numbers by Country 1995-2005

(with International trips in bold)

Destination	# of Participants	# of Participants	
Haiti	**91**		
Mexico	**76**		
Ukraine	**57**		
Costa Rica	**45**		
Philippines	**37**		
Honduras	**31**		
Hong Kong	**9**		
Germany	**28**		
Argentina	**26**		
Venezuela	**10**		
Kenya	**11**		
Thailand	**14**		
Czech Republic	**7**		
Abbotsford		67	
Halifax		12	
Toronto		18	
Los Angeles		26	
Seattle		29	
Winnipeg		9	
Baker Lake		8	
Montreal		45	
TOTALS	**442 International (40 students took 2 trips)** **402 International**	**214 Local**	**656 Total**

Accordingly, an invitation to participate in this study was mailed to as many of the 402 former international participants that I could locate - 151 of this sample were male and 251 were female.

In terms of my research sample, I am cognizant of the limitations of the sample population. Students who participate in S-L trips at MEI are largely self-selected, or have been encouraged by a teacher to sign up. I need to recognize this self-selection and acknowledge that these tend to be students who are keen to be involved. Stukas et al., (1999) note that self-selection confounds research examining the effects of community service and can skew the results. Youniss and Yates (1997) suggest that youth who sign up for service tend to be active and intense individuals who enjoy

helping. These students may have already differed prior to the study from those who did not participate in IS-L and may be pre-disposed to service activities. They may have already displayed social awareness and responsibility.

This is not problematic in this study as my research question focuses on the perceptions of those within the IS-L program. I am not looking to generalize. However, I do recognize this self-selected sample is not representative of any predefined student population and I acknowledge that this study is looking only at trip participants and not at the school population as a whole.

Lastly, there is a small group of parents who have had more than one student participate in the MEI IS-L program. I was interested in their perceptions and asked them to fill in a survey to provide their reflections as well. Although not essential for a study examining student self-perceptions, I hypothesized that their feedback may serve to corroborate and may elicit further questions about some student perceptions.

1.6 Significance of the Study

Educators are increasingly recognizing S-L as a powerful pedagogy through which experiential education unites the academic with the practical. The Service-Learning program at MEI was implemented in 1995 with the hypothesis that in addition to helping people in need around the world, this cross-cultural experiential learning might have a positive educational effect on our own participating students. Student journals, team reflections, trip evaluation forms and anecdotal feedback immediately after the trips seem to indicate that this is indeed occurring. As someone who has travelled to five countries with 16 teams over the past fifteen years, I have seen short-term merit in the program. However, there has been little thought given to evaluating potential long-term effects. I was curious to learn the longitudinal perspective of those who participated and to hear what, if any, influence they perceive their trip to have had in their development and life choices since their trips. The school also believed that a longer-term evaluation was necessary and would be worthwhile, giving further purpose to this research. I believe that all assessment/evaluation should be geared to improving student learning. It is hoped that information that emerges from this study will illuminate practice and contribute to the continuation and shaping of a program that is evolving and ever-expanding.

I believe that the best reason for conducting research is to inform and improve practice. I also believe that research legitimizes practice. I believe that researching S-L will help us to better understand our students. Miller (1997) summarized: "Reviewing the findings on differential student characteristics and experiences not only deepens our understanding of the students' changed perception of the power of people, but also significantly supports the importance of attending to these variables as mediators of Service-Learning outcomes" (p. 19). As someone who is involved in sending these teams out, this is of great interest and importance to me and to overall program development at MEI.

Society calls on schools to produce virtuous and educated citizens. As educators, we need to examine how best to facilitate this. Teachers' dreams and initiatives seem endless, as do the possibilities emanating from the supposedly standardized Integrated Resource Packages (IRP's) issued by the Ministry of Education in British Columbia. It is imperative that questions be asked about programs and initiatives as resources are limited and need to be consumed expeditiously within the school system. Programs need to be reviewed and evaluated. School Administrators are incessantly faced with a barrage of programs so they find themselves continuously considering best practice and facing the tension of evaluating outcomes of programs operating in their schools. In this study as we look at the IS-L program at MEI, I situate myself as a practitioner-researcher. The research questions that I am proposing to investigate emerge from both practice and research.

Many questions emerge upon reflection on my own International Service-Learning experience. I am cognizant that I have travelled extensively and the students in this study may have had only one International Service-Learning experience. It is difficult for me to isolate the impact of my first trip and yet the fact that I continue to lead teams speaks to an impression left from Haiti in 1995. I do know that trip caused a great deal of cognitive dissonance as I wrestled in particular with issues of distributed wealth and different levels of social service availability. I had never seen poverty to that extent and it was hard to reconcile what I knew and lived with what I was then seeing. Several "snapshots" continue to haunt me. In the desperation of the Cité Soleil slums, I was approached by a young pregnant woman asking if I would take her child and raise him or her in Canada. In Port-au-Prince, I held a starving infant as he died after he was discovered dumped alongside the road, and that same night cheered his twin on as he

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rallied to survive and outlive his tiny sibling. I was later miraculously re-united with this little one in his adoptive placement in Canada. In Grand-Guave, I visited a Pastor, his wife, and the sixty children he had living in a house the size of my garage.

These experiences cannot help but make one question and reflect. But I also realize that I came back sick and feeling overwhelmed while struggling to re-enter my cultural milieu. I wondered whether any sustainable change is incurred when a team of "western" youth travel to the third world. Re-entry is a complex process and has been shown to be a challenge for anyone who witnesses difficult life circumstances overseas. However, I had several assets: that of being older when I travelled with life experience and perspective undergirding my trip, which provided a larger context within which to process and debrief what I saw. Along with an on-going opportunity to experience similar situations as I continued to travel and further reflect, this has proven to be formative. I believe these factors have mitigated what I experienced in Haiti and have enabled me to live a balanced existence in Canada while being globally aware and involved.

As I work with youth, I wonder how they process and what they "do" with what they experience overseas. What they experience definitely seems to make an impression in the moment, but is it quickly forgotten as the students return to their routines, life and accessible commodities in Canada? Do these trips leave any lasting imprint and might they shape future thought and behaviour when a student's International Service-Learning experience occurs during the adolescent years? This study will examine these questions.

1.7 Research Questions

This research study was designed to investigate whether IS-L connects the classroom with "real life", and whether it is a vehicle that enables students to engage meaningfully with their world. Students are encouraged in these experiences to reflect critically as they gain a new understanding of others who are different from themselves. But are S-L opportunities truly transformative? Is IS-L achieving the goal of creating global citizens?

I assert that moral development underlies the actions of global citizens. In this study, I endeavoured to determine if or how IS-L affects future moral development, viewpoint and action. Understanding that in a qualitative study, questions are under continuous revision (Kvale, 1996); I started by seeking to answer the following questions:

- What is the perceived influence of an International Service-Learning program on the long-term moral development and behaviour of its participants?
- How do students perceive they were changed/influenced positively or negatively on these trips?
- Do students perceive their Service-Learning experience to have impacted their personal development (self-esteem, self-efficacy and empathy towards others)?
- Does Service-Learning build confidence in personal effectiveness and a sense of self-efficacy?
- Do these perceived changes translate into action or changed behaviour?
- What kinds of humanitarian/philanthropic/service-related involvements have high-school service learners continued to seek?
- Does International Service-Learning in high school influence students' sense of citizenship, social responsibility and global engagement later in life?
- Do Service-Learning programs contribute to and achieve the goals of schooling?
- What are the implications of this study for future International Service-Learning initiatives?

1.7.1 A Final Question: IS-L as Moral Education?

Overall, my study sought to answer the question of whether IS-L is an effective vehicle for moral education and for raising global citizens. For decades, schools have experimented with moral education. Kurtines & Gewirtz (1995) characterized three major approaches to moral education: the character education approach, the values clarification approach and the cognitive-development approach. These approaches are further outlined in my review of the literature.

The impact of character education, regardless of approach, is hard to measure long term. Attention to student performance is often a school's focus as it evaluates student success during the final formal years of schooling. In this study, I am suggesting that perhaps society ought rather to look at education in terms of the magnitude of student success *after* students graduate and become adult citizens in a global world. Perhaps we ought to evaluate adult values and action as we assess the impact of moral development.

1.8 Study Limitations and Delimitations

This study combined both qualitative and quantitative measures. In a longitudinal study, internal validity is always a concern. Royse (1991) comments that the following factors must be considered: the possible unrelated maturation of participants; the history of the participants since the experience; testing effects and over or underestimating their experience; and mortality or the inability to track down participants. I recognized that these were all limiting factors that could affect my study. However, I believed that the number of respondents and the multiplicity of sources (journals, surveys, interviews) would cause themes to emerge clearly and repeatedly, despite the lapse in time. I was looking for themes but also unique and specific aspects of student experiences in IS-L settings. In speaking of data analysis, Lincoln and Guba (1985) state, "The object of the game is not to focus on the similarities that can be developed into generalizations, but to detail the many specifics that give the context its unique flavour" (p. 201).

I realized that I was asking people to reflect on a historical experience. I recognized that memory and maturational factors may cloud their recollections as I was attempting to weave experience and reflection with present attitude and behaviours. Encouraging them to look back on trip pictures and reflections helped to reacquaint them with their IS-L experience. Participants were encouraged to bring their photos to the interviews and then to share the definition of their meaning with the interviewer. Reflexive photography is a qualitative research technique, which uses photographs to bring a focus to the analysis of and reflection of experience (Collier & Collier 1986; Harrington & Schibik, 2003). It is important to note that my study did not seek to definitively attribute subsequent participant belief and behaviour solely to these trips, but rather sought to evaluate self-perceptions around the role and impact of these trips. Accordingly, I relied on the maturation of participants in being able to communicate their thoughts and reflections.

I recognized other limitations in my study. Firstly, qualitative studies do not necessarily produce objective data. Participant observer research is also inherently subjective. In fact, Denzin (1989) asserts that one role of qualitative research is to avoid the fallacy of objectivism. My study examines self-perceptions, which were expressed through the lens of the participants and then the researcher. I recognize that descriptions of participant experiences may be, by nature, more objective than interpreting those experiences. Measurable outcomes for S-L programs are hard to come by. This study

is based almost exclusively on participant perception and self-report. We know this is not always accurate, especially when participants are recalling past events.

Second, in students who report enduring effects from their trip, it is difficult to discern whether the MEI IS-L trip planted the seed of wanting to serve or strengthened the service orientation of students. Because no pre-trip data was systematically taken (other than participants' historical reflection), the results in this study cannot be used to measure a specific quantity of change. It can, however, speak to how people think and feel, what they believe and how they act upon returning from an IS-L trip and to the degree to which they perceived this trip to have shaped these factors.

Despite this limitation, I believe that people's perceptions for better or worse constitute their reality and this is what I have been seeking to understand. I needed to listen to participant narratives and their construction of meaning closely. Hopkins (1994) suggested that:

> The idea of narrative might provide a cohesive, even protogenic, operating principle for tying lived experience to subject matter in schools. Narrative is a deeply human, linguistic process, a kind of primal developmental impulse. We are storytelling creatures. We do not just tell stories; we live them, create them, and define ourselves through them. Our narratives are the expressive, temporal medium through which we construct our functioning personae and give meaning to our experience" (p. xvi).

In discussing narratives, the Personal Narratives Group reiterated, "It is precisely because of their subjectivity – their rootedness in time, place and personal experience, in their perspective-ridden character – that we value them" (as cited in Riessman, 1993, p. 5).

As one who has been involved in the IS-L program, I needed to guard against researcher bias. I have been involved in the shaping of this program and many students have travelled with me. I recognized that I would need to pay attention to any assumptions and preconceptions I may have. However, I also recognized that I have a genuine curiosity as to how this program may affect people and I was just as eager to analyze negative reports as positive. I had to be careful not to over-generalize my findings, but rather to reflect the findings describing others' experiences. In examining participant statistics, I was mindful that 116 of the 402 students who travelled internationally between 1995 and 2005 were part of teams that I led (see Table 1.5). I

wondered if this might affect their honesty in response but hypothesized that our shared experience might also lead to a deeper understanding. Allowing participants to answer the survey anonymously also helped to mitigate this threat.

Table 1.5 Number of Students Who Travelled With Me

Students invited to be part of this study are bolded

Country	Year	Number of Students
Haiti	**1995**	**17**
Philippines	**1997**	**16**
Philippines	**1998**	**8**
Ukraine	**1999**	**7**
Kenya	**1999**	**11**
Ukraine	**2000**	**10**
Ukraine	**2001**	**9**
Ukraine	**2002**	**10**
Argentina	**2003**	**8**
Argentina	**2004**	**10**
Argentina	**2005**	**10**
Argentina	2006	7
Argentina	2007	10
Argentina	2008	11
Argentina	2009	10
Philippines	2010	9
TOTAL		**116**/163

Respondent bias could also be a potential threat. As I have already discussed, I collected data from program participants only. These students do not represent a random sample of youth – they are students who are self-selected and who chose to engage in S-L. The sample size in this study does not allow for broad generalizations of findings and so is idiographic as I relate my analysis to MEI's IS-L program only. Furthermore, relying on self-reporting may not elicit information of interest or may unintentionally provide the wrong information to readers. I was also mindful that the people I surveyed and interviewed might have wanted to please me as a former teacher, leader, program director or administrator. I addressed this in my opening survey and interview comments, encouraging participants to reflect openly and honestly on their experience. I also provided the option of anonymity to survey participants.

Last, S-L is complex. The variables within programs are innumerable. Many factors could influence an IS-L experience, beginning with the participant. I have seen how who a person is and what he/she brings in terms of self-understanding, ability to relate, gifts, abilities and weaknesses, previous exposure to service and perceptions and expectations can have a significant impact on both his/her personal and the team's experience. Kiely (2005b) refers to this as "cultural baggage". A second factor is the constitution of a team. This can have huge implications as a group serves together. Third, the site, length of service as well as the service activity itself has been shown to shape and impact an experience. Last, the level of reflection and processing also influences the experience. With this many variables it seems ludicrous to consider generalizing any aspect of Service-Learning. Furthermore, this study is one case study and represents just one school's experience. Essentially, the findings of this study are limited to the IS-L program at MEI. Other schools considering IS-L as a tool for globalization may find the information and suggestions helpful, but caution must be used in extrapolating any data.

As this case study tells the story of one school's program, I recognize its findings will not be highly generalizable. However, it is believed that participants in this program have a story to tell that may help guide the future of the Service-Learning Program at MEI. Furthermore, the study may elicit at least some important questions and considerations for others who look to operate similar IS-L programs at the secondary level. I was confident that the research sample along with a multi-methods approach to data collection and analysis would overcome the limitations in a manner that allowed the generation of useful and valuable data from this study.

1.9 Organization of the Study

This dissertation is a case study exploring one secondary school's IS-L program. It examines whether students perceive a short-term IS-L trip in high school to have influenced their moral development and subsequent behaviour. It explores their perceptions and actions five to fifteen years after their trip/graduation. In this chapter, I have outlined the context for my study by describing one school's IS-L initiative and I have endeavoured to outline a rationale for this study. In the chapters that follow, I will explicate the foundation and structure for my study.

Throughout my discussion and analysis in this study, I review research discussing the potential role and effects of S-L (and IS-L in particular) in moral development and behaviour that then leads to the shaping of global citizens. My literature review further seeks to position and contextualize my research as it identifies theories and previous research that shape my topic. Chapter 2 therefore reviews the literature that surrounds character education and Service-Learning and presents the conceptual framework for my study. The review of the literature continues by examining the intersection of moral development and S-L. As the study focuses on students in a secondary setting, the developmental period of adolescence and the subsequent transition into adulthood was of interest as I explored the issue of moral growth.

The definitions and constructs of citizenship, moral behaviour, moral education, S-L and IS-L emerge through my literature review. I argue that global citizenship requires morally educated people. That argument is divided into three sections wherein a triadic framework is used to describe moral education. The impact of IS-L on the maturation toward moral development is judged to occur when one (1) situates oneself through developmental changes (2) practices moral action and (3) engages in reflective dialogue. I then examine, within the framework of these three constituents, how moral education seeks to develop virtuous citizens, and actualize development through experience while concurrently inciting purposeful dialogue and reflection.

Chapter 3 explores the methodology for data collection and data analysis that was used in this study. The findings that emerge are then presented in Chapter 4 – the chapter which reflects the voices of study participants. Chapter 5 concludes the study by discussing conclusions, implications and recommendations for the IS-L program and for future research.

2: REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Educating for Global Citizenship

The challenge to raise global citizens is pervasive and of immeasurable importance. During the 1500's, Montaigne maintained that cultivating a sense of humanity was the basis for mercy and sympathy and the only thing that could contain "the propensity towards a cycle of vengeance and resentment" that is erupting around the world (Turner, 2002, p. 51). As we prepare students for globalization, hope for a peaceful future rests in our schools and in moral education. Moral education consists of helping youth to acquire virtues that will enable them to lead a good life individually while also becoming contributing members of society. Any discussion of moral education must explore how to best educate those entrusted to our school system to be the best human beings possible, to be morally responsible and to be active on both the civic and global levels. Such a discussion will foster an understanding of how identity, role and membership develop in a global context in order to meet the objective of shaping global citizens.

Many researchers have attempted to define global citizenship. Generally, they comment on the type of thinking required, contemplate the required juggling of one's own culture in living mutually with other cultures and consider the sharing of world resources (Boulding 1988; Hurtado 2007). Almost all discussions regarding educating for citizenship begin with the importance of connecting the school to its local community (Hanifan 1916; Boyer 1994; Gottlieb & Robinson 2002). Being a member of an even larger community, or being "a global citizen" has increasingly been examined in the literature (Falk 2000; Carter 2001; Heater 2002; Singer 2002; Held 2005; Richards & Franco 2006; Sangiovanni 2007). Researchers are defining global education with different emphases. The commonality running through the definitions speaks of using understanding, knowledge and critical thinking to treat all people justly and fairly - and of pursuing human rights and social justice. In 2000, The United Nations defined global education as "education for human rights, peace, international understanding, tolerance and non-violence," also stating "it includes all aspects of education relating to the principles of democracy and multicultural and intercultural education". Perhaps the

words of Osler and Vincent (2002) best capture a definition of global education in a manner most relevant to our pending discussion of Service-Learning (S-L):

> Global education encompasses the strategies, policies and plans that prepare young people and adults for living together in an interdependent world. It is based on the principles of cooperation, non-violence, respect for human rights and cultural diversity, democracy and tolerance. It is characterized by pedagogical approaches based on human rights and a concern for social justice, which encourage critical thinking and responsible participation. Learners are encouraged to make links between local, regional and worldwide issues and to address inequality. An educated cosmopolitan citizen will be confident in his/her own identities and will work to achieve peace, human rights and democracy within the local community and at a global level (p. 2).

While facilitating thinking about constructs such as justice, power, privilege and oppression, global education should then inspire students to act to defend the best interest of an individual and the common good. Parks Daloz et al. (1996) examined the lives of people who were engaged with diversity and complexity and committed to the common good. They state that the single most important pattern they found in their lives was "a constructive, enlarging engagement with the other" (p. 62). This engagement "jolted their idea of who they were and where they stood in the world, challenging their previously held assumptions about who was 'one of us' and 'who was not', challenged some earlier boundary and opened the way to a larger sense of self and the world" (p. 65). The authors characterize these people as having four habits of the mind: the habit of dialogue grounded in the understanding that meaning is constructed through an on-going interaction between oneself and others; the habit of critical, systemic thought - having cultural consciousness, the capacity to identify parts and the connections among them as coherent patterns and to reflect evaluatively on them; the habit of dialectical thought - the ability to recognize and work effectively with contradictions by resisting closure or by reframing one's response; and the habit of holistic thought or the ability to intuit life as an interconnected whole in a way that leads to practical wisdom (p. 108). As we attempt to develop global citizens, it is imperative that we, as educators, examine how to best equip our students with these very habits ("the means to the end"). We must examine how schools can "enlarge perspectives" and develop these types of relational, caring, peace-pursuing, world-focused, world-changing students (Kiely, 2004).

Enlarging one's worldview means creating an honouring sense of "otherness", rather than a pre-occupation with self. This can be a challenge to adolescents

developmentally. How can schools instil a concern for others and world issues that will produce genuine empathetic, unselfish and moral behaviours? Batson (1991) and Oliner & Oliner (1988) suggest that four social processes are involved in creating caring, altruistic relationships: bonding and forming positive connections with others, empathizing and understanding others' feelings and emotions and imagining how the person in need is affected by his/her situation; learning caring norms and practicing care; and assuming personal responsibility. Researchers concur that educating for global citizenship means students gain understanding of the people with whom they are interacting. They gain an understanding of the background of individuals by studying historical contexts, embracing multiculturalism, viewing the challenges, issues and problems people face from multiple perspectives, and becoming involved by clarifying values while taking action that is socially responsible (Richardson 1979; Rubin & Giarelli, 2008). Smith (1976) refers to this as developing a "critical corporate self-consciousness".

As a teacher in a high school setting, I wrestled with how to inculcate this sense of "otherness" and cultural awareness in my students. I wondered how to help students make connections between their own privileged lives and the needs of those around them and how to impel them towards critically considering global issues and inspiring them to invest/contribute globally. It seemed like these were life lessons that could not be brought to life through engagement with a textbook. They needed to emerge and be taught in relationship.

Throughout history, educators have recognized the importance of teaching about social interaction. Emile Durkheim (1961) was one of the first to describe socialization when he discussed the need for "we" and community stating: "the fact is that man is not truly himself, he does not fully realize his own nature, except on the condition that he be involved in society...Man is more vulnerable to self-destruction the more he is detached from any collectivity" (pp. 67-68). Bandura (1977) then went on in his social learning theory (or social cognitive theory) to depict social learning in terms of a causal and reciprocal relationship between a person, his environment and behaviour. This furthered the work of Kurt Lewin (1948) who had asserted that an individual's behaviour was a function of the person and his/her interaction with the environment. The idea of socializing children and the emphasis on "otherness" has led to a concept that schools now refer to as social responsibility. In general, a socially responsible person helps

others in need and is prepared to make commitments. Pascarella et al. (1988) termed this having "humanitarian and civic values". Social responsibility, therefore, leads to citizenship. Hamilton and Fenzel (1988) suggest that social responsibility comes only when a person can move beyond self-fulfilment to value engaging civically and fulfilling social obligations. Giles Jr. and Eyler (1994) assert that "sustained citizenship participation is thought to rest on the values, attitudes and beliefs about service that make up 'social responsibility'" (p. 328). The challenge is then how to engender this sense of social responsibility on a global level in our students.

In British Columbia, elements of global citizenship have now been legitimized in the curriculum. In 1997, the BC Ministry of Education identified social responsibility as one of the four performance standards that should be promoted alongside reading, writing, and numeracy. Four years later, in 2001, the Ministry fully implemented the voluntary BC Performance Standards for Social Responsibility. This pragmatic document champions developing "community minded students in their responses to school, local, national and global issues and events" (p. 7). It identifies a common set of expectations and levels of performance for student development in several areas including contributing to the classroom and school community, problem solving in peaceful ways, valuing diversity and defending human rights, as well as exercising democratic rights and responsibilities locally, nationally and globally. Additionally, in 2007, the BC government introduced an optional Social Justice 12 course. Its Integrated Resource Package (2007) describes the course goals as helping students: to acquire knowledge required to recognize and understand injustice, to apply critical thinking and ethical reasoning skills, to understand what it means to act in a just manner and to become responsible agents of change in order to contribute positively. The mandate is clear.

2.2 An Introduction to and Definition of Service-Learning

My study explores whether incorporating S-L into our schools may be an effective means of meeting these curricular objectives of extending worldviews, developing good citizens and fostering socialization and social responsibility. I suggest that S-L may be a form of moral education worth exploring as it propels students towards personal and moral development, moral action and transformative reflection. These three elements form a structure, which I later refer to as the triadic framework of moral education.

S-L is a concept that has evolved over the years. Rather than examining its path of evolution, this study focuses on the definition and components that emerged in an exploration of how it may contribute to moral education. Astin (1984) presented a theory of student involvement, which suggests that the quality and quantity of a student's academic and personal development is a direct function of the student's degree of involvement in the learning/academic experience. Involvement suggests an investment and a commitment of time and energy. S-L is an activity that requires a high level of involvement and investment and therefore it would conceivably contribute to students' academic and personal development. It has been theorized that S-L enhances citizenship by connecting adolescents to society in authentic experiences, which demonstrate that they can actually make a difference that has substance over time. This may create an awareness of social and political issues as well as stimulate a sense of social agency and responsibility.

In discussing how S-L may facilitate moral education, it is first important to have a clear understanding of what S-L is. A growing body of research identifies S-L as a general pedagogy that engages students in opportunities that teach knowledge, skills and understanding for active participation at the community and global levels (Rutter & Newmann 1989; Delve et al., 1990; Barber, 1994; Barber & Battistoni 1993; Cross 1998; Levine & Cureton, 1998; Eyler & Giles Jr., 1999; Jones & Hill, 2001). However, reaching consensus on more specific characteristics of S-L is elusive. A disparity in types and length of service has resulted in there being no single criterion or definition of S-L in the literature. Kendall et al. (1990) summarized 147 S-L descriptors, stating S-L is a specific method to deliver content knowledge (a pedagogy) and a worldview that permeates curriculum instruction and assessment (a philosophy). Kendall asserts that good S-L programs illuminate sociological, cultural and political contexts. Freire (1972) had earlier referred to this very component as "taking people's historicity as their starting point" (p. 65). Kendall also emphasizes that S-L accentuates reciprocity – "a doing with" instead of just "doing for". This supported Sigmon's (1979) previous assertion that S-L occurs only when both providers and recipients benefit from the service. Rhoads and Neururer (1998) also refer to "this mutuality" – the willingness to receive as well as to give. Lastly, Furco (1996a) had similarly summarized that service should benefit the provider and recipient of the service as well. Furco actually suggests that S-L should place *equal* emphasis on the service provided and the learning that is occurring. Society seeks to narrow the definition of S-L further; but to date, it appears that most researchers agree

that S-L entails providing for those in need, correcting power imbalances and advocating for the marginalized and for social change. It also has an element of reception to the service providers. In fact, some have suggested that those who contribute to S-L receive in personal growth and development as much as they contribute to the lives of others.

In a reciprocal relationship, there is an implied connection between the person who serves and those being served. In S-L research, the impact on those who are served often appears most evident. However, some studies on S-L also attempt to show a linkage between meeting community needs and an impact on self, suggesting that S-L may be a means to invite personal development (Stanton et al., 1999; Jacoby et al., 1996). Claus and Ogden (1999) suggest that a good S-L program will allow adolescents to explore a community, identify needs and then propose ways to meet those needs. This enables them to learn about themselves and others, to identify their own strengths and weaknesses, to experiment with leadership planning and to work with a group. Through this personal development, the self is situated and an identity is created. This personal development underlies moral education and action and represents the first strand of the triadic framework for moral education that I am proposing.

Many educators agree that S-L is a strategy, which recognizes that students learn best when actively engaged both physically and mentally and which favours linking the community to the classroom through service. Researchers agree that the active and experiential nature of S-L successfully integrates the theoretical with the practical. Practicing moral action will be later discussed as the second strand of my triadic framework of moral education.

Of the many S-L definitions reflected in the literature, I have chosen to use the one which was operationalized by legislation in the United States and subsequently summarized by two national organizations. These definitions are broad, encapsulating and clearly expressing a wide variety of the tenets present in S-L, which are also applicable to international experiences and therefore most relevant to my study. The National Service-Learning Clearinghouse defines S-L as a "teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities" (as cited in Keen & Hall 2009). The National Society for Experiential Education (NSEE) defines S-L as "any carefully monitored service experience in which a student has

intentional learning goals and reflects actively on what he or she has learned throughout the experience". NSEE (1998) suggests eight principles for practice for S-L. These include intention, authenticity, planning, clarity, monitoring and assessment, reflection and acknowledgement. However, it was the National and Community Service Act (1990) that finally operationalized S-L in the United States with the following criteria: (1) Students learn and develop through active participation in thoughtfully organized service experiences that meet actual community needs and that are coordinated in collaboration with the school and community. (2) It is integrated into the students' academic curriculum or provides structured time for a student to think, talk or write about what the student did and saw during the actual service activity. (3) It provides students with opportunities to use newly acquired skills and knowledge in real-life situations in their own communities, and (4) It enhances what is taught in school by extending student learning beyond the classroom and into the community and helps to foster the development of a sense of caring for others (as cited in Cohen & Kinsley, 1994, pp. 5-6). I have used this definition of S-L in my literature review and research, as I believe it encapsulates how and why we as educators might consider S-L as a suitable educational strategy within a school system. It requires identification of need, collaboration with the larger world outside of the school, connection to the curriculum, further development of knowledge and skills and a reflective element.

The term "Service-Learning" is often used interchangeably with other active terms such as community service, volunteerism, internships or field-based education. All these activities share the attribute of serving others; however, S-L encompasses much more. As an educational term, it includes the specific goal of academic and personal learning. This has been thoroughly discussed in the literature. Some researchers have suggested that there is a continuum of S-L: Volunteer activities that range from emphasizing simply serving and those served – to programs that focus primarily on learning, such as internships and field-based education (Furco, 1996b). Other researchers (Sigmon, 1994; Eyler & Giles Jr.,1999; Billig, 2000a) suggest that S-L falls in the middle – an equal blend of service and learning, of the practical (action) and the theoretical (reflection). Jacoby et al., (1996) feel that "the hyphen in S-L is critical in that it symbolizes the symbiotic relationship between service and learning" (p. 5). Rosenberg (2000) and Thomsen (2006) also differentiate between volunteerism and S-L, by emphasizing S-L's connection to classroom instruction and emphasizing the component of reflection added to the action of service in S-L. In fact, to several researchers

(Sigmon, 1994; Furco, 1996a; Wade 1997), these elements of curriculum integration and reflection distinguish S-L from other volunteerism. Reflection connects a service experience to curriculum, deepens learning and requires the incorporation of critical thinking. The concept and importance of reflection and subsequent transformation in S-L is consistently addressed in the literature and viewed as critical and will be revisited later in this review as the third and final triadic strand of moral education.

Generalizable effects of S-L have been difficult to discern, as studies on S-L have not been conducted in a systematic manner. S-L programs look different, researchers use different measuring instruments and studies are difficult to replicate. This review reflects many studies on S-L and acknowledges that there are a handful of very influential researchers and studies in this discipline. Conrad & Hedin paved the way in the 1980's followed by Eyler & Giles Jr. and Melchior & Bailis in the 1990's and Astin, Vogelsgang, Ikeda & Yee as well as Billig in 2000. *The Michigan Journal of Community Service Research* has also become an instrumental resource in the field of S-L. In the past 8 years, several large reports on S-L have been published: *The Kellogg Foundation Retrospective Report* (2002); *Smart & Good High Schools* (2005); *Youth Helping America* (2006); *Growing to Greatness* (2006); *Research in S-L* (2007). Although these reports have informed my study, their discussion centred on community S-L, so apart from incorporating the studies' outcomes pertaining to the impact that serving has on students, the reports are not instrumental to an investigation examining international experiences.

2.3 The Added Dimension: An International Experience

Most of the studies cited in this review refer to domestic or local S-L and its contribution to moral education. This is because research on the outcomes of International Service-Learning (IS-L) is not extensive. As service activities and goals can be quite similar in both domestic and international S-L experiences, I have used outcome research from domestic S-L interchangeably. It is important, however, to recognize that IS-L adds another dimension that is not present in local opportunities. Charles Kammer (1988) summarizes that:

> Our experiences also shape our moral feelings and intuitions. Growing up in a white, middle-class neighbourhood may make it very difficult for us to empathize with the pain, desolation, and difficulties of minorities or the poor in our culture….Being immersed in a minority culture, becoming a

minority in another culture, may help us to better understand and empathize with the situation of persons whom our society regularly degrades and dehumanizes. Such experiences may awaken new moral feelings in us and so offer us new moral possibilities (p. 29).

IS-L places students in a service situation in a foreign country and offers a depth of experience that is impossible to replicate in one's own familiar surroundings or in a classroom. Students are exposed to and immersed in the realities of privilege, poverty and oppression first-hand and are asked to reflect upon cultural and international issues. Not only do they learn about the culture, beliefs and social issues of a people, students "truly live" the experience 24 hours a day for the duration of their trip. They may live in the homes of the local people and step into their lives and realities. They work with organizations to serve the community in which they are staying. A human face and a personality become attached to the issue at hand and the people, embedded in a particular geographic location, become the curriculum itself. Students are forced to wrestle with questions regarding developing a better quality of life for human beings and the role of the western world in such matters. In 1974, the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) produced an excellent description of international education, which encompasses IS-L:

> International education should further develop the appropriate intellectual and emotional development of the individual. It should develop a sense of social responsibility, of solidarity with less privileged groups, and should lead to observance of the principles of equality in everyday conduct. It also should help to develop qualities, aptitudes and abilities that enable the individual to acquire a critical understanding of problems at the national and the international level; to understand and explain facts, opinions and ideas; to work in a group; to accept and participate in free discussion; to observe the elementary rules of procedure applicable to any discussion; and to base value judgments and decisions on a rational analysis of relevant facts and factors (as cited in Lutterman-Aguilar & Gingerich, 2002, p. 47)

Therefore, IS-L by nature often elicits issues of great moral proportions and seems like a logical vehicle for precipitating moral education. Eyler & Giles Jr. (1999) state that authentic S-L experiences enhance the community and impart powerful consequences for the students. The experiences have the following characteristics in common: they are positive, meaningful and real to the participants; they involve cooperative experiences and promote teamwork and citizenship skills; they address complex problems and offer participants the opportunity to engage in contextual problem solving;

they promote deeper learning; and due to their immediacy, they elicit emotional responses, challenging values and ideas. "Experience enhances understanding; understanding leads to more effective action" (p. 9). Both local and international S-L can facilitate this type of experience and understanding.

Therefore, at the same time as hypothesizing that there are similar outcomes in domestic and international service experiences, I am suggesting that I-SL likely offers a more intense experience. Paige (1993) identifies several aspects of IS-L that may intensify the S-L experience: experiencing cultural differences, confronting ethnocentrism, communicating in a new language, being immersed in a new culture – isolated and removed from home, having new experiences and perhaps experiencing being a minority with issues of power and control. In fact, Lingenfelter & Mayer (2003) point out that if we truly want students to experience a paradigm shift from ethnocentrism, the process requires language learning and living with people. Crabtree (2008) also comments that "international immersion experiences involve intense psycho-emotional, ideological, and physiological disruptions" (p. 21). Rhoads (1997) concurs, stating that international immersion experiences cause students to think differently about the world and to consider their relationship with the world in new ways. Lundberg et al. (2007) believe that such an experience has two outcomes. The first is humanitarianism as students understand and gain an appreciation of human differences, become more culturally competent and develop a sense of social responsibility. Secondly, students develop interpersonal and intrapersonal competence, or the "students' ability to critically reflect on their personal social standpoint and engage in communication with others different than themselves" (p. 7).

There is limited research on the impact of IS-L programs (Myers-Lipton, 1996; Grusky 2000; Hartman & Rola, 2000; Kraft & Krug, 2002; Kiely, 2005b; Crabtree, 2008). Most studies have consisted of self-reports, have tended to highlight a particular program and report short-term effects. Most studies have also reported on students at the college level. These studies demonstrate that participation in IS-L increases students' intercultural competence and intercultural sensitivity; tolerance for ambiguity; understanding of global issues; language skills; and sense of global citizenship. They suggest that this type of service reduces stereotypes and facilitates cultural understanding (Pyle 1981; Myers-Lipton 1996; Crabtree 2008; Monard-Weissman 2003b; Fitch 2004). Research also links IS-L to social development as participants

better understand social issues and gain a sense of social responsibility and commitment to social action (Monard-Weissman, 2003b). However, even with these studies, we still have little data concerning high school service-learners and we do not really know whether IS-L at any level has long-term impact. Only Kiely (2005b) has looked at IS-L longitudinally with the intent to focus on any subsequent long-term transformative impact on perspective and action. In his case study, he found all study participants to have experienced some form of perspective transformation. Hartman & Rola (2000) summarize the majority of research on S-L: "We do not know whether these changes continue throughout a lifetime, but the short term changes are all positive" (p. 21).

Critics of S-L have questioned the use of time, money and personnel during short-term IS-L trips. Some suggest that the money would be better utilized, and be more impacting if it was simply sent to the country of destination. Linhart (2005) estimated that nearly 250,000 middle and high school students spent over 100 million dollars in 2003 to participate in short-term international service trips. Van Engen (2000) challenges:

> A spring break group spent their time and money painting and clearing the orphanage in Honduras. That money could have paid two Honduran painters who desperately needed the work, with enough left over to hire four new teachers, build a new dormitory, and provide each child with new clothes (p. 21).

While this may be true, proponents recognize and return to the dual reciprocal goals of S-L – those of helping people in need but also impacting the teens who travel.

As noted, much of the research demonstrates positive effects of S-L in student growth and development. However, although it has been suggested that S-L has the potential to shape life-long student interest and commitment to service, Melchior (1998) saw little change in civic-social attitudes in students who served. A study by the National Association of Secretaries of State in 1999 likewise asserted that student involvement in the larger civic realm was unchanged despite an increase in service involvement. Kiely (2005b) concludes, "Transformational learning that stems from participation in domestic and international S-L programs tends to be ambiguous and under-theorized" (p. 275). A further suggestion that emerges in the research is that not everyone benefits equally from an IS-L experience and that such a trip may actually increase the stereotypes and

gaps in citizenship due to race or gender (Eyler & Giles Jr., 1999). Grusky (2000) also cautions:

> Without thoughtful preparation, orientation, program development, the encouragement of study, and critical analysis and reflection, the programs can easily become small theatres that recreate historic cultural misunderstandings and simplistic stereotypes and replay, on a more intimate scale, the huge disparities in income and opportunity that characterize North-South today (p. 858).

Mixed opinions on this issue emerge as Roschelle et al., (2000) counter that S-L in fact enables stereotypes to be challenged by direct interaction: "Individuals whom students previously defined as 'other' become human beings who deserve compassion. Many students then begin developing a strong commitment to social justice that some maintain throughout their adult life" (p. 841). I am proposing that it is the depth of experience that may make a difference. Parks et al. (1996) suggest that "superficial encounters with those who are different can often lead to stereotyping and fortressing, but encounters which evoke empathic recognition of a shared humanity and will-to-live foster a generous commitment, not simply to me and mine but to the common good upon which we all depend" (p. 215). Rhoads (1997) believes this recognition and acceptance of difference is critical as he indicated that culture is the backdrop for identity development, saying that culture "establishes the parameter for our social interactions...(and) provides a framework for how we define ourselves in relation to others" (p. 55). Others see IS-L as a form of manipulation or indoctrination as students are taken overseas to "see the poverty". In response, a recurring factor that emerges from the literature is a call to have students have a voice in IS-L activities. Without an opportunity to control parts of the experience, it appears students do not connect with the experience (Morgan & Streb, 2001; Hart et al., 2007). Kielsmeier (2000) refers to this as "shedding the passive mantle of dependence for the more active roles of contribution and influence" (p. 652).

Overall, what becomes apparent is that IS-L is an under-researched phenomenon in all areas. However, amidst the diverse propositions and lack of information, it does initially appear that the short-term social and personal benefits of IS-L may mirror those of domestic S-L.

As we contemplate a call to global citizenship and moral education, educators are naturally led to consider what type of citizens we wish to graduate from our school system and the means by which we will shape and develop the students in our schools

today. I will now characterize a globalized student and examine how that citizen develops. In particular, this study focuses on how we morally educate our students who then contribute to society and the world at large. As we consider IS-L as a possible means of creating morally educated, global citizens, I examine the three tenets that comprise moral education along with relevant research on S-L and ISL.

In his writing on moral literacy, Wynne (1986) asserts that society needs to help students to become good, not just smart. But what does "becoming good" look like? Aristotle was one of the earliest theorists to articulate a clear and enduring definition of virtuous citizens who worked for the common good of society. Now, thousands of years later, his descriptions continue to personify the desired outcomes for both S-L programs and for moral education. For this reason, I have used Aristotle to introduce my discussion on developing virtuous and responsible citizens. His conceptualization of virtues, moral purpose, repeated action or habituation, the common good; and his recognition of the particular remain relevant and foundational to any discussion on S-L.

2.3.1 Whom are we trying to produce? Aristotle and the Virtuous Citizen

Some theorists have argued that developing moral identity is a goal of moral education. As an identity is constituted by a sense of "who we are", a key element in the development of youth is the development of virtue. Both Aristotle (Nichomachean Ethics - Broadie & Rowe, 2002) and MacIntyre (1984) believe that moral education revolves around the deliberate cultivation of virtues and the nature of a good life. Their emphasis is on the person discovering and cultivating the virtues. Interestingly, any strategic development of virtues has since been questioned in the literature as people debate whether virtues are innate or developed. Society questions how values emerge and contest whether they are situation or culture dependent.

According to Aristotle, virtues house our moral values and they arise through "hexeis" or habits of excellence. Character arises through habituation - out of activities and consistent repeated acts. "Habits are part of maturing as they shape who we become. We control our actions, our actions give rise to our habits, our habits shape our character; our character is who we are" (Vella, 2008, p. 138). Aristotle spoke to the importance of habit formation in youth and so inferred that adolescence would be a significant time of development. He further asserted that moral values lie within these virtues. Rokeach (1972) defines a value as "a type of belief, centrally located within

one's belief system, about how one ought or ought not to behave, or about some end-state of existence worth or not worth attaining" (p. 124). According to Aristotle, it is not our actions that make us virtuous, but it is rather the moral value within the person who is performing the moral actions. Moral virtue or virtue of character is always the medial state between two extremes or "the intermediate state" between excess and deficiency. Aristotle spoke of a continuum of excellence – that for every excellence of character, there is a corresponding pair of faulty dispositions, which he called the excessive and deficient. Moderation therefore represented soundness of mind.

The idea of this continuum is interesting when one considers S-L. In his article *Sympathy Deformed*, Dalrymple (2010) concurs with Aristotle and cautions that:

> to sympathize with those who are less fortunate is honourable and decent. A man able to commiserate only with himself would surely be neither admirable nor attractive. But every virtue can become deformed by excess, insincerity, or loose thinking into an opposing vice. Sympathy, when excessive, moves toward sentimental condescension and eventually disdain; when insincere, it becomes unctuously hypocritical; and when associated with loose thinking, it is a bad guide to policy and frequently has disastrous results. It is possible, of course to combine all three errors (p. 44).

Aristotle addresses a number of virtues individually in his writing. His thoughts on generosity and justice are particularly relevant to a discussion on S-L. He characterizes an emotional virtue of kindness to others as "kharis". He defines open-handedness and cheerfully giving to others as a virtue. Kristjansson (2007) reveals that true generous acts are performed for the right reason or as Aristotle states, from a "firm and unchanging state of character" (II, 4,1005a32, p. 115). A virtuous person understands the "rightness" of an action and thus performs it. A generous person emerges through moral habituation and through consistently emulating worthy role models. This person understands "the rightness" in virtuous action and therefore chooses to perform this right action. Kristjansson (2007) believes that S-L is "the modern form of moral education which comes closest to Aristotle's description and which importantly for our present concerns can be aimed at cultivating generosity" (p. 135) because it exposes students to real-world experiences and challenges them to act virtuously in the given circumstances. Giving students opportunities to engage in generous activities is critical. Finally, in a discussion regarding creating global citizens, it is significant to note that Aristotle aligns

justice as the highest and most complete virtue because it is other-centred. We will see that fostering a sense of social justice and "other-ness" is paramount in S-L programs.

2.3.1.1 Phronesis

Aristotle defined phronesis, or practical wisdom/prudence as "a true disposition accompanied by rational prescription, relating to action in the sphere of what is good and bad for human beings" (VI. 5, 1140b20, p. 180). Phronesis serves the moral virtues by helping to find the right ends and the means to achieve the ends. Phronesis undergirds acts of service. MacIntyre (1966) concludes:

> Without it (phronesis), one cannot be virtuous. A man may have excellent principles, but not act on them. Or he may perform just or courageous actions, but not be just or courageous, having acted through fear of punishment, say. In each case, he lacks prudence...the virtue that is manifested in acting so that one's adherence to other virtues is exemplified in one's action (74).

Halverson (2004) elaborates: "Phronesis is the experiential knowledge, embedded in character, used by individuals to determine and follow courses of intentional action...a moral form of knowledge, guided by the habits of virtue that come to form character" (p. 92). Aristotle taught that phronesis is acquired through experience (practice and rehearsal) and reflection rather than direct instruction. Halverson (2004) characterizes phronesis as providing "a kind of executive function", resulting from "habitual action and embedded in character" (p. 92). Aristotle saw phronesis as the foundation of all virtues, the centre of character and critical to maintaining, developing, and growing one's moral character. Halverson (2004) summarizes Aristotelian philosophy:

> Our character represents the individual network of habits we acquire through training and through subsequent experience that determines our ability to act virtuously. In Aristotle's terms, the processes of deliberation, choice and action must be explicitly learned and practiced at first, then through experience become habits of character that are simply manifested in action. Phronesis represents the accumulated wisdom embodied in character that helps us to determine which action is worth taking in a given situation (p. 98).

Aristotle blazed the educational trail of character education and virtue development. In *Nichomachean Ethics*, Aristotle explores what is good for human beings and what it means to live well. Vella (2008) suggests that Aristotle approached ethics as the science of human character as he looked at what are "fine and noble actions". Aristotle

asserts that we must educate citizens to be virtuous, that we should focus on "being" rather than "doing" as this is fundamental to happiness. Along with virtues and phronesis, Aristotle's notion of purpose and happiness is fundamental to a discussion on moral formation.

2.3.1.2 Eudaimonia

Helping students to discover purpose and then practice virtuous acts is inherent to S-L. Aristotle believed people have "telos" or a purpose they were created to fulfil. He refers to "eudaimonia" as the ultimate human good or happiness – not as a feeling but rather as a status that is secured through one's own actions and choices. He defines eudaimonia as activity expressing virtue (I, 4, 1095a15-20, p. 284). "It is the state of being well and doing well in being well, of a man's being well-favoured himself and in relation to the divine" (MacIntyre, 1984, p. 148). Eudaimonia infers an exemplary life achieved by performing good and noble acts. Praxis is moral-political action. Praxis aims at a good and worthwhile life (eudaimonia) in which how one goes about living his/her life is also considered to be important – the means are integral to the end. If an activity achieves in its end (or telos) what is internal to it, it is praxis.

These notions of expressing virtue through service and the need for practice and action are relevant to our discussion of S-L. MacIntyre (1984) defines practice as a cooperative activity between humans that occurs in a social setting. Internal goods are embedded in the practice and are realized when practitioners apply virtues to the task at hand and do the practice well. In fact, MacIntyre states that "goods...can only be discovered by entering into those relationships which constitute communities whose central bond is a shared vision of an understanding of the goods" (p. 258). As we seek to develop virtuous, globally engaged citizens and the sense of purpose to which each has been called, uncovering these goods in each student becomes an important feat.

2.3.1.3 Action and the Common Good

Aristotle believed that actions are an outpouring of the virtuous person and thus things cannot be viewed apart from action. Values and priorities are developed through practicing actions. This would suggest that students need both excellence in moral character and need to act on that excellence. This mirrors the first two tenets of the triadic framework – character and action. Excellence of character is achieved by

practicing the actions or ways typical of excellence. He further indicated that it is not perception that originates action but, rather, character excellence that weighs the means that reason presents and thereby determines a good decision. Good action should be aimed at the good of a community and nation, and moral development propels action towards the common good. Aristotle espoused a vision for the common good – that which is good for every human being. McIntyre (1984) proposes a different way of life in which people work together in genuinely political communities to acquire the virtues and fulfil their innately human purpose. He proposes that the common good is sustained when narrative selves "embrace the proper roles" required for them by their particular narratives. S-L shares this focus and often facilitates the shift from an "I" to the "we". Students learn that education is not solely geared toward their personal success, but rather, toward working for the betterment of society.

Ironically, critics of S-L also refer to the notion of the common good. Although they share a concern for the common good, they question the means of achieving it. They assert that if we really wanted to bring the greatest benefit to the greatest number of people, we would send money instead of people into third world countries: "Perhaps we could reform the present system which allows relatively well-off people in this world to travel long distances to experience other peoples' misery for a life-enriching experience" (Guo, 1989, p. 108). However, that perspective again solely considers impact on program recipients but not participants. Grusky (2000) counters that perhaps S-L is not so much a "life-enriching" but rather a "complacency shattering" or "soul-searching" experience (p. 866). Both perspectives need to be considered as we contemplate educational strategies to better our world.

2.3.1.4 Particular vs. Universal

Last, Aristotle's ideas also contributed to a debate prevalent in S-L literature – that of the universal vs. the particular. Society continues to debate whether there are universal principles and virtues that should be transmitted to students. Does the particular emerge in an S-L setting more effectively? This question is foundational to moral education and is reflected in many programs targeting moral education, such as virtues education. Aristotle emphasizes that phronesis is not only concerned with the universals and noted the importance of the particular: "To be wise, one must also be familiar with the particular, since wisdom has to do with action and the sphere of action is constituted by

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particular" (VI.8, 1142a15, p. 192). He also believed that practice occurs in response to concrete, practical situations. Dunne (1993) reiterates this idea: "The crucial thing about phronesis is its attunement of the universal (epistemic) knowledge and the techniques (techne) to the particular occasion (as cited in Halverson, 2004, p. 100). He suggests that knowledge "be pushed one step further", adapted and applied in unique, concrete situations. He further elaborates: "This requires perceptiveness in one's reading of a particular situation as much as flexibility in one's mode of "possessing" and "applying" the general knowledge" (p. 710). MacIntyre (1984) translates this to mean, "Knowing how to apply general principles in a particular situation...It is the ability to act so that principles will take a concrete form" (MacIntyre, 1966). Eisner (2000) explains, "Phronesis addresses the particularity of things and situations, it addresses their distinctive conditions so that someone could decide how to move in a morally framed direction" (p. 381). MacIntyre (1984) believes that each community develops its own conceptions of justice and virtues and that these concepts are therefore not universal, as Rawls (1971) once suggested. Rawls had previously expressed a theory of justice, which advocated fair treatment, and a just share of society's benefits for all.

This discussion goes hand-in-hand with Immanuel Kant's theory of universalism. Although he also distinguished the theoretical from the practical, Kant (1956) took a different approach from Aristotle. He did not believe that moral action was the longing of humans to do good, but rather believed that moral action should be seen as duty alone. He believed that a good will acts from duty and that the only source of good is the good will itself. Good will is enough for moral worth, regardless of whether what one does turns out to have positive consequences. For to him, if something is done out of good will, it would simply be right in the end. Virtue is not created by habits of morally good actions, but results from "considered firm and continually purified principles" (Frankena, 1965, p. 94). The particularities of a situation can be put aside as everyone should be doing the same thing – because there is a single moral obligation that is true for everything. Principles are universal guides to making moral decisions. This aspect of Kant's view was later elaborated upon by R. M. Hare in his *Prescriptive Language of Morals*: "One must decide which actions one will commit to and accept as exemplifying a principle of action binding on anyone in like circumstances" (Hare, 1952). So for Kant, there was a sense of duty to help others. People, possessing reason, are to be valued and this guides moral practice. People should be treated as ends in themselves and not simply means to one's own ends. His *Categorical Imperative* (Kant, 1956) instructed

people to "act only on that maxim which you can at the same time will into universal law". An action would be right if it was done according to this Categorical Imperative, regardless of outcome. From Kant's perspective, moral education consists of giving students tasks to perform and then fostering in them the dispositions to perform those tasks out of a sense of duty to oneself and to others.

This belief has been espoused in some character education programs. Kant's duties to others include respecting others, being loving and benevolent in practical ways, and being friendly and sympathetic (Frankena, 1965). The question emerging from our schools today is whether universal truths and characteristics can be taught in a way that creates transference from textbook into action. Barrow (2007) challenges that notion of universality. He believed that some traits that may appear universal are actually the products of tradition and conditioning which have been internalized. He stated that they are not necessarily innate proclivities. Oliner & Oliner (1988) likewise disagreed with universalism stating: "The path to virtue is neither uniform nor standardized" (p. 220). Proponents of S-L have wrestled through this debate as they have considered whether virtues such as generosity and justice are universal or whether values, virtue and service are situation specific. Both viewpoints have influenced moral education. Further complicating this discussion is research that demonstrates low transferability from the cognitive to behaviour after teaching specific virtues (Kristjansson, 2006). Although Kant's outlook deviates from that of Aristotle and McIntyre, I have included his universalist perspective, which also potentially underlies S-L.

There is significant discussion in the literature regarding whether schools should foster a sense of duty to others and teach universal principles and whether service should form part of the curriculum. People question the increasingly common mandatory service requirement in schools. Research indicates that mandated S-L programs have some impact; however, it is not a cure-all for apathy. A Canadian quasi-experimental study (Brown et al., 2007) surveyed and interviewed over one thousand secondary students who had completed mandated community service and found limited short-term impact. Although the study found that the program drew in students who would not have normally volunteered, continued volunteerism was conditional on the experience having been a positive one with continuing opportunities. Levels of subsequent civic engagement were the same in both the experimental and control groups.

My research question examines whether students perceive their short-term IS-L experience to have influenced their moral development and behaviour. Effectively I enquire whether they feel their international experience formed part of their curriculum or education in the area of moral development and whether the impact was enduring as evidenced by their beliefs, attitudes and behaviours. To further elaborate, I will now discuss how moral education occurs and then focus on the three tenets that, in my assertion, constitute moral development.

2.4 Moral Education: Preliminary Thoughts

The Merriam Webster Dictionary (2002) defines moral as coming from the Latin word *mos* or *moralis*, and states that it is derived from the customs of a people, which define how one should live. Most discussions about morality focus on "the good" and "the right", implying norms, rules, standards, principles and values. Education is typically the social means by which society transmits these norms, standards and values and ideally creates social, moral beings. Education is not values neutral and does indeed inculcate a sense of what is proper and what is good and right. As Purpel & Ryan (1976) state:

> Schools cannot avoid being involved in the moral life of the students. It is inconceivable for schools to take the child for six or seven hours a day, for 180 days a year, from the time he is six to the time he is eighteen and not affect the way he thinks about moral issues and the way he behaves (p. 9).

In fact, I would like to suggest that the foundation of citizenship development lies in the very combination of morality and education.

How do schools facilitate moral growth? It is important to consider how and what we teach. Noddings (2002) says: "To produce good people, we must provide a morally good education" (p. 154). Narvaez & Rest (1995) assert that there are four components to morality. These components mirror the goals of S-L. Their four-component model consists of moral sensitivity, moral judgment, moral motivation and moral implementation. Moral sensitivity is developed as one appraises certain social situations and interprets possible actions and probable responses. Moral judgment involves deciding the best and most moral choice of action. This is developmental and changes with age and experience. Moral motivation occurs when moral value is placed above all and the intention to act is generated. Moral implementation combines strength with the skills needed to carry out the action. I assert that these components are embedded in

an individual's personal development, subsequent actions and commitments. Researchers have investigated the formation of these moral commitments. Barrow (2007) states that individuals need to choose morality. This resonates when considering the genesis of moral behaviour. He suggests that there are five defining characteristics of morality: fairness, respect for persons as ends to themselves, freedom, truth, benevolence (or well-being). He believes there are "good reasons for concluding that society as a whole should abide by these principles" (p. 85); however, he further states that if we are "forced" to adhere to them, we would cease to be moral. He argues that we have an innate sense of fairness that makes it natural for humans to be concerned with another's well-being and suffering. Following this paradigm, educators ought to be promoting these characteristics and evoking this "goodness" from students. Snarey & Pakov (1992) conclude moral character education "then involves supporting students' development of autonomous inner standards of justice that overcome the dependence on external authorities" (as cited in Garrod, 1992, p. 29).

2.4.1 Moral Education: What Have We Tried?

For decades, school have experimented with moral education. Kurtines & Gewirtz (1995) characterize three major approaches to moral education: the character education approach, the values clarification approach and the cognitive-development approach.

The idea behind the character education approach was that of fostering ethical, responsible and caring people by teaching and modelling good character. Character education postulates the inculcation of a set of desirable personality traits. Although the premise seemed positive, the actual programs lacked consensus - different programs incorporated different virtues, defined them differently and there was no conclusive evidence that studying the virtues actually translated into enacting them. Damon & Gregory (1997) comment on the disconnect between what is taught and what is being experienced in kids' lives and criticize the lack of specific, action-oriented directives to shape young behaviour in character education programs. Lastly, critics question the selection of virtues, wondering if they are indeed the qualities that inspire individual commitment to moral goals and purpose.

A second method, the values clarification approach, encouraged students to explore their personal values. The programs advocated individuals forming their own values, being aware of them, making one's values consistent with others, ordering them into

hierarchies for decision making and becoming more tolerant of others who have different values (Kurtines and Gewirtz, 1995). No values were seen to be more adequate than others. Critics again felt that values clarification did not go further than eliciting awareness of values because the approach assumed that "becoming more aware" was an end unto itself.

John Dewey was a proponent of the third approach – the cognitive development approach. This approach stressed open discussion of value dilemmas centring on issues of justice and individual responsibility with the goal of moving students towards the next level of moral reasoning. "The aim of education is growth or development, both intellectual and moral", he said (Dewey, 1940, p. 10). Likewise, Kohlberg (1984) talked about stages and levels of moral reasoning. As Damon and Gregory (1997) note: "building a bridge to moral action requires developing an overall moral perspective that integrates moral values into one's personal identity" (p. 122). The challenge was again, transposing classroom exercises into practice. Researchers and educators have debated whether values in these programs were deeply engrained into identity enough to cause consistent action.

Transferring character education into practice and measuring its effects seems difficult. Lickona and Davidson (2005) performed a national study on moral education in American secondary schools and noted that there was a shift from programs focusing on moral character to ones focusing on both moral character and performance. Service-Learning was listed as an effective strategy to address this goal of targeting both areas. Consequently, many different approaches of moral education have merged into two categories or types of character education/citizenship studies: virtue-oriented values education and participatory values education.

Virtue-oriented programs centre around personal virtue development as the mainstay of good citizenship, whereas in some studies, participatory programs emphasize public action and are referred to as "social cause" service. Studies have largely shown classroom based values development and civics instruction to be ineffective in terms of transference into habitual behavior (Langton & Jennings 1968; Dewey 1966; Torney-Purta et al., 1975; Gutmann, 1987; Emler, 1992; Niemi & Junn, 1998 and 2000).

As participatory citizenship has been increasingly emphasized, community service programs are increasing (Barber & Battistoni 1993; Barber 1994; Dagger, 1997; Etzioni 1993; American Political Science Association Task Force on Civic Education 1997;

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Riedel, 2002). "Social cause" service enables students to participate and become agents of support or help to others. It forces them to confront social issues or unfamiliar people and is often done in the context of an organization striving to improve society, which allows students to interact with ideologies and committed people (Metz et al, 2003). Dewey believed that true learning only took place when there was a purpose apparent and meaningful to the learner. Archambault (1966) comments, "Interest is therefore an essential catalyst in the learning process; but one which always presents as a by-product of genuine purpose operating to ensure the absorption of the child in a learning task which is both challenging and meaningful for him" (p. 168).

Service-Learning is a participatory program that has the potential of affecting one's values, life purpose and sense of global citizenship. It facilitates moral education in three areas, enabling one to situate oneself through developmental changes; to practice moral action; and to reflect on one's experience in a manner that transforms.

2.4.2 Personal Characteristics

A clear theme emerging from the literature is the notion that personal characteristics undergird moral commitment. So we must consider how these personal characteristics are developed and how they flourish. Moral values and identity play a powerful role in shaping social conduct. Blasi (1984) suggests that this is because moral identity engenders a sense of responsibility to a group and a compulsion to act in accordance with one's concept of self. He believes that one will act according to one's moral judgments to the extent to which one regards moral values and goals as core to one's self. Likewise, Colby and Damon (1992) believe that moral commitment requires a "uniting of self and morality" (p. 9), and Rubin & Giarelli (2008) believe that students must develop a normative consciousness in which they view the world differently and develop an empathetic approach to others as they understand global change and issues. All of this stems from one's own personal values and moral identity. Values, morality and ethics, by nature, involve choice, decision and action. Schultz (1990) assert that values take on meaning only when they are "realized in a tangible form in the life of a person" (p. 92). Therefore, aside from encouraging ethical value development, one of the biggest challenges educators face is that of joining thought, values and ideas to action. It seems that schools must educate students morally for active citizenship, and then facilitate some kind of practice. Serving may be the action that cultivates a

sense of morality by causing students to reflect on ethical problems and to practice their beliefs.

2.5 Three Tenets of Moral Education: A Triadic Framework

S-L is a participatory program that has the potential of affecting one's values, life purpose and sense of global citizenship. I am proposing that it facilitates moral education and the development of virtuous citizens in three areas: through enabling one to situate oneself through developmental changes; through practicing moral action; and through engaging in reflective dialogue that subsequently transforms. These three elements constitute my triadic framework for moral education (See Figure 2.1). This is a heuristic construct that arose from the literature. I propose that the three tenets are non-sequential and non-hierarchical. This review will now turn to the research surrounding each of these areas before investigating whether their effects are enduring in this study.

Figure 2.1 A Triadic Framework of Moral Education
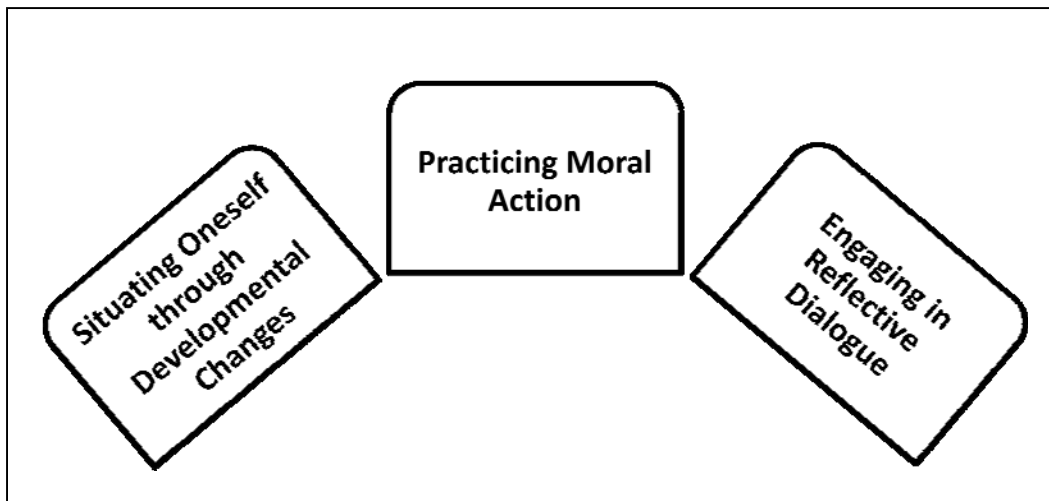
2.5.1   Part I - Situating Oneself through Developmental Changes

Although S-L draws from many theories because it is centred on individuals, relationships with others and relationships with societal structures (Billig & Eyler, 2003), I would like to assert that because S-L originates in personal characteristics, thus the

degree to which moral action then becomes central to people's identities appears to vary. "For some, moral considerations and issues were pervasive in their experience because morality was rooted in the heart of their being; for others, moral issues seemed remote and the maintenance of moral values and standards was not basic to their self-concept and self-esteem" (Walker et al., 1995, p. 398). The degree may vary, but what is apparent is that "a commitment to working with others is fundamentally tied to the individual's sense of self and vision of others" (Rhoads, 1997, p. 219).

There is a growing body of research establishing a relationship between adolescent identity development and moral behaviour in citizenship and S-L (Rhoads 1997; Youniss & Yates, 1997; Eyler & Giles Jr. 1999; Jones & Hill, 2001 and 2003; Jones & Abes, 2004). First, there is a belief that placing students in contact with people with whom they may not normally associate and who may be very different promotes self-awareness, reflection and scrutiny of issues around identity, ultimately leading to a shaping of "self". Jones & Hill (2001) found that although students thought they would be learning about the "other" in an S-L experience, they often reported experiencing great learning about themselves. Baxter-Magolda (1999) refers to Kegan's (1982) concept of "self-authorship" – having personal authority over one's identity through "an ability to construct knowledge in a contextual world, an ability to construct an internal identity separate from external influences, and an ability to engage in relationships without losing one's internal identity" (p.12). Baxter-Magolda (1999) believes that an environment encouraging self-authorship recognizes that self is central to knowledge construction but that knowledge is mutually socially constructed amongst peers. Kegan (1982) discusses "the evolution of social consciousness" as the way we organize experience and asserted that self-authorship is impossible unless students are able to connect learning with their lived experiences. This process consists of cognitive (how one makes meaning of knowledge); interpersonal (how one views oneself in relationship to others); and intrapersonal (how one perceives one's sense of identity) elements. Palmer (1993) notes that teaching transforms only "when it connects with the inward, living core of our students' lives" (p. 31) - a core he called "the inner voice of identity and integrity". As this study is investigating the influence of a serving-learning trip during adolescence, it is appropriate to discuss what is occurring developmentally in these areas during the adolescent years - years characterized by rapid change and identity development. It seems that engaging students in authentic and meaningful life activities during this

period would be critical to the emerging of "self", and would then contribute to moral development and action.

Within the first strand of the triadic model, I will briefly explore adolescent psychosocial, cognitive and moral development. There are several theories of development that could have been used to frame how students might grow socially and cognitively while engaging in IS-L. I have selected a prominent theorist in each developmental area and in some cases referred to the further work of others. In this discussion, I am most interested in how identity, thought and morality develop in youth. Most explanations of psychosocial identity development are grounded in the work of Erik Erikson (1994). Cognitive development theories most often begin with Piaget (1954) and most theories of moral development have their genesis in Kohlberg (1975). I will analyze the constructs of these three theorists to explain how "self" develops, while integrating research on S-L which supports that S-L may contribute to moving a student from one level of development to the next. Each theorist, therefore, contributes to an explanation of how adolescents situate themselves, which is the first aspect of moral education.

2.5.1.1 Psycho-Social Developmental Changes

Erik Erikson (1994) saw adolescence as a period of reconciling oneself with the outside world, seeking relationship, significance and connection   He believed that as youth struggled with fundamental questions of identity, such as "Who am I?"; "What's the point in my life?"; "Where am I headed?", a coherent sense of self would be formed (Damon & Gregory, 1997). He stated that amidst the search for answers, a moral identity forms as beliefs are deeply constructed. He believed that youth need ideological guides to help them make sense of their surroundings, and he believed that youth need to identify with something transcendent – something that supersedes family and self. He saw moral identity as critical to moral action and commitment; thus, it is important to get a sense of how this identity is formed.

At the crux of Erikson's stage theory of identity development is a series of crises or challenges that resulted in the resolution of each stage (See Appendix 1). Erikson emphasizes social context and interaction with the environment. He believed that "certain challenges are systematically presented when physical growth and cognitive maturation converge with environmental demands" (Chickering & Reisser, 1993, p. 22). The eight stages in Erikson's theory are not fixed and therefore people can progress,

regress or remain at any particular stage depending on context. As people move through the stages, an ego strength or virtue is formed. Of particular interest to this discussion are Erikson's crises of adolescence: Identity vs. Identity Diffusion and Intimacy vs. Isolation. Herein lies the essential tasks of adolescence; and thus, it is important to examine how S-L contributes to identity development and how identity development leads to S-L. I suggest that this occurs in the intimacy and context of relationships. Youniss & Yates (1997) also suggest that a prime task of adolescence is the development of a social identity that embraces civic participation.

The notion of stages and developmental tasks is useful as we discuss identity formation. Some additional work theorizing identity development has been helpful to an understanding of the role of S-L. James Marcia's earlier work (1966) added a dimension to Erikson's work. He believes that commitment was an essential part of development as people began to make choices. Prager (1986) extends the theory, asserting that "crisis leads to differentiation and individualization, while commitment results in stability, continuity, and comfort". Chickering's (1977) seven vectors (which he later termed building blocks) characterize college identity development and also built on Erikson's (1994) work but were not linked to crises nor were they age specific. His original theory underwent revision and culminated in these seven vectors: developing competence; managing emotions; moving through autonomy toward interdependence; developing mature interpersonal relationships; establishing identity; developing purpose and developing integrity. Understanding identity construction was furthered by Kegan's work called *The Evolving Self* (1982) which focussed on how accomplishments lead to independence. His stage theory moved from self-centeredness to inter-individual balance where people become individuated, interdependent, autonomous and yet able to live in community. Finally, Blasi's (1984) exploration of the formation of moral identity also contributed to this discussion. He believed that integrity hinges on the question of whether one acts consistently and intentionally regarding one's moral beliefs. He believed we care deeply about what kind of person we are and that we take steps to manage ourselves accordingly. A sense of agency and ownership are paramount in his theory and they emerge as a consequence to self-mastery and self-appropriation. He distinguishes among the typical list of virtues, calling them low-order virtues, and argues that self-control (or will power/self-regulation) and integrity (self- consistency) are the higher order virtues. When virtues guide and regulate life, moral character is developed.

Each of these theories contributes to a complex conceptualization of identity formation as "the self" emerges. Teenagers are learning who they are and how to be autonomous and yet care for others while fitting into a bigger picture. Experience drives students to define themselves and so an experience like S-L naturally contributes to identity formation. Research shows S-L contributing to identity development in several areas. Serow (1997) defines four categories in which S-L outcomes benefit the individual: competence, participation, understanding and relationships. Conrad & Hedin (1987) identified and measured outcomes of social, psychological and intellectual growth/academic competence both quantitatively and qualitatively. They conclude that community service programs benefit not only the recipients but also the participants. In the area of personal growth and development, outcomes in several studies (Giles Jr. & Eyler 1994 and 1998; Yates & Youniss, 1996a; Billig, 2000a; Scales et al., 2000; Kezar & Rhoads, 2001) showed increased self-confidence/self-esteem, increased self-understanding and personal efficacy, increased direction and autonomy, increased social responsibility and civic mindedness, increased concern for others' welfare and a growing sense of personal power. Other studies showed that S-L has positive effects on interpersonal development and the ability to work with others (Eyler & Giles Jr., 1999; Eyler, et al., 2001; Astin et al., 2000). Edwards & Marullo (1999) confirm that Service-Learning affects characteristics of personal development such as personal worth, spiritual and moral development and personal identity in addition to interpersonal skills such as working effectively with others, communicating effectively and exercising leadership. Lastly, other studies show there was a significant increase in the sense of personal and social responsibility (Conrad & Hedin 1982b; Hamilton & Fenzel 1988; Markus et al., 1993; Sax & Astin 1997) and altruistic motivation (Yogev & Ronen, 1982). Youniss & Yates (1997) argue that a primary task of adolescence is developing a social identity, which leads to civic and political participation.

Situating oneself in relation to those around us is critical in identity development. Social responsibility emerges as a moral identity construct and outcome of S-L as well, and it is ultimately measured by the behaviours of citizenship. S-L appears to foster self-efficacy and social responsibility and Kielsmeier (2000) believes that the inculcation of a service ethic must occur during a formative period in one's life – between Kindergarten and Grade 12. Yates and Youniss (1996b) suggest that S-L helps develop three aspects of identity formation: agency, social relatedness and moral-political awareness. Lipsitz (1984) adds that community service might assist young adults to commit to group ideals,

develop personal autonomy and become involved in relationships that are more intimate. IS-L places students in another culture and quickly forces students to reflect on themselves, their reality and the world at large. When they are forced to think deeper, wider, to make choices and to act, self-efficacy emerges. Bandura (1997) found self-efficacy to be highly predictive of motivational measures such as choices, self-regulation, academic learning, persistence and effort (Bandura, 1997). Giles Jr. & Eyler (1994) comment on the importance of: "the faith that one can make a difference, a sense of being rewarded for involvement, and some connection to personal belief about change". Nisan (1996) adds: "If a person sees a value or way of life as essential to their identity, then they feel that they ought to act accordingly" (p. 78).

The significance and outcomes of membership to a community are particularly problematic when there is a perception that youth seem to have lost any sense of community. In 1999, Eyler & Giles Jr. found that S-L is strongly correlated to tolerance, personal development and connection to community. It has been suggested that students' understanding and attitudes towards diverse groups is positively impacted through Service-Learning and this in turn influences identity development (Yates & Youniss 1996b; Scales et al., 2000). They, along with others (Astin & Sax, 1998; Myers-Lipton 1996; Marullo, 1998; Jones & Hill, 2001; Boyle-Baise, 2002), found that S-L reduces racial prejudice, negative stereotypes and increases tolerance for diversity. S-L encourages empathic understanding (Yogev & Ronen, 1982). Students who served had a higher sense of responsibility than their peers did; they were more likely to treat each other kindly and reported increased self-esteem and self-efficacy. S-L seemed to reduce levels of alienation and behavioural issues as well as "at-risk behaviours" such as sexual activity and violent behaviour (Billig, 2000a). In terms of overall social growth, students who participate in S-L indicated a broader concern for the welfare of others, more positive attitudes towards diversity, greater care for others, a greater level of civic responsibility and an increased likelihood of continued activity in the community (Speck & Hoppe, 2004).

However, S-L is not a panacea. Both Newmann & Rutter (1983) and Conrad & Hedin (1987) saw modest growth in the areas of social responsibility and sense of personal competence; but both caution against "expecting adolescent participation in community service projects to demonstrate dramatic changes in social responsibility for all students" (Hamilton & Fenzel, 1988, p. 65). Concerns have also been expressed (Jones, 2002)

about placing ill-equipped students in overwhelmingly challenging situations. Some students are unable to comprehend and process the magnitude of issues with which they are presented. Monard-Weissman (2003b) concludes that S-L does indeed stimulate moral development, increasing a general sense of responsibility and commitment to social action; however, Billig et al. (2003) comment that a program directed towards personal development is helpful but does not necessarily lead to the pursuit of social justice. It could also reinforce oppressive outcomes and perpetuate negative assumptions about others.

The primacy of the adolescent years in development remains unchallenged in the literature. Could S-L or IS-L positively contribute to, or accelerate developmental tasks and assist students in finding their place in a larger world during adolescence?

2.5.1.2 Cognitive Developmental Changes

A second aspect of personal development and the development of social consciousness can be defined by cognitive changes. Cognitive developmental theories clearly delineate the maturity or moral capabilities of children as they grow up. Fostering social responsibility and civic/global engagement has a cognitive dimension. Aristotle (in Broadie & Rowe, 2002) states that "excellence of intelligences" cannot be separated from character. Claus & Ogden (1999) suggest that S-L implicates the moral, political and intellectual domains as it teaches the students to give and care (moral); to respond to their civic duty, to reconstruct ideas about social policies and conditions, to participate socially (political); to engage in thought across the disciplines and to engage in higher level thinking skills (intellectual). They believe "that S-L has an extraordinary potential to engage young people in experiences involving explorations of community and self, critical thinking, democratic activism and the pursuit of a more just and humane world" (p. 20). In discussing learning about global issues, Richardson (1979) proposes that four elements need to be examined cognitively. Students need to understand and consider the challenges facing the global community, the background to the issues/problems and their impact, values and possible actions.

There are several theories of cognitive development that seek to explain how young adults change in thinking and develop values, beliefs and assumptions. Kurtines & Gewirtz (1995) describe cognitive development theory, claiming that "mature thinking emerges through a process of reorganization of psychological structures or

stages...development is dependent upon experience; moral development is dependent upon interpersonal and social experiences including role-taking" (p. 51). Kohlberg characterizes cognitive development as "a dialogue between the structures of the human mind and the structures of the environment" (Kohlberg, 1984, p. 57). I have chosen Piaget as a foundational theorist in the area of cognitive development and then referred to his successors, Perry Jr. (1970), Loevinger (1976) and Warring (2008) as they added relevance to IS-L. Understanding stages of development is important as we examine how S-L contributes to adolescent cognitive development.

Many cognitive theories are rooted in Piaget (1965) and his conceptualizations of moral and cognitive development. Several of Piaget's ideas parallel the assumptions inherent in S-L, particularly his theories of interaction and construction. Piaget believed that intelligence is active and that learning happens through experience. He laid the foundation for experiential education when he described learning as accommodating and assimilating experiences into existing cognitive schemas. As Lutterman-Aguilar & Gingerich (2002) summarize, "learning takes place as people test concepts and theories in their lived experience and as they develop new concepts and theories based on their experiences" (p. 44). Meaning is not inherent in experience, but rather socially constructed as experiences are interpreted. S-L illustrates this process.

Piaget (1954) outlines four sequenced stages of cognitive development: sensorimotor, pre-operational, concrete operational and formal operational. As thinking moves through this sequence, the cognitive structures change, becoming more complex and integrated. He believed a person has cognitive structures that provide a frame of reference for creating meaning, choosing behaviour and solving problems. Piaget also believed that stimulation from the environment precipitates cognitive growth. Life must continuously present anomalies and new information to challenge the existing cognitive structures. In Piaget's cognitive model, adolescents are leaving concrete operations and moving to formal operations where they are able to reason with abstract phenomena and can think abstractly and hypothetically. Piaget suggests that youth must reach a certain level of cognitive development in order to experience others as separate from self and that they must be able to see another's point of view in order to develop empathy. Although Piaget's stages provide a helpful framework for our discussion and help us understand what type of information a teen may be capable of processing – whether or not ages

may be attached to certain stages has been contested and highly debated in the literature.

Piaget (1965) describes three phases of moral development in youth: non-moral, heteronomous (rules from others) and autonomous (rules come from self). When children have reached the autonomous stage and understand that rules are not absolute and that they have the ability to make moral decisions; they have reached moral maturity. In his view, justice and fairness develop over time and characterize moral maturity. He defines these characteristics as "an ideal equilibrium...born of the actions and reactions of individuals upon each other" (p. 318). As people mature, they are able to treat others as they themselves would like to be treated. Again, interaction with other people is central to this moral growth and development. Simons (1994) suggests that S-L reinforces the following Piagetian concepts: experiential world-based learning; cognitive development consisting of social development; self-initiated activity promoting learning and reflection bridging the abstract and the real.

Prior to parting ways, Vygotsky (1978) worked with Piaget and concluded that man's ideas and thinking comprise the innate basis of the human soul. However, he believed that human essence is constituted by social relations and that mental activity results from social learning. This has implications for a discussion on S-L as Vygotsky advocates that in order to understand cognitive development, one must understand the social, cultural, political, ideological and economic forces at play and fully examine the social context eliciting the behaviour. Self is constructed in relation to others (Vygotsky, 1978). The significance of social context is a foundational premise in S-L and my study attempts to discern whether a short-term IS-L experience plays a role in constructing peoples' consciousness.

Indeed, how one situates oneself in the world is paramount to identity development. Perry Jr. (1970) worked with college students using Piaget's ideas as a springboard for his research. He expanded the cognitive developmental model, and outlined intellectual and ethical development in nine stages. Moving from dualism and absolutism, he concludes that a person at the final stage establishes his identity in a pluralistic world and is able to appreciate diversity while succeeding in integrating his beliefs and actions. Perry (1970) adds to a discussion on S-L by describing certain turning points that may affect relationships and identity formation. He shows how a person grows in accepting other viewpoints, grows in tolerance and therefore accepts others. Despite the fact that

Perry's work was with college students, his theory is particularly useful in a discussion of cultural displacement in IS-L.

Two other cognitive theorists contribute valuably to our discussion by explaining how one becomes autonomous or "a self" within a larger world. Jane Loevinger's (1976) linear and sequential model of cognitive development outlined thinking processes. She states that unity of personality encapsulates: impulse control, character development, interpersonal style, conscious preoccupations and cognitive style. She concludes that personality is "striving to master, to integrate and makes sense of experience". The last two stages of Loevinger's model are "autonomous" and "integrated". In the autonomous stage, one can integrate contradictory ideas and tolerate ambiguity. Choices become more difficult as values are clarified. Interdependence becomes important but individual differences are cherished and celebrated. The integrated stage is only realized by people who are self-actualized, according to *Maslow's Hierarchy*. Maslow (1971) suggests that self-actualized people develop "being values" such as goodness and justice and "they are, without one single exception, involved in a cause outside their own skin, in something outside of themselves" (Maslow, 1971, p. 43). Lastly, Warring (2008) argues that in order to engage in self-awareness, one must examine one's own culture and view of identity and the assumptions tied to each. Experiences can then be examined in view of those realizations. This is corroborated by the Optimal Theory applied to Identity Development (OTAID) (Myers et al., 1991) which states that one's purpose is to gain self-knowledge and come to know who and what we are. This theory facilitates examination of personal identity and worldview. As we understand our relationship to our ancestors, community and world, the concept of self grows from an individual to one situated in a global context. The stages of this theory reflect the journey: absence of awareness, individuation, dissonance, immersion, internalization, integration and transformation,

I am hypothesizing that cognitive development through S-L may help a person to situate him/herself. Cognitive outcomes that could emerge from authentic experiences such as S-L are: a complex understanding of issues and problems, a less individualistic view of the world, a reduction in stereotypes, development of empathetic understanding and reduction of judgment, and a stronger sense of the social/structural elements of opportunity and achievement (Giles Jr. & Eyler, 1994). Conrad & Hedin (1982a) also note heightened communication skills and career awareness in service-learners. As

they continued their work, Eyler & Giles Jr. (1999) found that students gained a new understanding of social problems, questioned current policies/arrangements and became committed to social justice with intent to be actively involved.

Several other studies have explored academic benefits to students (Coleman, 1977; Astin, 1984; Billson & Brooks, 1982; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991; Giles Jr. & Eyler 1994; Billig & Eyler, 2003). Astin & Sax (1998) report that academically, students involved in S-L showed an increase in higher level thinking skills, skills in learning from experience and communication; and more positive attitudes toward education. Generally, students who participate in S-L show an improved sense of educational accomplishment, attend school more regularly, ask more questions, engage in class discussion, and complete homework more regularly after being involved in service projects. One study of two thousand youth that included a control group, found improvement in grades and behaviour in S-L students and significant reductions in absenteeism and suspensions (Billig et al., 2003). However, again there is a noticeable gap in research measuring long-term outcomes as all of this research examined immediate outcomes. Because students lead busy lives, it is also difficult to attribute these short-term outcomes definitively to students' S-L experiences. There is an overall sense, however, that S-L contributes positively to cognitive growth. Cognitive growth in turn plays a foundational role in moral development.

2.5.1.3 Moral Developmental Changes

How do students develop a sense of morality? In addition to considering how character can be measured, Campbell and Bond (1982) argue that three factors ought to be considered when focussing on moral development/character education: what constitutes good character, what causes or prevents it and how it can best be developed. Emile Durkheim (1961) suggests the progression towards moral growth is very simple. It moves from the individual thinking of himself as distinct (egoism) to being able to concentrate on others (altruism). Durkheim views morality as the internalization of the norms and values of a culture and sees any system of human relationship as moral. He characterizes three outcomes or "transformations" of good moral education. The first is respect for authority and cultural/societal customs. The second is a feeling of attachment to the social group of which one is a member. Lastly, is the ability to articulate reasons for/justify one's membership to that group and obedience to its rules.

This third and final transformation coincides with Erikson's identity development stage where identity is often resolved when a young person develops an ideology which establishes norms and standards of morality (Kurtines & Gewirtz, 1995).

Of all moral theorists, Kohlberg outlines a progression describing what Durkheim suggested most clearly. Kohlberg's (1975) model presents three levels and six stages of moral development (See Appendix 2). Like Piaget's theory, the pre-conventional, conventional and post-conventional stages in Kohlberg's model are universal, sequenced, hierarchical, and move from concrete to more abstract. Aside from characterizing various levels of moral growth, Kohlberg makes some interesting contributions to S-L theory. First, he believed that stages emerge from our thinking about moral problems and not from maturation or socialization as previous theorists had suggested. Kohlberg's emphasis on justice has been questioned as people wonder if the emphasis is to the exclusion of other significant values. In addition, Kohlberg's theory can be considered absolutist in that his moral principles are universal and can be generalized. This leads us to again question whether there are universal principles such as justice and liberty that should be learned through S-L experiences. Benhabib (1992) disagreed, stating that:

> For Rawls and Kohlberg...the autonomous self is disembedded and disembodied; moral philosophy is learning to recognize the claims of the other who is just like oneself; fairness is public justice; a public system of rights and duties is the best way to arbitrate conflict, to distribute rewards, and to establish claims. The standpoint of the generalized other requires us to view each and every individual as a rational being entitled to the same rights and duties we would want to ascribe to ourselves. In assuming the standpoint, we abstract from the individuality and concrete identity of the other (p. 157).

It is significant to note that Kohlberg's work revolved around analysing responses to hypothetical situations, which is, by nature, more limited. Proponents of S-L have suggested that the authenticity S-L offers far outweighs hypothetical reasoning. Kohlberg's theory also went through several revisions. He later questioned whether stage six (morality thought of as self-chosen, universal principles of justice) existed separately and he put more emphasis on caring and empathy as indicators of post-conventional reasoning. Development is the aim of education. Although Kohlberg's stages are useful in conceptualizing a framework for moral growth as students move

towards the next higher moral stage, it was the emphases in his later work that most contribute to an understanding of S-L.

Because my study emerges from a faith-based school, a discussion on moral formation must include the development of faith in youth. Faith has cognitive and affective elements and constitutes another element of personal development in situating oneself. Stokes (1982) comments on the importance of the young adult years in rethinking faith and found that positive and negative crisis experiences, involvement with social issues and concerns, balancing the affective and cognitive dimensions and using non-traditional forms of education help stimulate faith development. In most theories of faith development, the goal is to move towards one's own, autonomous belief system and to "own" one's faith.

Westerhoff (1976) introduces fours styles of faith – experienced, affliliative, searching and owned. This parallels the S-L model that Delve et al. (1990) proposed. It has five phases: exploration, clarification, realization and activation/interaction. Parks (1986) then built on the work of Gilligan (1982), Kegan (1982), Piaget (1965), Fowler (1971) and Westeroff (1976), adding consideration to the elements of probing commitment (exploring and testing truths and visions cognitively), mentors, communities, images, symbols and ideologies in faith development. Students who participate in faith-based S-L programs are influenced by a number of these elements and have reported they feel closer to God, are able to trust God more, are more committed to Christian service and are more likely to serve others again (Manitsas, 2000; Beers 2001). However, once again, these effects have been reported immediately after the trips. The long-term impact or commitment is unknown.

Randy Friesen, Director of Mennonite Brethren Mission and Service International (MBMSI), a missions organization based in Canada, did a faith-based study, examining the short-term missions phenomenon in 18-30 year olds. He measured changes in 24 concepts related to participant beliefs, attitudes and behaviour in their relationship with God, the Church and the world around them. His research uncovered significant positive change in their beliefs, attitudes and behaviour during their mission experience; however, there was a regression in almost all of the positive changes they experienced a year after their trip, something he likened to taking "a spiritual vacation". He noted that longer short-term missions {or S-L} experiences did yield deeper and more lasting impact and women experienced more positive changes than men. His study also

asserted that cross-cultural experiences did indeed add an element that domestic assignments did not provide. He emphasized the need for follow-up regarding these trips and the role that supportive churches and families play in retaining any positive growth and changes (Friesen, 2004, p. 34).

S-L focuses on a sense of human agency, striving to develop critical and engaged learners, exemplifying aspects of critical education theory. Critical education theory asserts that transformation occurs through interaction with various groups of people followed by subsequent reflection. It has the goal of transforming existing social inequalities and injustices to heal and repair the world (McLaren, 1989). Critical education theory seeks to discover the curriculum and pedagogy that allow teachers to "become transformative intellectuals" and students to become "active, critical and engaged learners" (Giroux, 1988, p. 6). It purports that "real world" experiences enhance moral development. As students compare their lives to those of others, an awareness of social justice issues naturally emerges and critical thinking skills are naturally engaged.

However, not all S-L programs focus on these elements. Levison (1990) distinguishes between S-L programs that seek to expose students to encounters with those less fortunate and those that promote engagement where "students understand intellectually the broad social dynamics underlying the situations of the people they serve - the plight of the elderly, the causes of poverty, racism etc." (p. 69). Rhoads (1998) discusses the need to develop "the caring self, a socially oriented sense of self founded on an ethic of care and a commitment to the social good" (p. 283). This only happens if an individual is engaged and involved, not simply an observer. S-L can offer both types of experience.

S-L often fosters interpersonal relationships while out in the field. These affiliations may affect cognitive growth – rearranging priorities, changing assumptions and provoking new action. Such involvement usually precipitates the caring that Rhoads summons. In 1997, Rhoads argued that "fostering a sense of self grounded in an ethic of care is a necessity as our society becomes increasingly diverse and diffuse" (p. 2). He suggested that "caring" can serve as a bridge across cultures and invoked Carol Gilligan's work on the relational self. Gilligan (1982) looked at aspects of moral development related to gender and voice. She found disparity with Kohlberg's work with primarily boys, proposing that Kohlberg overemphasized the rights of individuals as separate and autonomous and discounted a valuing of relationships. Unlike Kohlberg, she concludes

that developing morality was not about forming an autonomous self. Gilligan focuses rather on the "voice of care and responsibility" instead of Kohlberg's focus on the "voice of justice". Her theory is rooted in a concept of interdependence and the belief that learning is a relational process full of connections to others and to one's own experience.

Her three level model moves from self-focussed survival to forming attachment and connections. Level three represents a deep self-understanding and an understanding of morality when self-sacrifice represents goodness and protecting others takes on importance. Caring for others and not harming other people becomes a universal obligation. Moral development is the development of self in relation to others and the preservation of human relationships is paramount. Noddings (2002) went on to say: "I will suggest that education might best be organized around centres of care: for self, for intimate others, for associates and acquaintances, for distant others, for plants and the physical environment, for the human-made world of objects and instruments and for ideas" (p. xiii). This concept of universal care is central in a discussion of S-L. Moral education includes pursuing social justice, which by definition, requires the "disposition of caring and social responsibility" (Gollnick & Chinn, 2004, p. 9).

Overall, S-L appears to positively influence moral reasoning (Conrad & Hedin, 1982a; Furco, 2002) and problem-solving (Eyler & Giles Jr., 1999). Several studies (Youniss & Yates, 1997; Melchior, 1998, Weiler et al., 1998; Billig et al., 2005 and Kahne & Sporte, 2008) found that students who perform service in moral or political causes tend to be civically engaged as adults, and show improvement in school participation and performance. Another study (Morgan & Streb, 2001) showed S-L to have empowered students to believe they can cause change and to have increased students' political attentiveness and social action. Regardless of controversy that may exist in the literature around linear or sequential stage theories, universal progression and universal moral principles; it is indisputable that psychosocial, cognitive and moral theories have contributed significantly to a framework for understanding the tasks of adolescence. They suggest how we might educate adolescents as we seek to help them individuate as people while remaining in communion with others in a global society. Perhaps Chickering and Reisser (1993) say it best:

> We propose that while each person will drive differently, with varying vehicles and self-chosen detours, eventually all will move down these major routes. They may have different ways of thinking and learning and deciding, and those differences will affect the way the journey unfolds, but

for all the different stories about turning points and valuable lessons...
(They) live out recurring themes: gaining competence and self-
awareness, learning control and flexibility, balancing intimacy with
freedom, finding one's voice or vocation, refining beliefs, and making
commitments (p. 35).

These themes can lead to personal transformation and subsequent action. Mezirow
(1990; Mezirow et al., 2000) present a process-oriented theoretical model of
transformational learning. He describes the learning processes that lead people to
experience significant changes in the way they make meaning of their experience and
understand their identity, culture and behaviour. He calls for a "disorienting dilemma"
(which could be likened to Piaget's cognitive dissonance) to challenge previously held
assumptions, values, beliefs and lifestyle habits. This leads to self-examination with
feelings of fear, anger, shame and guilt. These feelings lead to a critical assessment of
assumptions and a recognition of one's discontent. The process of transformation is
shared as one explores options, tries new roles, relationships and activities, while
planning for a course of action and picking up new knowledge and skills along the way.
Competence and self-confidence are gained in new roles and relationships. Finally, the
conditions dictated by one's new perspective are reintegrated into one's life. This
transformational S-L process model can be summarized as: contextual border crossing;
dissonance; personalizing; processing and connecting (Kiely, 2005b). Several people
who study S-L (Eyler & Giles Jr., 1999; Kiely, 2005b; Feinstein, 2005) have used
Mezirow's model to describe the transformative effect of S-L on students. The
developmental and stage theorists included in this review would concur that the
individual's cognitive, moral and social development are entwined and play a significant
role in moral education and I suggest in transformationally preparing students to step out
and act for the common good.

2.5.2 Part II – Practicing Moral Action

The extent to which a person can clearly identify his/her own moral development must
be raised. One of the most apparent ways to measure our thoughts and attitudes is by
observing behaviour and conduct. The concept of S-L and educating through
experience in authentic, rich contexts emerges largely from John Dewey's (1966) work.
Dewey believed that knowledge enables people to participate in the life of a community
and to work both individually and collectively to better society. Dewey defined character

as having three parts: force/energy; judgment and responsiveness. He encouraged educators to provide environments where students could practice goodness and learn how to practice good judgment and responsiveness – to practice social justice. Several studies purport that social justice is an essential outcome of S-L (Kendall et al., 1990; Delve et al., 1990; Jacoby et al., 1996; Stanton et al., 1999). Essentially, social justice involves taking "intentional steps that move society in the direction of equality, support for diversity, economic justice, participatory democracy, environmental harmony and resolution of conflicts" (Warren, 1998, p. 134). It represents the action of S-L, extracting and acting on authentic issues from real life. This behaviour follows the cognitive. Wilson (1997) emphatically asserts, "The building of moral character can only be haphazardly attained unless students have a chance to struggle with the foundational social justice issues, however painful and uncomfortable they may be" (p. 10).

In considering moral action, it is first important to examine motive. Altruism is defined as a selfless concern for the welfare of others. Altruistic behavior seeks to do good and to help without reward and is done from a motivation of wanting to help, rather than driven by feelings of loyalty and duty. This is thought to be a virtue, rather than a universal principle in many cultures (Merriam Webster's Dictionary, 2002). There is a significant body of literature (Kendall et al., 1990; Barber & Battistoni, 1993; Eyler et al., 1997) that suggests that S-L should centre on the goal of moving students from a motive or viewpoint of charity to one of social justice (or from philanthropic to civic motives), where the root causes of systemic social inequality are questioned and addressed. Battistoni (1997) and Hoppe (2004) suggest that charity paradigms focus on assisting individuals to resolve immediate problems; whereas students with a "social change" motive seek to change societal structures that are negatively impacting the individuals in need. Marullo & Edwards (2000) declare that "charity work that is not guided by social justice values will reproduce unjust structures and fail in the long run to stem the tide of injustice" (p. 910). They list a number of characteristics of acts of service that are guided by social justice: the service empowers the recipient; the students look at how to address the root of the problem; the students are challenged to look beyond the immediate need to the cause of the problem; and the service builds community, social capital and enhances diversity. All of these things emphasize mutual responsibility and interdependence. Research on S-L demonstrates that it enhances understanding of social inequality and fosters moral thought. Monard-Weissman (2003a) found a deepened understanding of

the world and an increased commitment to serving and active citizenship after IS-L experiences.

2.5.2.1 Experiential Education

The rationale for practicing moral action lies in experiential education. Developmental goals for S-L include fostering empathy, engaging responsible citizenry and inciting just action. Experience is key in actualizing these goals and therefore must be incorporated into student learning. Sociologist James Coleman et al., (1999) once called schools "information rich and action poor". Experiential theorists assert that learning by direct participation is essential and that "ideas are not fixed or an immutable element of thought but are formed and reformed through experience" (Kolb, 1984, p. 26). Carver (1997) even goes so far as to say that experience sits "at the heart of the learning environment" (p. 146). Gager (1982) claims that "the process of learning by experience occurs when the learner is placed into a demanding reality context which necessitates the mastery of new, applied skills followed immediately by responsible, challenging action coupled with an opportunity for critical analysis and reflection" (p. 33). These premises lie at the heart of S-L and IS-L.

There are three major goals in experiential education and S-L. The first is allowing and empowering students to become more effective change agents. In this process, students shift their locus of control and realize they have power. The second goal is to develop a sense of student belonging in communities so that students see themselves and others as having rights and responsibilities and are able to consider the interests of people around them. Lastly, experiential education seeks to develop student competence by creating an environment where students learn skills, acquire knowledge and become able to apply what they have learned (Carver, 1997). Carver believes that authentic learning situations draw on personal resources and experience and lead to reflection. He suggests that we develop student agency, belonging and competence through creating situations that engage students in "multiple forms of learning that have naturally occurring consequences of significance to the students" (p. 142).

Kolb (1984) developed an Experiential Model of Learning. He agreed with Piaget's assertion that learning was constructed. He claimed, "Learning is the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience" (p. 10). His Experiential Model begins with a concrete experience, followed by reflective observation. The

reflection then evolves into theory or abstract conceptualization, which is later translated into action or active experimentation. The assumption is that we seldom learn from experience unless we assess the experience and assign our own meaning in terms of our own goals, ambitions and expectations. This happens because the experience then takes on added meaning in relation to other experiences. All this is conceptualized, synthesized and integrated into the individual's system of constructs, which he imposes on the world and through which he "views, perceives, categorizes, evaluates and seeks experience" (Wight, 1970, p. 234). Piaget referred to this as accommodation and assimilation.

Kolb (1984) describes a dialectic between value and fact and relevance and meaning. He states that value predetermines the concrete experiences we choose. We organize our observations to create meaning from our experience and then try to apply that meaning to experimentation. He identifies four values: courage, love, wisdom and justice that are governed by the master virtue of integrity. Integrity "calls us to respond to life's condition in an active and empathic manner...opting for less selfish paths" (Stewart, 1990, p. 40). Stewart believes that S-L goals can only be realized if these virtues are cultivated in students. In serving others, students care. Care and respect elicit love, which creates an understanding and propensity for justice. Wisdom enables students to create meaning and to make choices regarding how to act. Courage provides the motivation to model and promote their values. Kolb's framework provides an explanation of how the experience of IS-L may alter previous beliefs and assumptions. Critics, however, comment that not every experience results in learning as Kolb's model suggests. They contest that it may not be the experience itself, but rather the subsequent reflection that causes learning.

S-L as a form of experiential education seeks to empower students and help them become authentic, responsible global citizens. Several authors comment on this notion of empowering. Dewey (1897) spoke of human empowerment, liberation, and being free to pursue one's own purpose. Freire (1998) spoke of humanizing learners and moving them from objects to subjects in the educational dialogue. Shor (1992) called for education that empowers with the following values: participation, affective, problem posing, situated, multi-cultural, dialogic, desocialized, democratic, researching, democratic and activist. S-L incorporates all of these elements and is a powerful form of pedagogy linking the academic to the practical, the classroom to the real world. It

provides opportunities for students to engage directly into communities and invites them to meet the needs of other human beings. Conrad & Hedin (1982a) report that experiential education programs have a positive impact on students' psychological, social and intellectual development and have increased performance on tests of moral reasoning, self-esteem, social and personal responsibility, attitudes toward adults and others, career exploration and empathy/complexity of thought. "Without this expansive view of community to orient us, human beings become self-centred and social life becomes atomistic and potentially chaotic and dysfunctional" (Moran, 2006, p. 2).

2.5.2.2 Linking Experience to Education: Dewey

Dewey saw moral education as central to education. Dewey began his pedagogic creed (1972) declaring, "I believe that all education proceeds by the participation of the individual in the social consciousness of the race", and continued, "I believe that the only true education comes through the stimulation of the child's powers by the demands of the social situations in which he finds himself...I believe that education therefore is a process of living and not a preparation for future living" (pp. 20/22). Dewey's writings make several contributions to the "big ideas" in experiential education, moral education and S-L. His contributions could be characterized as linking education to experience, advocating the use of education as a vehicle for social transformation, speaking of a democratic community and of social service and lastly, addressing the importance of reflection to the learning process (Saltmarsh, 1996). I will now explore these tenets of Dewey's philosophy that undergird the premises of S-L.

Dewey challenged the traditional notions of the relationship between work, experience and education and emphasized learning through experience long before Kolb's theory. In *The School and Society* (1915), Dewey states, "The primary business of school is to train children in cooperative and mutually helpful living; to foster in them the consciousness of mutual interdependence; and to help them practically in making the adjustments that will carry this spirit into overt deeds (p. 177). Dewey "envisioned a society held together by a common commitment to the use of intelligence in the solution of human problems" (Hersh et al., 1980, p. 20). He believed that moral education involved the relationship between knowledge and conduct and was a product of reflective thought rather than character training. In fact, Dewey argued against explicit character education, stating that children did not need isolated moral lessons on

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particular virtues. He called this "external teaching". Rather, students needed to form habits through experience. Likewise, Dewey believed that moral education did not consist of imposing ready-made standards but in guiding responsible and intelligent choices. Morality was not absolute but ever evolving with changes in context. In his philosophy of progressivism, Dewey argued that morality was a process of social problem solving gained through experience and not through a transcendental authority. He believed in the importance of authentic situations to arouse inquiry, suggestion, reasoning and testing and of linking "action and doing on the one hand, and knowledge and understanding on the other" (Dewey, 1933, p. 338).

Dewey called for a link between education and "social reconstruction" in his writings, as he believed that education played a role in social reform. He believed that learning is a social process and experiential learning theory thus focuses on the intersection between personal and social knowledge experienced. He advocated that teachers should emphasize the social and personal aspects of subject areas, stress how human beings are affected by them and point out the responsibilities that flow from their inter-relatedness (Hook, 1975, p. xi). Dewey believed that one's sense of self is only fully developed in association and communion with others. In fact, he believed that school and life outside of school should not be separated. He described an ethical school and reiterated that moral life is grounded in social interaction when he stated:

> I sum up then, this part of the discussion by asking your attention regarding the moral trinity of the school. The demand is for social intelligence, social power and social interests...In so far as the methods used are those which appeal to the active and constructive powers, permitting the child to give out and thus to serve, in so far as the curriculum is so selected and organized as to provide the material for affording the child a consciousness of the world in which he has to play a part and the relations he has to meet; in so far as these ends are met, the school is organized on an ethical basis (Dewey,1897, pp. 75-76).

This preceded Buber's assertion that the only authentic life is the relational life (Walters, 2003). As Martin (1984) so aptly stated, "education integrates thought and action, reason and emotion, education and life and does not divorce persons from their social and natural contexts" (p. 179). This premise is at the heart of S-L programs.

In terms of service, Dewey (1966) said: "helping others, instead of being a form of charity, which impoverishes the recipient, is simply an aid in setting free the powers and furthering the impulse of the one being helped" (p. 2). He believed in democracy and the

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equality it seeks to extend to each individual as we develop ourselves as people. He saw education as the place where this is best learned and the means by which personal capacities are discovered and liberated. He recognized the value of education in social reform and believed that:

> Democracy is a way of life controlled by a working faith in the possibilities of human nature...the democratic faith in human equality is the belief that every human being, independent of the quantity or range of his personal endowment, has the right to equal opportunity with every other person for development of whatever gifts he has...It is belief in the capacity of every person to lead his own life free from coercion and imposition by others provided right conditions are supplied...(Dewey, 1938 as cited in Hickman & Alexander, 1998, p. 341/343).

For service-learners, the world becomes their classroom and democracy their goal. Giles Jr. & Eyler (1994) state:

> Service itself was an educative experience for many students. It would be hard to imagine a situation more likely to embody the key elements of educative experience identified by Dewey than a service project. The students are doing work that is 'intrinsically worthwhile' and is 'capable of fostering development over time'. There is a good deal of evidence in these interviews that the experiences 'generate interest' and 'present problems that awaken new curiosity and a demand for new information' (p. 26).

2.5.3 Part III – Engaging in Reflective Dialogue

Reflection, as the final element in my triadic framework for moral education, may both precede, occur during and follow acts of service. It integrates learning and instruction with the seeing, doing and experiencing of S-L. Reflecting on our own life and the lives of those around us is important. People experience the same things yet learn different things due to the influence of varying internal factors. Dewey (1938) defined experience as having both objective and internal components. The objective component consists of the environment, the social interaction and the skills required for the experience. The internal component includes predispositions, previous expectations and expectations for the future. Reflection is the vehicle through which experience is processed and the external and internal united. Dewey defined reflection as "the intentional endeavour to discover specific connections between something which we do and the consequences which result" (Dewey, 1966, p. 151). He believed that "every genuine experience has an active side which changes in some degree the objective conditions under which

experiences are had" (Dewey, 1938, p. 39). Not all experiences were educative in Dewey's mind: "Activity that is not checked by observation of what follows from it may be temporarily enjoyed. However, intellectually it leads nowhere. It does not provide knowledge about the situations in which action occurs nor does it lead to clarification and expansion of ideas" (p. 87). Peterson (2002) reiterates, "Experience may be the best teacher, but only when it is subjected to critical analysis" (p. 167). S-L programs are structured to promote learning about larger social issues. They seek to create circumstances in which young people develop a deeper understanding of their world and themselves as well as an improved sense of purpose, justice, agency and optimism. Reflection, the link between social concerns and critical consciousness, involves examining our own assumptions and orientation to perceiving, knowing, believing and assessing the way we view and solve problems. Dewey argued that reflective thought resulted from "careful and extensive study...the purposeful widening of the area of observation understood and reasoning out the conclusions of alternative conceptions to see what would follow in case one or the other were adopted for belief" (Dewey, 1933, p. 8). Drury et al. (2005) conclude that reflection provides insight to develop our knowledge and sound judgment, which contributes to phronesis.

The element of reflection is required in order to fully process and benefit from the S-L experience. Eyler et al. (1996) assert that reflection provides "the transformative link between the action of serving and the ideas and understanding of learning" (p. 14), and Mezirow (1990) asserts that the most significant learning experiences always involve critical self-reflection. In discussing students' work with the homeless, Goffman (1967) refers to their "inner experience". Baxter-Magolda (1999) later talked about the students' "interconnected web of varied experiences" (p. 16). S-L is an avenue of connecting emotions with thinking and living with learning. Students need to reflect on what they are seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting and doing. Studies in S-L demonstrate that when reflection is an integral part of service or is "purposeful", it contributes to a deeper critical awareness and concern (Claus & Ogden, 1999). Grusky (2000) elaborates: "the real power and potential of international service learning is precisely at this juncture – where the experience meets study, critical analysis and reflection" (p. 861). Madsen-Camacho (2004) discusses power and privilege in relation to S-L in Tijuana and emphasize that reflection on such issues may be uncomfortable but is critical in enabling students to engage in issues of global citizenship, rights and justice. Rhoads (1997) concludes that:

> Service without a reflective component fails to be forward looking, fails to be concerned about the community beyond the present, and in essence fails as community service...service projects ought to have reflective components that challenge individuals to struggle to identify various forces that may contribute to homelessness, rural and urban poverty and economic inequities in general (p. 85).

High school teachers will acknowledge that engaging adolescents in critical thinking and reflection is challenging. Schon (1983) notes that people often appear to remain at a level of abstraction so that they do not have to confront uncertainties in our world. To Dewey, reflective thinking "involves a state of doubt, hesitation, perplexity, mental difficulty in which thinking originates and an act of searching, hunting, inquiring, to find material that will resolve the doubt, settle and dispose of the perplexity" (Dewey, 1933, p. 12). Piaget called this cognitive disequilibrium and saw it as a means for growth as students are forced to resolve issues of contention. Johnson et al. (1998) agreed in their "Controversy Theory" in which they stated that when students are confronted with opposing points of view, uncertainty or conceptual conflict results, it calls for a re-conceptualization and a search for information, which in turn results in a more refined and thoughtful conclusion. Reflective thinking is "the kind of thinking that consists in turning a subject over in the mind and giving it serious and consecutive consideration...It enables us to know what we are about when we act. It converts action, which is merely appetitive, blind and impulsive into intelligent action" (Dewey, 1933, p. 113/125). The element of critical analysis in reflection is key. As people employ critical thinking skills and develop critical consciousness, individual experience and broad social issues are connected. Warring (2008) coined the term "critically culturally conscious reflection" to describe this process:

> Critically culturally conscious reflection involves questioning that which is otherwise taken for granted and involves looking at unarticulated assumptions and seeing from new perspectives. With these new perspectives come the empowerment to understand our identities and actions with the context of complex global issues. The new perspectives assist in the development of global understandings and relevant and necessary applications in the teaching-learning process (p. 243).

Moral judgment and motivation emerge from reflection. Freire (1972) is another theorist who contributed significantly to the pedagogical foundations of service learning. He developed a theory of "liberatory" education including "pedagogy for consciousness". His goal was to develop methods to encourage critical thinking skills through reflection,

analysis and dialogue. He believed that all people needed to develop the "ability to perceive social, political and economic contradictions and to take action against the oppressive elements of reality" (Freire, 1972, p. 19). As we intervene and transform the world, we develop "conscientizacao" or critical consciousness. Freire (1972) defined praxis as "reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it" (p. 9). Research on S-L suggests that reflection should be enmeshed with curricular learning objectives. For the purpose of this study, reflection is defined as "consideration of some subject matter idea or purpose or a critical thought, idea or opinion formed as a result of meditation" (Merriam Webster's Dictionary, 2002).

Bringle et al. (2004) declare that reflective activities should intentionally link the service to course objectives, should involve clarifying values, should be structured, occur regularly, and should allow feedback and assessment. Eyler & Giles Jr. (1999) assert that the incorporation of meaningful reflection into S-L activities is a decisive factor in determining whether or not students meet learning outcomes for actual S-L. Coles (1994) wrote extensively about the need to help students connect experiences with academic course work: "Students need more opportunity for moral and social reflection on the problems that they see first-hand...Students need the chance to directly connect books to experience, ideas and introspection to continuing activity" (p. A64). Conversely, although research is overwhelmingly in favour of reflection, Claus and Ogden (1999) caution that reflective activities can serve to reinforce previously held beliefs. In his book on critical thinking, Paul (1990) also cautions that students might use their developing reasoning ability to "maintain their most deep seated prejudices and irrational habits of thought by making them appear more rational" (p. 370).

It is apparent that there is a need to intentionally connect the affective and cognitive domains before, during and after a S-L experience. Research points to the fact that part of reflection and connection happens in dialogue. Freire (1972) defined dialogue as reflection and action: "Authentic thinking – thinking that is concerned about reality – does not take place in ivory tower isolation, but only in communication" (p. 64). "In dialogue, students can develop critical re-perception of their powers, conditions, language, knowledge, and society which they had before thought about uncritically" (Shor, 1992, p. 188). S-L team members usually form a close relationship with their leader, which can create a mentorship within which rich interaction may occur. Lesgold & Glaser (1989) describes "coached practice" or discussing with carefully framed

questions to help students reflect on what they are doing as they explore different approaches to framing what they have experienced. Stories and meaning emerge from the language and dialogue. MacIntyre (1984) states that "man is in his actions and practice, as well as in his fictions, essentially a story-telling animal", and becomes through his history, a "teller of stories that aspire to truth" (p. 216). It is our stories and roles that help us understand and respond to what occurs around us and how we in turn should respond. Phronetic narratives tell society how "value commitments are lived in daily practice rather than formalized into general moral rules" (Halverson, 2004, p. 105). Hopkins (1994) also linked narrative and education with self-growth. He states that:

> The idea of narrative might provide a cohesive, even protogenic, operating principle for tying lived experience to subject matter in schools. Narrative is a deeply human, linguistic process, a kind of primal developmental impulse. We are storytelling creatures. We do not just tell stories: We live them, define ourselves through them. Our narratives are the expressive, temporal medium through which we construct our functioning personae and give meaning to our experience (p. xvi).

Schon (1983) encourages teachers to engage students in analysing, questioning and rethinking societal arrangements and structures to develop critical thought and consciousness that will then drive action or reform. Claus & Ogden (1999) assert that a transformative vision of S-L includes both service and critical analysis. They developed five concepts in their model of transformative S-L: situated learning, dialogic discourse, teachers as problem posers, critical thought, consciousness, and activist learning. Learning must be rooted in the lives, interests, themes and concerns of the student and input from the student creates a democratic learning process. Students should be engaged in dialogic discourse – where dialogue and group discussion unpacks and defines the experience. Kiely (2004) maintains that processing and connecting demonstrate the essence of reflection:

> Processing entails rational, reflective and importantly, dialogic ways in which students explored and revaluated their assumptions or engaged with others to understand the origins of and solutions to social problems...Connecting represents the affective dimensions of the transformational learning process in which students developed deeper relationships...in an effort to understand and empathize with {others'} life situations. The interdependent relationship between processing and connecting helps explain how students experience transformation as both an abstract intellectual shift in their understanding of poverty, S-L and their citizenship role as well as a profound change in their sense of moral affiliation and obligation (p. 25).

Perspective may be transformed through S-L/IS-L. Not only do students learn from their experiences but "also from the intimacy and immediacy of their personal reflections" (Godfrey, 1999). In fact, researchers agree that it is reflection that often distinguishes a common community volunteer experience from authentic S-L (Giles Jr. et al., 1991). It is in reflection that students truly see the benefits of service, thus making it an essential component for learning and growth in S-L/I-SL.

All of this merits further consideration. The long-term impact of IS-L is under-researched and there is a salient gap in the literature.

2.6 Establishing the Gap: Brief Summary of What We Don't Know

As I have demonstrated in my review of the existing literature, there are several gaps in the literature on S-L. First, very few studies examine the long-term impact versus immediate effects of S-L. Second, the research that does exist focuses on domestic community service, rather than IS-L. Third, there are very few Canadian studies on S-L. Last, much of the research also examines students at the college level rather than the secondary level. Therefore, a study profiling a Canadian secondary school's IS-L program will surely enhance the literature. I will now briefly outline each of the perceived gaps in the existing literature.

2.6.1 Long-term vs. Short-Term

Most of the studies discussed in this literature review examined short-term impact of service programs. As I conceptualized my study, I was interested in discovering if there are long-term effects. I used student response immediately after their trips to contextualize the experience and as a point of comparison between the short-term impact and the potential long-term impact of these trips. This was accomplished through reviewing their trip evaluations and journal entries, and then by examining their views five to fifteen years post-travel.

As evidenced by my commitment to the program, I remain convinced that these overseas learning experiences have short-term impact. However, issues have arisen in the program causing me to question whether the initial impact that seems strong, in fact wanes over time. For example, it is my experience that almost every student returns from his or her service assignment excited and wanting to return to that specific country.

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However, it has been MEI's policy that students generally do not return the following year to that same destination. This is believed to help team dynamics, to prevent potential disappointment and to further enlarge a student's worldview, but it is typically news ill-received by many students. Students contesting this position must convince the organizing committee and justify their desire to return and only two students have successfully done so in the fifteen years of this program. Interestingly, even those who have desperately wanted to return to a country and have been diverted to another assignment often come back equally excited about that second experience. In fact, at times, their commitment to the original destination and its needs appears to have faded or even disappeared in light of new experiences. This has led me to question whether IS-L constitutes an experience that is short lasting, or whether there are life-shaping, enduring effects. Is there a concept of "service" that supersedes individual locations? Do students continue in a life of service? There appears to be very little research as to the longevity of impact.

2.6.2 Domestic vs. International

As noted, research on domestic S-L is positive. Many studies have examined the effects of community service on students, schools and communities. Billig (2000b) indicates that Service-Learning helps develop students' sense of civic and social responsibility, helps foster respect between teacher and students and improves school climate; reduces students' engagement in risky behaviours; has a positive effect on students' interpersonal development and their ability to relate to culturally diverse groups while allowing them to become active, positive contributors to society. Boston (1997) believes that Service-Learning is an excellent way to develop character for the following reasons: It renders concrete that which is abstract in the classroom. It confronts students with immediate needs; imparts self-worth and empowerment when a student serves well and makes a difference; fosters values such as self-discipline, team building, respect for others, persevering and caring about the quality of work done; and ultimately moves youth "in the right direction". Blozis et al. (2002) studied middle and secondary schools and found that character development and S-L can increase student involvement in community and school activities, increase their understanding of their role as a citizen and promote growing sensitivity to different cultures. I would assert that the cultural displacement of IS-L experiences, which sees students step away from what is known

and step into an unfamiliar culture, adds a unique dimension to Service-Learning. Very few studies have examined the outcomes of IS-L programs.

2.6.3 College vs. Secondary Years

Although volunteer service tends to drop during college years (Astin, 1991), there are a number of studies that have examined the impact of community service during college or university. Astin & Kent (1983) and Pascarella et al. (1988) found that social involvement in the college years has a significant influence on the development of civic involvement and humanitarian related activities. Giles Jr. & Eyler (1994) report that students participating in community service showed a significant increase in their belief that people can make a difference and subsequently believed that they should be involved in their community, in leadership, in politics, and they were more likely to stress the need for equal opportunity (Riedel, 2002). Astin et al. (2000) collected data from 22,236 college undergraduates four years into their schooling. They found that service participation showed significant positive effects on 11 outcome measures, including: academic performance, values, self-efficacy, leadership, choice of service career and plans to participate in service after college. Students in Morgan & Streb's study (2001) also showed attitudes that are more positive to different people groups. Sax & Astin (1997); Johnson et al. (1998) and Metz et al. (2003) found that doing any service is predictive of intended future service and that high school service usually results in service at the college level as well.

However, there is limited research at the secondary level. Youniss & Yates (1997) surveyed students several years after completing a high school S-L course and found that student identity contained "an empathetic outlook toward the other, reflectivity on the self's agency and relating one's own agency to helping less fortunate individuals" (p. 129). The students continued to identify that high school experience as "a clear landmark" (p. 128). Jones & Abes (2004) found that participants continued to describe the importance of relationship building to "an evolving sense of self", two to four years after their S-L experience. Their sense of efficacy continued to grow, as did their empathy and compassion. The experiences that they continued to reflect upon and reframe resulted in interpersonal, intrapersonal and cognitive growth. Kendall et al. (1990) suggest that although there is no substantive research in the area of high school S-L, there is a presumption that students who participate will have an increased

commitment to service. One study done in 1999 by Astin et al. found that those who volunteered "frequently" in high school were more than twice as likely to devote some time to volunteer/community service work nine years later. Kiely (2004) also found positive outcomes in secondary service-learners. Apart from this handful of studies, there appears to be a gap in the literature in terms of long-term follow-up on S-L participants. I would assert that an IS-L experience has the potential to be influential during the formative adolescent years, perhaps to even a larger extent than the same experience occurring later in life. The degree to which these experiences influence an enduring sense of identity and moral development remains largely unexplored.

2.6.4 A Call for Research

In addition to the apparent lack of Canadian studies, there appears to be a struggle to research the impact of S-L worldwide. Hamilton & Fenzel (1988) comment on the complexity of measuring the impact of S-L due to the wide variety of programs and activities, the ceiling effects of youth most likely to participate and the difficulty of producing changes in self-esteem and social responsibility in a short-term experience. The many variables in S-L programs render research complex:

> One of the major difficulties in evaluating or researching Service-Learning programs is the lack of agreement on what is meant by the term Service-Learning and exactly what it is meant to accomplish. Whereas some programs emphasize social growth, character development or civic responsibility, others attempt to study psychological development and effects of programs on self-concept. Moral judgment studies have sought to evaluate the effects of service on moral and ego development, and other studies have attempted to measure the effects of service on the broader community. Perhaps the most difficult arena has been in the area of intellectual, cognitive, and academic effects. It has been difficult to design tight experiments to isolate the effects of service on specific academic achievements (Kraft, 1996, p. 142-143).

In 1998, Giles Jr. & Eyler posed ten questions that formed a research agenda for S-L. Two of the questions dealt with the impact that S-L had on leadership and on-going service contributions and "whether this form of education contributes to the long-term development of a social ethic of caring, commitment and civic engagement" (p. 69). At that time, they called for longitudinal studies of students beyond graduation. Giles Jr. et al., (1991); Markus et al., (1993) Giles Jr. & Eyler (1994); and Astin et al., (1999) comment on the urgency of collecting longitudinal data on how students are effected by

S-L. In 2007, Majewski & Turner commented that they had not yet discovered studies on long-term impacts.

Research seems to suggest that overall, there are immediate positive outcomes to S-L; however, in this study I examine whether these outcomes are perceived to be lasting and whether the added dimension of an international experience played a role in these outcomes. My work attempts to fill the gap by looking at S-L in a Canadian secondary school's program, by looking at international experiences and by looking at longitudinal data. My study follows people who travelled on an international short-term S-L trip during their high school years. I investigate whether, five to ten years after their trip, they perceive that they were influenced by their experience and if so, what they perceived those changes to be. As I embarked on this study, I was interested in discovering whether these perceived changes then translated into action or changed behaviour and whether IS-L influenced students' sense of citizenship, social responsibility and global engagement later in life.

2.7 Summary

Education is concerned with the moral development of youth as it seeks to prepare young adults to emerge from the school system with an engaged, interdependent, socially responsible global perspective. Aristotle effectively characterized the "good citizen" whom we hope will emerge from our school system as we seek to develop moral students who are engaged in the lives of those around them.

In this study, I hypothesize that IS-L is a means to contribute to and achieve the goals of schooling. As research seems to indicate that service experiences foster identity development, decision-making, critical thinking, reflection and recognition of multiple viewpoints (Sorenson, 1996), I am suggesting that IS-L should be considered as a means to morally educate. This ultimately empowers students to change structures that cause social and economic inequality.

I have delineated three tenets of moral education that I refer to as the triadic framework: situating oneself through developmental changes; practicing moral action; and engaging in reflective dialogue. My literature review suggests that IS-L may be a means to encourage and facilitate moral development in each of these three areas. Research on both community-based service learning and minimally on international learning

experiences demonstrates positive outcomes in all of the components of the triadic framework. The question that then emerges from the literature and from my practice is whether there is enduring impact from an IS-L experience when it has occurred in the formative adolescent years.

This study fills a number of gaps in the literature. It provides Canadian data. It examines longitudinal data from people five to fifteen years after their high school international travel experience. Triangulating the data has provided a deeper understanding of participant experience and the meaning which they accorded it. I will now further discuss the methodology that I used in this study.

3: THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction and Overall Strategy and Rationale

The purpose of this study was to generate and review some longitudinal data regarding the influence of a short-term International Service-Learning experience during one's formative adolescent years. I sought to understand the perceptions of former MEI students regarding the trip(s) in which they participated. This chapter will explain the research design, instrument use, data collection and data analysis methods used in my study.

Research is the process of collecting, analysing and interpreting data in order to better understand a phenomenon (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001). In setting up this study, I used Crotty's (1998) elements of a research proposal: methodology, theoretical perspective, epistemology and methods. This methodology section describes the broad strategies and plans of action for my study. The methods, or processes and techniques I used are embedded in this methodology. The section on theoretical perspective describes the philosophical stance that informed my research methods and the epistemology speaks to the theory of the nature of knowledge around which I situated my research. I begin by outlining the broad research designs that will guide me.

3.2 Case Study Design

This project is an individual case study, using one Independent School's IS-L program to explore its perceived effects on participants. A case study is an empirical investigation in a real life context and typically uses multiple strategies to gather data (Yin, 1989). Case studies are descriptive and evaluative and thus enabled me to explore the "what, why and how" of IS-L at MEI in an intimate fashion. Bringle (2003) asserts that studying a phenomenon in depth is a mechanism for developing conceptual and theoretical insights (p. 10). A detailed case study is useful in "providing in-depth contextual information for the improvement of a specific program, for generating theory and for illuminating unique or unusual aspects of a research phenomenon" (Stake, 1995, p. 8).

It is important to note the limitations of case study research. In particular, Yin (1984) cautions regarding the limitations of case study in terms of generalizing.

> Case studies, like experiments, are generalizable to theoretical propositions and not to populations or universes...The case study, like the experiment, does not represent a "sample" and the investigator's goal is to expand and generalize theories (analytic generalization) and not to enumerate frequencies (statistical generalization) (p. 21).

There are other schools within the surrounding area of MEI that have similar S-L programs and although I contemplated collecting data from multiple programs, it is the impact of MEI's program in which I am most interested. In investigating other programs, it quickly became apparent that there were significant differences in each program that would make finding consistencies, isolating variables and being able to examine aspects of the program or make attributions very difficult. Thus, I decided to narrow my focus to include MEI only.

My case study is descriptive in nature and surveys students who participated in the MEI IS-L program between 1995-2005. I selected participants from these years both to narrow the study but also to allow long-term impact to emerge. All of the students have now been out of school between five and ten years. I endeavoured to uncover detailed information on the characteristics of this group of students in the area of self-perceived moral development and behaviour. The study is also exploratory in nature in that it examined an area (IS-L) that has been under-researched and provided insight; but as well, it generated yet more unanswered questions (Royse, 1991). I used an exploratory survey to focus on the way IS-L affects moral development and behaviour. My hypothesis was that IS-L leaves at least a short-term impression, which may affect moral development during the critical period of adolescent development. I hoped to uncover the ways respondents perceive this IS-L trip during their secondary years to have affected their moral development and behaviour long-term. Lytle (1993) states that case studies, when embedded with action research, "offer intimate views of the actors experimenting with service-learning projects" (p. 20). Stories subsequently emerge and these stories become part of who we are and how we act.

3.3 Qualitative Research Design

In this study, I listened to these stories and sought to understand respondents' perceptions. It is the meaning that people derived from their trips, which was of most interest to me as researcher.

I considered using both quantitative and qualitative measures in this study. However, in reviewing existing S-L research, I noted that researchers have attempted to use a myriad of attitudinal and behavioural survey instruments as quantitative measures with limited success. Bringle et al. (2004) compiled information on research scales that were not necessarily created to assess service-learning but have so been used. In looking at these research tools, none seemed to suit a study that follows an experience five to fifteen years later. Neither could I locate a measure designed specifically to measure S-L that had high reliability and validity. This formed my rationale for turning to qualitative research as the primary method for this study, I also decided to collect some quantitative data. This resulted in a mixed methodological study.

Qualitative research is multi-method in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. Qualitative research involves the studied use and collection of a variety of empirical materials – case study, personal experience, introspection, life story, interview, participant observation, observational, historical, interactional and visual texts – "that describe routine and problematic moments and meaning in individuals' lives" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 2).

Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive material practices that make the world visible (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 3). As I was looking more to capture contemplation and rich description than to quantify data, I concluded that a qualitative or flexible study would be the best option for my work. This method enabled me to understand multiple, self-constructed realities on a deeper level. "Qualitative researchers seek to understand lifestyles and social phenomena first-hand," as they "seek to provide detail and add richness and depth to our understanding of any phenomenon being investigated...They ask questions that allow the subjects to talk about themselves and their world so that special experiences, ways of viewing the world, or vocabulary can be learned" (Royse 1991, pp. 218 and 221). I tried to reflect Denzin and Lincoln's (2005) image of a

qualitative researcher as a *bricoleur*, piecing together bits of information into a coherent, meaningful and illustrative whole.

This study has phenomenological features as I sought to capture, interpret and explain how a group of IS-L participants experienced and made sense of their experience. Phenomenology is the study of lived experience or the life world; it emphasizes the world as lived by the person and asks the question, "What is this experience like?" (van Manen, 1997; Valle et al., 1989), as it seeks to understand and illuminate another's point of view. It is an approach that seeks to understand empirical matters from the perspective of study participants. It "describes the meaning of the lived experience for several individuals about a concept" (Creswell, 1998, p. 51).

I examined these understandings in the context of peoples' worldviews. Valle & King (1978) state that "phenomenologically oriented psychological research seeks to answer two related questions: What is the phenomenon that is experienced and lived, and how does it show itself?" (p. 276). This essentially outlines my research question. Denzin (1989) describes "self-stories" as personal narratives told by an individual in the context of a specific set of experiences. They position the teller centrally in the narrative and describe the position of self in relation to the event or experience. The goal of phenomenological studies is not empirical generalization, but rather understanding an experience. Denzin (1989) challenges researchers to capture the "reflective nature of selfhood" (p. 8). I examined the personal subjective narratives people have created around their IS-L as participants in this study shared their "self-stories". Seeing the way that "people construct the social world, both through their interpretations of it and through the actions based upon those interpretations" (Hammersley, 1992, p. 44) was central to my study.

In order to capture the experiences and the meaning attached to these experiences from participant perspective; this qualitative study used the self-reported voice as a key variable by eliciting the richness of student reflections expressed in their own words. This strengthened the rationale for using qualitative measures in my study. I was not seeking to identify a single "objective reality", but rather recognize that it is the individual student who makes meaning on these trips. His or her perceptions and stories created the narratives in this study. Pratt (1986) comments, "that the personal narrative...plays the crucial role of anchoring description in the intense and authority-giving personal experience of fieldwork" (p. 27). In this study, I attempted to build "a complex holistic

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picture" (Cresswell 1998, p. 15) for each individual experience as I analysed participants' words and report their detailed views.

Bogdan & Taylor (1975) summarize that "Qualitative research allows investigators to know their subjects personally and to understand their struggles and explanations of their world" (cited in Royse, 1991). Both Newmann & Rutter (1983) and Hamilton & Fenzel (1988) suggest that the analysis of the written and spoken world of service-learning participants may be the best way to measure change in program participants. I hypothesized that participants on the same trips may recount the same experiences in very different ways. Ruckdeschel (1985) suggests that the qualitative researcher may "discover no single, universal truth, but rather, different perspectives that reflect how different groups [or people in this case] with different interests view the same situation" (p. 19). This is why, after considering both qualitative and quantitative strategies, qualitative research emerged as the option that would best generate and best permit analysis of the data for this study.

3.4 Theoretical Perspective and Framework: Symbolic-Interactionism

Maxwell (1996) defines a conceptual framework as "a system of concepts, assumptions, expectations, beliefs and theories that supports and informs your research" (p. 25). In this section, I outline the approach to understanding and explaining society that undergirds my work. I frame my study in a way that integrates to produce a coherent piece of research.

I believe that much of my data emerged from the personal interactions students had on their IS-L trips. I was interested in how a sense of self developed out of this interaction. I believe that students' personal reflections emerged from Denzin's (1989) reformulation of Blumer's symbolic-interactionist perspective, which is based on three assumptions. First, social reality as it is sensed, known, and understood is a social production. Humans interact to produce and define their own definitions of situations. They name and give meaning to things they encounter. Second, humans are capable of shaping and guiding their own behaviour and the behaviour of others. They learn from social interactions. Last, people will take their own standpoint and fit it into the behaviour of others as they interact. As they assess situations and make sense and meaning of them, their interpretations will cause them to respond in different ways (Denzin, 1989).

How students interpreted events and interactions on these service-learning trips contributed to the meaning they created and the self they constructed through their IS-L experience. In this study, I wanted to examine how their social interactions overseas influenced or altered their perceptions, attitudes and behaviours.

Methodologically, the implication of the symbolic interactionist perspective is that the actor's view of actions, objects, and society has to be studied seriously. Lincoln & Guba (1985) declare, "No phenomenon can be understood out of relationship to the time and context that spawned, harboured and supported it" (p. 189). The situation must be seen as the actor sees it, the meanings of objects and acts must be determined in terms of the actor's meanings, and the organization of a course of action must be understood as the actor organizes it. The role of the actor in the situation would have to be taken by the observer in order to see the social world from his perspective (Psathas, 1973, as cited in Crotty, 1998, p. 75).

Ultimately, I wanted to hear how participants remember their IS-L, made sense of it and then later talked about it. I was interested in hearing peoples' stories and understanding the personal meaning they have made of their IS-L experience. However, I also recognized the need for objectivity in a study that is largely subjective in nature. A number of factors contributed to that objective element in this study. First, having travelled with many of these students and having shared either a similar experience or the very one they discussed; I was able to verify the factual information surrounding their interpretations. I had a framework in which to put their stories. Although interpretations differed, I was able to develop a description of events/a phenomenon that can be viewed as trustworthy. Second, I surveyed multiple students from each team. It was interesting to see how the interpretations of team members experiencing the same phenomena compared. Due to the team aspect of these trips, in my experience, very few impacting situations are experienced or kept in isolation and this emerged in my data. Third, along with qualitative expression on my survey, there were a number of questions for which answers could be reported in an objective, quantifiable form. Last, the survey design required that some of the same information be repeated more than once which provided an additional reliability check.

3.5 Ethical Considerations

Obviously, this study involved human beings sharing their stories and therefore required approval from both MEI and Simon Fraser University. The MEI Board sanctioned this study with a written letter from the Superintendent (see Appendix 3), pending Human Ethics approval from Simon Fraser University. The school expressed an eagerness for the results and possible implications that may emerge and requested an executive summary of my findings.

An application was made to the Research Ethics Board (REB) at Simon Fraser University (SFU) in March of 2010. After addressing some minor issues, approval was received on April 7, 2010 (see Appendix 3).

Having now graduated, all research participants in this study were adult volunteers over the age of 18 who were able to provide informed consent. Written consent forms provided information about the nature and purpose of my study, the procedures, data gathering methods and risks. The consent form was included in both the mail-out invitation to participate and again immediately after login to the survey website. Participants were made aware that they could withdraw from the study at any time, should concerns arise. This was deemed a low risk study in terms of potentially causing harm as it simply enquired about experiences and perceptions. However, with a clear explanation of the study they, as adults, could further consider any personal risks and potential benefits. Participants were also informed that if reflecting back elicited negative memories, an opportunity to debrief and process those feelings would be provided by school counselling staff. No study participant requested this support.

The confidentiality of study participants was ensured as no personal information was reported in an identifiable fashion in my study. Pseudonyms were used to relate stories. Completed questionnaires, data, and interview tapes and transcripts were stored in locked cabinets and the survey website was password-protected.

3.6 Context: Setting/Participants

Hearing and understanding participant perception was the focus of my study. It was important to select participants and data sources that would provide a rich source of information in illustrating the impact of S-L experiences. With 990 students having participated in both domestic and International trips over the past 16 years, I decided to

limit study participation to students who travelled internationally within MEI's IS-L program. I did this because I believe that an international experience adds a significant component to S-L and this was focal to my research. I wanted to give everyone eligible an opportunity to participate, so I was prepared to survey and interview IS-L trip participants who travelled on IS-L trips through MEI Secondary between 1995 and 2005. Again, it is important to note that these students may have travelled more than once in our program as they could have participated in Grades 10-12.

An invitation to participate in this study was mailed to the 402 former IS-L participants - 151 are male and 251 are female. As the study of school alumni was sanctioned by MEI Schools and as I am a current member of the Administrative team at MEI Middle School, the Superintendent agreed to provide me with the names and current addresses on file for trip participants through the Director of Development who maintains alumni records.

In terms of my research sample, I was cognizant of the limitations of the sample population. Students who participate in IS-L trips at MEI are largely self-selected, or have been encouraged by a teacher to sign up. I recognized this self-selection and acknowledged that these tend to be students who are keen to be involved.

Stukas et al. (1999) note that self-selection confounds research examining the effects of community service and can skew the results. Youniss & Yates (1996) suggest that youth who sign up for service tend to be active and intense individuals who enjoy helping. These students may have already differed prior to the study from those who did not participate in IS-L and may be pre-disposed to service activities. A question on my survey asked if this was their first IS-L experience. I was careful to acknowledge that students may have already displayed social awareness and responsibility prior to their IS-L experience at MEI.

This was not particularly problematic in this study as my research question focused on the perceptions of those within the IS-L program. I was not looking to generalize. However, I do recognize this self-selected sample is not representative of any predefined student population and I acknowledge that this study is looking only at trip participants and not at the school population as a whole.

Last, there is a small group of parents who have had more than one student participate in the MEI IS-L program. I was interested in their perceptions and asked them to fill in a survey and provide their reflections as well. Although not essential for a study

examining student self-perceptions, I speculated that their feedback would corroborate or conflict with that of their children and could elicit further questions about some student perceptions.

3.7 Participant Observer and Practitioner-Researcher

As one of the founders of the IS-L Program at MEI, I continue to jointly coordinate the program with the Secondary Principal and continue to lead trips. I was aware that I bring a passion for issues of social justice, equality, and for educational reform to this study and this undoubtedly influenced the questions asked, and observations made. Obviously as evidenced by my commitment and investment, I believe in this program. However, I was also aware that I maintained a healthy level of inquiry about the long-term positive effects of this program. Is it as transformational as it might appear when students first return from such an experience? I was unsure and eager to find out.

This study is unique in that it included 116 students who travelled with me during the ten-year period spanning 1995-2005. It also included many who have travelled to other destinations under the leadership of other staff members. The study examined participant values, beliefs and actions five to fifteen years after leaving high school. As I am involved in the program at MEI and have travelled and lived in similar environments as these participants, the study contained elements of participant observation and I was aware of the potential of bias emerging. However, in my work, I intentionally sought to immerse myself in the world of those who have participated in the program. In some cases, respondents travelled with me, causing me to have "experienced the world of those who are being observed by living alongside them and sharing their activities" (Royse, 1991, p. 220). Moreover, in all cases, we all shared an experience of international travel and service. Having shared in the/a similar experience helped in quickly establishing relationships with the interview candidates. However, I also noted that we all experienced trips differently. In considering my study, I emphasized the role of *observer* in the participant-observer framework as I approached program participants with a genuine interest in understanding *their* experience and hearing *their* reflections. The role of participant entered into my own reflection only after I heard some of the stories and thoughts of those who have travelled and as I contextualized them with what I have seen students experience on IS-L trips. Denzin (1989) asserts that participant observation requires "submersion of the observer in the data and the use of analytic

induction and theoretical sampling as the main strategies of analysis and discovery" (p. 158). As practitioner-researcher, I openly guarded against the notion that "I knew that already". In the case of the IS-L program, we know subjectively that most often students come back enthusiastic about their experience. However, as I have already indicated, there has been no follow-up, so the long-term impact of these trips in students' lives truly remained to be investigated.

3.8 Research Methods and Procedures

I strove to approach the data with an open mind – seeking what would emerge from that which is shared by IS-L participants (Strauss & Corbin, 1990; Seidman 1998). My study combined data from observations, participant reflection, surveys and interviews. Using multiple methods of data collection in an investigation enables triangulation, "the combination of methodologies in the study of the same phenomena" (Denzin 1989, p. 234) and added to the credibility and trustworthiness of my study. "The combination of multiple methods, empirical materials, perspectives and observers in a single study is best understood, then, as a strategy that adds rigor, breadth, and depth to any investigation" (Denzin and Lincoln 1994, p. 4). Leedy and Ormrod (2001) define triangulation as using multiple sources of data, which can "potentially converge to provide a unified picture or portrayal of the data results" (p. 105). I triangulated data in this study by using the following information sources: participant journals and post-trip feedback forms, surveys and interviews. I therefore used document analysis, surveying and interviewing as the research methods in this study. As I accompanied some of these students on trips, my personal observation also entered into the discussion. However, I was cautious in using my observations as I sought to reduce observer bias. Any observational notes formed a small part of the discussion and my own observational comments arose from and were entwined with participant perceptions. I further triangulated by incorporating some quantitative data, creating a mixed methodological study.

This study examined the perceived effects of an IS-L program on moral development and behaviour, so it relied heavily on self-reporting. "Self-reports invite respondents to express their attitudes and values and seem to make good sense as a strategy for assessing students' personal growth through service-learning" (Pritchard and Whitehead III, 2004, p. 174-175). There is also a negative element to self-reporting. I was

cognizant that as Goffman (1959) states: "When the individual presents himself before others, his performance will tend to incorporate and exemplify the officially accredited values of the society, more so, in fact, than does his behaviour as a whole" (p. 35). I was aware of this as I crafted my survey, and sought to enable people to express their viewpoints in a way that would be perceived not to incur judgment. Many of my survey questions were open-ended to encourage expression of thought freely. Although I sought to explore impact in the areas of moral development and behaviour, some survey data could be quantified. Qualitative data was collected in the reports and analysed inductively. Having some quantifiable data furthered my mixed-method approach to this study and enabled further triangulation. Combining quantitative and qualitative methods increases the validity of research. Collecting this data concurrently or simultaneously allowed me to "provide a comprehensive analysis of the research problem" (Cresswell, 1998, p. 16). Themes and patterns were discovered through both qualitative and quantitative inquiry and were not predetermined in this study (Manning, 1999).

3.9 Data Collection Procedures

The first phase of my study was to "get the word out". MEI publishes an alumni magazine, *Connections*, several times a year. The December 2009 issue carried my article: Equipping Students for Life and Forever...Mission Accomplished? (see Appendix 4) in which I introduced my study. Feedback from that article was positive and I had people immediately contacting me, wishing to take part in the study. I was also contacted by three organizations that indicated they would like a copy of the results.

The next task was to determine the actual scope of the IS-L program at MEI. I assembled a list of students who had participated in the program from 1995-2010. This information was garnered through the archives - primarily through examining team lists and through yearbook team pictures. I created an Excel spreadsheet listing program participants year by year and then extracted those who had participated in the program between 1995-2005. I further extracted those who had travelled internationally during those years. For interest sake, I also identified a list of students who had travelled with me throughout the years.

This list started at 990 total program participants from 1995-2010. 612 of those students travelled internationally and 378 served locally. 163 of those students travelled with me. When I limited the study to 1995-2005, student participants totalled 656. 442 of those

students travelled internationally and 214 served locally. 116 of those students travelled with me. Of the 442 students who travelled internationally, 40 of them had taken more than one trip, reducing the total number of international travellers to 402. Additionally, one student sadly died suddenly the year after he graduated, reducing the total number of possible study participants to 401.

Identifying those who served on teams was a far easier task than knowing how to currently contact these students. Our alumni department has some addresses on file; however, I quickly came to realize that our alumni records have not been maintained. Many addresses on file were those of parents dating back to when students lived at home. The department could only provide email addresses for 8 students on my list. An unanticipated part of my study became updating MEI alumni records.

3.9.1 Direct Observation

I would be remiss to discount the fact that I have had the opportunity to travel with 16 teams of students since 1995. I have seen 163 teenagers work in cross-cultural settings – some of them travelling on airplanes for the first time on those trips. I cannot and would not want to step out of this context for this study for I think it adds depth and provides a participatory-observational contextual element that is unique to my study. My observational comments, while intentionally limited, form a part of the data incorporated into this study. Becker (1958) cautions that potential biases may occur in this type of research. The participant-observer may assume a position of advocacy or become a supporter of the program and the participant role may take too much attention relative to the observer role. He recommends taking time to step back and to raise questions from different perspectives. I was aware of this potential conflict and tried to remain as objective as possible.

3.9.2 Documents – Student Reflections and Journals

The first method that was employed in this study was that of document analysis. I had access to two types of written documents as data collected immediately after the trips is on file at the school in the form of team journals and trip feedback forms. Several teams who travelled maintained a team journal in which students took turns reflecting. Each night of the trip, a different team member took the journal home and wrote their impressions and reflections of that particular day. The journal circulated to all team

members and at the end of the trips, copies were made for team members as well as a copy for the school's records. This writing was in addition to students' personal journals. Denzin (1989) considers the journal to be very useful as it contains "uncensored outpourings" (p. 193), and provides insight into a private life that is not available elsewhere. Participants were also invited to share their personal journals. Obviously, this was voluntary, as personal journals are not retained at the school. Although not necessarily reflective of long-term impact, these impressions were noteworthy in this study as they provided a picture of what students were experiencing and what impacted them on-site. They also provided a helpful reference point for discussions during interviews with team participants.

The second source of post-trip data that was examined were the trip evaluation forms that students are required to submit upon their return (see Appendix 5). These two sources of data revealed impressions during and immediately following IS-L trips. They also exposed moments of impact and student thought processing while they travelled. My hypothesis was that if these trips had long-term influence, it would be those exact moments that stimulated long-term moral growth and affected subsequent behaviour.

3.9.3 Survey Research

A third source and second method of data collection consisted of surveying all trip participants five to fifteen years post-travel to gain a longer-term understanding of their perceived experience. I endeavoured to systematically collect data through surveying the 401 students who participated in IS-L trips at MEI from 1995-2005. "Surveys are structured sets of statements that represent attitudes or values of interest to those collecting outcome information" (Pritchard & Whitehead III, 2004, p. 175).

After the study was outlined in the alumni magazine to generate interest and express its purpose, I endeavoured to send invitations to participate (see Appendix 6) by mail to the 401 eligible international travellers. 18 of those students had "disappeared", resulting in an initial mail-out of 383 survey invitations. In my letter of invitation, participants were provided with an online link and asked to use *Grapevine Survey*, a Canadian web-based survey tool, to complete the survey on-line. Participants who would prefer to complete the survey on paper were asked to contact me by phone, and I would mail a survey to them. I mailed paper-copy surveys to two research participants. Although only 32 letters were returned by the postal system to the school; I know that a number of the

addresses that we had on file were for parents of our graduates and so I suspect a number of those letters needed to be passed onto another home. Whether or not that happened is impossible to measure. In the end, 351 survey invitations were, to my knowledge, successfully mailed.

One of the disadvantages of survey use is that, often there are low response rates. I knew this and anticipated having to follow-up by phone and email to encourage response. Although this was an online survey, it had elements of a mail survey, as that is how contact was first made. Royse (1991) believes that the success of a mail survey depends on an accurate mailing list, a short questionnaire and follow-up. Dillman (1978) advocates the mailing of surveys, followed by a reminder postcard and then a second mail-out to those who have not responded. The need to follow-up on the mail-out was anticipated, and did prove to be true.

Most school administrators view the social networking website, *Facebook*, negatively because a significant number of discipline issues arise from inappropriate use of this site. This study somewhat changed my view of that website! As a researcher, *Facebook* became invaluable to me. I was able to find many MEI graduates on *Facebook* and used it as a vehicle to transmit messages and to find email addresses. I was able to locate email addresses for 208 of the 351 survey contacts, which along with the 8 provided by the school enabled me to follow-up electronically with 216 potential participants.

Unfortunately, due to a lack of information as to their whereabouts, I was unable to follow-up on many of the other potential candidates other than by mail. I was able to make 54 phone calls – many to the homes of parents, but for many of our graduates, all I had was that original address on file at the school. Therefore, a month after the first mail-out, a reminder post-card (see Appendix 7) was sent by mail to possible participants who had not already responded.

Ultimately, I had 126 people complete on-line surveys, 2 complete paper surveys, and 3 complete surveys over the phone (after having technical difficulties and answering the entire survey online twice only to later lose it). Therefore, the total response rate was 131 of a possible 351 for whom we had contact information, which represented a response rate of 37.3%. This was out of a possible 402 international travellers between 1995-2000, which represented an overall response rate of 32.5%. To further triangulate this study, I identified families who had more than one student involved in the MEI IS-L

program between 1995-2005. Fifty such families were identified and addresses were located for 45 of these families. A survey was mailed to each of these parents. 34 out of those 45 invited responded to the survey, which represented a response rate of 76%.

3.9.4 Questionnaire Design

Anderson & Bourke (2000), both considered experts in measuring affective characteristics in schools, outline six steps in developing a survey: Developing a blueprint (target, scales, lay out survey), writing survey items, preparing survey directions (communicate purpose of survey, optional nature of participation, way to respond, no rights and wrongs, opinions sought, having the draft survey reviewed (sequence, redundancy), piloting the survey and preparing the survey for administration (p. 112).

I first established the goals of my survey and developed its blueprint by identifying my areas of interest in following up on trip participants. Survey participants were asked to reflect back to the period before their program participation, to their actual trip and to further consider their current situation and thoughts. Surveys included asking participants to recall and analyze, in writing, aspects of their experience in terms of their own attitude and values, which then enabled me to do some experience analysis (Pritchard & Whitehead III, 2004). They were asked to share their impressions whether good, bad or indifferent on the long-term impact of these trips. One of the questions on the survey invited students to share personal writings or reflections from their trip and/or participate in a follow-up interview.

I next created my survey items and I carefully crafted my survey questions. I started the survey with questions applicable to all participants in an effort to build trust and rapport and further engagement. I began with some close-ended questions and then later moved to more open-ended questions. I recognized response fatigue as a threat so tried to strategically position questions through the survey while sequencing questions topically as well. As I was seeking primarily qualitative data, I sought to ask more broad, summary-type questions (Frey, 1983). The *Grapevine Surveys* website provided a comprehensive menu of question-type options. I was able to incorporate check boxes, radio buttons, text boxes and rating scales into my survey. I tried to avoid "double-barrelled questions, leading questions, unavailable information, use of jargon and technical terms, insensitive language, inflammatory or 'loaded' terms, mutually exclusive

response choices and vague and ambiguous terms, all-inclusive terms and negatively constructed" (Royse, 1991) questions.

I created several sections on the survey that asked participants to demonstrate their level of agreement to a statement. Kidder & Judd (1986) describe the phenomenon of acquiescence or the tendency of respondents to agree with items regardless of their content and suggest that this be countered by constructing items so that respondents answer positively and negatively in equal proportions. I was careful to include both in my survey. I then divided my survey into sections and drafted some section headings and directions for the participants. I included these aspects of my survey on the pre-testing of my instrument.

3.9.5 Piloting the Design

Prior to going live with my survey online, I had a group of students who served recently on IS-L teams at our school pre-test it. Ten students answered the survey and provided feedback.

I was most concerned about the length of my survey; however, I also knew that for most participants, this would be the only contact that I may have with them, so there was tension between wanting a volume of information and not creating response fatigue. In my pre-tests, students averaged about 20 minutes completion time, as did I when I went through it. I was satisfied. What I failed to account for is the fact the students in my pilot group had travelled within the last couple of years and answers were perhaps more accessible in their memories. In reality, according to the timer on the website, study participants averaged about 40 minutes to complete the survey. Some participants went into more detail and took over an hour. This said, only two participants expressed frustration with the survey length.

A second concern was that study participants would answer in a manner they thought I would want to hear. My pilot group allayed this concern, stating that providing the option to answer anonymously and providing all the open-ended responses would incite honesty. They indicated a level of comfort with the tool.

After feedback from both the pilot group and my advisory committee, I edited and adjusted my survey to produce a more useful tool (See Appendix 8). I re-administered the survey to the pilot group and found their answers to be consistent and therefore

reliable. I then prepared to administer the survey to my study participants and it went "live" on-line.

3.9.6 Interviewing

A survey cannot access in-depth data. Therefore, additional data was collected through in-depth, semi-structured interviews. I selected 10 survey respondents to elaborate on their IS-L experience. I chose these candidates based on their indicated willingness to be interviewed and some content in their survey responses that caused me to want to dig deeper. For some it was a particular idea or experience that they mentioned that bore elaboration, for others it was a negative tone which I desired to further explore. I also hoped to learn of the limitations of IS-L, through the interviews. All survey respondents had the choice of opting out of an interview, with a survey question that asked if they were open to further sharing about their experience. Twelve respondents declined this opportunity.

I used Seidman's (1998) definition of "phenomenological interviewing" as it seeks to take an interest in understanding not only the experience, but the meaning that a person takes from that experience. This involved facilitating the reconstruction of experiences using open-ended questions. However, I deviated from Seidman's series of interviews, and met with each interviewee once. I was open to further interviews should it be deemed helpful, but it was not. Riessman (1993) describes the partnership of interviewer and interviewee in the process of reflection. The parties interact in attending to the experience, telling about the experience, transcribing the experience, analysing the experience and reading about the experience. Likewise, the stages of interview research that Kvale (1996) identifies encapsulated this partnership when he discussed describing, interviewing, transcribing, analysing, verifying and taking action. I followed this process.

Interviews were held in a neutral location – at the school or over the phone. I preferred in person contact; however, in several cases, distance necessitated telephone or Skype interviews. Both the survey and interview protocol were developed and tested with two former students, who have completed an IS-L trip more recently (since 2005) and who are not consequently included in the research sample. The interview protocol was then revised with observation and feedback incorporated. Interviews lasted between 45 and 60 minutes and focussed (after catching up a bit) on student reflections regarding their

trip, perceived influence of these trips on identity and moral development and subsequent life choices and behaviour. Essentially, participants were invited to discuss any area of their life in which they perceived impact subsequent to their trip. Participants were also invited to elaborate on negative trip experiences or concerns that arose.

Kahn & Cannell (1957) assert that interviews must translate research objectives into specific questions and the answers while motivating the respondent to give the necessary information (as cited in Denzin, 1989, p. 107). My interview questions were semi-structured in order to ensure respondents answered the same questions and to allow for comparison of responses. Questions were open-ended to better understand participant viewpoints without pre-determining them through prior selection of questionnaire items (Patton, 1980) and to allow free-flowing oral reflection. I used reflective listening techniques in order to verify the accuracy of the researcher's understanding of various responses.

As I was interested in stories and was asking participants to reflect back several years, interview participants were given the interview questions ahead of time in order to encourage some cursory reflection. Although it was hoped that this would aid in preparation, it must also be acknowledged that providing additional time to think may also challenge the authenticity and therefore accuracy of responses. Participants were also invited to bring their trip photograph, journals or mementos to the meetings. All interviews done in person were audiotaped, with permission of the interviewees and later transcribed. If clarity was questionable, I used member checking and had respondents review a part of my transcriptions or interpretations. I followed Kvale's (1996) model of interview analysis, which involves thematizing, designing, interviewing, transcribing, analysing, verifying and reporting. Although an interview protocol was used (see Appendix 9), interviews were neither rigorously structured nor open conversations.

I transcribed the interviews that took place in person and took detailed notes from the interviews held over the phone/Skype. Data was managed electronically with back-ups being made on a portable hard-drive. All electronic records were password protected and all paper data continues to be stored in a locked filing cabinet.

3.10 Data Analysis Procedures

I endeavoured to approach my data with an open mind, seeking what emerged from the text (Seidman, 1998). Weiss (1995) recommends a four-phased process including the

initial reading of data, coding, sorting, analysis, integration of the information, identifying the recurrent themes in the data, and then integrating the themes into a coherent picture. I took this interpretative approach to data analysis with the aim of understanding what the participants were expressing and trying to capture their subjective experience. Moustakas (1994) identifies five phases of data analysis: immersion with the experience, incubation/contemplation, illumination, explication and creative synthesis. After interviewing, my real interest rested in the latter four stages with identifying patterns, key events/experiences and themes around which the data is organized and interpreting those themes to create an interpretive analysis. Geertz (1973) suggests that analysis is an interpretive adventure as we search for meaning. I reviewed the data to understand how participants created meaning and how that meaning affected subsequent behaviour. Lincoln & Guba (1985) refer to an inductive process of data analysis, where research and observations lead to pattern discovery, broader generalizations and emergent theory. I found data collection and analysis to be a simultaneous and an on-going process that evolved as my study unfolded and as I saw these patterns and generalizations emerge.

As with most qualitative studies, I had an overwhelming amount of data to examine. I tried first to develop a sense or overview of the entire text. I sought to set aside preconceived notions and develop a sense of my data as a whole (Kvale, 1996). I then reviewed individual surveys and interviews multiple times, as I strove to gain a deeper understanding of individual experiences and their meaning to the participant. I sought "core meanings" that were implicit in statements, expressions and tones. Identifying key issues and comments was not difficult; however, selecting the language in which to express the concepts and themes had to be done carefully.

Document, survey and interview data was categorized and coded. I used an "open coding" process as described by Strauss 7Corbin (1990). I examined data, conceptualized, delineated and coded themes. Similar phrases, patterns, themes and relationships that reflect the participants' experiences quickly emerged and this enabled me to assign codes to various categories and to classify statements as themes emerged. My codes served as "bins" for data analysis. As new data failed to fit into my categories, I either refined categories or developed new categories. I started with a small number of codes, then expanded the number as I reviewed data and then finally reduced the number of categories.

I was able to take my initially developed categories and reassemble data to provide examples of trip observations, context and phenomena. Although I did not use Grounded Theory, Strauss & Corbin (1990) present three levels of coding in their theory that are useful for any data analysis: open, axial and selective. In open coding, the first level begins with the actual words of the participants. This helped me uncover concepts and ideas that enabled comparison between these concepts to determine categories that are more abstract and theoretical. Axial coding involves explicating the story line, relating subsidiary categories around the core category, relating categories, validating relationships and filling in categories that need further development and refinement. Finally, the core categories or the "central phenomenon around which all the other phenomenon are integrated" (p. 116) can be identified through selective coding. Through analysis, categories became defined and saturated, indicating enough data had been collected. Although in my work, this process was not as linear as the theories presented, there did come a point where I experienced data saturation and as things crystallized, I could identify consistencies and generalizations that I could link to a formalized body of knowledge, as well as unique interpretations and stories. Throughout the study, I was using a constant comparative method of analysis. Riessman (1993) identifies validation criteria for content: persuasiveness of content; member checking with the respondents, coherence of content and the pragmatic value of the data findings. Lincoln and Guba (1985) refer to the process of making sense of the data as searching for "the lessons learned" (p. 8).

In this study, I sought to unfurl thick description with thick interpretation (Denzin, 1989). Thick description extracts the meanings, actions and feelings in an experience and captures the meanings that people bring to those experiences. Thick interpretation seeks to uncover the conceptual structures that inform action. It examines the subject's interpretations of the experience. Interviews and surveys allowed themes to emerge from the student experience and the subsequent growth, development and choices of these students after they left high school.

3.11 Validity and Reliability

Trustworthiness in qualitative studies is challenging, as there are no statistical means to assure reliability and validity. Using multiple sources of evidence and establishing a chain of evidence promoted construct validity. "Thus any finding or conclusion in a case

study is likely to be much more convincing and accurate if it is based on several different sources of information, following a corroboratory mode" (Yin, 1984, p. 97). The validity in this study is the extent to which what I measured reflects what I had intended to measure and the extent to which my interpretations are true. Of concern to validity are the truthfulness of study participant response, the accuracy of records and the generalizability of my results (Anderson & Arsenault, 1998). Maxwell (1992) suggests that there are threats to validity in the descriptive, interpretive and theoretical aspects of qualitative research. Each was addressed in my research through using databases, audiotaping, careful note taking, establishing a chain of evidence throughout my investigation and using theoretical propositions as a framework (Yin, 1984). Lincoln & Guba (1985) suggest that credibility, dependability, transferability and confirmability are preferred when discussing qualitative work. I believe that using an adequate sample size, being transparent with my research process, including all program participants from that time period, and triangulating helped to address these concerns. To ensure accuracy and completeness in description, I asked survey participants for written description, audiotaped my interviews and used member checking to verify accurate transcription. Mason (1996) shows how to demonstrate valid interpretation:

> Validity of interpretation in any form of qualitative research is contingent upon the 'end product' including a demonstration of how that interpretation was reached. This means that you should be able to, and be prepared to trace the route by which you came to your interpretation...The basic principles here is that you are never taking it as self-evident that a particular interpretation can be made of your data but instead that you are continually and assiduously charting and justifying the steps through which your interpretations were made (p. 150).

I believe that my questions were valid, my respondents understood the questions and they were interpreted as intended, respondents were cooperative and willing to respond, they had knowledge of information that they needed to respond, they were honest in their responses and the responses were recorded accurately. Lastly, the responses were transcribed and aggregated accurately.

Reliability is measured by a tool's consistency in measurement. Anderson & Arsenault (1998) explain it as "the extent to which subsequent administration would give similar results". It is difficult to ensure reliability in a study working with personal impressions; however, the title of this study expresses that the very essence of this study is perceptions.

I have endeavoured to report the results of this study with care. Robson (1993) suggests that in writing, evaluative criteria such as elegance, coherence and consistency are critical in ensuring that qualitative studies are trustworthy.

This chapter has focussed on the design of my study. I began my research with a hypothesis about the broad areas in which S-L may affect change. I created a triadic framework for moral education through which I looked at the body of literature and which served to organize subject information and then examined literature describing S-L outcomes in the areas of developmental changes, moral action and transformative reflection. I identified the lenses through which I viewed my data while outlining the research methods and procedures and have endeavoured to transparently outline the limitations of this study. Chapter 4 will now report the themes and observations that emerged from this study and Chapter 5 will summarize implications and recommendations for further research.

4: FINDINGS – LETTING THE DATA SPEAK

This study examined the perceived long-term impact of short-term international service-learning (IS-L) trips on its participants. For the purpose of this study, the perceived impact was measured primarily qualitatively through document analysis (journals and trip evaluation forms), through a survey and through interviews. This chapter will report the findings of that research, endeavouring to give voice to study participants.

4.1 Summary of Study's Purpose and Design

While a number of studies have been done regarding community service, there are very few Canadian studies, there are few which examine the impact of international service at the high school level, and few have that have examined any long-term effect of such service.

This is a case study following students from MEI, an Abbotsford secondary school, who travelled to an international destination in their tenth, eleventh or twelfth grade, between the years 1995 to 2005. The perceived impact of high school IS-L trips was therefore measured five to fifteen years after it occurred.

I was involved in founding the IS-L program at MEI and have subsequently travelled extensively with student teams. Upon return from trips, immediate anecdotal feedback has been positive, however, prior to this study, no follow-up had been done to examine whether these trips had enduring impact. This study attempted to locate graduates from our program and to record their beliefs, attitudes and behaviours several years after returning from their experience.

4.2 Revisiting the Research Questions

This study focussed on participant perceptions five to ten years after travelling to an IS-L destination. I sought to determine what the perceived influence of an IS-L program is on the long-term moral development and behaviour of its participants. The research questions to be answered in the study were as follows:

- What is the perceived impact of an International Service-Learning program on the long-term moral development and behavior of its participants?
- How do students perceive they were changed/influenced positively or negatively on these trips?
- Do students perceive their Service-Learning experience to have impacted their personal development (self-esteem, self-efficacy and empathy towards others)?
- Does Service-Learning build confidence in personal effectiveness and a sense of self-efficacy?
- Do these perceived changes then translate into action or changed behaviour?
- What kinds of humanitarian/philanthropic/service-related involvements have high-school service learners continued to seek?
- Does International Service Learning in high school influence students' sense of citizenship, social responsibility and global engagement later in life?
- Do Service-Learning programs contribute to and achieve the goals of schooling?
- What are the implications of this study for future International Service-Learning initiatives?

4.3 Profile of Study Participants

4.3.1 Demographics

Of the 442 IS-L participants at MEI between 1995 and 2005, contact information was located for 351 of them and all were invited to participate. 221 of these participants were female and 131 were male. Of those invited, 131 chose to participate - 40.5% of respondents (53 people) were male and 59.8% of respondents (78 people) were female (See Figure 4.1). It should be noted that females have had significantly higher participation in the IS-L program at MEI throughout the years. Normally the ratio of applicants to the program is about 2:1 female to male (See Table 4.1).

Responses from the two genders were comparable on this survey, except in one area – that of future service. A higher percentage (77%) of those who indicated they had been engaged in prolonged service overseas were male. Conversely, a higher percentage of those who indicated they were engaged in local or community service were female (71%). When asked why they thought this was so, one interviewee commented, "We're

young and it's scary to be a female alone in another country, but females are wired to help and when we see need in our own backyard, we are there!"

Figure 4.1 Gender of Respondents – by percentage
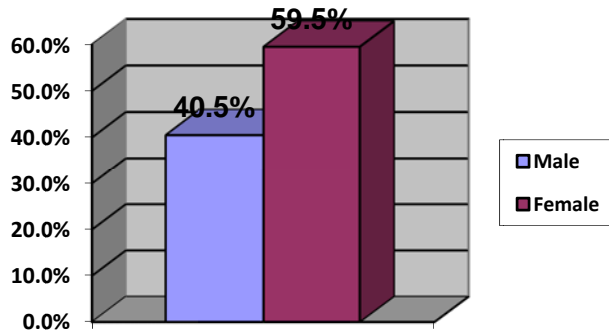
Although the MEI program offers trips to Mexico in Grade 10 and overseas in Grades 11 and 12, most survey respondents indicated that they had travelled in Grade 12 (See Figure 4.2).

Figure 4.2 Respondents' Grade Level when Travelling
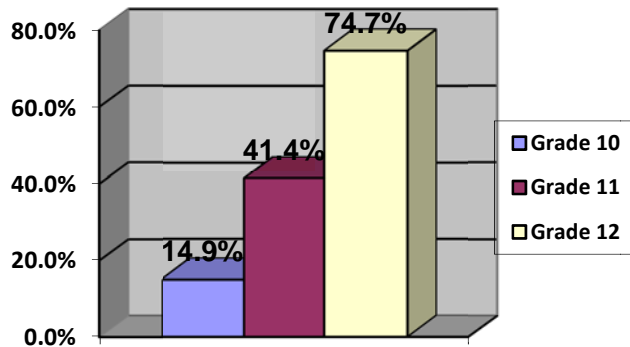
This again reflects the overall demographics of the program as most often students wait until Grade 12 to take an IS-L trip. Every international destination to which MEI travels was represented by respondents in this survey. Table 4.1 illustrates the destinations to which the survey respondents travelled.

Table 4.1 International Destinations of Survey Respondents

Destinations	Percentage of Survey Respondents who Travelled to this Destination
Mexico	16.1%
Ukraine	13.5%
Argentina	10.6%
Haiti	10.6%
Philippines	10.1%
Germany	8.6%
Thailand	7.7%
Cambodia	6%
Costa Rica	4.4%
Kenya	4%
Honduras	3.7%
Hong Kong	2.5%
Czech Republic	1.2%
Venezuela	1%

The uneven distribution is not simply reflective of those who chose to respond to the invitation to participate in this study, but may also be attributed to the unequal number of MEI teams and therefore participants who travelled to each destination between 1995 and 2005. MEI has deployed teams to Haiti, Argentina, Ukraine and Mexico most frequently. It was also noted that those who had travelled most recently constituted a greater percentage of the survey respondents (See Figure 4.3).

Figure 4.3 Percentage of Respondents by Graduation Year
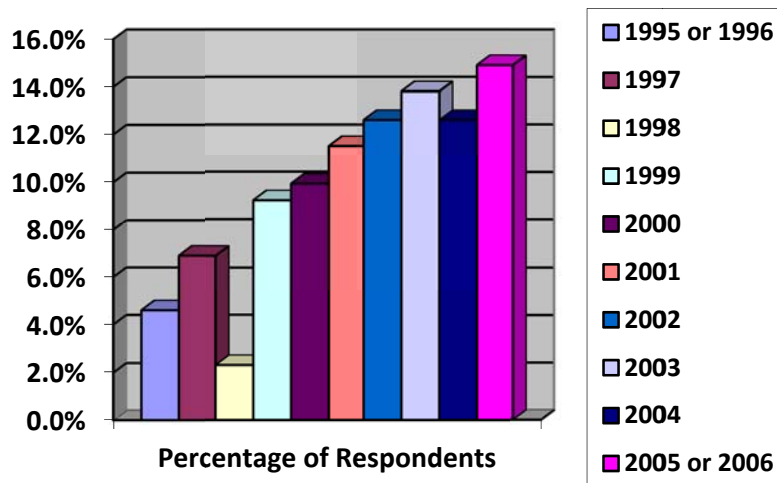
Of those who responded, 8.7% chose to remain anonymous and 69.1% expressed a willingness to be interviewed.

Of the 45 parents invited to participate in my survey, 34 returned completed surveys (see Appendix10). Each of these parents had more than one student participate in the MEI IS-L Program. All 34 parents who responded lauded the program, seeing it as a valuable growing experience for their children and believed IS-L trips should continue at MEI. Their comments are integrated in the themes below.

4.3.2 Participant Self-Descriptions

Survey questions attempted to gain some understanding of participants before they embarked on their IS-L experience.

4.3.3 Faith

When asked whether they were actively practicing a faith when they went on their IS-L experience, 97.7% of respondents indicated yes, while 2.3% indicated they were not. All but one of the students practicing a faith indicated it was Christian, while one indicated she practiced the Sikh religion.

4.3.3.1 Pre-Trip Demographics

Survey participants were asked to reflect about their lives prior to their IS-L experience. 70.4% of participants indicated that this was their first international service-learning experience but 41.4% of respondents indicated that they had been involved in local or community service activities prior to their trip. As secondary students, 63.2% of survey respondents indicated that they did not regularly contribute to any cause or people in need prior to their trip but 73.6% indicated they had some awareness of social injustices at that point of their life. One study participant commented, "I would have served internationally without my MEI experience. I think people who have an interest in serving people choose trips like this. Trips like this don't make people care more for service". This is an interesting response and one that points to the fact that students who are attracted to IS-L activities likely have a propensity to serve already. However, her sentiment was not shared by all other participants. Another commented, "I had never really thought about serving really but during this trip I learned that it is good for others but also good for me. I guess I learned to love to serve".

4.3.3.2 Reasons for Travel

When asked why they applied for an IS-L experience, motivations varied widely. Some wanted to help others; others spoke of authenticating or putting their faith into action. "I was motivated mostly out of my religious convictions. I was convinced that there was more to Christianity then [sic] going to church. I felt that I needed to go and wanted to experience more of life and help others, even though I didn't fully understand what that meant when I signed up". Some wanted an international travel experience or to learn about another culture. One student commented, "I was always interested in serving overseas as a young boy, so naturally I jumped at the chance...I think naively as a young person you anticipate helping the world and impacting a region in your time of service. I

would now say the greatest impact was on me. I had two motivations, the first to help people and the second to see the world a little more".

One person shared how a presentation during his fifth grade year by an MEI team that had travelled to Ukraine seeded a desire to have a similar experience. Other respondents spoke of how they had anxiously waited since Grade 8 for their opportunity. One interviewee commented, "One of the major influences in choosing MEI as a school back when I was going into grade 8 was this opportunity to travel and serve. My motivation was a desire to travel, to see different cultures apart from what is seen as a tourist and to open my eyes to social injustices that I was vaguely aware of". A few participants had older siblings who had come home excited about their experience. Another commented on how it seemed almost a part of the school's culture: "I signed up for an S-L trip because I felt it was a good opportunity to go out into the world and see how others lived. In addition, these trips had been part of the MEI tradition, and it almost seemed a rite of passage, as if it was simply a natural part of my graduating year".

At times, a personal connection or interest with a country was mentioned: "I have an adopted brother from Haiti so I was interested to see where he was from" or "My grandparents came from Ukraine and so this trip was part of my family's journey – going back to my roots. I got to see the Motherland and made my grandparents so proud." A desire to work with impoverished children was also a common motivating factor for signing up on these trips.

Several respondents indicated that friends played a critical role in their decision-making. Either a friend was going on a trip and encouraged a peer to join him/her, or travelling and sharing such an experience with school friends seemed attractive. One respondent said: "I went to Mexico with sixty team members and a huge if not the number one factor of me going was because my friends were going. I did want to go and be helpful, but at that age I was more concerned about making memories with my high school friends". Another shared how he/she had tentatively decided: "I was taking a bit of a chance going to the initial interest meeting and I sort of remember thinking I still didn't have to go. When I found most of my friends at the same meeting (it must have been the big secret of the morning), I locked in and was motivated to go. The security of friends convinced me and this is one instance of how peer pressure can work for the good! One respondent summed his motivation up, "It sounded like a fun time, I'd get to travel with friends and do some good as well".

Motives were not always what adults might consider "pure" as respondents candidly shared, "I think at that age, I was most interested in getting a great tan over spring break. I don't know if God or the leaders were smarter than me, but I ended a part of the snowy Ukraine team". Another indicated she had signed up "because it was more activity orientated [sic] instead of learning by wrote [sic]. Also there was a boy whom I really liked who signed up..." Another student said: "I applied so I could brag about it. I wanted another reason that I chalk into my good Christian person list" and other respondents indicated they had not much considered the work they were about to do, but rather their main motivation was "just to have fun".

4.3.3.3 Immediate Post-Trip Data

Students in this program are asked to submit trip evaluation forms upon returning from travel. These forms emphasize questions around faith development and perceived spiritual growth. On post-trip evaluations, 98% of students reported having strengthened their relationship with God during their trip. In addition, 79% felt that they lived a better Christian life. 98% of students felt that they would go on another trip if they had an opportunity, 88% felt that they would be open to being a missionary and 89% felt that their IS-L trip had helped prepare them for life and service in a real world. With overwhelming support, 99% indicated that they felt MEI should continue to have an I-SL program. Other feedback from the trips was also positive:

- 93% felt that their appreciation for another culture increased as a result of the trip.
- 82% felt that they had experienced the joy of serving.
- 94% felt that God had worked through them to affect others' lives.
- 97% felt that they had learned to love others in a more significant way.
- 96% indicated appreciation for their team.
- 72% indicated there was a good balance between work/service and recreation on their trips.

Evaluations did express some disappointment. One student said, "I expected to be changed more, but I still felt like the same person when I returned", and another said, "It wasn't what I expected. We didn't get to do what I thought we would do at all".

4.3.3.4 Overall Trip Reflections

In fact, when asked to reflect back now on the IS-L experience, 64.4% of survey respondents indicated that the trip was different than they had expected. When asked for elaboration on this in interviews, participants talked about how hard it was to live in a different cultural milieu both physically and emotionally. They did not expect to see the level of poverty that they had: "these people had way less than I could ever wrap my head around" and participants did not expect to feel so tired all of the time they were there. "Ukraine was a lot different than I expected. It was the hardest experience of my life. Lots of tears. Literally – my host family had to deal with my emotions one night when I cried for a couple of hours straight. I was so overwhelmed. I couldn't handle the food. I couldn't communicate anything I felt to anyone and I hated my team leader". Several participants expressed a wish that they had learned more of the language prior to travelling: "It was very hard to be away from my team the whole day with people who did not speak English. I often felt very helpless as I sat there smiling while I think someone told my story in a language that I didn't understand".

Other comments that came up frequently revealed that service had to be redefined for many students. At the time of signing up for these trips, they expected to be living in third world settings. This proved to be true for some of the trips, but others found themselves living in respectable homes or working in clean, well-organized, well-provided-for orphanages. Some expressed disappointment with the setting of their trip; others re-framed their idea of service. This also held true for the type of service. Students found themselves doing many unexpected tasks on their trips and indicated having to adjust their concept of what it meant to serve. Some did this successfully, while others struggled. When successfully re-framed, cleaning toilets and washing windows came to be valued as much as interacting with people.

Many participants also indicated surprise with the level of impact they experienced. One was surprised that she "got healing in my own life". Another person said, "I don't remember my expectations that many years ago beyond the fact that I didn't or couldn't believe it would have the impact on my life to come that it did". Another said, "I had not anticipated to have been changed to this day, by that one experience. A significant part of my empathetic response to those in challenging social/financial circumstances domestically and abroad was born in me that trip".

Homestay situations were frequently mentioned as being unexpected and difficult to imagine "until you are there". Many were surprised by the graciousness of their host families: "The family that me [sic] and my classmate stayed with gave us their best room in the house – sacrificing their own comfort for us. Those experiences shocked me and still stick out in my mind." Another summarized:

> I was surprised at how I felt I was being blessed by these people more than I was helping them. It was an interesting feeling. I assumed that I would be such a big help to them, and that would be so grateful because they needed it so much. In reality, they did need help, but their daily and life attitude was one of caring, consideration and love. This attitude overrode any negativity from the life situation/conditions of which they were involved. They seemed more giving than I was. That shocked me.

In some of the more humble homes, lack of showers and electricity, coupled with the language barrier made evenings very long for students. However, although it may have looked differently than imagined, overall the majority of study participants indicated feeling satisfied with their IS-L experience. One interviewee commented, "In no way did this trip fall short. It was a great experience and I would do it again tomorrow". Another stated, "That trip was a once in the life time, world changer for me. It exceeded my expectations in ways I could not have imagined."

4.3.3.5 Unmet Expectations

But not everyone was positive. Participants also discussed several concerns. Communicating proved to be difficult for many. Some felt unprepared in other areas apart from language training: "It would have been great to do some class cultural study beforehand, related to the place, people and issues we were going to be visiting and encountering so that our 'grid' was already to process it".

Team leadership was also an issue that surfaced frequently in discussion. "I did not feel specifically edified and encouraged by the teachers who accompanied us. I felt a need for that and it was not met". Another said, "I felt that my female leader did not treat every team member the same way or fairly".

Another repeated point of contention was the balance between service and recreation on some trips.

> The trip did not meet my expectations because I was expecting to do a lot more and be much busier with our time serving. I felt we spent too much time sightseeing considering how short a period of time we were gone for.

Also, before we left, we didn't know a lot about what we going to be doing. Further preparation may have been useful.

Some even questioned whether their service was of much benefit. "I'm not sure what we really did that was worthwhile. Some painting and cleaning and I guess relieving the orphanage workers, but does playing with kids really make a difference in the world?" Another struggled with how a two-week trip could accomplish anything sustainable: "As a short-term trip, it doesn't have much long-term impact on the people we were going to help". And yet several others recognized that "the bigger impact was made on the students who went, rather than the community we served".

In the end when participants were asked if they felt they could have had an experience with a similar impact at home, only 24% agreed, 56% disagreed and 20% remained neutral and refrained from commenting. So there appeared to be recognition of the uniqueness these experiences provide.

4.4 Results: A Snapshot of Broad Trends

Participants in this study were asked to consider whether their IS-L trip impacted them in terms of moral development and behaviour and whether it continues to impact them. 85.1% felt that their IS-L experience had a positive enduring effect, 14.9% described its enduring impact as neutral. No survey participant indicated that his or her trip had a negative enduring impact. This chapter will continue to examine the ways participants perceive their trips to have impacted them and examine whether the participants' perceived changes translated into development and behaviour.

A large number of IS-L participants did link their experience to future service. 74.1% of respondents indicated that they felt their MEI IS-L experience played a role in their serving again. One survey respondent reflected:

> It was a remarkable experience to leave home and family and see life in a different place. The poverty, the need, the heat, the markets, the children. All were new experiences and the opportunity to see it and then process it with a group of my peers was remarkable. It changed me in many ways and effected [sic] how I viewed service work, overseas workers and missions, expectations for my own life and where I wanted to go with my career.

Participants also perceived S-L to be an effective learning exercise in relation to other kinds of school activities and assignments. 92% indicated it was more effective, with the

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remaining 8% indicating it was equal to other learning activities. No respondent felt it was less effective. Study participants affirmed that MEI should continue offering these trips through an IS-L program, with an affirmation of 97.7%.

To summarize, my study examined how participants perceived their trip to have influenced their moral development and behaviour. Seven themes emerged as I listened to how people made meaning of their IS-L experience and heard what factors they attributed to behavioural change. Participants attributed the following changes to the IS-L trips: enlarging their world, challenging their cognitive schemes, invoking self-discovery, developing a sense of otherness, inspiring faith development, creating a struggle to re-enter and inspiring future involvement. Each of these factors contributed to the moral development of trip participants as they situated themselves through developmental changes, practiced moral action and practiced transformative reflection of their experiences. I will now examine each of these contributing themes. All names have been changed in this study.

4.5 Theme 1: Enlarging their World

As schools seek to create global citizens, the question must be asked whether IS-L is an effective means to create this enlarged worldview. As one study participant said:

> These trips are extremely important, as we live in a world with a current climate of integration, and yet social economic and political issues continue to force a re-casting of the Nationalist narrative. In order to become aware of the dangers of national identity, one must experience other nationalities and their own way of seeing the world. In addition, we live in a world of increasing disparity between the haves and have-nots; this often times is amplified by looking at it in an international context.

The majority of respondents thought their trip did enlarge their worldview, with 97% of survey respondents indicating that they felt the trip broadened their understanding of people and places, 2% remaining neutral and 1% disagreeing. 94.2% of survey respondents indicated that they felt it was important to engage with other countries. Participants had several comments. They first talked generally about seeing another part of the world. One student captured the experience, "This was my first time experiencing life outside of North America. I was amazed by the different culture we visited (different food, cobblestone streets, old buildings etc.) For the first time, I realized that we live in a big big world filled with many cultures". Another commented that:

> Whether we see it or not, every experience changes how we see the world. I had never been to Africa so it was great to learn about a new area of the world in terms of geography, wildlife, lifestyles, languages, education, gender and food. It challenged some stereotypes and preconceived notions I had about Africa from books and the television...

Participants talked about a subsequent broadening of their perspective, "It was very dirty and stinky. It was also very much of a learning experience for all of us. We got to be there and experience it, while before we could only read about it or see it on TV – these places really do exist!" Another person commented, "S-L gave me a better visual for the life that other people have. It allowed me to see an area beyond pictures and learn beyond reading or hearing". Someone else commented, "It broadened my worldview. Instead of just seeing poverty on the news, I began to understand it. There is a huge difference between watching something on TV and seeing it in person". Another also compared the experience to what is depicted in media. "This trip greatly influenced the way I viewed the world, both on a global scale of witnessing incredible poverty, as well as a greater understanding of the true nature of a place like Hollywood, and the gloss over it presents through all its media outlets. It was not the same place I had once imagined it was, changing my view of most media and entertainment outlets". One respondent commented, "Unless you travel to other countries, you don't know that the rest of the world doesn't think and live like you." Another asserted that by taking these trips, "Your own faith and worldview will be strengthened."

Although most respondents talked about gaining "vision beyond themselves" or "opening our eyes to a world bigger than ME", others talked about personal growth. These trips "help you grow as a person as well as impact the lives of others" or "it expands your worldview, gives you perspective on life, is very practical and the best education I've received."

Interestingly, one person did not use the language of enlarging, but reported that the trip "shrunk her world". "I remember being there and feeling like it was so much like home. I guess I expected the air to feel different and for land to look different and people seem different. I was shockingly surprised how similar it all felt to home. I now have a much smaller view of the world and see people as more like me than I did before". It seemed that while their perception of the world changed, connections seemed to be made for participants. One commented that the trip helped her see how "interconnected the world

is and yet how different the world is. Seeing something first-hand is so different than being told about it".

Others seemed to develop social consciousness as they talked about seeing need and feeling a compulsion to help, which thereby situated them within a global context. "I was better able to see myself in a global context and place who I am," said one participant. Another said, "I began to see and understand how other people may be living on the other side of the world." Similarly, someone commented, "This trip made the world seem like a smaller place. So it seems no big deal that I would want to cross the world and help people". Another said, "It gave me a taste of the needs and challenges in other parts of the world and caused me to want to help those in need", and another, "It lit the fire or whatever you want to call it. It made me aware of all the things that made me see international service as something both important and necessary".

Students described recognizing a disparity that naturally leads to questions of justice. The disparity between rich and poor struck an Argentina team member. "How could I stand and face one way and see extreme poverty and walk 2 blocks and see the wealthiest homes in the country. Something is not right with that picture". Another said, "We would see a mansion, a castle-like building and then a tin roof and cardboard house 2 blocks behind in a dirt alley". Another commented, "It was hard to reconcile big beautiful Catholic churches on every block, yet see the poverty around them. How can that be right?"

When asked whether their trip helped them appreciate cultural and ethnic diversity, 88.9% of respondents agreed, while 2.5% disagreed and 8.6% remained neutral on the matter. When asked if they felt uncomfortable working with people who are different from them in race or wealth, 81.5% said no, 6.1% remained neutral and 12.4% agreed.

Another participant summarized, "I am convinced that the experience has benefited me probably more and impacted my worldview lens beyond any other influence". Said one interviewee when asked what she would say to someone considering an IS-L experience, "The world will be a different place when you get back because your eyes will change". So what causes this change? Several sub-themes emerged as contributing to enlarging the world of these youth.

4.5.1 Challenging their Cognitive Schemas

Despite participants having had unique trip experiences, there was a commonality in much of what they described. For many, there was amazement at what they experienced during their international experience. Many cultural differences stood out and recurring comments were made about the following aspects: surroundings, food, language, transport, living conditions, and time. Experiences collected in this research ranged from light-hearted to profound, but each involved the presenting or experiencing of new information. This new event could be described as causing cognitive dissonance as participants tried to assimilate or accommodate new, real-life situations and experiences into their existing cognitive schemas. Kohlberg (1984) referred to it as a dialogue between the structures of the mind and the environment and others refer to it as the social construction of meaning. For many it was "like nothing I'd ever seen" and they were trying to figure out how to respond. The sensory intake of these experiences led to subsequent thought and discussion and more intense dissonance as participants described wrestling with significant societal issues, like poverty, hunger and justice. Dewey (1933) called such situations "a forked road dilemma", while Mezirow (1990) referred to this as a "distorting dilemma". All of these new observations and experiences caused participants to reflect, to form conclusions and beliefs and therefore contributed to enlarging their worldview, which later directed some of their choices and behaviour.

4.5.2 Surroundings

Many participants described powerful visceral experiences and continue to have vivid memories of their first international experiences. A member of a Philippines team shared his initial impressions in a journal entry:

> I saw a man pee in the street: they will go to the bathroom anywhere. It's just revolting. The streets are so dirty, I can't even explain it. The smells are enough to make you throw up and never want to eat again. (Urine, garbage and fish mixture is what it smells like). The children in these villages are so happy to talk to you. The women bathe in the streets and the men gamble to try and get more money. These people eat only rice and smoked fish. There were rats in and amongst these shanties, and "le cocka-rocha" are everywhere. Jody picked up a hat in one of the stores and a cockroach came crawling out. She dropped that hat pretty quick. There are fish and meat markets out here in the sun and covered in flies – what a stench! Make sure you always get the BEST PRICE. Everywhere you go don't pay first price, but ask what the best price is

(that usually means 30-50% off). This is everywhere. What a mark-up, eh?!

A Haiti team member recalled flying over the island, "I think the desolation of Haiti's resources was quite impacting and confusing at the same time, seeing the line with lush forest on the Dominican Republic side and barrenness on Haiti's side. It's a lasting picture I have, and is a good 'why?' question to linger on". Someone who travelled to Mexico said, "I couldn't believe there are very poor parts just a stone's throw from the US border". Another student commented "I got to see first-hand some of the effects of civil war and occupation – gangs driving around in the backs of pickup trucks armed with guns and knives and burning tire blockades. Things I never would see in North America".

Several survey respondents commented on how difficult working in 40-degree heat was or how hard sleeping in sub-zero temperatures was! One person wrote in his journal, "It is so humid here, you can feel the weight of the air. I don't know if we are getting used to the humidity, but we'll have to stick it out". From Rift Valley in Africa, a team member made a journal entry: "We played basketball at 7000 ft. elevation today. Every 2 minutes I needed a sub. I was gasping, thinking, "How do people live here? I've never considered the air we breathe but it is a gift." After a team meeting, one participant journalled, "We talked about how much we take for granted in Canada; we have so much and so many Philoppinos [sic] live in poverty. They also breathe a million times more pollution than us. The pollution meter in town reads POOR conditions. It reads POOR conditions every day of the year. Some countries have it rough."

Some saw through the beauty of the country they were visiting, "One thing that stood out to me was the beauty I saw in that country, in the landscape, cities and people. However, not everything was really beautiful. Some people there do struggle to survive and ache for love and safety". Another remarked, "I thought it was crazy in Ukraine how people could be poor and have no money to eat but be so consumed with how they looked and they dressed as if they had a lot of money. Then I thought about life at home, and realize that we do that too. That was eye-opening". Another recalled sitting in a tap-tap {public transport in Haiti} stuck in traffic for half an hour. "I looked at all the hurt and disease. Those people live their lives like that day in and day out. How come I've got it so good, and yet I complain?"

There was more evidence of personalizing what they saw and experienced. A Thailand team member said:

> I will never be the same after we went to the Watt and saw where all the bodies of the Tsunami victims were placed. This was really hard to see but it changed me. You cannot take a day of your life for granted. This happened on Boxing Day, remember? You'd never expect that to be your last day.

A different interviewee stated:

> Because my family escaped from the Ukraine, it was challenging to see what life would have been like had we stayed in Eastern Europe rather than come to Canada. It helped me understand that I had basically won the lottery by being born to a family living in Canada. I understood how people in other countries live which is not something I had ever considered. This trip blew me right out of the water.

A Germany team member similarly commented that seeing "Checkpoint Charlie was significant to me. My grandmother lived through the Berlin blockade and thus Berlin and the Soviet involvement has always been a particular obsession of mine".

As foreign as these sights, smells and sounds were to participants, when asked whether they enjoyed the cultural differences that they experienced, 87.9% agreed, 3.7 disagreed and 8.4% did not comment.

4.5.3 Living Conditions

Participants wrote and spoke extensively about their living conditions during the trip. "Having to sleep in not so normal conditions, using bathroom facilities, eating minimal and basic, was challenging but also humbling", summarized one participant. The Ukraine team has a long journey to their destination as they fly through the night and then travel a second night by train. As students begin to pass through customs, they experience challenging living conditions right away: "Two men remanicnet [sic] of Nazis stood behind glass waiting with unmoving eyes to check our passports. I prayed for God to give me strength, cuz [sic] quite frankly they frightened me". Then another student recounted this story:

> After one bag was nearly stolen, we boarded the train as we looked upon our cramped living quarters. Two bunk beds, four people and a table in a space no bigger than a powder room. Throw in four hockey bags of team supplies and our four backpacks and you wonder where we fit. Yet nothing could top the infamous train toilets. A prison style toilet

containing unknown moistures on the seat, an untouchable sink and a tiny window furnished the space. A petal [sic] released your "business" on the train tracks so you could bid farewell to your poop as it was laid to rest.

A gathering was held in our leader's cabin; all of us squished in and we ate the cake that came in a hatbox. After the cake had become nothing but crumbs upon our three-day-old shirts, we split to our own cabins. That night was known as "the worst sleep I've ever had in my life!"

One team member remarked, "The living conditions were hard. Finding cockroaches under our sleeping bags every night and not being able to have a normal bathroom was hard. Wearing a skirt every day was awkward to me." A male survey respondent countered, "Girls thought skirts were bad. Try wearing long pants and shoes in 40-degree heat every day. Just about killed me".

4.5.4 Language

Language barriers and struggles were mentioned several times in surveys. Although acknowledged as frustrating at times, it was surprising how light hearted people seemed to be in this area. "The language barrier can be frustrating at times as we found out making the craft. Over half of my group put sad faces on their suns instead of happy ones. Kind of funny actually!"

Some participants talked about a lack of empowerment they experienced as they sat quietly while others talked or they desperately wanted to communicate something to someone and could not. Others mentioned their lack of language skills as a safety concern. "What would have happened if we had trouble on the streets and couldn't talk?" or "We managed to get through the airport with no complications considering that most of us can only say 'who' or 'how are you?' in Spanish". During one presentation at a school, the language barrier made some team members nervous. "They were all laughing and at first I thought it was at us (which made me even more nervous), but then Sarah reminded me that we crack jokes when a speaker talks to us, and we're not necessarily laughing at them (the speaker) so it could be the same with students in another country too."

Overall, participants saw language as a challenge "you just had to overcome" and a source of great humour on many trips. Said a person from one of MEI's first teams, "I have some great dinner party stories from that trip!" People also saw how creativity

resulted in communication, "It's funny how we try to communicate with these kids because we don't speak Spanish. You can overcome any language barrier with actions, smiles and love I've discovered. Kindness is internationally read in peoples [sic] faces." Another summarized in his journal, "We've all become quite cocky with our translation skills and communication is no longer a barrier but rather an obstacle easily overcome with patience, creativity and a sense of humour". Another wrote, "By now, I'm getting used to hearing Russian half the time (although I'm still understanding 0% of the time)". Others wrote about dreaming in another language or "starting to think in my head in English with a Ukrainian accent". One participant commented on how an immersion experience "really gets to you. It sort of penetrates your sub-conscious or something".

4.5.5 Transportation

Several survey participants (mostly male!) mentioned the transportation system as something they noted to be a big cultural difference. Said one excited Philippines team member:

> I have one word for you. Jeepnee. They are the coolest transportation system ever invented. I would ride on them all day long if I could. We got the ride of our lives. There are no seatbelts, and you just sit on a bench in the back. The drivers are insane! They just bud [sic] in anywhere and no one follows rules. Hmmm. I wonder if they even have rules?

En route to the Ukraine orphanage, one male remarked, "The drive through Makeyevka was very interesting. A usual road was the same as a very bad road in Canada. The contrast between Makeyevka and Abbotsford is amazing." Regarding the same experience, another wrote, "We got there after 20 minutes of driving on roads that make gravel roads with potholes the size of my CD player a walk in the park". A Haiti team member commented on riding on top of a truck, "dodging what I think was live wires, but everyone does it there, so you do too". One of the anonymous survey respondents wrote, "I travelled through a foreign country either on top of or in the back of a big truck. My hair was pasted to my head and I would wipe an inch of red dirt off my face whenever we stopped. I threw out all my clothes when I got home because they would not come clean. But we lived like the nationals, they were not on fancier vehicles at all and that made my trip. Comfort is not where it's at people!"

4.5.6 Time

Several survey respondents commented on cultural differences regarding the construct of time and how that had influenced them. One survey respondent wrote, "I learned that time doesn't matter – Hakuna Matata. Kenya isn't like Canada and things work differently. Time in that country is irrelevant. Nothing happens quickly. Be prepared to wait for things to happen." Her teammate expressed frustration at never knowing a schedule and said, "When going somewhere, we would usually actually leave an hour or so late, due to drivers not showing up. Africa time became a whole new concept to me". From across the world, another participant voiced "How South Americans view time makes you think. I learned that I should focus more on relationships and less on getting things done. I often get busy and forget time to know others. I learned a lot from my homestay family". Another commented, "Time does not matter. Their culture is about community and relationships. I took my watch off and loved living like that." However, perhaps this one participant best captured the essence of time in another culture.

> People gave me time. In my own culture, time is a precious thing that is hard to get and attain. In their culture, all they have to give is time, and everyone gave it to me. People took time out of their day every day to rest (siesta) and they took time to get anywhere (2:00 start times became 2:30) and they took time to pray (my culture takes 5 minutes to pray, but in their culture there is no time limit to prayer).

Participants expressed being challenged as they considered how other cultures handled time but some of their comments also indicated cultural adaptation, "All I wanted was a coke so we began walking around the neighbourhood looking at people's house stores and even went to the marcado but no go. It was siesta time. I could have got really mad right then, but I shook it off and then figured not a bad idea - the whole country's doing it, why aren't I? I grabbed my towel and found some shade". Another team member working in South America commented, "Because of the rain, we were unable to dig and finish the work site. Fortunately, we are learning how to be flexible so we all just went with the flow." Another concluded, "This is a better way to live. No stress".

4.5.7 Bathrooms

Bathroom facilities are seemingly an everyday discussion on IS-L trips, and it appears that time does not fade these memories. Survey participants mentioned them

repeatedly. "You become a lot humbler and have more gratitude when you have to flush the toilet by reaching through to a plug in the wall immersed in water". Another admitted,

> Okay this sounds weird but toilets taught me a lot. They were all gross – squatties, pits in the middle of a forest and then even when we had a flusher, we weren't allowed to flush. It took me a while to get used to not flushing the toilet every time but when you think about the water shortages you understand it. Would I ever "get this" at home? Never.

4.5.8 Showers and Water

Showering was also a much-mentioned experience on this survey. "I had my first experience with a cold shower this morning. Home has never looked so good!" said one participant. After running a children's program the previous day, a Philippines team member wrote, "We woke up this morning sweaty, sticky, slimy, stiff and sunburned after a long sports day in the hot sun. Freezing showers here are always nice, although I had to convince myself to take the plunge this morning". Not having enough water was an eye-opener to many. Another student wrote, "The water doesn't always come out. They only have water for a few hours a day and so store it up in bins. I never imagined you wouldn't just turn a tap on. Sometimes I talk to the water, hoping it will just come out. I have varying success." Ten years after her trip, the participant relayed, "We were not able to have a shower the whole 8 days and I only washed my hair twice in a small bucket of cold water. You know what? You survive."

4.5.9 Homestays

For some, the most intense part of their experience came when they moved in with host families. Real cultural immersion began when participants moved into a foreign home, took on the family schedule, lived in everyday conditions and shared their food. From the number of comments made pertaining to homestays, it appears that living with these families had a profound impact in terms of participant understanding and honouring of another culture. Relationship with homestay families will be discussed in more detail later. For many, the living conditions in homestays were an experience in themselves. Two topics recurred in journals and on surveys in relation to homestay living conditions: sleep and food.

4.5.10 Interrupted Sleep

Several participants talked about their interrupted sleep. Someone who travelled to Ukraine journalled,

> The day began with the sun rising and that happy and annoying little rooster crowing (cock a doodle do ten million times). I think I lost count. One of these mornings, I think I'll send Yana out to bite off his head. That awakening was followed by a nice freezing cold shower. The numbness in my head slowly eased in time for our breakfast of garlic toast, sausage and tomatoes...

Evidently, things were no better in South America! "This morning some of us woke up pretty early thanks to the noisy semi-trucks and people shouting outside of the windows. At four in the morning, the birds decided to make another appearance. We were all not very happy". A Haiti team member remembered, "waking up one night to loud voodoo rituals being performed right outside our gate". Someone else commented, "I've noticed that no matter what time I am up, either really early in the morning or really late at night, the city of Manila is always noisy. Manila NEVER sleeps. Abbotsford shuts down at 10. What's with that?"

4.5.11 Food

Food came up repeatedly both in writing and discussions. It was a big cultural adjustment and learning experience for many.

> For breakfast, we had a pot of soup each with a quarter chicken in each. Then bread, salad with purple cabbage, a side of liver cold with red sause [sic], and a few dishes that yet remained unnamed. I had my first cabbage roll stuffed with flesh and my first fish that stared up at me with his googly eye as gulped it down. It was like Christmas dinner in the morning in a bad movie!

In another home, the meal was equally as plentiful:

> We had fried potato chunks with onions, strawberry jam, bread, chopped beet salad and sandwiches, pickled something, half a piece of bread with 2 pieces of sausage and cheese, topped with tea and sugar and lemon slices and Ukrainian chocolate and cookie biscuits for breakfast.

Team members learned how to respond graciously. The Costa Rica team had a motto. "We were told that if we were offered food, we should accept it as a gift. Our team quote was 'Where they lead me I will follow. What they feed me, I will swallow, and by God's

grace I will keep it down'. We lived that for the entire time and it actually changed me."

One year's Philippines team joined small house groupings within an orphanage. One team member commented:

> Supper was awesome at our house tonight with the exception of the fried bananas. They made them special for us and no one else was allowed to have them so between Beth, Christa and me we managed to eat them all and look like we were enjoying it. We had a good laugh over that together after dinner.

Later that day, the same team faced another challenge:

> We climbed into a 19-year-old brown van that looked as if it would deteriorate underneath us. We arrived at a philipina's [sic] house and she served us mango, peanuts, sweet buns and a special coconut drink. The drink was extremely sugary and had slimy coconut shavings (looked like worms) floating in it. Roxy led the way by gulping the whole thing down in one swallow. Brave girl. If we had been in Canada, I NEVER would have downed that.

The same team later enjoyed eight day incubated duck eggs:

> We had a Philippino delicasy [sic] BALUT. Paul wins the prize for eating the most. I think I took the "throwing it back up" prize. I would say our leader had the nicest sounding bite but didn't get anything but balut juice on her. I think we would all agree that balut has the most revolting smell of anything on earth. But everyone tried some. I don't know if we can count what Billy ate as trying it. Technically he never chewed it. He'll be arguing his case for awhile [sic].

Sometimes teams faced the opposite challenge to those in Ukraine. "I personally love the Costa Rican food even though sometimes there is not quite enough for the working machines that we have on our team." Said one Haiti team member, "Rice and beans every day 3x a day sometimes. I just couldn't face it. But then I got really embarrassed thinking that I would be leaving this food soon, but this is all that keeps them alive. They have no choice. All of a sudden I looked at those multiple bowls each day with thankfulness." A Team Kenya member recalled:

> We were short on food and drink sometime in the small villages. In one village, we bought them out of coke. But it was okay. We ate lots of ugali, coke and Wonder bread. Not the menu I have in my house, but I realized it's a lot better than most of the world has. I needed to experience that to really know that.

One of her teammates concurred, "I learned that you've just got to eat as much ugali as possible. You get flavour later."

Argentine team members did not have any complaints about food – only praise from the land of barbequed meat! But they did comment on the cultural tradition of passing a common cup of Yerba Mate around and sharing the straw. For some that was a joy, for others a challenge each time someone brought it out. Every survey respondent who went to Argentina also commented on the large noon hour meal and the 10 p.m. dinner time and the challenge it was to adjust.

Life was very different for those who travelled internationally on these trips. It was apparent there were many new experiences and surroundings. Living conditions, language, transportation, time, bathrooms, water, homestays and food were just a few of many aspects of culture that were mentioned in the comments of trip participants. 93% of survey respondents indicated they felt that they had experienced another culture on this trip, 4% remained neutral and 3% did not feel that they experienced another culture.

It would be important to note that a great number of the 3% who felt that they did not experience another culture were on teams that stayed as a group in guesthouses, while most of the 93% who did feel that they experienced another culture, stayed with families in homestays. When asked whether they felt it was important to experience life within different cultures, 94.3% felt that it was important or very important to experience life within different cultures, 4.6% did not feel it was important and 1.1% indicated they were unsure about it. When asked whether they enjoyed experiencing cultural differences, 87.5% indicated they had, 3.4% indicated they had not and 9.1% refrained from commenting. Additionally, 86.3% of respondents indicated that their international trip helped them appreciate cultural and ethnic diversity, 4.6% felt it had not and 9.1% felt neutral about their experience.

4.5.12 Experiencing Poverty

Survey participants were asked whether anything on the trip upset or disturbed them. 56.3% of respondents indicated yes, and 43.7% indicated no. Seeing poverty first-hand at new levels was the most common answer. "Experiencing the slum was disturbing in terms of seeing fellow human beings in such a difficult scenario with little or no hope to alter their life experiences. Its [sic] a good reminder still of all the blessings and amazing things I have". Another said:

The neediness in Haiti and Ukraine was very hard to see, knowing I was going back to a wealthy lifestyle back home. In Haiti, it was less hidden and we saw it expressed even in a couple of men asking girls on our team to marry them in an attempt to get out of Haiti to a better life in Canada. Also, after we came home, we continued to get letters from our friends in Haiti, asking us to come back and bring things with us for them as well as asking for financial support. I didn't know how to respond to such abject neediness.

One female respondent commented that her "opinion of homeless and less-priveledged [sic] people changed. I had unintentionally been holding myself in a position above them, but working alongside them helped me realize that I had my values wrong." Another survey participant remarked, "I realized on this trip that people are poor because they are lazy is a false but common assumption. People and kids are just born into it sometimes". This was an interesting comment in view of the fact that when surveyed, 65.5% of respondents believed that some people are poor because of a lack of effort, 17.3% remained neutral and 17.2% disagreed. When asked whether they believed unemployment was the fault of society or the individuals, 9.3% believed that unemployment is the fault of society rather than individuals, 54% did not comment and 36.7% felt it was the fault of individuals. This seemed to suggest that perhaps there is not yet a full understanding of the complexities of poverty.

Another participant described how witnessing poverty compelled her to act. She said:

It {Her trip} made the world seem a lot bigger and a lot more desperate than I could have imagined. I knew that poverty existed but had not know what it looked like or felt like. Once you have that experience and put it together with the number of poverty stricken people in our world, you can't help but feel grief and a need for hope in our world.

Obviously, service assignments in third-world settings facilitated more exposure to greater poverty and need than some of the other MEI trips. Team members who travelled to Haiti recounted images of naked kids sticking their hands in vehicles asking for "one dollah please". Two members of the 1995 Haiti team told the story of driving through Cité Soleil, reportedly the worst slum in the western hemisphere. One said:

I still remember something from our trip to Cité Soleil. We were told to take off all jewellery and not to bring anything to give away. We were all riding on top of a huge van and one girl dropped a hair elastic by accident. There were many kids hanging onto our van below and a fight broke out over this elastic. This picture has stayed with me because it highlighted the extreme poverty of the people, and how vastly different

their lives were from mine, that they would fight physically for something so small as an elastic.

For others, the smells were what remained memorable. One student described, "The cultural differences, sights and most of all the smells and food were certainly an assault on my senses". One student wrote about walking 20 paces and then smelling something completely different. Another said:

> I remember driving through Porto Prince [sic]. It was sweltering hot. There were thousands of people crammed into this capital city and the stench was incredible. There didn't seem to be any system for dealing with garbage, so it was just all out there, rotting in the sun, and it smelt [sic] like hell had just opened up beneath us.

Although housed in better living conditions, participants told similar stories of poverty in Ukraine. "The Orphan Annie orphanages in Ukraine are just what you picture. Run down, broken windows, kids washing their own clothes and all mismatched and dirty. When we arrived they had not eaten for two days. It is unbelievable these places still exist when there is so much money in the world. Every person living needs to see this". Another described his/her perceptions:

> We took a tour of the orphanages and the rooms were bare except for as many as 18 beds and a couple of nightstands with empty jars on them. The jars were supposed to be for toothbrushes but there were not any for these kids. The building did not smell very good at all. At every orphanage at the end, we gave out all the donated toothbrushes, soap, shampoo, deodorant, vitamins and medication. One of the boys came and asked if he could have a second bottle of shampoo because he was stinky and wanted to wash his clothes. We saw 400 kids whose parents had either abandoned them or died; who had most likely lived on the streets before they were ten, who had to get their head shaved to get rid of lice, but still had to live and work in Hepatitis quarantined buildings, who played patty-cake with each other all the time for something to do other than cleaning, who had not much more than the clothes on their back to call their own and who just needed to be loved by someone. We looked at these kids through classic North American eyes and could not figure out why they were happy with literally nothing. But somehow those kids looked at life and found joy in just the fact that they were alive.

A third remembered visiting another orphanage, which was also struggling. "They didn't have enough money to give us sugar for our teas, so they gave us candies to suck while we drank the tea instead". After a visit to a barrio, a team member said, "I was deeply moved when we saw and travelled through the squatter villages. The people there really

tugged on my heart. This was stuff you only see in documentaries and TV. We were there and it was real and seemed so difficult".

Several Team Africa members were also struck by the level of poverty in the slums. "Walking through the slums in Kenya – the poverty, the children's smiles, the filth and destitution in that heat was overwhelming and forever made a mark on me." Another said, "In Kenya, we walked over the ridge of a hill and as far as the eye could see there was a slum of lean-tos and shacks. We walked through the slum and played with the children. Even in all my travels from my childhood to now, I have never been surrounded by such poor living conditions, rampant disease and hunger."

Experiences that were memorable ranged from small to large. One student recalled sweeping the roof at a Haitian hospital and asking one of his leaders for a dustpan. "He promptly found a piece of cardboard that he said we could use. He said something to the effect 'It's Haiti. Here's the dustpan'. I guess it challenged my thinking of what was normal. I began to see you can go really far with small resources".

Some MEI teams served after natural disasters and discussed the destitution that they witnessed. After travelling to Honduras, a member said, "The magnitude of Hurricane Mitch was overwhelming and everybody needed something. Nobody had anything left". Two Team Thailand members who participated in this survey mentioned the impact of visiting the ravaged area the spring after the Tsunami of 2004. "I was deeply moved by the devastation of the Tsunami. It made the Tsunami real. Canadians really don't understand what it is to be stripped of everything you care about. But there is still joy among the people who have survived so much". "I really enjoyed being on the island and helping out there where there was a real need. It was hard to imagine everything each family had been through with the Tsunami and how much they lost and yet they still went on with their lives. It made me think what I would do if a disaster affected me".

Comments continued to reveal that participants had struggled to process what they saw:

> We saw lots of slums that made me think of a kid we hung with who is supposed to go back and live in squatter housing with her family one day. She is holding onto hope for going back into hell – what is that? Kids should dream about big things like Disneyland and palaces. She is dreaming about going from a pretty decent orphanage to squatter-ville to be with some family. How can that be right? How can there be so much wealth for some and such poverty for others? I don't get it.

Seeing disadvantaged children left an impression on many participants. "Seeing kids not have breakfast because of a lack of money really made me think. I lost my appetite very quickly." Another said, "I found the tiny beds crowded into rooms in the large orphanages disturbed me. It made me sad to think of all these very young children growing up in an environment where they were raising each other".

Team members also showed evidence of relating what they saw and experienced to their own living situation. One person said, "I was deeply moved by the large group of children living in the slum. Their living conditions were horrible and so cramped. I could not imagine ever living like that. We have the exact opposite". Another said, "My eyes were obviously opened to the poverty that we don't see here. It makes me appreciate that I'm so young yet I can own a car and house and I never have to worry about clothes or food. Yet I'm often less grateful than the Mexican people I met". A specific memory stuck out for one participant: "I remember the moment we were driving through the streets and seeing all the apartments people live in and realizing that not everyone has the same privilege I have. It just hit me. I learned that I am rich compared to the world". Another said "I have never done anything to help the poor in Vancouver, but in looking at those people here, I realize I have a whole mission field at my back door. I need to be practically helping these people."

For some, reflection spurred greater understanding. "I began to understand that greed is the root of poverty. People steal and cheat each other to get ahead thus there is no trust, ethics or honour to build business together." A member of another team said, "I came to realize the real living conditions that people endure. I realized much of the world is in pain and sorrow. We are select few that live without daily struggle. I was inspired and informed to pray and work for change." Another summarized, "You have to look deep inside you and ask what you actually believe about all this stuff. At home, I would never be thinking about stuff like this. It's so real when you get to know the people who are on the World Vision commercials".

Another said, "Going on this trip helped me figure out what is really important. I now clarify between what I 'need' and what I 'want'". Other comments demonstrated the recognition of some significant truths: "I learned that these are not just statistics, they are people," and "I learned it doesn't matter how much money or what status you have, God sees each of his children with love, hope and grace. It's our job to show others that." Another said, "It really IS more blessed to give than to receive. If you try to make

yourself happy with buying stuff you will never be happy, but when you try to make others happy, you'll find happiness in them."

Students recognized resilience in those who suffered. Remembering his/her experience working in Hong Kong, one commented, "I was deeply moved at the drug houses where these men who had incredibly hard lives were open to healing. They were very caring towards each other. It was hard to believe they were once hard-core heroin addicts. They had simple faith." Another said, "People who survive disease and trauma and poverty are tough and need to be admired". A repeated observation, most often expressed with wonder, was the spirit of those who were poor and had little. "How can people in slums have close to nothing and live in a dirty stinky area and still smile and laugh? Maybe true happiness doesn't come from money and the things we have." Another remarked, "Being poor does not necessarily equate unhappiness. People can be poor and still joyful and that's amazing."

Respondents' observations and reflections seemed to indicate an enlarged perspective. But participants also expressed gaining understanding around the issues of poverty, a growing sense of injustice and an increased sense of gratitude. "I loved speaking with people at the soup kitchen and hearing that each had a dream. I just wanted to help them pursue it. Being poor is not chosen all the time and it is not fair." Another member summarized what he/she had recognized, "I realize the need. You can't imagine poverty until you see it, eat it and breathe it and even then you can't begin to fathom what a lifestyle in poverty would be like. Opening my eyes now compels me to help. Ignoring the need would be immoral." Another commented, "This trip taught me not to be judgmental and be thankful for the many blessing I receive at home, church, school and in life in general." In a journal, a student reflected, "Why are there poor people? Can't we just commit to take care of each other and help those who need help?"

One participant stated, "The poverty I saw in the city will forever be in my mind". Another summarized his/her feelings: "I've been changed on the inside most and now I have more of a heart for the needy as I've experienced a little of it. I would never have this experience at home." In summary, one participant wrote, "God really showed me there's more than Abbotsford." Another said, "I became thankful, just really really thankful".

4.5.13 Understanding Social Issues – Developing Social Consciousness leading to action

A Jesuit priest once said:

> When the heart is touched by direct experience, the mind may be challenged to change. Personal involvement with innocent suffering, with the injustice others suffer, is the catalyst for solidarity that then gives rise to intellectual inquiry and moral reflection. Students, in the course of their formation, must let the gritty reality of this world into their lives, so they can learn to feel it, think about it critically, respond to its suffering and engage it constructively. They should learn to perceive, think, judge, choose and act for the rights of others, especially the disadvantaged and the oppressed (as cited in Kenny et al, 2002, p. 134).

Study participants indicated that their encounter with poverty, disparity and other social situations made them think about these social issues to a greater extent than they had at home. For some, this new realization and understanding translated into action. "I have been changed dramatically. My life feels as though it's been flipped upside down. I will no longer think the same way or act the same way, especially in regards to poverty. This experience has made me want to be out there more". Another expressed that his/her view towards the homeless had changed from judgment to wanting to help them. Another participant said, "Rubbing shoulders with poverty made me change my lifestyle back home." Another said, "The needs I saw have forever changed me. There is no "us" and "me" anymore. We are all people." When asked whether they make quick judgments about the homeless now, 45% of survey respondents disagreed, 23% agreed and 32% declined to respond. Several participants stated that their trips led to volunteerism and activism at home in the area of supporting the poor.

As the magnitude of what teams observed and participated sunk in, a sense of personal responsibility and a desire to help "these real people" began to rise, "Going to a slum the first time leaves an unremovable [sic] picture in your mind. Whether playing soccer or building a house for a widow, we have to get into these dirty areas and care."

Trip participants also observed and questioned the social support structure in various countries. The most commonly mentioned was Social Services as many teams wondered why the children in orphanages could not be adopted into families. However, teams also visited hospitals and homes for the elderly. Of hospitals, someone said, "We went to feed and pray for sick people in a hospital, if you can call it that. It was terrible."

Another commented that the paediatric ward "looked more like a prison than a hospital".

Another interviewee talked about her shock at conditions in a Ukraine hospital:

> We went to visit some kids who were sick at the hospital. We saw liquid all over the floor when we walked into the ancient falling down building and cats and dogs wandering around on the lower level. Their beds were metal bars from out of a movie. Paint was all wrecked on the walls and ya [sic] I can't even really describe it well enough. It was terrible. It looked like an orphanage. I was quite frankly scared to touch anything or sit anywhere. Even after I "Purrelled" {used hand sanitizer}, I didn't feel clean. They don't give you sheets or any food when you are in the hospital there. You better have someone in life who loves you and has time off work to feed you. We paid for our kids to get fruit and the Center brought borscht soup for her in a jar. It just made me really sad and really think for the rest of the day. I can't even remember where my team went after that...

In Haiti, another recalled seeing a

> blind lady who walked down a mountain path every day to sell things in town. She was totally blind yet she had memorized the long and winding path and was able to navigate it without any assistance while balancing a basket of goods on her head. I asked a lot of questions. I gained insight then about how there is little social infrastructure to take care of people like this.

One graduate, currently working in a third world setting, stated:

> In many other countries, there is no social net or welfare to fall back on. Greed has taken over the small percentage of rich and the rest are left to fight for whatever is left. These people are dying, lacking in education, nutrition, and basic life needs not because they are lazy or unintelligent but often because of the greed and suppression of the rich. The rich need the poor to stay poor as they are the cheap labour force required to feed their greed. Unless we defend this injustice, nothing will change. People in Canada have options if they desire to change; most other countries leave their poor to die. For example, law forces hospitals to provide care to everyone, no matter their social standing in life. In our side of the world, people get turned away at the front door and go from hospital to hospital looking for someone who will help them. Many of them eventually die on the front steps of a local hospital and are refused the help they need. That is why we are needed – to defend the poor in places where nobody else is willing…

> Everyone deserves to choose how they live. That is one of the greatest gifts God gave us – the gift of choice. In the western world, that is a gift we have, for the most part, been able to take advantage of. In many areas of the world, people are not given that liberty. They are denied choices through oppression and poverty. Furthermore, they are

sometimes not aware of the choices that should be theirs to make. When people are limited to make these choices both by circumstances and the actions of others, I believe we who have that liberty should be the ones to step in and offer what aid we can to free people to make their own choice...

Many respondents to the survey indicated their trip constituted the first time they had seen that other humans lived and were treated differently. Gender issues were not referred to specifically on the survey; however in reflecting and in view of the fact that teams travel to countries where male and females can be treated quite differently, it was somewhat surprisingly that only two participants mentioned gender-related observations on the survey. "At times, I felt acutely different being a female there than in Canada in terms of rigid gender roles/responsibilities and place in the family." This same participant recalled, "I stayed with a Korean team member in my homestay. Most people in Africa had never seen an individual of Asian descent. It was an added point of difference." The second observation was made in relation to South American males "harassing the girls on the team, cat-calling as they walked down the street". While this participant shared her discomfort, she also showed an appreciation for the protective nature of the males on her team.

Another observed, "Everything is corrupt. The poor have a hard time getting out of poverty. Even the cops are corrupt. We got pulled over and the cop would not let us go until we gave him cash. Who would I trust if I couldn't trust my own police force?" Another said "Going into a jail opened my eyes. They aren't luxury jails down there at all. Some people get thrown in unfairly with no recourse in a corrupt society". Another respondent summarized, "That trip in Grade 11 exposed me to international issues that made me realize that there are injustices in third world countries which can be addressed. Not all people are treated the same."

Survey respondents also expressed developing a sense of affiliation and obligation. When asked why it is important to be involved or active in the international community, someone responded simply, "Because this is the world we live in! You learn about yourself and become more connected to the people of this world". Another challenged, "Imagine what the world would be if everyone only lived for themselves". Several survey respondents used the word "responsibility" when they wrote about their experiences, and the notion that those with more need to help those without. In one journal, a student reflected, "Why does there have to be haves and have nots in this world when if we put

everything all together and lived as one, we'd have enough to feed all the babies and street people? I am wondering if those who are greedy will one day have to account for hogging what they shouldn't have". Another commented on the survey, "I may not be responsible for causing this unfair life, but I am responsible to help clean it up after I see it". A team member commented, "The entire experience of seeing the public orphanages in Ukraine is still sharp in my mind and is part of a framework for a personal sense and approach to social and public justice". Another said, "My interest of [sic] global politics and issues around justice was strengthened in a practical sense from just seeing the difference in how we live".

When asked in an interview what social justice meant to them, one person replied,

> That's a hard thing to define, um, there's the social part and the justice part. We are talking equal opportunity for all here. That everyone has needs met and nobody suffers. That everyone has someone to step in for them and defend them if needed. Socially, a more levelling of life – no super rich and terribly poor anymore. Let's just share the resources no matter where we live. We are all humans for pete's sake, um, and we need to share the responsibility to solve the world's problems.

85% of trip participants indicated that their trip had increased their understanding for the need for service work around the world, 13% remained neutral and 2% did not see their trip increasing their understanding. Although we will later see 69% of participants indicated that these trips made them think more critically about social justice, when asked whether they felt they had a responsibility to solve our social problems, 54% did; 28.8% remained neutral and 17.2% did not. In terms of their dedication to social justice, 44.8% of trip participants thought the trip increased it, 21.8% disagreed and 33.4% chose not to comment. Furthermore, 50.6% of respondents felt this trip increased their motivation to participant in advocacy for others, 13.8% disagreed and 35.6% chose not to comment. So although the majority of respondents indicated impact from the trip in the area of their response to social injustices, there were a significant number of respondents (around 20%) who indicated that they did not feel a responsibility to solve our social problems, nor did they feel that the trip contributed to increasing their sense of social justice. One of the respondents commented in an interview that she found the trip quite overwhelming and became unmotivated due to the magnitude of issues she saw.

Of the idea of taking youth overseas and the international learning environment, one interviewee commented, "There is no better classroom". Another survey respondent

stated, "I feel that I gained a much greater understanding of social needs around the world, and also possible needs in my community". Another said, "It made me much more aware of the fact that my Abbotsford/MEI bubble was not the only thing that mattered or existed in the world". Another summarized, "My perspective on life definitely became more global – overnight! I was challenged in my thinking of how I could be involved in the lives of others around the world who have different needs that I could help out with". Lastly, for another, "for the first time, the importance of serving others in need and resisting the trend of complacency became real".

It is important to acknowledge that not all participants found their trip to be perspective changing. Some came from backgrounds that had included similar travel experiences and commented on how these trips likely had a greater impact on their peers. A few participants commented on the fact that their perspective became more informed, but did not necessarily change. "I would say it evolved and this experience continued to reinforce my interest in justice-related issues". Another used the word "solidified" to describe how the trip affected his perspectives. Many students attributed changes in their thinking to the fact they had been challenged by what they had seen and experienced. One person better described how this shaped him, "I had not formed concrete thoughts about life in Grade 11, so my thinking wasn't challenged as much as my thoughts were directed in a more positive direction. I had a lot more empathy for those who suffer and a greater understanding of what I could do to help." Another student concurred, "I don't think I was challenged in any way. I think I was too naive and young to really understand. I'd say this trip more encouraged and developed me."

4.5.14 The Service/Work Itself

Survey participants also commented frequently regarding the type of service they performed in their locations. This also seemed to affect participants. Some trips were highly relational by nature, where team members worked long days with people in different settings. Students who did "people-oriented" work indicate they developed insight and attachments through relationships. Other trips consisted of more manual labour. Some participants took great pride in what their teams had accomplished through physical labour, years later showing pictures of painted buildings, houses built, buildings roofed and areas cleared for construction. Some of these assignments required great physical endurance. "Work was so hard today. We shovelled in the

trenches and moved bricks for hours." Another commented, "Probably the hardest day was when we had to paint in the hot sun and walk 6 km while the other part of our group got to vacation." It was true that some tasks were mundane. One trip participant said, "I did work projects that I would never do in Canada like smashing rocks and digging holes and carrying lumber for long periods of time". However, it was also true that simply having to "work" stretched some teenagers. Some trip participants were just not accustomed to working that hard! "We worked for two hours without a break today", journalled one student. "We worked our butts off today even through all the girls were covered in bug bites," said another.

The joy of serving also emerged for some students. "I was sooooooo used to being served. My mom did everything, made my bed, laundry done, lunches ecetera [sic]. All I did was exist and occasionally help carry something around my house. It felt really good to serve and not just to be getting served." Another concurred, "I have learned that I can serve anywhere. I just need to keep my eyes open to see how in every situation. When I hear that small quiet voice in my head to do something, I will do it more faithfully."

4.6 Theme 2: Causing Cognitive Changes

Survey participants described the challenging of their cognitive schemes through their interaction with different living conditions including food and bathrooms; a foreign language; different transportation; different concepts of time; a lack of water and of sleep; as well as a first-hand experience with poverty and insight into different social issues through their service work. So how did all these new experiences including exposure to a new culture and poverty, enlarge participants' worldviews by inciting further learning and thinking?

4.6.1 Finding Context in History

For some participants, the importance of understanding history and being able to situate oneself emerged. When asked if they felt their IS-L trip helped them to identify with being part of a larger community, 87.5% of respondents felt it had, 9.9% remained neutral and 2.6% disagreed. One person said, "I saw we live in a big world but I definitely have a place in it and can do things that make a difference in the lives of other people and make good changes for them". For others, linking the past with the present

was important. "This trip did not influence my view of the world in a large way, but it did give me a greater context by which to place my knowledge of history". Another team member commented:

> For me I was always affected by how unaware my fellow travellers were of political or historical events. Visiting places such as the Berlin Wall, The Reichstag, Wittenburg and concentration camps, all of which have had large consequences on the trajectory of the twentieth century, made it [sic] painfully aware that all of these "good Christian kids" were being educated in all the wrong ways. If one hopes to "change the world", one must first learn what the world is that one wishes to change. Frankly, it was embarrassing.

4.6.2 Increasing Understanding

Trip participants demonstrated a bigger perception of the world but also an increased understanding of some global issues. One person commented, "I began to understand how the balance of power and wealth in the world plays a role in the lives of others in the world, even those who seemed far away and removed from what I would have considered my sphere of social impact." Someone else said, "I learned about the role of past political instability and how it caused poorly planned infrastructure. And now the existing infrastructure is not maintained to meet the needs of people." Another expressed learning that "because our economic activities in Canada affect third world countries; merchandise is manufactured with their hands, natural resources are taken from their lands, and they are not given the compensation that they deserve". "I gained insight into the power of the Western World to oppress societies that it does not agree with," someone else said. Another commented, "Corruption really takes away the joy of the people as a whole. There is fear and mistrust in most of the way they live." It was clear that questions were birthed in the minds of many. "There were so many things as far as infrastructure that I just couldn't get my head around. Why did they have to live like this? I just assumed that all governments were good and helpful. So seeing the way corruption and greed had really robbed the everyday people really challenged my thinking".

Some talked about how this exposure had spurred them onto further research or reading: "The realities of voodoo religion disturbed me. Its influence and hold on the people of Haiti is disturbing. Aside from being terrified, it made me want to learn more about the people, their religions and their culture. I haven't stopped reading about other places since". Another commented on how big questions had personal impact, "It {the

trip} was a foundation that brought up questions that had to be answered. It spurred in me a discontentment with the futile, unfulfilling life I had been living and to seek the answers for my life questions."

In his contact theory, Allport (1954) purports that interpersonal contact is a significant way to reduce stereotypes and prejudice. He believes that generalizations and over-simplification about entire groups of people occur when people have incorrect or incomplete information. When a person learns about a group of people first-hand; cognitive structures change. He suggests that if contact is intimate and significant in nature, an individual's beliefs can be modified. According to this study's participants, this occurred as people from different cultures and different social and economic spheres literally lived together and interacted.

4.6.3 Eliciting the "Big Questions"

69% of survey respondents felt that their trip made them think more critically about issues of social justice, 22% remained neutral and 9% felt that trips did not spur them onto critical thinking. Participants were asked whether they were left with any "big questions" after their trips. Variations of "How do I want to spend my life?" were mentioned forty-two times in responses. Other questions (in randomized order) included:

- What is my purpose?
- Is long-term service for me? Where might I end up?
- How can I be more grateful in my Canadian life? What am I expected to do about the problems in this world?
- Can I really do anything that will make a difference?
- How should I live when there is so much poverty?
- How can I be so rich just because I was born in Canada and they are so poor, just because they were born in another country?
- How do we live in a way that is proper in a materialistic world and society?
- Why do people in Canada do nothing to help those in need around the world?
- How can the Western world be so wealthy and not share with other countries?
- How come the Western world is so concerned with time and not relationships?
- What do I really believe about God?
- Is God really just?

- Why would God allow kids to grow up as orphans without family?
- How can God allow such loneliness in the life of a child?
- Why does God allow devastating things to happen in the world?
- How do people call themselves Christians and yet care so little to educate themselves about other places of the world?
- How can I serve God every day at home?

According to Kohlberg (1984), it is these types of questions that elicit the type of thinking required for participants to move to different stages of moral development. A key difference is that participants in IS-L programs are confronting real-life situations rather than the hypothetical scenarios that Kohlberg presented.

4.6.4 Valuing Learning

Participants seemed to recognize the value of their new knowledge, understanding and reflection:

> I think that a large part of the problems in the world are a result of being naive and a lack of understanding as to other people and their cultures/feelings. For that reason, being involved in the international community provides communication and understanding which can mean that many of the world's problems are unnecessary.

Another said, "It is important to be more aware of different cultures, how they live and their beliefs/values. Ignorance makes it too easy to over-generalize and discriminate, particularly when our only information about these cultures comes from what is portrayed on the news." A third expressed, "Even though I don't totally support the idea of these trips, I cannot deny that I learned a ridiculous amount of valuable practical lessons in that two week trip".

4.6.5 Considering their Response

There was evidence that trip participants were integrating ideas, developing values and considering how to respond during and after their IS-L experiences. This illustrated Loevinger's (1976) model of personality development and seemed to lead participants to self-actualize to a greater extent. It was clear that as worldview and understanding grew, participants began to situate their selves in a more global community and most

participants felt compelled to respond to needs they witnessed first-hand. A growing sense of social justice began to emerge in many.

Some spoke of a sense of duty that came with that understanding. "We have advantages and privileges that other countries don't and need to share". One respondent said,

> As a member of North American Society, we have exploited and oppressed many underprivileged countries. Since North American Economic politics assassinate every attempt of developing countries to regain their footing on the international sense, I feel that it is my duty to rectify some of the wrongs committed by our greed.

Another said:

> It is important to help out others, no matter where they live. Some international communities have a harder time meeting their physical needs, so it is important for others to reach out to them and help them. The world is so much bigger than the little area we live in. I believe that God has commanded us to help those in need whether that's in Canada or overseas. We can't turn away from the needs in the world even when they feel overwhelming.

One student said, "If anyone asked me this {why should we be involved internationally?}, I would say 'Look around buddy, see what we have and how much we take for granted. We can make a huge impact on individuals, families and communities when we want to make a difference'". One interviewee talked about "an intense battle in my head", as he considered how using one's rights can sometimes be at the expense of others. "It happens at home too, but it is so intense here. You can hurt a lot of people just by doing what you have a right to by being a different status". Another said, "It's not enough to give food to the hungry. Why are they hungry in the first place?" Another said, "We have to do something about the injustice these poor people endure. We have to figure out a way to level the playing field for all human beings. It's our responsibility". This illustrates some of the research that suggests moving students towards social justice and a consideration of social inequalities is more important that developing a sense of charity as it perpetuates long term motives for social change, rather than short-term problem-solving. Respondents in this study showed an understanding that acts of mercy and compassion are helpful and needed in many cases, but that root issues also need to be addressed as causes for social injustices are pursued.

Motives for serving varied greatly. Some students felt a sense of duty while others expressed just simply wanting to care for another human being: "These were people just like you and me. I wanted nothing more than to help" or "When I see a need, I want to respond. We are human beings and all we have is each other. We have to want the best for each other". Responses seem to depict a shift from the typical adolescent self-absorption to thinking of others. Another respondent seemed to grasp the Aristotelian notion of coming together for the common good:

> The world is connected and is continually becoming more connected. Each citizen of this world has a responsibility to ensure their actions are as beneficial as possible to others, and to avoid activities/decisions that will negatively impact others. Each citizen has the power to make decisions that will impact on a global scale. Knowledge is power, and the more people understand about the world around them, the more they can make right choices. There is no better way to learn about the world than to be involved in it, whether local or global.

Participants in this study indicated an increased sense of social responsibility to do something about the problems in our communities. 56.3% said this trip increased their sense of responsibility to do something about the problems in our community, 32.2% did not comment and 11.5% disagreed. These percentages were very similar to that which reflected that 54% of respondents felt that they had a responsibility to solve social problems.

4.6.6 Feeling Empowerment

Although the magnitude of what they saw was overwhelming for some, many survey respondents talked about being a part of something larger and recognized being able to contribute in small ways. "Even though it may not always seem like you're doing a lot, even small actions can cause great reaction." "You will make a difference, even if it is small. Every bit counts." One summarized, "We can make a difference to one person, if not the world, and if everybody believes that, then we can make a difference to billions of people". In the survey, 78.1% of respondents said they believed that they can contribute to solving some of the problems the nations face today, 13.9% remained neutral and 8% disagreed. When asked if the trip experience was overwhelming and contributed to a feeling that societal change is unlikely, 11.5% of survey respondents said yes, 67.8% said no, and 20.7% remained neutral. When asked if this trip made them realize that they could NOT make a difference to the inequities of the world, 13.8% of survey

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respondents felt that this was true, 63.2% disagreed and 23% refrained from commenting.

When asked if they believed they could make a difference in lives of other people in other countries, 89% of survey respondents agreed, 6% remained neutral and 5% disagreed. When asked whether they felt their trip encouraged them to contribute to other causes, 68% of respondents seemed to experience empowerment when they indicated they felt that their trip encouraged them to contribute to other causes and to be more involved and 82% felt that having an impact on the world is within the reach of most individuals. When asked if they currently strive to make a difference globally in their lives, 54.1% indicated yes, 20.6% indicated no, and 25.3% remained neutral.

There was a growing sense of citizenship emerging as participants described respecting others, defending those who needed defending, supporting those who needed help and generally working for the common good of each other, "I learned that when you see someone who can use a hand, it makes for a better world if you actually take the time to help". Others discussed how their new understanding integrated with a perceived spiritual mandate that propelled them into action, "God asks us to help the poor and oppressed. We are not oppressed or poor here in Canada. We have a responsibility to extend God's love and justice to those who need it." Another said, "We must help because God created them and we all need help. Those who have been given lots need to give lots." Another summarized, "Jesus loved people and he calls us to do the same. We are commanded to serve the poor and hungry. Simple as that."

4.6.7 Bringing it Home

Despite their new experiences and knowledge, not all IS-L participants came back committed to return to the international scene. The IS-L experience also had participants thinking about life in Canada, and debating whether they should be involved internationally or locally. "I sponsor some children through Impact Ministries internationally, but in a lot of ways my focus is more on the local community needs, because sometimes I see whose [sic] overlooked in light of international activity, but then again, I wonder if perhaps some are intended to be more internationally minded and some locally minded." One person countered: "I would say it is more important to be active in the local community. Just like it is important to look on the inside of yourself before/during working with others". Another supported his /her thinking "... {Serving}

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locally is just as important. As long as you are doing your best to better this world, I think that's good enough". Another stated, "I think there should be more local activities that promote S-L. It's relatively easy to go away to a place, serve, see another culture and come back and live however you want. It's another thing to serve and minister to those that you may see on a regular basis in your own town." Another advocated balance, "I think it is important to be as aware as possible of what is happening around the world. It is good to be involved internationally as well as at home. There are lots of lost kids here too." Someone concluded: "Short-term trips can help a country, but I think the bigger result may be God opening peoples' eyes to the needs of their current community".

Study participants reflected how unfamiliar settings away from home affected them. These new experiences challenged participants to grow cognitively. "Many of my views towards missions and service have changed. I'm more ready to serve and to sacrifice of myself. I'm less worried about possessions and personal hygiene. I don't think I'll shy away from dirt again. I can handle spicy foods and I'm open in my thoughts both home and away." Another said, "I have seen and I think so differently about people, life and world events than I ever would had {had I not travelled}".

4.7 Theme 3: Invoking Self-Discovery

The period of adolescence is most often defined by identity development as youths seek to identify themselves and find their places in the world. Many students described how their IS-L trip had changed the way they viewed not only the world, but themselves. In fact, 92% of respondents stated that they learned something about themselves on their IS-L trip.

For many of the students, this was the first time away from home in every sense (no phones, no internet) for an extended period of time. "I remember getting to my homestay's house after almost three days of travel and realising that I was as far away from home as I had ever been (or possibly could ever be)." One student described her personal sense of agency and autonomy: "I learned I can take care of myself if I really have to". Another said, "I was okay away from home. I would never have thought it would be okay". Another said, "I learned to maintain a positive attitude when things go wrong and have patience when we have to wait. Being apart from my mom and dad was hard but good because I had to solve my own problems and figure out what I really

thought about all that I saw." For most, this growing sense agency and autonomy started with the courage to step out.

4.7.1 Stepping Out

Although many respondents communicated excitement about embarking on an IS-L adventure, there was a group of respondents who shared how hard a step it was for them. "I am most proud that I was able to step out of my comfort zone and go. I had a considerable amount of uneasiness about going and was concerned about having my own spring break rather than this. At that point in my life it was a huge step for me and I conquered." Another said, "I think just going on the trips was an accomplishment for me. I am very shy and none of my friends were interested in going. On all three trips, I did not have a close friend and yet I had the courage and strength to go and those trips were the highlight of my high school years". Another participant said, "The most significant aspect was probably the difficulty it took to be out of my comfort zone. My expectations were that I would actually be sort of comfortable, but in all honesty, I was not and it was hard. But in my discomfort could see more clearly the complacency in my life in Canada. There was no relying on objects to cheer you up."

A fourth summarized her feelings:

> Personally I think I was most proud of overcoming a fear of not knowing what to expect. I never knew what to expect on my trip. To be out of control of my surroundings: the people I would meet, the food I would eat, the vehicles I would be travelling in and where I would sleep – all those things were out of my control and I learned for the first time how to let go and trust that everything would work out right. Up until then, I was ALWAYS so fearful of what I would be doing and how and where. So letting go of knowing things was a huge accomplishment for me.

One student told of the accomplishment of flying down to South America alone, a day later than the rest of his IS-L team due to Basketball Provincials: "I travelled down on my own. I wasn't a very outgoing person around strangers and so I didn't do a lot of socializing on my way down. It was a lonely trip down but I totally did it – I flew by myself." There was a similar sense of "overcoming" in many of the respondents' answers. Participants mentioned successfully giving up comfort, food and showers repeatedly as engendering a sense of personal accomplishment. "I think the fact that I

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learned how to survive in that heat and not be so picky while eating was amazing" or "I think the fact that I made it through Ukraine is huge". One interviewee concluded, "You know, I am just really proud of just having gone and made it to tell the story".

One of the Africa team members commented, "the feeling of being absolutely separated from anything related to home whether phones, people, food, clothes, ability to contact the outside world or regular bathing facilities stands out in my mind as a picture of what we really truly did." Another summarized, "Living in a real African cultured home, seeing a goat slaughtered and being thrown into the real African experience was the highlight of my life. You can't learn what I learned by staying at home in comfort-land."

4.7.2 Learning About Self

As mentioned, 92% of survey respondents indicated that they had learned things about themselves on their trips. Study participants described the things that they learned about themselves. A number of travellers indicated they came to understand themselves better. This surprised some:

> I went with the mind-set that I would save the world or that I would come back with mind-blowing stories. Instead, I came back changed. Just in doing teamwork, I grew spiritually and in my outlook on the world. It was good to pop the bubble that I had grown up in and experience another way of living in the world that isn't necessarily right or wrong.

Another person commented that they learned they could be extroverted. Several indicated that they had "discovered compassion" in themselves. Another said, "I learned that I have a hard time sharing what I have." One survey respondent said:

> I came back to this question after thinking about it more, and I would say that trip significantly changed (developed) my personality. The first three years of MEI, I was reserved and internal. I preferred not being noticed and only having a few friends. After the trip, I opened up. I was definitely still introverted, but I had a bigger desire to interact with classmates and people around me. I would say the internal side of me started to think deeper to try to understand life, while the external side of me tried to impact peoples' lives. My confidence in myself also grew during this time period.

Some spoke of personal issues of character and viewpoints coming to their attention. Another described a refining process:

> I was kind of expecting to feel more useful there but I didn't really feel like I achieved much in my own skills seeing as I cleared rocks for a week.

But I think the trip did more for me that I could possibly have done for the people who lived there. I realized how selfish I really was after seeing the conditions the people lived there and how happy they were still compared to my rich-style existence in Canada and how discontented I still was despite my lap of luxury. The trip more revealed characteristics God wanted to deal with in me than a realization of the social injustices with I would thought I would be more touched and motivated to do something about. I think I actually went downhill after the trip for awhile....But then I was finally able to give to the needy for the right reasons instead of just doing things out of a need for recognition and personal gain (having people see me as a good person vs. actually caring for the people).

Some talked about discovering things about themselves in the context of their team as they quickly found out "where their buttons were". One spoke of the influence of team members, "I tend to be quite judgmental and impatient. My team challenged me in that area and I really had to learn that I need to love people for who they are instead of getting irritated or picking their faults out". Another said, "I learned that I can persevere on this trip. There were very difficult moments and days but I made it through and now I look back on that trip as a defining moment in teaching me that". For six people on a team in Haiti, one particular activity stood out. One of them described,

I would say the all day hike up to that mountainside community was a huge accomplishment for me at that time and challenged me to persevere. It was a humbling experience watching ancient looking Haitian women walking the same trail barefoot with huge baskets balanced on their heads headed all the way down to the market. They made it look so effortless.

Trip participants listed many things they discovered about themselves on the trip: "I am very goal-oriented", "I am adaptable", "I can work hard no matter WHAT the job I am handed". Some discovered that they had something to offer others relationally, "I learned that I have value and while I may not always recognize how I can help people just by being myself, there are things about me that people relate to and find comforting." Others learned the opposite: "I learned that I am more of a practical service person that a relational person." One team member who went to Honduras shared:

One day in Talamonka [sic], we were putting on a kids club for the children there and I felt I had nothing to give. I wasn't even considering going to help but I had told God I would do whatever He wanted. Two girls came up to me and asked me if I would play pass with the Velcro balls. One by one, more and more kids started coming and soon it turned into maybe 30 little tika kids chasing me and me chasing them for hours.

> I don't know why the kids came to me because I am not a kid person. I gave my necklace to the oldest girl. I was just glad to bring joy.

Others shared disappointment as they learned things about themselves: "I am no good in that kind of heat. I loved the adventure but hated the bugs." Another said, "I am shy. It bothered me the way I became aloof because I didn't feel I had anything to offer".

Others talked about how their trip had caused students to examine, and in some cases reinforced their personal beliefs or values like no other experience they have had. One said:

> I realized that I am RICH. Not just making it, but RICH. Every parent should take their kid on a trip like this while they still believe in Santa Claus...Things that mattered a lot at home like my music and electronics just faded away there and never really regained their sense of importance in my life ever again. I think I began to understand what really matters in life on that trip.

4.7.3 Becoming aware of Abilities and Gifts

These trips seem to enable participants to explore new roles, identities, interests.

> If I was really honest, I would say that I hated kids before this trip. My heart sunk when I found out what team I was on, but I came back feeling like I learned how to work with kids and feeling like I'm actually pretty good at it. I also learned that other people see me as a leader and that changed my picture of myself. I went on to walk out it [sic] those ideas and have been a leader ever since and sometimes a leader at summer camp with kids!

This case represented perhaps the discovery of a new gift. However, this was not the case for everyone. Another trip participant relayed that she was put on a trip during which there was a great deal of work with children. "I knew before and I knew after that I'm not cut out of this. I wish leaders would have considered this".

Trip participants described new abilities and gifts that they discovered as they stepped out into new adventure. Normally on each trip, students are asked to share their life story with people. Many survey respondents still relate that as being a life-changing experience. One said, "Speaking was scary for me. I never had to do anything like that before. It really freaked me out. It was a massive accomplishment." Another commented, "I found I enjoyed speaking in front of people and I believe it is a strength. I think I may have found myself to be more bold more capable than I thought I was". When asked in the survey if they felt this trip had developed personal qualities such as

confidence and independence, 72% responded yes, 17% remained neutral while 11% disagreed. When asked whether they felt they acquired new skills or knowledge on their trips, 78% answered affirmatively, 6% did not feel they had and 16% remained neutral.

Respondents talked about how they developed the affective qualities of empathy and hope during their trips and how they discovered the virtues of caring, serving and social justice to a greater extent. "When I came home I had learned the joy of volunteering so I kept it up in an old folk's home. I sort of lost my teenage self-obsession on this trip". This corresponds with Piaget's formal operations stage. Students were beginning to be able to see another's point of view. A number of respondents discussed how they realized they needed to care about more than themselves and how this broadened circle had continued upon their return home. "My heart just broke for the people. I have never cared for anyone else like that – let alone strangers". Another said, "Serving makes you feel good and that's when I learned it's good for the others and for you to care a lot". Participants also showed evidence of being able to think abstractly and critically. "After the trip, I began thinking of changes that could be made in the world to eradicate poverty differences", said one respondent.

Travelling to South American countries enabled students taking Spanish to practice their language: "Being able to translate a little for my team mates and have them come to me for help was a big turnaround for me. For once people saw me as an expert. That felt good". Others felt pride in learning some Russian or German. "I can greet a Russian and tell him I have diarrhea thanks to my leader who taught us what's important". A couple of respondents expressed that they learned how to travel for the first time on this trip. "I just watched my leader in awe. She knew how to work airports, security and customs and trained us well". Some learned simply how to give clear instructions for a craft or how to speak effectively when using a translator. One student said, "I learned to play guitar from one of my leaders which is something that is so enjoyable and theraputic [sic] to me today." Another student learned to play the djembe. Other students assisted with dentistry or wiring and developed new skills and interests. "The skills I practiced during the trip still benefit me now," said one respondent.

Others took pride in making changes to their normal routine. "I learned that I am flexible and adaptable." Another said, "I learned to do things their way – from doing dishes without running water, to taking a siesta (I wish that was applied to our culture), to

showering in the afternoon instead of the morning and eating a supper of almost all meat at 10 p.m. I was amazed at how easily I can change routines."

Leadership development was a recurring theme on surveys and in interviews. Several respondents talked about how they felt leadership skills began to emerge in them as they were forced to do things they were not used to doing. Designing and leading a child's craft or being responsible for a section of a program was challenging to many. One commented on the survey, "Before the trip I had been very very shy, but over the 2 weeks that I was there I somehow became the unofficial spokesperson for our team, speaking in various group settings. I am still proud of myself for stepping out of my comfort zone and doing that". Another said, "I feel like I really developed as a leader on that trip. That trip helped propel my leadership into other avenues such as Student Council and eventually leading a ministry at my church". Now, years later, 74% believe it is important to be recognized as a leader, 22% do not find being considered a leader important, and 4% were unsure.

4.7.4 Growing in Perspective

Journals and survey responses demonstrated that participants learned how to put issues into perspective on this trip. During the trip, one journalled, "I just finished dousing my legs with calamine lotion. I am fortunate though, I don't have it as bad as the others. I am learning that my problems are quite small when you compare what some of these people deal with every day of their life". Another student said, "I've been changed in my perspective that it's not what you do but how you do it that makes a difference. I heard from the Montreal team that they cleaned a bunch of bathrooms and had a great time. Our team toured and worked with kids but most of the team members felt it was a bad trip. A lot of them blamed it on the leaders but I think they didn't have a good time serving because they weren't ready to serve. They weren't in the right frame of mind; humble." Another said, "I learned to try not to have expectations, to have an open heart and not to complain. Things all happen for a reason."

Some students acknowledged that small contributions are valuable "It felt so good to hold a flashlight for a bit for Sam {the dentist}, and be part of meeting that physical need. You can make a difference in really small ways". Along that same line, another said, "We met emotional needs by spending time with people and physical needs by bringing supplies with us". Yet another said, "I learned to be ready for anything at any time and

not to be upset if your plans don't work out. I am a planned person, but I really learned this. I am more flexible now".

One person shared that he/she felt that their trip had helped put life into perspective. "Situations in life that may have felt huge to me previously were something I learned to shake off. I now consider myself an easy-going person. I suspect the experience I've had, this trip being one of them, has showed me nothing in my life is too big a deal".

4.7.5 Learning about Service

Students on these trips wrestled with what it means to serve. "I had always believed that service entailed building/fixing/back-breaking labour. It was almost difficult to accept that running kids camps was a valuable service", said one male participant. A female participant also struggled, "I was on painting duty at the pre-school, which is fine; however, the group that was building a water filtration system seemed to be doing more. This is something that God humbled me about, making it quite clear that love is love, as long as it is coming from a servant heart." An anonymous participant related a story describing how he/she had been asked to assist a podiatrist by washing the feet of some youth before they saw the doctor. "It was gross and dirty and I remember being angry that the rest of my team was conversing with the youth while I had to wash the feet of street kids. However, it was also one of the most humbling and fulfilling experience I have ever had."

The type of service that made an impact really depended on the traveller. Many longed for relational trips, while others were quite happy to build something for someone. What seemed to matter most was that there was a clear purpose in the mind of the participant. On a highly relational trip, one Czech team member said, "I still don't really see what we accomplished besides making friends with a bunch of teenagers there. We taught them a little English maybe but that's about it". After completing two trips, one person said:

> I feel that going to Mexico was more impactful on the world than Ukraine.
> Ukraine cost a lot more money for me and I didn't feel as though we really
> did much. Like obviously, we were busy, but we weren't changing lives.
> We left a family in Mexico with a house. That is huge.

When asked whether they believe it is important to help other people, all survey respondents agreed to varying degrees - 92.6% of survey respondents believed it was very important and another 7.4% accorded it somewhat important. 96.6% believed that

it is important to help others, regardless of whether one is paid and 3.4% remained neutral. When asked if helping people they knew was a greater priority than helping strangers, 36.7% agreed, 32.3% remained neutral and 31% disagreed. This was an interesting response as each option garnered almost equal response. It appears that those who participated in an IS-L experience did not all necessarily see the need or responsibility to help every fellow man in need, but rather saw helping those they knew to be a greater priority.

4.7.6 Developing Social Skills

For some travellers, a foreign environment forced social growth. One respondent's greatest personal accomplishment on the trip in her view was "stepping out and making friends on the team. I was pretty lonely at school before this team". Survey respondents discussed how this trip further developed social skills. "I had to learn how to communicate with the family I was staying with even though neither of us spoke each other's language". Another said, "This trip stretched me in learning how to be a team player 24/7. We had to work together towards the same goal of helping these people". Participants described an emerging sense of interdependence and of appreciating one another, which will be further described within the next theme.

Learning not to complain was also a mentioned by numerous respondents. "I did not complain about the lack of flushing toilets. Normally I would have but when I listened to others, I learned how annoying it is. It turned me away from complaining".

It is evident that participants both give and receive on IS-L trips. They watch how other team members interact and for some, social growth occurs. Years later, one participant still remembers the action of a teammate:

> We were all so hot and tired. This sun takes all your strength. We sat down, but Todd kept going, playing with kids, giving piggybacks and just running around with them. He was an all-star. Then when we got home, everyone wanted showers and were calling shotgun. Todd just sat back and let everyone go first. What a guy!

4.7.7 Developing Personal Efficacy

Erikson (1994) argued that adolescents strive to reconcile themselves with the outside world and that industry or action is paramount to identity development. Adolescents need to experience themselves performing well. Participants discussed feelings of

personal efficacy – of sensing their worth, feeling competent and believing they were making a difference on their trip by contributing to others. Comments often involved bringing joy to children and providing breaks for orphanage staff, or running dentistry clinics in Haiti. "Of far greatest value was the encouragement we brought to the orphanage staff to let them feel that they are not alone in their efforts", or "You could see the appreciation they {the Haitians} had to have a dental clinic service provided for free and we were part of that". Many team members described supplies they had transported in big hockey bags or bins – a year's supply of vitamins, medication, craft supplies, shoes and eye glasses – things that would clearly help those in need.

> You cannot imagine the sense of accomplishment you have when you are in a poor barrio and can hand a family a hygiene kit. I explained how to put toothpaste on a toothbrush to one lady who had never seen it and pulled it out of the bag, questions in her eyes. She didn't have much [sic] teeth left in her smile. It was cool that she saw me as a resource and someone who can help. That spoke to me deeply.

Years later, one African trip participant proudly described step by step how her team had built a water purification system for a village. "That is a huge need and we were able to meet that. We forever made a difference in that village's health". Another commented, "We paid for and then served food to the hungry. How much more deep and yet basic can you get?" A participant summarized, "Hopefully after we left, they kept a small piece of that visit, letting that memory piggyback with them throughout their lives, the attention, the nurturing and the hope". Another reflected, "It was eye-opening to be in the middle of the muck. These darling little kids were so precious and this was all they knew. I was challenged to look at my life and the impact that I could have on the people around me at home. I learned I am capable of helping".

Some teams befriended people. One participant shared that he had the opportunity to sit with a man who said he was about to commit suicide and helped him change his mind. Another participant commented on his personal investment, "I bought a naked little boy some shorts and held him a long time. This may have met two needs for him – clothing and love". Another spoke of choosing to be stretched. "I spent a morning with James from the special needs home. I remember being given the option of where to go and only a few of us chose the special needs home. I remember choosing to go because something within me kept telling me to challenge myself".

Other teams assisted with renovating houses, preparing land for building, digging trenches or assisting an electrician wiring houses for electricity. "Our service felt very practical which did make it seem that we were meeting the needs of those we were serving". A Haiti team member shared, "The team leader and me [sic] built a shelving/kitchen unit for the cookhouse of the school. We brought power tools down with us and worked on it for multiple days. It was beautiful and functional and I was proud. Sadly, I hear that the building was mostly destroyed by the recent earthquake".

Several students on the Argentina teams mentioned that they were assisting long-term Canadian workers at their destination and these workers provided updates months after their trips demonstrating how the team's service had opened doors for the workers. "Because of the Canadian visit, they {the workers} can now continue going into that orphanage and the jail in town. Before us they were not allowed". Some students also felt like they were one piece of a larger puzzle. "For a destination like Ukraine, I recognize that there have been multiple trips there and continued connections with the shelter. I was on one of those trips and so I have contributed in some way to the long-lasting impact and meeting of needs for the community there". Another summarized, "It was amazing to see that I can contribute and am comfortable in international experiences". Another participant said, "I felt confident that I could handle unexpected situations, people and environments". Another concluded, "I am a much more capable person that I would have thought". Some researchers (Luszczynska et al., 2005; Speier & Frese, 1997) have found self-efficacy often results in increased self-esteem and that was corroborated by this survey.

Many participants suggested that this trip inspired further involvement for them. "The trip made me want to see more of the world and continue travelling, serving and doing what I did there. It opened up the world to me, and showed me that normal people can do service work in other places and that I didn't need to be a doctor or nurse to be useful". One respondent wrote, "Haiti broadened my world view and I believe paved the way for longer term international service. The exposure created a passion to bring hope (physical, emotional, spiritual etc.) to people in need and showed me how comfortable I can be living in a different culture".

But not all trip participants appeared to gain this personal efficacy and some questioned the purpose of their service. "I feel like we really just amused the kids for a week". Another concurred, "We probably helped meet some of the needs for the workers and

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children at the orphanage. I don't think we necessarily made a long term effect on the people there". A third said, "I feel like most of what I did on my trip was observe and let everything soak in. I'm not sure whether I did anything of super big significance". One respondent admitted, "I don't really feel proud. I feel like I faked my faith because I wanted to go help people and didn't know if I would be allowed to go."

Some also felt that they did not accomplish much: "Apparently we did more than just play with kids and build a house but that's precisely what we did". Another commented, "I felt we met the needs of the children in the community we worked in, but those are short-term solutions. I felt there was no follow-up in our work and it was hard to say good-bye knowing there was so much more we could have done long-term. I felt that we did not meet the needs of the adults in the community we worked in because most of our work was directed towards children". One respondent continues to struggle, "I still wonder if what we did to get that hospital ready would have been done by other people. But then I think if everyone thought that and nobody went, nothing would get done. It's just hard to figure out what each of our roles is and how to best spend money".

The differences in how participants framed their experience were apparent in their comments. This could be due to previous experience, maturity or simply perspective. One Mexico team member said, "The family that we built the house for was obviously so overjoyed to have a home that had a floor and a roof, real walls and a window. Yet another person on that same team said:

> It was nice to hang out with the kids but I got the feeling that they get this attention all the time from various groups that come down. Obviously, I have no way of knowing how impacting it really was for the kids, but I did not have a sense of making any difference. Honestly, in hindsight it feels silly to go to Mexico and do a little building, sing some songs, play with some kids, take over someone's residence...and silly to me to mostly address spiritual needs when there are so many obvious physical needs.

Most survey participants expressed a sense of efficacy in the belief that they had contributed in a small way. They described risks that they had taken and the self-confidence that had subsequently emerged. When asked whether they now believe that they can make a difference in the lives of people in other countries, 84.3% of survey respondents felt they could, 3.4% did not feel they could, and 12.3% preferred to remain neutral on the topic.

Some participants shared that the magnitude of need they witnessed was a lot to process: "The reality is I was overwhelmed by what I saw and don't think there is anything I can do". Another said, "The fact that I saw no matter how hard we worked, we wouldn't make a huge difference was overwhelming – there would still be teens living on the streets and needing the help of the food banks. At times it seemed almost impossible to make a difference". A third commented:

> I was overwhelmed by how much money, energy, effort, change and social restructuring would be needed to 'fix' Haiti. Ten years later, especially with the recent event in Haiti, that thought is still overwhelming. The only comfort I have is that they (most anyways) are not concerned with reaching our (western) goals.

Feeling overwhelmed by need is a well-documented concern in the literature. When addressed directly on the survey, respondents shared mixed opinions. 22% of respondents concurred that this trip made them feel that the world's problems are too big for them while 55% disagreed with that statement and 23% remained neutral. Overall, trip participants expressed feeling empowered as evidenced by the 90% of survey respondents who indicated they felt that they could make a difference in the world. In terms of affecting their confidence, 69.9% felt that their international experience increased their confidence regarding their ability to contribute to improving the life of others, 21% remained neutral and 9.1% disagreed.

Throughout participant responses, and particularly in the interviews, there was a sense that self-authorship had unfolded during these trips as students continued to define their own identity: Kegan (1994) described identity development as

> an ideology, an internal identity, a self-authorship that can coordinate, integrate, act upon, or invent values, beliefs, convictions, generalization, ideals, abstractions, interpersonal loyalties, and interpersonal states. {The person} is no longer authored by them, {the person} authors them and thereby achieves a personal authority (p. 185).

To summarize this section on self-discovery, participant accomplishments seemed to promote feelings of self-worth and to further feelings of empowerment. 79% of students felt that God had used them on this trip, 17% remained neutral and 3% disagreed. These trips appear to have enabled students to do some of this "coordinating, integrating and acting upon", outlined by Kegan, resulting in increased individuation. That is a major task in the adolescent years - years of great change and development, years of

probing "Who am I?" "Where do I fit?" "Where am I heading?" Survey respondents demonstrated that having students participate in an IS-L experience can enhance that development by promoting high degrees of critical thinking and by invoking greater self-discovery, confidence and self-efficacy.

Developing this sense of self is an important aspect of moral development. Blasi (1984) said:

> Morality is not a thought or action, but a characteristic. People need identities to link them to society. Morality is more characteristic of the agent than of either action or thinking; the ultimate source of goodness lies in good will, and good will is at the core of what a person is (p. 130).

Trip participants readily described how their identities had been shaped through their IS-L experience in their reflections. "I am different, more confident and I know that I am good with working with kids", said a student upon returning from Argentina. Another participant said, "I realized that I have a real interest in experiencing new things and trying to understand others." Another summarized, "It {the trip} shaped me into a more humble person who is more sensitive in a practical sense for those disadvantaged socially and economically. I am more compassionate".

Parent surveys supported and reiterated the perceptions of their children. All parent respondents were positive about the IS-L program and most (92%) felt the program had significant long-term impact on their children. Some parents indicated that although their son or daughter did not pursue any other international service opportunities, the one trip they took was, as one parent stated, "an excellent cross-cultural experience and it [the trip] generated thankfulness that cannot be manufactured in our consumer driven home. It was a life lesson we couldn't have taught our kids sadly so we were glad they got to walk into poverty and grow in appreciation." Another mom wrote, "Both of my kids came back changed and will never ever forget it...They are not the same...They can always go back to that special time..." A third stated, "My daughter was never the same after that trip. It rocked her to the core".

When asked about the types of changes they observed, some parents described new experiences and skills that had developed such as assisting at dental clinics or having to look after kids for the first time. Others mentioned personal development "She is less shy in public settings since that trip and will speak in front of others". Parents talked about many of the "big questions" that caused their children to think deeply and talked

about a developing sense of self they felt could be attributed in part to these trips. They thought their sons and daughters became more independent as they "felt a responsibility to do their part and as they looked within themselves to give it their all" on their trips. The word "well-rounded" was mentioned by twelve parents as they talked about their children becoming, as one said, "more well-rounded in gaining understanding on how to extend themselves to others in different cultures". Another mom commented that both her children "finally learned that is not all about ME".

4.8 Theme 4: Developing a Sense of "Otherness"

Adolescents are typically consumed with self. This collides with the very concept of service-learning. By their nature, S-L experiences are not meant to be self-focussed. Survey participants reported that IS-L experiences lead to a deeper appreciation of others. One participant said, "It {this trip} opened up my eyes to realize that life is not all about me and my accomplishments".

When asked whether the IS-L trip affected their two daughters' identity development, one parent commented, "It helped them to be more others focussed and not be so me focussed. This has translated into how they live their lives today as adults". A growing sense of "otherness" emerged as a significant theme in this study. The Service-Learning model (Damon et al., 2003) outlines six C's: competence, confidence, character, caring and contribution, and connection. The first five C's have already been discussed. I will now examine the connections that form on these trips. This sense of connection is also reflected in Erikson's (1994) discussion of a growing sense of intimacy rather than isolation.

Survey and interview participants wrote and spoke extensively about the connections they had formed on their trips – connections with each other, the community that they were serving, and all the people and children whom they met. The role of people or "others" in stimulating personal and cognitive development and inciting moral behaviour cannot be underestimated. Eyler & Giles Jr.'s (1996) Citizenship Model illustrates how personal, interpersonal and intellectual development converge to develop citizenship and social responsibility and then effective participation:

Values   I ought to do

Knowledge   I know what I ought to do and why

Skills   I know how to do

Efficacy   I can do and it makes a difference

Commitment   I must and will do

All of this happens after connection. Interviewees and survey respondents traced the path of this happening in their relationship with teammates, host families, missionaries and in-country workers and with the people whom they served. Students first developed a connection to the community and became motivated to be involved. As students quickly became attached to those they served, a sense of responsibility to help them ensued. When they observed poor living conditions and disparity, a sense of social responsibility was not hard to awaken in adolescents who tend to have a heightened sense of justice developmentally. Seeing inequity first-hand not only made it hard to turn away but also elicited a sense of empowerment and a realization that small acts can make a difference. And most trip participants believed they were making a difference – even if only holding a small child in an orphanage. Participants began to see that they could make moral decisions and began to develop a sense of justice and fairness. Many comments seemed to indicate that participants began to reflect on how they would like to be treated in similar situations. "I felt it was wrong they lived like this and knew that I would be hungry for help from someone if I lived like that."

A sense of care evolved amidst their developing cry for justice. As connections were made, there appeared to be an increased interest in the welfare of others. Noddings argues that care is largely reactive and responsive. Caring can involve an "I must do something" impulse to help those one cares for (Noddings 1995). Gilligan (1982) believed also that a voice of care and responsibility was more predominant than a voice of justice. She also emphasized one's own experience and a sense of connection. One student said, "I love those people I lived with and would do anything to help them". Another said, "I had to do something. I learned caring for others and family is more powerful and rewarding than any job or other reward". When asked if the IS-L experience increased their empathy for others, 87.5% of survey respondents believed it had, 5.7% did not and 6.8% did not comment. So what contributed to this development of care and empathy? Much unfolded in the context of relationships. This section of the study will report on the impact of relationships formed.

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When asked if they ever find themselves thinking about the people they met and stayed with, 74.7% of respondents replied affirmatively. Most often these people were homestay families, but respondents also mentioned translators, pastors, people they worked with, orphans and specific homeless people with whom they interacted. They wondered about whether these peoples' needs are now being met, about their health, about possible adoptions and whether people were "given a break and a chance to succeed". One woman's comments were similar to many respondents' ruminations, "There was one boy that I met in the orphanage that we were based in that completely captured my heart. He was so sweet and I still think of him every once in a while and pray for him". Another simply said, "I think about that boy I gave my soccer cleats to". Others wondered about the family for whom they built a house and whether they were still happily living in it. Some spoke of subsequent re-connections made on Facebook.

A few respondents indicated that when they think of their trip, they most often remember "people-centered events", like the one night it rained and they were out together, or being brought roses by their host or making a hand-print rainbow with kids or watching boys do handstands. Several spoke about photographs they have up in their houses that remind them of special connections made around the world. The recent earthquake in Haiti seems to have stirred memories and thoughts anew as team members wondered about the survival of those they had met.

4.8.1 Interdependence

It was clear that participants realized that they relied on one another and from that, a growing sense of interdependence emerged from their two weeks or month away from home. As one participant remarked, "It's hard to be independent in another country". Another said, "My belief in self-sufficiency was totally challenged. I learned how much the people I was serving and me [sic] needed God and other people". Another commented, "I learned that God uses people through building relationships not just the acts of service. Respondents talked about how they had opened up to teammates they had never talked to, hugged homestays and connected with the people who were part of their shared experience very quickly.

There was also a connection to home. Participants appeared to link their learning to their lives at homes. A number of respondents indicated they thought about people back home while on site during their IS-L. Many were grateful for their families; others found

themselves thinking about the poor, about immigrants, drug recovery houses and the homeless in Abbotsford. Several students who travelled to Haiti had friends who had been adopted from Haiti (there is a large adopted Haitian population in the Abbotsford area) and "thought about their roots now that I saw where they came from". Others were inspired to consider other agencies that were helping, "I thought about the organizations like Red Cross, other churches and schools that come to Haiti. How awesome that we are all connected in our want to help the people".

Several sub-themes in the area of connectedness to others emerged from this study, including interacting with one's team, with children, with hosts and with the people one served. I will now summarize what participants said in regard to these relationships.

4.8.2 Team

For most, a sense of interdependence on their IS-L trip started with being a member of a team. "Your team is all you have in a land where you don't know anyone". One person said, "I don't really think my trip was about personal accomplishment. {I} think of us working together as a team, learning and serving, however we could". Another said, "I don't feel like I did anything on my own. It was always a group effort. I am proud of the work we did in Thailand. The clean and habitable residences that resulted were a tangible sign of the effort we put in". His teammate summarized, "We united around a common goal; everyone pulled their weight and worked hard". Most team experiences that were shared reflected a sense of unity:

> Being with a bunch of other students for that long, in those conditions, and remaining friends was an accomplishment...It wasn't really about me, or what I could do on my own. It was all of us working together that made a difference. A bunch of 16 and 17 year olds could make a difference and do something on the other side of the world. That is empowering.

A parent also commented, "The unity of the team working, planning, praying and having fun together was awesome". Although students attend school together, IS-L teams are often constituted of students who don't necessarily know each other well. One participant described, "We were a bit of hodgepodge thrown together, and yet we managed to get along really well". Another said:

> An experience that stands out is the formation of a friendship with two people who I had walked the halls of MEI with for almost 5 years but never talked to. To provide some context, I was always a bit socially

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awkward despite always having some friends. But on this trip I felt that I had actually been proactive in being a part of a group of 3 that normally would never had hung out together. Like many others, social acceptance and confidence was very important to me in high school. The only unfortunate thing is that the three of us had to fly half way around the world to actually talk to each other.

Some good friendships were formed on these trips. "I really grew to like the different types of people on our team. We weren't friends before. It was awesome", said a member of one team. There was a sense that everyone played an important part and had their own niche or role. "You're an awesome team and I know I'll be missing you for months. We must keep getting together", reads the last entry in one team journal.

Functioning effectively as a team takes time, development and skill. When asked whether they learned about working together effectively as a team on their trip, 72% of survey respondents indicated that they had, 15% remained neutral and 13% disagreed. Study participants reported learning skills in compromise, conflict resolution, sharing and negotiation. One person commented, "A team is an integral part to service. My team was amazing, although, there were moments when we had conflict and had to work through that. Building into a team before they are on the ground serving is a necessity". Another shared, "I learned how to appreciate different gifts people have to offer and I felt grateful for the different personalities on my team".

Teaming is not easy. Perhaps one participant said it best, "Nothing can really prepare you for being around 20 {or 10} people 24/7". Another commented, "When you live with people for a month, you learn to live together. Interesting, fun, frustrating, enriching. You learn way more about people than you would have at home". Another said, "I got to know individuals very fast in a very intense environment".

Most teams return recounting generally positive experiences, along with some challenges. For some, the team was seen as completely positive. "One of the best parts of this trip for me was our team. I think we really pulled together on this trip. There were no major (or even minor) disputes and there was really good chemistry", said one participant. Another said, "The picture that stays with me from my trip the most is the relationships I developed with my teammates – laughing together, eating together, and crying together. Almost every memory I have from the trip is filled with a member of my team. I still meet with these team members today – 6 years later". Strangely enough, some even perceived teaming to be a trip highlight: "The best part honestly, was

spending time with the other students on the bus ride down. It was a very fun trip, but I can't say that it impacted or deeply changed me. I just loved my team".

Teaming brings an opportunity to care for each other. "Unfortunately, the first thing I think about the trip is how sick I got with sunstroke on the last few days", said one member of the Philippines team, "My team leaders and team members were so caring and supportive of me (and a few other sick students) during that time." As they walked through a shared experience together many students opened up, "The idea to be real to everyone around me stayed and has become a fundamental part of my personality", said one person. Several members on one team recalled an evening when a teammate shared. "A girl on my team admitted that she struggled with low self-esteem. That really hit me, especially after almost all the girls on our team admitted it as well. We were open and really talked about who we were". Another commented, "You learn quick there is no point in being fake with your team".

Team members watch each other carefully on these trips. When speaking of a teammate, one participant wrote, "At points, I saw rigidity in not being able to adapt to the scenario or the social demands of bring gracious with our hosts". Another wrote,

> One of the most significant aspects was hearing everyone complain about the loss of our luggage and our food, and our leaders over and over again and realizing how annoying it is to hear people complain and how inconsiderate it is. This impacted me because I was a regular complainer and I realized that I should change.

Participants also demonstrated that working in a team had cognitive aspects. Someone said, "Everyone is so different but when you learn to accept the differences, you can really learn a lot from each other". Another said, "We all had our own issues that could prove to be hurdles if we were going to function as a team, but if we could persevere and forgive one another, we could unite and work together". Other teams with leadership struggles talked about how they had come together for peer support, "I learned how to bond with my team members even though there was no unity between us and leaders". Another said, "Through this experience I realized that you don't need to have the same hobbies or interests to have fun and get along with people".

As to the long-term impact of this experience? When asked about teaming on his trip, one participant answered, "Well...I ended up marrying one girl from the trip!" Three others shared:

The long-term impact on a life is worth more than a 1000 words. The personal experience has been much more effective in changing my life than any one piece of information I have ever received from my 5 years at MEI. Because of the extended time spent with the same group of people, it forced a lot of growth in a short period of time which could be delayed by short interactions you have at school 6 hours a day 5 days a week.

My team had a large impact on me. These types of trips are amazing due to the intense bonding that can take place in such a short period of time. Also, people are vulnerable like they are nowhere else in their lives. In a few weeks, you can know your team as well or better than those you might consider yourself closest to. It gives you a new insight into what relationships can be like. So ya, [sic] when I think of this trip, my team is one of the first things I think about. It changed me forever...

The members of my SL team all poured into each other for the entire trip, it was amazing. To this day, I believe that I share a deeper spiritual connection with those people. Moreover, my leaders from that team both modelled and instructed how to be humble leaders, always persevering to serve. This has carried right into my own ethos as a person, educator and service-learning leader.

However, for others, living and working with their team was difficult. Living in close quarters with teammates brought challenges. One student wrote in the team journal, "I still need some matchsticks to put into my eyes because they shut by itself [sic]. Bruce snores very hard every night but it is better than not having showers for several days like the female members of our team". It was Bruce's turn two entries later and he wrote, "Billy keeps commenting on my snoring. What he doesn't know is that he snores too. Sharing a room is not easy".

Some participants had to adjust their expectations, "I learned to appreciate the people on my team, even though we didn't see things the same way. The fact I am interested in service doesn't mean that everyone else on my team is interested in the same way as me". Others expressed further struggles: "There was great unrest from within our team. There was a lot of conflict and it was not handled well by anyone on our team".

Twenty others indicated they found it stretching and some spoke candidly, "I found it overwhelming at times to have to open up emotionally and spiritually with a group of peoples that I barely knew. As a private person, I found any sharing hard, but it was good to push the comfort zone", or "It is hard to be with the same group for two weeks. I got a bit sick of some people". Another said, "In Mexico, there was a complete lack of space. We drove down in a van, so we had to get close. We lived in tents. We had no

time to ourselves...I am someone who thrives on people and need lots of contact, but I also need a definite amount of alone time each day in order to be able to function. That was hard". Sometimes close quarters brought increased consideration of others. One respondent said, "My thinking was certainly challenged on the trip. First and foremost, through the relationships formed with those on my team, and my need to be more sensitive to the feelings and insecurities of others". Another said, "It started me to make me consider other people in other places, rather than just my own". Others were very honest. "I learned how annoying it is to be with a group of your peers 24/7. Grew closer to some people and grew to dislike others more".

Follow-up with one interviewee was pursued after she related that she had a negative IS-L experience on her survey. Aside from a significant challenge with her team leaders, she attributes much of her struggle to one team member who was "taken on this trip as a project" by the leader. This team member, who also ended up being her homestay mate, was negative, required constant attention and "had no reason to be there and really should not have been there at all". This experience and in fact that one person, tainted the trip for the whole team. Her feeling was that this team member really should have been sent home. The team required a separate time of debriefing upon returning home to work through their dissatisfaction. She was not alone. Four respondents from different teams talked about one member negatively impacting their time and clouding their entire experiences. In each case, that person had been approached or encouraged by a staff member to sign up for the IS-L program. When asked to comment on his or her team experience, one respondent answered with a single word "needy". Another answered similarly "high maintenance". It was evident the constitution of teams and learning to live and work together is an important part of the IS-L experience.

4.8.3 The Children

Trips that involve working with children are normally attractive to a large percentage of IS-L applicants in the program. Children also seem to have significant impact on trip participants. Participants talked about children almost as often as the impact of witnessing poverty first-hand in survey responses. Several sub-themes recurred in talking about the impact children had on trip participants: Images that Haunt, Steps to Embrace, Reciprocity in Action and Lessons Learned.

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4.8.3.1 Images that Haunt

Almost all trip participants who worked with children had stories and described images that are burned in their mind. "I close my eyes and see pictures of public orphanages and lines of beds with all one's belongings contained in a single cubby. Children seemed content but some of the faces burned in my mind seem full of loneliness. How could this not stay with me and continue to challenge me for life?" recalled one interviewee.

Some stories were simple. "I played with a little girl, 'Knee' during a rainy day. All I did was tickle and enjoy her company but when we left, she ran out in the rain to hug me and wouldn't let me go." Another said, "I will never forget showing a kid his first water balloon. We threw them off the roof and the all the kids wanted to get wet. They were shrieking standing in a cluster trying to get hit. To think I could bring that joy even though I am not a smart person was eye-opening."

Others vignettes were heart wrenching and speak for themselves:

> There was a little girl in the orphanage whose aunt had put her in a shed with a pigpen when she was bad. The pigs had eaten her flesh so the girl had pieces of her body gone. She always wore a hat to cover up the bites and deformities. One day her hat came off and it made me so sad to see that. I appreciate my parents and the love and safety they give me for the first time.

> One afternoon I was just holding one of the babies and they were sleeping and I was just moved by the heartbreakingness [sic] of the situation – how anyone could abandon their child in a garbage bag in a garbage dump and just leave them there to die?

> In Mexico, I remember one child (around 4 years) who had been recently brought to the orphanage and stayed by the fence mumbling "mama" or however it is in Spanish. I held him for as long as I could and tried to comfort him. Broke my heart.

> I was hugely moved when I saw 6 rooms of 30 babies in each. They were starving and had nobody to take care of them. They just wanted to be touched and loved to the point that they would stop crying immediately if you touched them. I just stood there and cried. It opened my eyes to the hurt and suffering in this world. I can still remember their big eyes staring up at me, longing to be picked up.

> We saw a child picked up from the shelter and taken to an ugly state orphanage with only a garbage bag in hand. I will never forget her looking out the van window as it pulled away.

> It was heart breaking to be in an AIDS orphanage, to see great kids full of life and to hear that many would never reach 10 years of age.

> I met one girl in her house that was found in a garbage bag with her placenta and she is somewhat brain damaged because of it. Seeing and knowing things like that breaks my heart.

The fact that many children had been abandoned or unwanted really affected trip participants and they mentioned it repeatedly on surveys.

> It's good to just hang out with the kids and watch their faces...to think that their parents don't want them is appaling [sic]...remembering where all these kids have come from is so hard because they're so easy to love. A lot of them may have been born with a lot of pain attached for their parents.

Another said, "When I saw the kids and heard some of their stories of their abandonment, I was sad and angry. I wanted to take all of their hurt away but I couldn't and that was hard." Stories like this clearly evoked love, compassion and empathy but also gave birth to questions in the minds of MEI student travellers.

Questions also arose as trip participants commented on the likeness of these kids to kids they knew back in Canada. A member of the Venezuela team said: "When we went to the juvenile detention centre, the boys had very sad eyes. Sharing with them seemed to give them hope. It opened my eyes to how other people live and saddened me to see kids our age in that place." Another said, "I look around at these children - some my age. I see the conditions they live in and I wonder why God chose to put me in Canada. I don't know why it is that I am so blessed to have a family, a nice home, and a great school to go to."

Again, seeing joy amidst poverty touched respondents. "I won't forget seeing children with so much joy in slums. They have so little but that doesn't matter. They are just regular kids. I wonder if our kids actually need all the Connex and Lego that they have." Another said, "The times we spent with the kids was amazing. I'm so glad we spent lots of time with them even when we were hot and tired. They had so little and loved the small crafts...I loved watching their faces when they got to hold a felt pen, or put glitter on something".

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4.8.3.2 Steps to Embrace

Connections also formed when team members extended themselves. One participant even used the word "connectedness" in his description, "I gave my clothes to a sick child who was naked and cold. There was a moment of connectedness that sticks out in my head". Another student said, "I'll never forget that one street kid who was crying. All I could do was hold him but it was enough". Another said, "I loved two little nursery girls Nanuska and Joanne. Those kids impacted me and I loved being a source of security for them."

Sometimes it was through simple play. "I will never forget those smiling faces on those kids when we played, tickled and just simply loved those kids". Another said, "My heart went out to them. Seeing a little 3 year old from a difficult home come out from under the table at kids' club. Her shyness turned to excitement and I was determined to make a difference in that one girl's life this one time." Wishing they could bring a child back home was a common comment on surveys. "I found myself wanting to put him in my suitcase and take him home so my parents could adopt him. I still think about and pray for him from time to time". Another person wrote in his journal, "I am really enjoying it here with the kids and I have decided I will bring Jessica back with me in my suitcase".

Other times, embracing was not so easy. Said one, "Those kids just stunk". However, most times, even in those circumstances, there was a sense of sacrifice, or "overcoming" that prevailed. "I learned to hold the children even if they're dirty and have ringworms. None of that matters in the big picture. These are human beings." Another said, "In the middle of the trip, even though a child could be quite filthy and covered in lice, it did not matter. I didn't want to keep my distance because of something like that; because I knew what they needed most was human connection – an arm around their shoulder or a hug". Some survey respondents had regrets in this area. One said:

> I remember one little girl who followed me around an orphanage and we played and I gave her lots of hugs. I remember right before we left, I gave her a hug, but I did not want to give the hug fully because I was pretty sure she had lice and I was fearful to get it, so this did not allow me to fully embrace this child. I think this picture has stayed in my head because it is a picture of how sometimes I am hesitant to jump into things because of how my comfort level or life might be affected and I am not always willing to give those things up.

On first impression, it may seem like that participant failed. Indeed, perhaps she missed an opportunity; however, the fact she relates this story eight years later shows its enduring impact.

4.8.3.3 Reciprocity in Action

Many respondents commented on the impact the act of receiving had on them as people from the host country served or gave to them. This was very true of the children. Each gift seemed to come with a message. "I learned it feels really good to have people care and really appreciate you. I learned this by an orphan Larissa giving me a picture she had coloured." Another student wrote the following on her evaluation form, "One day I got to the shelter a little late and it took me about 10 minutes to get up to our room, because every single one of the kids hugged and kissed me. I felt embraced in every way". Another participant summarized, "Their generosity was far greater than any other and they have less to give. It was astounding to see kids give us their small trinkets in gratitude."

Many respondents commented on the fact that there was sharing amidst poverty. "The children were selfless. We did an Easter egg hunt one day and the children got chocolate as a rare treat. They kept trying to share their eggs with me. How can they be so good at sharing and we who have so much are not? I take a lot for granted."

Another said:

> Something that is really a blessing to see is when these kids who have basically nothing make something like a tambourine and then give it away to you so that they will be remembered. Many people today were touched by that and also the living conditions of these kids. They're all dirty, crammed together in a small living space, starved from physical material things such as food, clothes etc. and other things like love. My heart and mind has [sic] been opened. God loves every kid in those internats {Ukrainian state orphanages} and we were privileged enough to be able to share that love with them. To see their empty eyes be filled and light up thanks to one little smile.

In addition, a person who had the privilege of doing a Samaritan's Purse Shoebox distribution in Argentina said:

> Giving Operation Christmas shoeboxes was the highlight of my life. We did it in two small villages. All my life my family has made a shoebox at Christmas but I never really pictured where it actually went. It will change

the way I make my shoeboxes forever and I will be making a whole lot more every Christmas. Small things make a big difference.

A teammate concurred but was touched by the children sharing their boxes,

I was touched by the way the kids gave us the things from their Operation Christmas Child boxes. I mean those are boxes that "we" pack for them. They don't get a lot of gifts and here they are giving us the gifts that they have received. Still to this day it blows my mind because I still struggle with (though God is working on this) giving others things that are mine.

Someone concluded, "Kids were an example to me. They had nothing but are still happy and they love you even if you can't speak the same language."

4.8.3.4 Lessons Learned

Aside from the generosity experienced, participants identified a number of lessons garnered through their interaction with children. Said one participant, "Seeing two older siblings in the orphanage take care of a little sister and make sure she was happy and safe at all times, made me reconsider my own relationships with my siblings. When your parents are taken away and you are an orphan, they are all you've got. I came home and changed my attitude towards them." Another spoke of the patience of one girl as she waited her turn to make a craft. "I am reminded of Anna. The little girl who was waiting for such a long time, but whenever someone else came up wanting one she would let them go ahead of her. I thought that was pretty awesome of her. She figured something out that often takes us a while to catch onto."

Another Venezuela team member shared, "I learned that small is BIG. One day I was in an indigenous native reserve and I played chalk with a girl. The next day she came to kids [sic] camp with some earrings for me as a gift. She asked me for a photo but I didn't have one, so I gave her my earrings. Even the smallest actions can touch someone's life. There is beauty in relationships."

Others noticed admirable qualities arising – in themselves and the children. "I have now seen what it means to be starved for love. Carla was seven years old and completely content to be held and loved by me. She was the sweetest girl and I was so moved when she would look up into my eyes and just stare. Nothing mattered but love. I never knew I had that kind of love in me." One of the participants who did not have an easy childhood herself, was inspired: "I saw that people can overcome. We were in a poor

place and people there knew how to live well off little. There was Margarita, a little girl being adopted who had burn scars all up her arms from her birth parents who had abused her. Yet the child was the happiest child I had ever seen and showed no signs of that past other than the physical scars. I want to be like that girl."

4.8.4 Their Hosts

Many respondents commented on the hospitality and gratitude of their hosts. As one participant wrote, "Homestays really stretched me a lot. I liked staying with the people. It was the best way to experience the culture and get into peoples' lives." Another concurred, "The highlight was staying with families. I learned so much about the people, the culture, families and patience that I would never learn staying in a hotel." From the stories, it is evident that many cultural exchanges took place. One interviewee laughed and said, "We had a great time destroying their pre-conceived notions regarding North Americans in terms of what we eat, how we travel and how we dress". Another summarized, "The most significant aspect of my trip was seeing an entirely different culture. You can talk about it forever, but actually going is another thing".

It was perhaps in homestays where the reciprocal nature of these trips was first visible to trip participants. They described and experienced first-hand, people living in poverty extending themselves to MEI team members and showing incredible love and gratitude to people who had been strangers two weeks before. Students learned to receive as well as give. Both the giving and the "receiving" of this response built efficacy. One person recognized,

> They were so giving and gracious with the things they had. They had so little, yet they would shower us with everything they had and thought we needed. They would cook us great meals and eat different foods by themselves. It was difficult to swallow.

Another shared this story, "When my host mother had an Easter egg hunt for me and my friend, she kept giving and giving us chocolate and candy. I was moved by her generosity to us, strangers. At breakfast, the whole table was covered with food and she insisted we always have enough." Another participant related this story about feeling touched: "We gave our homestays gifts and as we were packing, they came into our room and gave us some gifts, which they had taken right off their wall to give us. People were willing to give even when they were poor."

Many also commented on the joy their hosts displayed, despite less than ideal circumstances. "They worked hard all day, came home took care of us and were tired but seemed so peaceful and joyful". Another said, "My homestay mom got up before 5 and snuck in my room to take all my laundry and do it. She always had a smile even though she lived pretty poor". Another survey respondent summarized, "I was impacted by loving care and the sacrifice that I saw. Love and devotion impacted me the most to persevere and stay the course of love and not greed."

Although hard, most people who had homestay experiences affirmed that means of housing IS-L trip participants. "I was so glad to stay in a home with someone. I would never have got to know the people like I did had I gone to Costa Rica on any other pretense." Some commented on things they learned through their time in someone else's home. "I learned that life can be taken one moment at time and enjoyed thoroughly. You don't have to finish something immediately. Also the freedom to use your imagination and not money to come up with a fun and exciting things to do and explore." Another said, "I learned that despite cultural differences, we are the same in many ways. All people have physical and spiritual needs."

MEI students also enjoyed giving to their homestays. Some talked about staying up late to interact despite being exhausted. Others took delight in giving them Canadian memorabilia and showing them family photos. They found purpose in this interaction. Three girls stayed with a single woman struggling with depression in Argentina. Said one,

> Living with a single old lady Eliana in Argentina was very moving. We lived the real life of someone who lives in Argentina. She was poor and very lonely because she was going through some really hard stuff with her health. When we left, we put some money under the pillow for her to fix her leaky roof. Had we not been there, she would have no other people to comfort her and to fill her house. Our nights at her house made my whole trip worthwhile.

Participants revealed a growing understanding that a sense of self is embedded in relationships: "I learned how we treat everyone is pretty important and everyone deserves respect". Another continued, "I also learned that the world is one and we better start caring for each other". Back home and years later, when asked whom they missed or whom they had maintained contact with, homestay families were the most named people. It is clear that relationships were formed and had impact. Said one girl

in her journal, "I will sure miss getting woken up with a classic 'Gwuuuurls, Brekvast is vredee'".

4.8.5 People Met and Served

MEI IS-L students have interacted with thousands of people around the world. As much as survey participants hope that they have positively affected others, surveys indicated they were also quick to recognize the impact these people have had on them.

Sometimes they had humorous encounters, "On the vehicle we were trying to be friendly with everyone and to represent Canada well. We met up with twins, philoppino [sic] twins! Their names were Carlos 1 and Carlos 2. Seriously! Apparently that is common. Isn't that hilarious in this country?" But other times, comments were more serious:

> I met a man named Roy at the food bank, and I could tell as we talked each day that he was just desperate for someone to listen to him. I learned from him not to judge people by how they look or speak, and that everyone deserves the respect of being listened to and heard. He gave me a poem before we left about how he had been longing for a friend, just someone to listen and respect him and not just turn and walk by him when they saw him on the street based on how he looks. I still think of him and pray for him. He taught me so much about myself and about how I can and should relate to people.

In some cases, teams worked closely with national workers. "Building houses and working alongside the nationals was really cool. It was like saying I came half way around the world just to help you do a little bit more. I think we encouraged them that we cared". Kindness is an international language that touched trip participants, breaking through language barriers. One Haiti team member recalled:

> I wasn't a very good hiker, not that fit at the time, but there was a very kind Haitian man who worked at the orphanage who stayed with me at the rear of our group all the way up that mountain. He encouraged me the whole way, helped me up steep areas and never showed any trace of impatience.

Students expressed a desire to improve the quality of life for those they encountered. "My heart went out to them. I would do anything to help. All I could do at that moment was go out and buy some nice dish cloths to replace theirs, a new wash basin because there's [sic] was cracked and some pretty candles".

Participants were impressed with the resiliency of the people whom they encountered:

> I was amazed at how the patients in the dental clinic would not make noises or complaints, even when the dentist was doing procedures he said most westerners in the developed world would not be able to stand without heavy drugs. It was interesting the attitude those people had. People from our society love to complain about things. The Haitians were just happy for help.

Another commented:

> I learned that they are a strong people. Just recently watching the stories that have come out of Haiti this past year with the earthquake has been amazing and it change my perspective because of my own connection that that country. They have shown that though they are limited in material means, they are so much more than their "net worth"

Another said, "The community taught me more than I taught them about grace and kindness. " Seeing how little the people had, but how much joy and love they gave us was the biggest impression of this trip". Another summarized:

> My trip helped me understand humanity. Getting to know some of the locals, and seeing that we all have the same struggles. We all view life in a very similar light. Hope is hope. Whether you have drywall, beige walls, and a granite kitchen or not. There are the same relationship difficulties, etc. We don't need all of the material wealth and success that we have, we would be just as happy without all of it. Happiness and joy comes from the inside.

Many comments reflected participants noting commonalities between cultures. "In Bangkok, I realized that all around the world, people are serving Jesus – all different races. It was cool to sing the same songs in English while they were singing them in Thai." Another teammate said, "On Easter Sunday, we went to a citywide church service. I sat beside a Thai lady. We couldn't understand each other but we both knew that we shared the most important thing in the world. She would hold my hand and we shared the same God in different languages." Another commented, "I do believe that they {hosts} got something out of our faith. Our faiths were constructed differently because of the two different worlds we came from, and there was something in the blending of the two that benefited both sides". Another said, "Smiles, hugs and tears are universal". Respondents also reflected an understanding of culture's role in people's behaviour. One wrote, "After the trip I began to always consider people's backgrounds more in how they made decisions and the things that influence them. This trip expanded my worldview, exposed me to faith/ways of living I had never seen before". In many

comments, participants described a bridge or sense of community developing between cultures.

Indicators of this sense of community were probed on this survey. 91.9% of respondents felt that it is important to socialize with people of different backgrounds, 4.6% did not feel this was important and 3.5% did not comment. When asked whether their current friendship circle was multi-cultural, 97.5% of respondents responded affirmatively, 100% of survey respondents felt that it was important to treat all people with respect. 97.5% of respondents indicated that they discuss community issues weekly. Summarized one traveller, "I think I learned that you shouldn't associate someone's worth or value with how well off they are economically. You need to respect everyone. I met a guy at the soup kitchen who could joke around and have fun even though he is poor and living on welfare. It really made me realize that I should watch what makes me sad or depressed when this guy, who has nothing, is joyful in poverty."

4.8.5.1 Hearing their Stories

As one participant put it, "You hear a lot of sad stories on the news, but these were real people on our trip. We met them". Sometimes the same story was recounted repeatedly on several surveys. Said one person,

> I met a prostitute named Agnes who was 21 and addicted to cocaine. She worked the streets so she could feed herself. She knows she had made wrong choices but really felt trapped and had little hope, but she was so desperate for help and love. She was really afraid of people because her trust had been broken so many times. She also carried the pain of having given her baby girl up for adoption and never seeing her again.

On another survey, her teammate continued:

> One morning she came and her face was all cut up and puffy. She was trying to hide it with her hair. When I looked into her eyes, I could see such pain, rejection and fear, it made me want to cry. We also visited her apartment one day and I almost started crying there too, because they had nothing. Two little rooms with only a bed, table, stove and no food.

Others told stories of seeing people in their living conditions and hearing their stories as they delivered food hampers. "We went to deliver a food hamper and the lady spilled her life story that she had been raped the night before and her friend a prostitute had been stabbed to death that week. She had miscarried a baby when she was hit by a car

and is living with an angry boyfriend." Another said, "When we brought a food hamper to someone living in a two-room house with garbage all over the place, nothing in order, not a clean spot in the room. We woke the guy up and he had a butter knife to protect himself because his lock was broken." The impact of these encounters are undeniable as team members describe them in great detail and with much emotion years later.

4.8.5.2 Giving and Receiving

Repeatedly, survey respondents expressed amazement at how warmly they had been welcomed and accepted. Again, the reciprocal nature of these trips was reiterated. "Those people in Costa Rica didn't have many things materially but they really tried to give us something. They really cared and loved us as their own. They shared stories of their own some amazing life changing experiences and we also shared stories with them." Another commented, "Everybody at the church was very welcoming and we didn't feel like intruders (although most of us are a foot taller than everybody else and totally blocked their views)". A third respondent wrote, "The people we met were so kind and they have a spirit that made us feel so welcome. I loved being able to not only work with them but also have fun with them. One team member journalled, "Everything they do here is to make us feel welcome. We feel so special here. I feel that the workers and kids are doing way more for us than we are for them". One respondent recalled a story from years ago:

> This was the first time I had ever seen people live under cardboard, tin shingles and mud. My skirt ripped and a woman I met (who had nothing) ran to her house and gave one of her skirts. I knew I was taking one of the few things she owned, and it humbled me because I needed something from her. I was there because I had so much to give them, yet she gave something to me. This turned my perception of the third world upside down. These people lived with nothing, yet they were happy, and were happy to give me something in return for just my visit.

Survey respondents were touched by the love expressed, "I was deeply moved when the lady who braided my hair brought me a piece of cardboard that had "I love you" written in shells". Another said, "The most significant aspect on my trip was seeing all the smiles on the site of the house we built and at the schools. On the last day of the basketball camps when we were taking pictures, one of the little Thai boys wrapped around my neck and was kissing me. It's pretty hard to just give that up in a way." Another remembered, "On our last day, some of the girls who were around frequently came to

say goodbye and they were balling [sic], they were so sad. It was amazing to see that we had made such a difference in just one week."

Sometimes the participants saw the impact of their own actions, "At the end of our trip, a guy expressed how glad he was that we had come. He said he hadn't made a friend yet and since we had been there he felt like he had friends and people to eat with. In his words, we were 'people who really cared'. His words really touched me." Another said,

> I could not believe how "just being" makes an impression. Our bus driver Carlos was only with us for 15 hours or something but he told us we gave him joy and he wanted his kids to be like us when they get to be teenagers. I don't even think about all the people I bump into every day. I can leave a mark.

Another recounted, "At the end when we left, the kids were crying and it was interesting because I didn't know that I had even had an impact on some and yet they came to me sobbing and gave me huge hugs. Just goes to show the power of a smile and a loving heart." Another said:

> I met the needs of two communities and many people on my trip. One never knows the magnitude of a hug, smile or an encouraging speech. However, I know that all three of those things have had a positive impact on me throughout my life, sometimes from random people and sometimes from friends/family. The two communities that I was able to meet needs in were both my team and the community of people I was serving in. I trust that God displayed his amazing and far-reaching love through me, amidst my selfishness and tiredness.

Last, a participant confessed, "I am not a crying person but we were all crying when we left our homestay and so was that family. Just to know our visit impacted them made me think about how powerful just our presence is." Yet amidst this recognition, several participants commented that they felt humbled by their IS-L experience. "I didn't like it when people in Haiti saw us as celebrities just because we are from Canada and had some money. I did nothing to deserve the attention they gave us here".

Participants also reflected a developed cultural sensitivity or awareness through these relationships. "I remember eating a meal made by some locals that I didn't want to because I know it would have cost them so much money, and it likely that they would not have been able to afford that meal." Similarly, another recounted:

> The church we visited at the top of the mountain served us lunch. We didn't want to take food from them as they had so little, but we were told to eat anyways as they were honouring us. This was a surreal moment

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> for me as I realized that these people were truly giving out of their poverty and would be blessed for it. It was very genuine and loving.

One comment seemed to have really captured an understanding of the reciprocal nature of these trips:

> These trips used to be called missions trips (or so I remember) and I always had trouble with this name. I felt like I gained as much or more from going than I was able to give to the community. I like the name service learning a lot better as it implies that we learn as much from the people or communities we serve in.

4.8.5.3 Learning

Participants talked about many lessons learned from their time on foreign assignment. In both surveys and interviews, participants talked about gaining an appreciation for diversity. Overall, 82.8% of respondents indicated that they feel comfortable working with people who are different from them in race or wealth. Many attributed increased comfort levels to living in the homes of and interacting with people in another country. However, the most recurring theme was that of learning about giving. "In my entire life, I will not forget presenting the house we built to Fabiola and the expression on her face. I am a different person because I had the opportunity to do something like that for somebody else."

Participants also wrestled with the question of who truly received more on these IS-L trips. "I think people going on the trip got more than we were able to give. You learn a lot about how happy and peace filled people with nothing can be and we never seem to be satisfied no matter how much we have". Another pondered, "The work projects we completed were definitely a benefit. I wonder in my head though whether these projects were more valuable through my eyes than theirs. I know they appreciated the help and the work we did, but it was their attitude that helped them most in life and was very contagious..." Another commented:

> There were moments on the trip when our presence seemed trivial in terms of our service to the local outreaches and shelters we visited, and I could tell we were viewed more as a fieldtrip coming through than legitimate helpers there to serve. But it helped me to understand that the trip was just as much for my own spiritual growth as it was to serve others.

Said another, "I questioned the legitimacy of us being there. I came away realizing that the trip may have been more beneficial for the students from MEI than the locals".

This brought up the question of money spent and whether financing these trips is the best use of money, which is another well-documented debate in the literature. "Sometimes I felt we were more work to have there than if we had just sent money to the coordinators so they could have funded the programs we taught". Another lamented,

> We went to people's homes where they didn't have anything. They made us feel so welcome. But if we hadn't come to their home, they wouldn't have had to sacrifice so much of their money to treat us to things we take for granted every day. I remember how our host family bought us ketchup for dinner. We didn't think anything of it, until we found it was the first time they had ever bought ketchup.

Another agreed, "I did feel that we were imposing a little bit at our homestay. They made us feel so welcome, but we knew that they did not have very much, and I felt bad that I was using their warm water, and eating their food (especially when we didn't like the food they gave us)."

Considering this evoked deeper reflection for some:

> At times I felt like they {the hosts} might be thinking, "Why are they here?" Perhaps they could be bitter that 'some rich white folks have come to rub it in their faces that they are rich compared to us'. After all, we would be returning home to our luxury in only a few short weeks, and what good would we be doing for them in such a short amount of time, or even how could they even begin to experience what their life is really like. But I think that thinking was futile because that is not thinking that loving and caring and encouraging is important. You need to go in humility as a learner, observer and server. Not as a superior, rich 'know it all' North American. Learn from the people.

Another stated:

> I found it hard to handle the feeling of imposing and being an inconvenience. But these things are not insurmountable. I think trips should be planned really well with the people they are going to serve, to make sure the team is filling a need and not being a burden. It does sometimes feel like the people going are going for selfish reasons, which changes the impact of the trip. This is understandable given the age of the students. When advertising the trips, less emphasis should be put on the impact it has on the student and more emphasis placed on the impact it had on the people there.

However, in the end, when asked whether they felt the money used to fund their trips could be used instead to help people in a more significant way rather than taking this trip, 21% said yes, 22% remained neutral, and 58% disagreed. Therefore, overall, survey respondents felt that these trips were not a poor use of money. This likely came with the recognition not only of the benefit to others but also of the benefit to those who travelled – themselves. I will discuss financial considerations in more depth in Chapter 5.

In terms of supporting people in need and giving to causes, 97.7% of those surveyed felt that it was important to give occasionally to charity, 1.1% disagreed and the other 1.2% felt unsure. 95.4% felt it was important to give to the point of personal sacrifice, 3.5% were unsure and 1.1% felt it was unimportant.

4.9 Theme 5: Inspiring Faith Development

Nucci & Narvaez (2008) described moral development as a six-component process: developing moral sensitivity, moral judgment, moral motivation, moral commitment, moral character, and moral competence. In listening to trip participants recount what they saw and had been thinking about their trip, it is easy to see the affective arousal of concern, empathy and even revulsion that incited increased sensitivity and moral development in them. Again, these real-life situations and interaction with social issues and concerns seemed to have elicited spiritual growth and moral development. When students were forced to consider issues such as inequity and fairness, moral judgments began to form. Several students expressed a reprioritizing of their values as moral notions seemed to penetrate previously held goals and values and as moral motivation and commitment took hold. Survey respondents seem to feel that they had developed moral character and competence through their IS-L experience. Many of them provided concrete examples of how the impression of this trip continued to affect their behaviour years after their trip.

For many, morals, or a sense of right and wrong, good and bad, are rooted in spiritual belief. Some individuals see the world through the lens of faith. According to research done on faith development (Bibby 2009, Barna 2001), many of the student travellers were at a critical developmental phase of their faith. Underneath the teenage explosion of hormones, the stormy friendships, and their innate drive for justice, lies the development of identity or self. As students learn who they are, they wrestle with who

God is and how their self will function in relationship to their Creator and that which He created.

Therefore, faith development should be considered a significant dimension of identity and moral development. In fact, research (Barna, 2001) demonstrated that it is during the adolescent years that worldview development occurs and students must firmly develop and root themselves in a Christian worldview, if they are to make such a lifelong commitment. Grasping hold of personal faith and "making" it one's own extends beyond familiarity with Bible stories and memory verses and beyond beliefs held and taught by parents. This is work that is difficult to disaggregate as it occurs at a "spirit level"; however, it involves adolescents learning to discern truth, having their character shaped, developing standards and setting boundaries. Adolescents learn how to effectively take a stand for what they believe as they begin to develop eyes for a world bigger than themselves.

While it is true that some students have indicated that they made a first time faith discovery or commitment on the IS-L trips, most of the students going on these trips had already professed a faith. Most of them were Christians. So it is likely that many of these travellers were striving to live a good life prior to travelling and surveys indicated that part of their motivation to go on these trips seemed to have arisen from their belief that God asks people to care for others, to do right and to pursue justice and peace. When asked whether being ethical was important, survey respondents indicated this was highly valued – 98.8% of respondents rated it as very important or important. Nobody indicated it was not important, and 1.2% were unsure. When asked whether this trip caused them to grow in faith, 89.7% answered affirmatively and 10.3% responded negatively. It was therefore important to examine the way(s) this trip inspired faith and moral development.

Participants first talked about taking hold of their faith, or personalizing it on their trips. The "considering and clarifying" and then "realizing and committing", parallels the models of faith development outlined in the literature. One trip member described this process:

> It was like the coming of age, in a spiritual sense. The trip is when I graduated into a new phase in life and could start experiencing new things in my spirit and with God. Before I lacked certain concepts and qualities to do that, but after I began to develop them.

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Another said:

> My faith became more personal. It was no longer something I did because that is what I was being told was right. I started to understand that I had the choice to believe what I wanted to believe on my trip. The world was far more complex than I thought and there had to be an explanation for what I was experiencing and feeling. I realized that one doesn't require "religious conviction" to accomplish what we did, and I could "affect" the world in a positive way without holding onto tradition. This was an uncomfortable realization to make, as it forced me to re-evaluate how I wanted to live my life, and what labels I was willing to give myself.

Someone else said, "It {the trip} changed my attitude towards life and how I would set my goals for my future. It gave me a new perspective to live by, one where the true values in life were the ultimate goal." Another participant described the trip as "a key stepping-stone in my relationship with God". Finally, another summarized, "My faith grew slowly and steadily throughout this trip".

When examined, surveys revealed study participants indicated that this trip inspired and affected their faith in five ways. It helped them in their understanding of the character of God, helped them grow in their relationship with God, helped them experience faith in new ways, enabled them to practice spiritual habits and in caused them to feel personally changed by God.

4.9.1 Understanding God's Character

Trip participants described learning about God's character. One respondent wrote this about his trip, "I was challenged to consider who God is. I explored deeper God as the Father and what that meant in my life. I also was challenged on my expectations on how God speaks to me and miracles he can do". Others described coming to better understand who God was through the kindness of others, the faces of people and the beauty of his creation. "I stood on the beach at our debrief singing worship songs with my team around the fire as the stars came out. God sure does make beautiful things." One person said, "I recognize that God is in the big and small things now". Another said, "God is faithful. When we asked, He showed up". A third related, "I really experienced God's strength on the trip. I saw God work in so many ways. He really showed his faithfulness. When I would feel really tired, he would give me a boost of strength. He showed up and we had the time of our lives."

Some described developing an identity in relation to God. "I realized that I am strong in God, yet humble and weak. I know that I am loveable and that people do love me." Another said the greatest thing was "feeling loved by God even in my shambles". A number of participants felt that they had experienced God's love in new ways, along with his affirmation of whom they were. As one said, "That alone was quite freeing for someone who worked hard to achieve lots".

Experiencing God's faithfulness was a recurring theme. Learning how to better trust God was the most mentioned area of spiritual growth on the survey. Participants found him to be faithful and trustworthy on their trips.

4.9.1.1 Trust

Much of what participants described in terms of spiritual development resulted from encountering experiences they perceived to be very difficult or "bigger" than they could handle, causing them to turn to a higher power to ask for help. For some, it was in simple things, "I trusted in God because I was nervous about the food and the culture." For others, the trip was difficult and they had a sense of God coming alongside them. "I had to rely on God for my strength. There were many days when I knew the only reason I made it was because I had God on my side". Regularly finding themselves in challenging situations during their IS-L experience, participants indicated they felt the need to reach for help.

> The entire trip put me over the edge and out of my comfort zone. I was in an unfamiliar place with a group of unfamiliar people doing things like leading games and acting skits and sharing about my life. At home, I avoided doing any of these things whenever possible. So all that together was overwhelming. I would also like to add that this is the first time I experienced the courage that can come from trusting in God. When you are that overwhelmed, you are forced into a dependence on a God. He didn't let me down then and hasn't since. This is probably the single most significant aspect of my trip, learning that God was real and was in fact, active. Again, this is often difficult to grasp at home in such a safe environment.

They sensed that God helped them. "I learned God won't give me more than I can handle each day." Another said, "I learned that when I rely on God for strength my attitude changes." This built trust as they experienced a sense of God' presence and care. One participant said, "I learned that people disappoint – God doesn't". Another

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proclaimed, "I learned that I have nothing to fear as God was always with me." Another summarized:

> I have learned to put things in God's hands and not to worry about things. I learned to give all my fears to God and to trust him in everything. I see God everywhere. He is working everywhere. He worked through my life on this trip and is still teaching me. I have learned what it means to become a trusting servant.

There was a definite sense that God came through for participants. One participant acknowledged, "I learned that God never pushed me farther than I can handle (even if I feel he is) and I can do more than I give myself credit for". In a journal, another person professed, "I have more of a reliance on God and now even more than before. I also know that I will have to be visibly helping people to be content with my life." Another felt that God cared for her in her profound loneliness on the trip. Finally, one participant concluded, "I just have more trust for God and can depend on Him for my security and peace."

4.9.1.2 Experiencing Faith in New Ways through Answered Prayer

Many participants wrote about experiencing God in new ways and indicated that these experiences had shaped who they'd become. The theme that recurred the most was sensing God listening to them and answering their calls for help – or answering their prayers.

Several referred to answered prayer as something that strengthened their faith. "I saw God answer prayer in tangible ways." For some this was a new experience. One person told this story, "I became more aware of God's hand in our lives. We had a piece of luggage go missing and prayed it would come back. Just before we really needed it, it showed up at the orphanage." Another said, "When I was having a hard time sharing my story, a Bible verse just 'popped' out at me. I started to realize the 'little areas' where God is." Another felt her team had witnessed a miracle:

> We were packing gift bags for the kids in Ukraine. We had all the bags packed but as we continued to visit schools and hand out bags, we realized we were growing increasingly short of items. So as we continued to unpack and repack and "stretch" what we had, we discovered that we did not have enough stuff. We prayed. But I believe by the hand of God as we continued to pack and repack, we found we had enough stuff. We don't know where it came from, but we had exactly the right number.

Some had stories of personal prayers answered: "I found that praying for the people I didn't like helped me get over my dislike for them", said one. Another prayed on her trip to break the habit of smoking and "that was it, I haven't smoked since". A third said, "I learned that another girl saw Christ through me. I never have felt that God shines through me so that was really encouraging".

Participants also felt that they heard God's voice and God worked in them. "God has physically stretched my heart in the biggest, fastest way. I will never be the same again. I have been stretched and I have such love for people that I never used to have. God's heart has been shown to me". Another said, "I was encouraged that God can, will and does use me." Another said, "The trip played a role in maintaining my interest in serving God and provided a practical example of what it could look like". Of enduring impact, one person stated, "I now to this day trust God to work in people's life through me. That just comes from simple stories I have from that trip."

In terms of what they took away spiritually from their IS-L experience, one participant stated, "I learned to take God out of the box. He can work beyond our wildest imagination." Another reflected,

> I think I began to learn what was true spiritual growth and what was simply an emotional response episode. I think these two things are very different and often confused. An emotional reaction is not spiritual. Spiritual growth is where you learn something and apply it in a way that you never did before. Altar calls and similar emotional reactions to spiritual learnings are something that happens way too often in experiences.

Finally, one summed up his/her experience by saying: "If anything, I've just seen more of God on this trip".

4.9.2 Growing in Relationship with God

Survey respondents shared a number of ways they felt they grew in their relationship to God. They indicated that seeing faith in others, engaging with God, developing spiritual habits, feeling changed by God, gaining further perspective and believing they had grown spiritually and personally attributed to this perception.

4.9.2.1 Seeing faith in others

When discussing spiritual development, participants often spoke of growth occurring in the context of their team. Participants observed the faith of teammates and spurred each other on in their spiritual journeys. However, that sense of mentorship or inspiration was not limited to team members. Many were encouraged by the faith they saw in the nationals from various countries.

> Like many kids who grow up in Christian homes, I had a pretty bland relationship with God. I saw in Haiti how passionate people were about God, even in the midst of all that poverty and a lot of times tragedy. I realized I have the same things to be passionate and grateful for and how God is ready and waiting for me to take him seriously.

Another participant who travelled twice concurred:

> It encouraged me to see Ukrainian believers gathering together in fellowship and I loved seeing how the people in Haiti live on a daily basis and how they rely on God's influence in such a real way every day. This was an entirely new vision.

Another spoke admiringly of their leader. "Now there's a guy who trusts God. He is not afraid to do anything, anywhere, but he prays first. He knows God goes with him and so his fear goes away. That impressed me".

4.9.2.2 Engagement with God

Respondents felt that they connected with God on this trip and that he subsequently changed them. "I had a large view of God after this trip. A better love for him, more passion for him. I pray and worship wholeheartedly now. I can't explain how I've been changed." Others felt good about perceiving that they had been used by God to effect change in the lives of others. In fact, 81% of participants felt that God had used them on this trip, 16% remained neutral and 3% indicated that they did not feel used by God.

4.9.2.3 Developing Spiritual Habits

Most of the survey respondents felt that they spent more time with God than usual on their trip. Teams gathered and had meaningful discussions and times of prayer. "The most significant times on my trip were times my team spent in prayer and worship. It brought team unity and a closeness to God like never before for me". Another said, "I

became a lot closer to God through worship and intercession. He broke my heart for people".

Students are encouraged to draw away to be quiet, to listen to God and to journal during their trips. This forms part of the reflective component of the experience. Years later, one respondent said, "The most significant part of my trip was probably my quiet time with God. I've never really had a good habit of daily reading my Bible so having the chance to do it every day really showed me how significant it is and the great effect it can have on my day." Another said, "This was my first experience with daily Bible reading and my knowledge of the Bible grew significantly. I saw God in a more real way. This bought about the transition of making my faith my own choice and led to my baptism soon after I got home." Years later, many participants recalled turning to their Bible for encouragement during their trips.

4.9.2.4 Feeling Changed by God

On the survey, participants described many changes they perceive to have occurred in themselves through their IS-L trip on this survey. Many of these changes were spiritual in nature.

4.9.2.5 Gaining Perspective

Many respondents discussed perceived changes in their perspective. "Many problems people face {around the world} are not that their love handles are getting bigger, but what they are going to eat that day. We think our problems are so big, until we are met head on with the reality of our own extravagance", said one respondent. Another stated, "My perspective on life completely changed. I realized I live in a bubble of wealth and opportunity and the majority of the world lives life very differently. It helps to appreciate our blessings and be more generous in our giving".

Survey respondents talked about understanding more of God's perspective of the world after having completed an IS-L experience. "I was challenged on that trip to see things through the heart of God – The way HE sees things...others and myself, and was transformed through it to carry that thinking on after that experience". Said another, "God taught me that he values relationships very very very very much and many times he wants us to enjoy and develop relationships". Another respondent said, "God

developed more of a servant heart in me, gave me more of His heart for people and showed me how I fit into His kingdom".

Five participants quoted a specific verse from the Bible that they felt had shaped them and their response. The verse from Philippians 4:12 says, "I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want." For many there was a new sense of understanding and recognition of contentment in those they met that proved to be challenging. For others, the trip brought spiritual questions, which made participants wrestle for truth and perception:

> This trip added to my later perception that God's requirements for our life are a lot more simpler [sic] than we often expect them to be. I saw that he allowed things to happen that were outside of his will for us as humans. It saddened me for quite a while and I did not understand or accept this for a long time I questioned the justice of God.

Another summarized the spiritual element of his/her trip, "I think we all just got to see the world more like God does and now hopefully act more like he does".

4.9.2.6 Perceived Personal Growth

Most survey respondents believed that God was working in their lives during the trip. They saw the same God in Canada as in their destination, "God is with the people of South America as much as He is with us". "Everyone needs God – rich and poor". They felt that they learned to love more freely. They felt their response to others had changed. "The most significant thing I learned was to care for the poor", or "He showed me His heart for the others on my team and this allowed me to grow closer to them and to build a family unit". One said, "I learned to love a lot more. I've learned an inner love that I didn't have before. By loving the kids so much, I learned to love and appreciate my family and friends more". Another said, "I really learned what is meant to love people the way Jesus does". Similarly, another said, "I learned to serve with humility." Others perceived God to be changing them. "God really changed me on this trip. He was working on my heart". Someone felt greater peace in who she is as she journalled, "I am working so hard now to love the life God has given me, and be all He intended me to be".

One person said "He {God} made me bolder and less fearful." Another respondent commented, "I used to be very proud. I developed humility. I was confident enough in

God's strength to allow him to break me." Another said, "I have new compassion and understanding of a calling to people different than me." "He taught me to give up my rights and to go deeper with Him", said another.

One participant stated, "I have been more willing to get out of my comfort zone and do more things that I wouldn't normally do without worrying about it – not to worry about the little things and to let God take care of them. Also to take time to slow down to talk to people." Another summarized:

> My thinking was challenged. Thoughts about God and who he was, if and how he could speak to us, the fact that he would use us (young and inexperienced people) to help others in a different nation. My thoughts towards the people changed: it turns out they are really not that different from us. Sure there are cultural differences and such, however, deep down we are all longing for the same things as people. I personally grew a lot on that trip.

4.9.2.7   Determining their Response

Some participants also shared their response to their newfound knowledge and deeper relationship with God.

Some believed their faith required a commitment to "Serve one another", and commented, "I learned that serving God is not a chore, but fun".   Another said, "I felt a growing responsibility and ability to share the love of Jesus with people everywhere."

Others evaluated where they were spiritually. "I found that I wasn't where I thought I was spiritually", said one person. Some saw changes that they perceived needed to be made in their lives. Journalled one student, "I need to change my lifestyle a lot in order to live like I want to". Said another,

> I was {personally} convicted that I had been sleeping with my girlfriend prior to the trip. Knowing that this was going against God's call for my life and what I had wanted in my life, God still used me. Not only did he use me, he poured into me, built me up and showed me that broken people are who [sic] he uses. This means anyone who is willing.

Upon returning, another said, "Some of my friendship choices need some serious rethinking. God really showed that to me. I was with people from our school who are like who I want to be. I need to ditch a few people in my life and start hanging out with this crowd." Several years later when answering the survey, this same person indicated that as a result of this trip, she had made significant friendship decisions after her trip.

Another reiterated, "I basically changed all my friends after this trip from the popular group to the few that had actually proved they were just my friends on the trip".

However, not all felt that this trip was of long-term benefit. One person said with candour, "I did not grow at all as a result of this trip. I feel further from God then before I went on this trip". Two respondents felt that faith "got in the way" on the trip. One person indicated he would prefer to share on secular philanthropic teams. Another person commented, "I would say the spiritual changes were short-term and superficial". One explained their "neutral" stance on whether the trip had long-term impact:

> I think the trip was good as far as it was an amazing life experience. I don't know if it had any lasting effects. I always had questions for people's perceived spiritual levels on trips. They get caught up in the whole thing and it takes a life of its own, but has no long-term effect. Maybe I was just synical [sic] but I don't think I was too far off.

Others disputed this stance. In terms of on-going spiritual effects of these trips, one person commented, "The lasting change from this trip is that I try to invest in relationships and people daily". Another said, "I came away with a greater desire to know God and I have a strong desire to become firmly rooted in my theology so that I have a good basis for my beliefs. I have become more selective in what sort of media I subject myself to". Another stated, "I have realized that I cannot put restrictions on God. I have to let him use me in whatever way He chooses. My attitude toward service has changed". One participant summarized, "When God changes someone, it's forever!"

One participant mentioned that he/she continued to process the IS-L experience for some time. "My perspective on myself and about how God works was changed by reflecting back on the trip years later with more maturity". Another participant summarized the reality of her perceived spiritual development on her trip:

> I know I will never understand how this trip and all the things God is teaching me will eventually fit into His plan for my relationship and walk with Him. But all we can do right now is take all the memories and experiences and things God has impressed on our hearts and let God shape us and fit all of those things into our lives wherever He intended them to go.

4.10 Reflection as a Tool

Before I move onto a discussion of participant behaviour subsequent to their travels, I should visit the means by which some of the processing described in the previous

sections of this chapter occurred. Survey participants described what influenced them and how they were impacted. They also noted that their trips had raised "big questions" that caused them to consider what they could do about several problems and issues they had seen first-hand. Although describing new knowledge and skills acquired, at times students expressed frustration at not knowing what to do or how to change circumstances. As mentioned, some expressed feeling "very small" in light of what they perceived to be a huge societal problem. This could conceivably cause a sense of learned helplessness and a feeling of being entrapped in a situation that one is powerless to change. After intense experiences like the ones described by trip participants, information and thoughts need to be processed. What has not yet been examined in this chapter is the means by which that information entered their experience and then was processed to a level that was internalized and could subsequently be talked and written about.

One of the key tools in this process and consequently in S-L, is reflection. A number of authors have discussed the significance of reflection in S-L. Generally, journaling is widely regarded as an excellent means of processing what is seen, heard and experienced in life. MEI IS-L participants are encouraged to journal through their trip. 56.3% of survey respondents indicated that they personally journalled on their trips and 34.5% of them indicated that they were willing to share their writing. It appeared that many respondents were eager to interact regarding their experience as evidenced by the length and detail of their comments and by the fact that 69% of survey respondents also indicated a willingness to meet to talk about the IS-L experience. In addition to personal journals, some teams also shared corporate team journals in which they took turns writing their impressions. Although trip participants do often not embrace journaling, its significance was recognized years later by several participants. Advised one respondent, "I would tell anyone going to take a journal and to make sure they are writing what they are learning, so that they can remember it. I would tell them to take note of the things that God is doing, to look for Him".

The IS-L program at MEI also encourages teams to incorporate a daily debriefing with teams or "Team Time". Survey respondents mentioned the significance of this time repeatedly. Team time or structured reflection is critical. Teams have the opportunity to talk through issues, ask questions, reconceptualise problems and apply higher order or critical thinking skills. In theory, an adult is there to give perspective, re-frame and

challenge, as well as to empathize and comfort, along with the team member's peers. To some, this time was extremely meaningful: "Team time provided one of the safest and most welcoming environments I have ever felt. I was able to share and contribute and most importantly my contributions were accepted in a way I never had before".

It is through reflection that students acquire further knowledge and understanding, can question assumptions, address critical questions, and further develop problem-solving and critical thinking skills. It is through reflection that travellers develop inter-cultural competence and reconsider their worldviews. It is here that attitudes, values and beliefs are shaped.

As much as Service-Learning attempts to unite the academic with real life, unfortunately, the battle to de-compartmentalize learning and integrate school and the real world appears to be in its early stages. Only 46% of survey respondents indicated that their trip connected what they studied in school with real life outside of the school. Almost as many, 31% remained neutral and 23% disagreed.

4.11 Behavioural Indicators

Despite its many approaches and programs, the overall goal of character education is to develop good citizens. IS-L can be an important vehicle for developing socially responsible, actively involved citizens. It is the hope of such programs that once students experience another culture and are empowered to make a difference, participation and work for the good of others will continue. One study respondent observed, "We all, as young teens need a little culture shock to give us a vivid memory to hold onto". There is strong support for learning in a social context in the literature. Dewey (1959) maintained, "The mind is not individual but social, and learning is a by-product of social activities" (p. 78). Many participants have demonstrated that their IS-L trips, as a social activity, influenced their personal and cognitive development and spiritual growth. They also stated that seeing first-hand led them to reflect more on social issues. But did these changes and reflection translate into action? Did their IS-L experience impact behaviour? Kiely (2004), cautioned that, "By focussing on the short-term, positive nature of individual perspective transformation, prior research has indirectly fuelled a romanticized and an uncritical acceptance that the students' intent to act on perspective transformation will often lead to persistent engagement in social action" (p. 8). Measuring perceptual change is challenging and relies heavily on self-

reporting. Therefore, examining if and how the experience actually affected behaviour and action is of significance in determining the long-term impact of IS-L on participants.

4.11.1 Changes in Behaviour According to Participants

Respondents were asked about their behaviours in relation to civics and international connection, and the respondents shared the following information about their involvement with others:

• 66.6% of survey respondents indicated they have been active in helping address the needs of others since their IS-L trips, 13.8% had not and 19.6% refrained from commenting.

• 71.4% of respondents say they regularly invest in a friendship or relationship with someone from another culture, race or religion, 14.9% do not and 13.7% did not comment. 96.6% of respondents indicated that they have socialized with others of different races, religions or ethnic groups over the past twelve months.

• 71.5% indicated that when they see someone being treated poorly, they respond, 5.7% did not and 22.8% remained neutral.

When asked about keeping informed on a global level,

• 47.7% of respondents indicated they think it is important to keep up with current events, 50% found it somewhat important and 2.3% felt it was not important. In terms of actual behaviour, 70.1% indicated that they stay up to date on current social and political events, 13.8% do not and 16.1% remained neutral.

• 50.6% of respondents claim that they read an international story in a book, magazine or on the Internet at least once a week, 34.5% do not and 14.9% did not respond.

When asked about their financial contributions,

• 83.9% of respondents have supported international projects or missionaries financially since their trip. 9.2% have not and 6.9% did not comment.

• 77.2% of respondents have contributed to a humanitarian relief project in the past 12 months, 16% have not and 6.8% did not comment.

• 67.9% of respondents have contributed to a local community cause or project financially within the last 12 months. 21.8% have not and 10.3% remained neutral.

When asked about community involvement,

- 88.5% indicated they believed going to church or religious services regularly is important, 8% did not find it important and 3.5% did not comment.
- 94.3% of respondents feel it is important to vote in elections, with 5.7% disagreeing.

When asked how they thought they were changed by their IS-L trip, respondents had a variety of answers. Some felt they had gained understanding. Others listed character attributes such as responsibility, service, respect, humility, empathy, gratitude. One participant claimed, "To this day, I have a very soft spot for loving kids, helping people in need and sharing God's love with the world that started on my MEI trip."

Some described feeling empowered to make a difference and were led to serve again. Others talked about the value of work. Some said it led them to further travel and to travel differently, "When I travel now, I always make a point of going into the community where I'm staying – travelling with locals, eating with locals and just talking to them. I don't feel as alienated or different as some of my friends do who take comfort in all-inclusive resorts".

Many indicated a new appreciation for other cultures and a newfound compassion for others. Some felt that the trip had encouraged them to step in and get involved in friends' lives in a positive way. "I was challenged to drop my racist or prejudiced favouring thought towards people and just see them through Jesus and that is when I can truly be compassionate and share the love of Christ with those around me".

Others felt inspired to continue serving – in their community and abroad. "I have a bigger desire to serve people and am more sensitive to those people with needs around me. I see stuff I have never seen before in my own town." Another said, "I have found myself often reminding myself about how I should serve people here in Canada too, not just the Philippines. Even with little situations in my family. For example, no matter where I am, I try to eat everything at least once."

Another spoke of practicalities, "The way that I spend my time is totally different since that trip. I went from being a TV and game teenager to someone who was involved in bigger stuff. Still am." A number of respondents described how they came home and began to sponsor children through World Vision, MEI's 30/30 Sponsorship Program or Compassion Canada. "Before I left {the country where I served}, I knew I had to sponsor this kid. That kid is mine. I didn't have a lot of money, but I knew I could give up

$1/day." Several respondents also commented on their current immediate response to international disaster. Said one woman,

> I have kids and cannot necessarily go and help, but my husband and I give money every time there is a catastrophic disaster without much consideration – almost automatic. This is solely because of my trip to Thailand. Once you see stuff like this first-hand, you would be haunted not to help in some way.

However, the most noted change mentioned in the survey was that of becoming appreciative as a result of their IS-L adventure.

4.11.2 Gratitude

Participants returned with an appreciation for the abundance of economic and human resources in Canada. Said one, "I was reminded that God loves all people and that our wealth in Canada is a blessing that many people around the world do not have". Another said, "Canadians are not that thankful as a nation. We should be." Another survey respondent added, "I've been changed in that I now know what another part of the world is like. I have also been changed in that I saw what it is to be poor. I had never seen anything like that before. This has hopefully changed me so I'll be more grateful with everything I have". Another journalled,

> God has been teaching me so much this trip. One main thing is to be thankful. We have so much to be thankful for, yet I find myself complaining. Some of these kids have one set of clothes plus the ones on their back. Still, they give what little they have. It blows me away!

A survey respondent answered years after her trip:

> I believe that I thank God almost every day for the wonderful life I have and not have to live in horrible condition. I have a roof over my head, a good job, food and health. This trip led to an overall lifestyle of gratitude. My worldview was completely challenged. I guess the classic things when you first see another person's world that is so simple. Basically just how grateful I was for the family I had, the upbringing I was blessed with, all the "stuff" I have.

Appreciating simple things was mentioned, "I have such a greater appreciation for simple things such as showers. Our lifestyle here is so wasteful". Said another participant, "I have a heart for people who have nothing and I appreciate things way

more. I love just having my own space and my own personal time. I have so much and so often take it for granted.”

Participants grew to appreciate life in our country. “I appreciate the freedom of Canada, my parents and God”. Another said, “I had a new appreciation for my family and growing up in Canada {when I came back}.” Similarly, a respondent wrote, “I appreciate what we have in Canada a lot more and I need to be thankful for a family and friends who have the same morals as me. The rich opportunities we have were also acknowledged. “When I talked to one guy on the street I was struck that he really wanted to go somewhere with his life but was stuck. Here I am with every opportunity at my doorstep and I’m lazy and not really going for anything in particular.”

Participants also grew to appreciate others: “I had a BIG revelation on this trip. I appreciate each person now. I don’t judge people on the street and poor anymore. My mind is turned towards how can I help.” Another said, “This trip totally took away stereotypes I had been taught. Being different is not just okay, it’s cool”. Another concurred: “There is so much different in other countries, yet so much the same in people. They have so little and us so much and yet sometimes I wonder if they really know what’s important and we have little in that area”.

People groups came to be appreciated. “I’m looking for natives in our country because they are our history”, said one person. Another said, “I’ve never thought of the elderly people as friends and equals”. Another described her personal experience in learning from another culture:

> I came back to Canada a different person and stayed that way. I have never been hugged so much in my life. I had to learn tolerance for the sometimes-overbearing Africans but you see how they can just go right up to a stranger and welcome them in the warmest way. I need to do that and be friendlier with more at home with people who don’t look like me. There’s lots of diversity in my own backyard.

Again, years later, another respondent commented, “I’m more sensitive to those in need. I can’t walk past a street person anymore without feeling for them and wanting to talk to them.”

The importance of protecting human dignity was a recurring theme in the survey as participants reflected on orphanages, homes for the elderly and treatment of the handicapped. One Cambodia team member commented, “I don’t think there is anything

more worthwhile than sitting with someone who is lonely and dying, sponging their head and holding their hand. We all need someone and love". Participants also indicated recognition of how communities can exclude, judge and restrict. After visiting segregated schools for the disabled in Argentina, one team member wrote, "I'd like to meet the guy who made that decision. I could probably find a reason to point out how he is different and lock him in a building too. These are people who should be mixed up with us".

Summing up, two respondents had this to say about how the trip had changed them. The first said, "My attitude towards strangers has become one of more friendship". The second elaborated, "I have been given a new love for people, also to be more thankful and less judgmental – to look at the heart of people". A third summarized, "When you see what I saw, you can't go back to the person you were before you saw it. It's impossible".

4.12 Theme 6: Struggling to Re-Enter

Trip participants had a great deal to say about coming back to Canada. Aside from jetlag and some long-lasting health concerns thanks to international parasites, students commented on simple things like the rigidness of time and routine back home and the hassle of wearing seatbelts! But on a more serious note, participants reflected, "It was challenging to see how other people live in other parts of the world, to then reconcile that back to our faith and our way of life in Canada". Struggling to reconcile and reintegrate is something that Kiely (2004) refers to as the chameleon complex – the challenges and struggles students experience upon re-entry into their culture and return to their home.

One person indicated, "I wanted to maintain the level of spirituality on the trip. It feels like your whole world changes while you are away, but when you get back you realize that nothing has changed, it's very difficult to keep that mind-set with you". Another concurred, saying her biggest struggle upon returning was, "learning how to live a life of service and acting out my faith in North American culture where the focus is not on serving others and on God 100% of the time".

Someone else remembered, "It was difficult to return home and I felt that I need better debriefing. I think I was in culture shock or something and just zoned out for while". Another participant suggested, "It would have been great if there was any way to do

more personal follow-up, maybe even a couple of sessions with each student involved to debrief and process".

Part of the adjustment of returning from IS-L trips is getting back into routine and several participants commented on the abrupt ending of the service experience. "We got to together twice after our trip. I needed more contact and more time to talk about it. I needed encouragement to keep living what I learned". Some also found it a challenge to continue a life of service by finding local service opportunities. "The challenge was coming home to a life of mediocracy [sic]. I could not fathom a regular life at the time. I wanted to do more for people, but could not find good opportunities to do so".

4.12.1 Materialism

Returning to affluence after seeing such poverty can be a difficult transition. As one interviewee commented, "These trips clarify what you 'need' versus what you 'want'". But integrating that learning into a wealthier more comfortable environment is challenging. One person summarized, "Going back to my nice, upper-middle class life and trying to remember how to help and love people around me wasn't easy". Regarding finances, another said, "My perspective on the pursuits of life changed. I no longer wanted to pursue money simply to give me everything I thought I desired. My perspective of how the world worked, and how the world was connected became clearer and so did the non-importance of money".

Reflecting back on her re-entry experience, one person described,

> When I got home, I had a difficult time accepting how much I was blessed with in comparison with the people and children. It was very difficult for me not to get rid of all of my worldly possessions. A wise person helped me to understand that where I had been born and the good situation that I was place in was a blessing that puts me in a better position to help others.

Another shared a similar story, "Coming home to everything I had was hard. I wanted to sell everything and give the money away, but that was not realistic as I need to live as well." Another said, "I found it hard to justify the way I spend my money and time when there are such great needs internationally." A parent also commented that both of her kids "questioned their excesses and abundance and why we needed or had it", and "showed an extraordinary appreciation for Canada and home", not only when they arrived home but as life continued. When asked whether they felt that their trip had

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caused them to view material possessions differently, 84% of respondents agreed, 11% were neutral and 5% disagreed. Interestingly, 58.6% of respondents felt that being well off financially was somewhat important, 37.9% rated wealth as not important and 3.5% of respondents were unsure. A shift in how one views material goods was a commonly noted struggle upon return:

> I resented the richness of our culture...filled with so many wealthy families that were so ungrateful and selfish with all they had. It frustrated me that people with so much held onto everything and people with nothing gave as much as they could. It opened my eyes more to the fact that I was not who I wanted to be as a person, but I also didn't know how to live the kind of life I wanted to in the North American culture.

Another shared similar thoughts when he said how frustrated he was with "how caught up everyone was in materialism. People around me had so much, yet they still complained and took for granted all that they had. Classmates, people in our community. It is still very difficult to watch." One student said, "The greatest challenge on the return was coming to a place that seems oblivious to the needs of others, and consumed by self-indulgence". Another commented on the world in her words, "sweeping her away".

> My convictions about how I lived my own life were definitely challenged on this trip. What was important to me at home was challenged, but it took many years to actually get me to conscientiously [sic] change them. I continued on in my skewed values for too long. My greatest challenge was staying focused on what was important to me. Seeing as I was trying immediately to be accepted at a modelling agency, I focused all my attention on losing weight and getting glory and attention for myself. I pursued that for quite a while, to no benefit to me or anybody else. It took a few years to get focused again on God and his priorities in the world.

Another was frustrated with "seeing the obsession for material possessions. It's hard not to get caught up in that when everyone around you is buying buying buying". Said one participant about the impact of the trip towards his financial aspirations, "I originally thought and was planning my education to give me money, lots of money to spend to have a 'good' life. This trip changed my attitude toward wealth and happiness". Another described his struggle as a recurring question of "whether I want to continue to pursue the capitalistic vision of success and become financially successful – what I want to do with my time". Others talked about feeling the need to give consistently to third world development or to those in need in their community. 49% of participants indicated that

they have increased their financial giving because they went on this trip, 24% remained neutral, 25% did not and 2% chose not to comment.

A respondent who travelled to Costa Rica wrote, "I came home different. Wanting to do something with my life and give back instead of just making money and living comfortably". Another person likewise described the effect of having served overseas, "I would most likely be caught up in the pursuit of "the American Dream" if I did not go on an S-L trip. I now see need all around me and respond."

4.12.2 Separation from Team

Another difficult aspect to re-entry for most participants was the disintegration of their team. Undoubtedly, for some it was a relief, but many expressed difficulty in going from "an intense time of togetherness" to managing life on their own again. Even teams with good intentions of reuniting regularly seemed to fail. Of all the teams that went out and were represented on the survey, only one managed to continue meeting with any regularity after they travelled. Many teams did not meet at all, or met only once after they returned. "Team dynamics drastically changed once we returned. It was hard to go from everyone trying to help each other out, to living together without caring at all for each other", said one respondent.

4.12.3 Sharing the Story

Several respondents commented on the loneliness they felt when people did not share their passion and enthusiasm or even appear interested in the stories they were so eager to share when they returned home. "I had an experience that only a handful of people really understand". Another lamented, "I wanted to share stories with those closest to me but they were not able to engage on a deep level". A male respondent said, "Trying to share my experience with my friends and family was frustrating. I wanted them to know how I felt, what I saw etc. but had a hard time communicating it. Pictures were great, but the smells, sights, accents, that was hard." Two students who were disappointed with their IS-L experience also remarked on the difficulty they had in talking about their experience. One commented, "I felt like I wasn't satisfied with the trip and didn't have much of substance to tell people who asked about it when I got home".

4.12.4 Continuing to Develop Spiritually

Participants who felt they had experienced spiritual growth and change struggled to keep it continuing upon re-entry. "I became so passionate about serving and about the Lord when I was there. Coming back, it was almost depressing how that passion quickly faded into my normal routine." Upon arriving home, another said, "I want to spend a lot of time with God to deepen my relationship with him, but could never seem to fit it in". From the stories told, it seemed that participants came back with goals yet many feared "falling back into old patterns".

Said one candidly, "It's always easier to 'be a Christian' on a trip than it is to be at home". Another talked of it being "hard to maintain the level of spirituality on the trip. It feels like your whole world changes while you are away, but when you get back you realize that nothing has changed, it's very difficult to keep that mind-set with you."

Literature shows that successful reintegration into home life is complex after being culturally displaced, even for short periods of time. Participants in this study indicated that the pressures of western materialism, separation from the team and difficulty sharing the story are accompanied by a fear of fading impact, questions of how to continue service and strengthen any changes made, and a desire for increased support and accountability. This can make an often-anticipated homecoming difficult.

4.13 Theme 7: Inspiring Further Involvement

Alexis de Tocqueville first recorded community service in 1830. He referred to developing the propensity to serve as developing "habits of the heart" that countered the individualism of society (Bellah et al, 1985). Taylor (1991) calls this individualism a "malaise of modernity", reflecting that it causes us to "become less concerned with others and our lives are flattened, narrowed and poorer in meaning" (p. 4). Service is one means of countering that individualism.

Survey respondents were asked about the impact of their IS-L trip on their thinking about subsequent service and then their actual subsequent serving. 80% of participants felt that this trip made them feel responsible to participate in more service work, 15% were neutral and 5% disagreed. 87% of survey respondents felt that their trip increased their understanding for the need for international service work. When asked about the impact of this trip on their commitment to international involvement, 70.1% said it strengthened

it, 28.8% said that it had no significant impact and 1.1% said that it weakened it. 74.1% of participants said that their MEI IS-L trip played a role in their serving again, and 70% indicated that they had volunteered time in service when they got home. Said one participant:

> I was a fairly well travelled 17 year old but not in the context of the trip I went on. My view of the world broadened. It put me in the reality of people who live obviously difficult lives and are in need of hope. Eventually that led me to recognize the same need for hope everywhere, even here at home. I may not have {realized this} had I never gone.

"I would never have had the desire to serve again in another area of the world had I not had this experience. It is not the same as experiencing places from a cruise ship", said another. One traveller said, "I was challenged to consider what I was going to do with my life to make it count and future plans". Another participant summarized, "This trip opened my eyes to the need to step beyond myself and serve on the levels of family, my community, my city, my nation and the world in which we live". Another concluded, "It was an inspiring experience and I have since been willing to go anywhere in the world because of it".

Survey participants reflected a sense of empowerment and the belief that they could affect change. They indicated they believed they could become active in pursuing issues they personally felt to be important. Several suggested that aspirations born on their trip were "toned down" as they returned to life in Canada. One person captured these sentiments by saying, "Helping people has stayed with me. I have toned down this dream to make it fit in the bounds of realism. I naively thought I would change the world. Now I want to change a town or a village."

For some participants, the desire to affect change resulted in immediate action. One student immediately sponsored a child in Costa Rica through World Vision when he returned from his trip to that country. A second respondent said, "I met a girl at an orphanage who ended up becoming my sponsor child and I continued to help her financially for several years after that". Another commented more generally on his growing desire to serve, "I feel that every single time in life that we choose to serve people, our desire to serve increases. Therefore serving in these trips, all of our hearts grew – for people and for serving".

For some, serving was a continuation of behaviour that was in place: "I was already serving before and this was just one more step in the learning process for me" or "The trip played a role, just not a significant impact. It was not the first time I wanted to go out and do something. This was an outlet for something I had done and continued to want to do".

There appears to be enduring effects from IS-L. 98.9% of participants indicated they believed all adults should contribute to their communities, 83.9% indicated that they have volunteered to help people in need since their MEI trip, and 58.6% indicated that they are currently involved in promoting a social justice-like cause. These causes include eradicating child-trafficking, finding employment for land mine accident survivors in Cambodia, providing mother/child healthcare in the developing world, educating slum and village children in India, ending poverty in Uganda, supporting children and supporting foreign missionaries, supporting goat projects in Haiti, assisting new immigrants, eradicating Thai prostitution, helping oppressed women internationally, helping people overcome addictions and working to eradicate homelessness.

For some, their trip has had a stronger impact on personal decisions. One respondent said, "My trip gave me a hunger to do more. It definitely impacted the fact that I am certain I will adopt some day. There are so many children in the world who need parents. How dare I choose to leave them without love?" Another program graduate is currently in the process of adopting a child from overseas and stated, "We are adopting a child from overseas because of this trip".

For others, the change appeared to have been more cognitive in nature:

> The MEI service trip allowed me to view another cultural situation and have compassion on the people there. The most significant change was internal. For example, I turned from discrimination (mental) against the native cultures in our own Canada to having a degree of respect for their culture and circumstance. I feel guilty as part of Western Society as having exploited people groups who don't engage in our style of culture. However, the change is only in my ideology and does not affect my daily routine.

4.13.1 Further International Involvement

In an interview, one participant said,

> This trip began my search for more purpose beyond comfort and a 'good life'. That search has led me to a number of other outreach trips as well

as more to come in the future. It has also provided motivation for my career choice (I hope to continue my education to help in 3rd world development). As you can imagine, that search for purpose still continues, but the act of starting it was an important one. Furthermore, I believe my trip started me searching for that in the right direction, with God at the forefront.

Upon returning from their trips, there was a measurable and undeniable desire to continue serving and to go on another trip. Surveyed five to ten years later, it appears that many of those students followed through. Upon her return, a girl journalled, "I think I have much more than a servant's heart and I could totally see myself being a missionary. I just want to serve people and help them. My life is much more other centred". She later went on to serve internationally again. Several others have also travelled internationally since their MEI trips. One participant recounted, "I returned to Thailand after I graduated to work with the same family we were working with when I went with MEI. I have also participated in similar projects around the world since going with MEI." Another said, "It was my first trip and since then there have been more". One member of one of MEI's Thailand teams returned twice to Thailand to serve after graduating. A study participant who travelled to the Philippines while at MEI has since returned to Asia four times and has most recently served in New Delhi, India for seven months. Another described returning to Costa Rica immediately after graduation to work with the same organization with whom MEI collaborates. Of these trips, one participant said, "It was a good experience and that is why I continue and try to go on them". Still another said, "Unforgettable. Would love to go back. Something about Africa changes you". One woman who has returned thirteen times to Haiti (twice long-term) and has now married a Haitian summarized, "Really this trip set my life on a path of more and more connections with Haiti. Really, it was a starting point for a life of service in Haiti".

When asked if they would consider serving internationally again, 93.1% of respondents said they would. 71.3% of respondents said they would consider one day moving to another country to serve in a more full-time capacity. One participant stated,

> I have always felt most alive and closest to God on all the international trips I have done. Doing them scares the heck out of me because I now know how much it will stretch and challenge me and generally make me uncomfortable, Yet, I am still always drawn back to them.

Several indicated that they are planning to move to a foreign country after finishing their education and nursing degrees. Others indicated that they would like to serve overseas,

but feel inhibited for financial reasons or worry about safety and health care in other countries. 64.3% of survey respondents indicated that they have again travelled to another country to serve for some amount of time, 24.1% have not and 11.6% did not comment.

Those responses were disaggregated. Any student who indicated they he/she did more than one MEI trip responded in a positive manner to future service opportunities. One wonders whether they had a propensity to serve already, or whether repeated MEI trip participants are more likely to engage in future full-time service. Whether there is a correlation between the number of trips and future engagement in full-time service may be an area for further consideration.

Participants also talked about financial stewardship as they considered further IS-L trips. "I am always open to going on another Service-Learning trip, but am also aware that sometimes sending money is of the most help". Another said, "I don't think that going on international missions frequently is necessarily the best use of the money it costs, but I wouldn't say that I will never go again."

Two students indicated they would prefer to go on non-faith based trips. One said, "I would consider going on a trip to do non-religious affiliated help, such as medical help or educational help". Another said, "If I did go again, I would go on a non-religion promoting trip. I would prefer to serve without pushing any religion". This student was on a team that did door-to door evangelism. Participants on that team had a very negative view of that trip as a whole, feeling that it was unrealistic to share your faith in a different language through short encounters at the door.

For some, international service has consumed a significant part of their young adult years. A recently married program participant commented: "I just got married; my passion for overseas work took precedence and consumed my energy". One participant commented on his subsequent trip to India: "In a nut shell, this trip expanded upon everything the MEI trip impacted in me and in a huge way. I gained incredible things about God, myself, serving, my team, my direction in life, my skills and abilities etc." The participant who completed two separate teaching assignments in Haiti subsequent to her trip in 1995 commented, "The trip was a starting point. In 2000, MCC {The Mennonite Central Committee} looked at my experience in Haiti and offered a position to me in Haiti because of my prior experience with an MEI trip". Another participant summarized, "My trip made me excited about serving on the international scene. I became more

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passionate about dedicating my life to the service of others. I have a heart for missions. That trip started that fire burning and it hasn't gone away".

4.13.2 Career Implications

In several places on the survey, respondents mentioned that their IS-L trip made them consider what they would do in the future. One participant said, "I graduated a few months after going to Haiti with MEI and as a result of the trip decided to attend Bible College and focus on missions and counseling. I guess the question of where I was going in life emerged on this trip." One participant spoke of change in his life:

> It {the trip} was a building block that would shape my life much later in life, perhaps slowly over time. This experience has never left me and my perspective has been not to be in such a hurry to get things done, but enjoy the people that are around me, as they are in need of the same things that I am in need of, and they are just as important as I am. I am no more important than they are. Also the fact that I could have been born there and not in my own family…

One respondent said, "I really did change, and felt the trip was a big turning point in my vocation, spiritual convictions and goal of development among third world countries". Another said, "I would argue that one of the reasons why I have been successful in my life now is because I took the time to experience what life was outside of my high school life by going on this trip". A number of students who participated in IS-L during high school have demonstrated continued pursuit of international and intercultural studies and professions. One student graduated with a Diploma in International Studies, another with a Bachelor of Arts in International Studies and a third with a Diploma in Intercultural studies. One graduate earned his Bachelors and Masters in Political Science and spent some time working with UN Habitat. One respondent has recently been accredited and approved as an International Worker with a Christian denomination and is awaiting departure to serve overseas with her family. One is now working as a teacher at MEI and has lead three IS-L trips, another is a teacher at an International school in Thailand, and yet another is a local youth pastor who now takes youth on IS-L trips himself. One student who travelled to Argentina has recently been appointed Director of Local Outreach at a nearby church, with the responsibility of overseeing a church's service within Abbotsford. Twelve graduates in this study are working full-time for international missions agencies. Others clearly have a penchant for international involvement. One

student commented: "Since graduation from MEI, I have made six international trips."
He went on to describe three that were IS-L focussed:

> I was invited as a participant to an international co-op conference in Manchester, England focused on third world development and poverty reduction initiatives. I went on a month long trip to Kenya with Trinity Western University for education on a third world urbanization and cross-cultural communications in 2006. My specific project for this trip was establishing a micro-financing fund to be used for local widowed women in Muhanda village. Thirdly, I had the privilege of being part of a team of business students from TWU who went to Khon Kaen, Thailand to work with trade-school students to establish a micro-financing fund to further aid in their skill development and assist in breaking the poverty cycle.

Another described her commitment to international work:

> After graduation, I completed a 6 month YWAM DTS, following that I spent a year on Mercy Ships (hospital ship) where I spent 7 months in Europe and 5 months in Africa volunteering in the kitchen, dental team, hospital sterilization and post-traumatic stress program in local African schools. After that I spent 2 years in Bible College in Abbotsford and then I travelled to Thailand where I spent 3 years (returning home each summer for 6-8 weeks). The first year was spent volunteering with YWAM working with women who wanted to get off the streets and leave prostitution. We would offer job training, counselling and nursery services for their children (all for free). Following that, I spent a year at an International Bible College and then was on staff in their media department for the last year, which took me to several other nations in Asia. I met my husband in Thailand and we returned to Canada in 2007 to get married. We believe we are called to be involved {with service again} in the future in some capacity, however right now we feel we feel it is a time to get trained, equipped and set our foundations strong. Thus, I am completing a degree in Education at this time.

Another interviewee commented:

> The MEI trip was in many ways a foundation that my later experiences have built upon. As I've continued in service, I've referenced back to experiences that I had on MEI trips. Things I've referenced are what to expect in other countries, how to transition in and out of other cultures, what to expect in international travel, how to be gracious with food and hospitality from poor people.

One participant concluded, "It has been a change that has lasted. Half my time since graduating from high school has been spent overseas. I am now completing a degree in education which will open doors for me to be involved with young people locally and abroad for years to come."

As Table 4.2 illustrates, several study participants indicated (in varying detail) that they have invested a significant amount of time (more than a month) in intercultural service overseas. Many indicated that their interest in overseas service took root during their MEI trip.

Table 4.2   Further Long-Term IS-L Work described by participants – Work that lasted over a month in duration

Country	Organization	Duration
Kenya	TWU – Third World Urbanization and Cross-Cultural Communications	1 month
Uganda	Mennonite Brethren Mission and Service International (MBMSI) – DMI Trip	1 month
Uganda and Kenya	Youth with a Mission (YWAM)	3 months
South American Aid Work	Undeclared	6 months
Israel	Mennonite Brethren Mission and Service International (MBMSI) – Trek Program	3 months
Australia and Indonesia	Youth with a Mission (YWAM)	3 months
Cambodia and Thailand	Victory Church	2 months
Kenya	Youth with a Mission (YWAM)	2 months
South America	Youth with a Mission (YWAM)	3 months
Uganda	Mennonite Brethren Mission and Service International (MBMSI)	3 months
Tanzania	Development International	6 months
Philippines	Youth with a Mission (YWAM)	3 months
	SFU International Education Program	6 months
India (x2)	(MBMSI)	3 months
	Adventures in Mission	3 months

Country	Organization	Duration
Dominican Republic	Adventures in Mission	1 month
Mexico	Undeclared	1 month
All over travelling with YWAM Australia	Youth with a Mission (YWAM)	3 years
Spain	Youth with a Mission (YWAM)	2 months
Jordan	TREK Program	7 months
Thailand (x3)	Project Life - Pattaya	1 month
Israel and Egypt	Undeclared	5 weeks
Liberia	Mercy Ships	8 months
Argentina	Youth with a Mission (YWAM)	3 months
Moscow	Youth with a Mission (YWAM)	3 months
Tibet	TEAM Serve	3 months
Costa Rica	Pura Vida	3 months
Various places overseas	Youth with a Mission (YWAM)	8 mos.
Guinea-Bissau	WEC International	9 months
Haiti	MCC – SALT Program (Desarmes) American University of the Caribbean	2 years
Australia	Youth with a Mission (YWAM) – Create Emerge media team	4 years

Country	Organization	Duration
Australia	Youth with a Mission (YWAM)	10 years
Philippines	Ruel Foundation	2 years
Europe and Africa	Mercy Ships	1 year
Brazil	Working in an orphanage	1 year
South East Asia	Human Rights Advocacy	1 year
Thailand	Eastern Mennonite Missions	1 year
Thailand	YWAM, International Bible College	3 years
Botswana	Kings Foundation	5 years

One participant journalled her willingness and new-found knowledge in her last entry of the trip, "I hope I am able to go another trip and enjoy it as much as I did on this trip. I would do it all over again if I have the chance. But I would definitely wear sunscreen because my burn doesn't feel good, if I ever do this again!" In looking back, someone wrote, "Before leaving on that trip, I didn't know what God wanted to do with my life, but now he put my heart into helping other in different countries and I know that's what I have to do!" Another said, "I never would have had ideas about working in an orphanage or even opening one or even adopting kids, but now I want to do whatever I can for all these homeless kids in the world". Other reflections included, "Seeing myself in a different culture was very significant. I knew I want to be a missionary for sure. I love kids", and, "I definitely want to serve more in other countries. They need us". One person wrote, "My MEI trip was the tipping point that has me writing this from South East Asia. I live here, speak Vietnamese and work on development projects...It's really changed my life".

Although not all participants indicate that this trip led them to continue serving internationally, many talked about how it had planted ideas related to career and other

future choices. One stated, "I am not travelling internationally, but it raised a common thread that I have sought to capture in career roles – try to empathize and provide practical care for those in need". Another participant said, "Going on this trip encouraged me to go to school to get my nursing degree to further help others. You can't measure the benefits". Another said, "It was a positive experience that challenged me. Informed key decisions made in my life including areas to focus on in my career. It continues to inform decision I will make in future about service trips. This trip gave me the desire to do it again". Another student said, "I will now visit other countries without hesitation".

4.13.3 Further Local Community Service

Survey respondents showed a clear desire to improve society - 95.9% indicated that improving society is important, 1.9% disagreed and 2.2% did not respond. As international involvement had already been probed, the survey then asked participants whether local community involvement is important. 98.8% of survey respondents it was, while 1.2% disagreed. When asked if they perform volunteer work in the community, 78.2% of respondents declared they do and 80.5% feel they have assumed a leadership role in their community. One respondent commented on the transfer between what he learned abroad and life at home. "Being in another culture was very significant to me. It showed me that Canada is not ideal and while there are issues in other countries, there is work to be done in Canada. We need to learn from other cultures. There is much more to life than appearances and stressful frantic business."

When asked if they had been involved in any local humanitarian, philanthropic/service-related activities since graduating, 60.9% responded affirmatively. One respondent said, "This trip showed me again that things are needing to be done in our own back yard before sending people out to the rest of the world." Local involvement by study participants included:

- Children's programs at churches
- Downtown Eastside volunteer work
- Youth outreach in community
- Abbotsford Right to Life
- BC Cancer Agency
- Youth prison

- Big Brothers
- Working with disabled
- Union Gospel Mission food kitchen
- MCC Warehouse
- Food Bank
- Addiction rehab work/homes
- Volunteer doula work
- Fraser Valley Crisis Pregnancy Centre
- Volunteer with new immigrants
- Salvation Army, work with the homeless
- School breakfast programs
- Youth programs at church and in community
- Summer camp counsellors
- University Campus Ministries
- Disabled Sailing Association
- Children's Hospice
- Hospital Extended Care Units
- Prison Ministry with M2W2
- Nightshift Ministries – street work
- Docent at the Vancouver Art Gallery
- On-line mentorships

Respondents also mentioned on-going participation in special events, such as participating in the local Run for Water, preparing shoebox gifts for Operation Christmas Child and Adopt-a-Family at Christmas time. One respondent candidly commented, "My trip inspired me to do something worthwhile with my life". Yet, finding an area in which to invest upon their return has not seemed easy for participants. Another, who travelled more recently, candidly stated, "I have had a hard time combining my 'missions' life' with my 'home life' so far."

This chapter presented demographics and characteristics of the study participants. Participant journals, surveys and interview results were analysed and themes emerged. Participants consistently reflected the outcomes that Serow (1997) asserted emerge from S-L: competence, participation, understanding and relationships. Participant responses suggested their MEI IS-L experience was comprised, to varying degrees, of

each of the components required for S-L, delineated by The Commission on National and Community Service (1993):

> The need for active participation, thoughtful organization, the meeting of actual community needs, collaboration between school and community, integration with the students' academic curriculum, structured time for reflection, opportunities to use newly acquired skills in real-life situations, extension of learning beyond the classroom and fostering a sense of care for others (as cited by Kraft in Kenny et al., 2002).

I will now analyse these findings as we move to a final discussion of conclusions, implications and recommendations.

5: CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction and Questions Re-visited

I entered this study convinced of the immediate impact of IS-L trips, but somewhat unaware of **how** students felt they were impacted by them. Through reading their journals and post-trip evaluation forms and as I listened to their stories, I was able to gain further understanding. Their parents further corroborated the points of view they expressed. Parent support for the IS-L program has anecdotally appeared to be enthusiastic; however, MEI has a very involved and at times very critical parent community, so their positive responses to this program proved to be particularly affirming. Collectively, parents also identified and reiterated each of the themes that emerged from the study: enlarging worldview, causing cognitive changes, invoking self-discovery, developing a sense of otherness, inspiring faith development, struggling to re-enter and inspiring further involvement as outcomes that they saw in their children as a result of their IS-L experience at MEI School.

At the outset of this study, I was unsure of whether this program had any long-term enduring influence. Although difficult to measure in actuality, this study focussed on participant perceptions in these areas. The responses and behaviours of participants in this study seem to reflect and be consistent with developmental models, indicating change and growth. A careful and deep examination of participant experience revealed areas of personal, social, cognitive, and faith development for many. This subsequently led to moral development and moral behaviour that has continued years after the trips.

It was interesting to gain insight into an IS-L experience through the eyes of those who were serving and to understand how they made meaning of their trip as they shared reflections. As a participant-researcher, I was able to probe deeply into these experiences. For the purpose of this study, I was as intentional as possible about setting aside my perspective as a leader in order to focus on being a researcher. There were times when I wanted to challenge participant perspectives, to debate or to counter how

they viewed a particular event, but I refrained and remained true to depicting their viewpoints. Thus, I believe I have captured their voices. This study is truly their story.

I wondered whether participants, particularly those who travelled with me, would be honest or rather seek to respond in a way that would please me. I hoped to facilitate free expression by allowing them to complete the survey anonymously, should they choose. Some did. As a result, I believe I got very honest comments peppered with some very intense expression. I am also aware that those who felt strongly – either positively or negatively about their IS-L experience were probably the most likely to respond to my invitation to participate in this study. I also realize that some alumni serving overseas are difficult to contact and are not reflected in this survey.

Do these trips transform students? As one student said upon returning, "I don't really think I have been changed. I loved this trip. It was amazing and I did learn but not everyone will be dramatically changed. I actually started out a pretty good person." In reading responses and listening to stories, I came to understand that perhaps it is not a case of whether MEI's IS-L program did or did not have an impact. Rather, I would like to propose a continuum of impact. For some, IS-L provides a defining new exposure to service that was revolutionary and life-changing. For others, it may have involved a smaller shift in thinking; for some it simply provided encouragement to continue on the path they were already walking.

The mission of an IS-L program is to affect change in participants as well as those on the receiving end of these trips. As indicated in my introductory chapter, this study sought to explore IS-L as a potential tool to affect this change and to develop global citizens. In this study, I sought to address the following nine research questions:

1. What is the perceived influence of an International Service-Learning program on the long-term moral development and behaviour of its participants?
2. How do students perceive they were changed or influenced positively or negatively on these trips?
3. Do students perceive their Service-Learning experience to have impacted their personal development (self-esteem, self-efficacy and empathy towards others)?
4. Does Service-Learning build confidence in personal effectiveness and a sense of self-efficacy?
5. Do these perceived changes translate into action or changed behaviour?

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6. What kinds of humanitarian/philanthropic/service-related involvements have high-school service learners continued to seek?

7. Does International Service-Learning in high school influence students' sense of citizenship, social responsibility and global engagement later in life?

8. Do Service-Learning programs contribute to and achieve the goals of schooling?

9. What are the implications of this study for future International Service-Learning initiatives?

Throughout this chapter, I will summarize study results; review the three tenets that constitute moral development and comment on each of the themes that emerged in this study.

## 5.2 Question One: Perceived Influence on Moral Development and Behavior of Participants

Overall, respondents indicated that their IS-L experiences provided threshold experiences that ignited awareness of their place in the world and their personal responsibilities and commitments. This subsequently fostered reflective conditions for moral development that then resulted in moral action.

Key findings in this study included 85.1% of participants feeling that IS-L had a positive effect on their moral development and 72.4% of participants indicating that their high school IS-L experience played a role in them serving again. The parents of program participants concurred – 92% of parents surveyed felt that the high school trip had a significant and positive long-term impact on their children. Although there were exceptions, it became evident that most participants perceived these trips to have had an impact on their moral development and could then provide several behavioral indicators demonstrating how the trip had influenced their subsequent behaviour.

5.3 Question Two: How Participants Perceived they were Changed or Influenced Positively or Negatively

Participants indicated they perceived many changes in their lives that they attributed to their IS-L experience. They demonstrated how this occurred through situating oneself, practicing moral action and through reflection. These constructs constitute the three tenets of the triadic model that I presented in Chapter 1 (See Figure 5.1).

Figure 5.1 Reconceptualization of Study
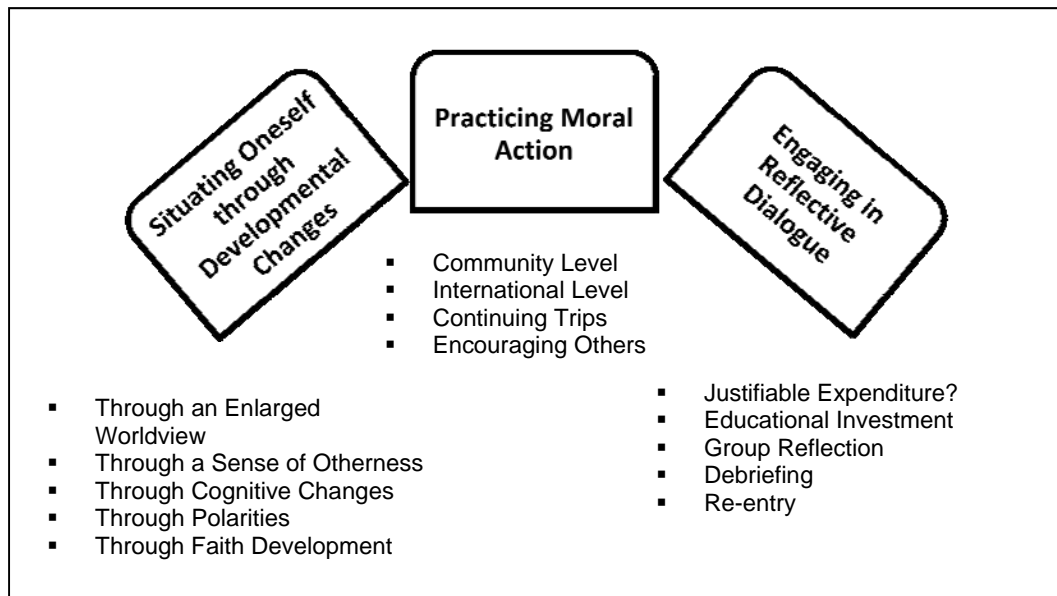
I will begin by discussing how participants situated themselves through developmental changes. This revealed how they perceived themselves to be changed both positively and negatively.

5.4 Questions Three and Four: Perceived Impact of IS-L experience on Personal Development and Self-Efficacy - Tenet One of the Triadic Framework: Situating Oneself Through Developmental Changes

Participants shared several experiences that contributed to self-awareness and to Kegan's (1982) concept of self-authorship. This occurred through cognitive, affective and relational means and was enacted in enlarging worldviews, developing a sense of otherness and through developmental and cognitive changes, addressing polarities and faith development.

5.4.1.1 Through an Enlarged Worldview

As Theme 1 indicated, survey responses demonstrated a strong sense of these trips having enlarged the world of students and having contributed to an emerging globalized worldview. This caused students to situate themselves in the following way. "I feel less sheltered than those who have not been outside of Canada," said one student. Another

said, "Most kids in North America are ignorant of the rest of the world. When they watch the devastation on TV, they are desensitized to it. When they see, smell and touch suffering for the first time, it will change their lives forever. It was forever hard to live a [sic] entirely self-centred life following this experience". Another said:

> It is important because we need a World perspective which will humble us and cause us to care a lot more about the peoples' needs around us. It helps us to get us out of our own little worlds and self-centeredness and makes us aware of what our fellow man is experiencing. We are called to love our neighbour as our self. Especially with our global economy and networking, people across the world are literally our neighbour and we need to love them in practical ways that meet their needs and help their physical, mental and spiritual suffering.

In this study, 85% of survey respondents indicated that their IS-L trip helped them identify with being part of a bigger community, 3.5% did not feel it enlarged their perspective in this way and 11.5% remained neutral on the matter. "We live in a global village and we are all interconnected", said one respondent. Likewise, another commented:

> My view on how interconnected the human race is, and that something one country does (policies, laws, economic or military decisions) can have great effect on countries around the world was changed...I was also forced to see that not everyone in life is dealt the same hand, that not everyone starts on equal ground and has the same opportunities no matter how hard they work or how talented they are. Made me realise that people can be put into the places they are, outside of their control.

Another said,

> I would say that from my new perspective, an insulated view of the world (not really aware of what's going on outside your country or region) is detrimental and keeps people from truly understanding how the world works. When we get involved in the international community, we gain understanding about the world and thus gain tools with which we can help change our world for the better.

On a personal level, a participant commented:

> This trip helped me understand who I was in more of a global context. It was a starting point to changing how I see the world. As with most young people who go on service learning trips, my eyes were opened to a different world, where people live and function on very little. This trip would have helped me to see that we live in a world of abundance here in Canada.

Another stated, "Economically, politically and socially, we are part of decisions that impact people all around the world. I now choose to participate actively and positively in my local world, as well as in global events, interactions, and experiences." Someone else concurred, "It is good to be involved in a bigger world than your own small one. I think it is very valuable to know people from different backgrounds, even just for the learning it provides you. To be challenged by other points of view, by other cultural assumptions is good". Another stated:

> I think it is important to have your worldview broadened. To see a different way of living life, different priorities that people have and experiencing different beliefs people have. I think too often we accept what is comfortable and it's so important to be challenged. We judge too easily before understanding other stories people have. I think you just become a better person overall.

Respondents showed that they were able to connect learning with their lived experiences and develop the "social consciousness" to which Kegan (1982) referred. It became apparent that respondents felt that their experiences created awareness that the world was a bigger place and that they needed to assess where they might find their place in it. This wrestling with oneself and how one fits into a larger context corresponds with Erikson's (1994) notion of identity development within a global context.

5.4.1.2 Though a Sense of "Otherness"

In addition to a growing sense of self, there was also a sense of understanding that society ought to work for the common good. Students discovered and cultivated Aristotelian virtues and it is hoped that their actions will be habit forming and character shaping as they continue to progress through life. As was demonstrated throughout their discussion in Theme 4, life is bigger than self and humans ought to care for each other. The "voice of care and responsibility" of which Gilligan (1982) and Noddings (1995) spoke began emerging. There appeared to be a growing "sense of otherness" that emerged from the relational element of these trips. This study showed evidence of that as a number of respondents shared how they continue to serve and work for the betterment of humanity around the world. One commented, "I was challenged to see everyone the same – as a person". Another said, "I would say my interest of global politics and issues around justice was strengthened in a very practical way". It was also interesting to note that 100% of survey respondents felt that it was important to treat all

people with respect. That was the sole survey response that garnered full agreement. Again, how much of this belief can be attributed directly to an overseas experience is debatable, but several interviewees commented on how the trip enlarged their circle of friends or opened them to relating to individuals in different circumstances or even relating to entire new people groups.

One interviewee commented that the trip "broadened my perspective, gave me a new lens in which I view other cultures, people and those with lower incomes". Seemingly, the international exposure from these trips brought a level of understanding and perhaps even a sense familiarity with people who are different and with those who struggle. This understanding and familiarity also seemed to bring a generalized level of comfort and acceptance with difference in people that, in many respondents, had previously not been present. It is hoped that this will translate into a life-long desire to accept and help others, which was suggested by many trip participants as they described future service-related engagement.

Although survey respondents in this study were overwhelmingly positive about their experience, it is also important to give voice to the few who were not. Not all students have continued international involvement as a result of their trip. For this reason, IS-L should not be regarded as a panacea. On his survey, one participant wrote, "I sort of disagree with short-term missions now. It seems to be more of a personal thing then {sic} to reach out to others. Breaking the kids [sic] hearts by loving them and then letting go when we had to leave. Why put the kids through that pain?" Others also questioned the effects their short-term stay had on people.

Some of these responses reflected a sort of tension. Two issues in particular surfaced in this manner and were questioned several times on surveys. First, that of the potential harm or the perceived negative impact of forming deep relationships quickly and then having to leave after a very short period of time, perhaps never to see those people again. The second tension came in debating whether sending money overseas rather than sending actual teams is a better use of money.

The issue of relationships is difficult and merits consideration, particularly when a team is working with orphans who have already experienced much loss. Is forming a new friendship with a Canadian student for a short period of time more harmful than good for children who have already experienced abandonment and rejection? These are questions that have been asked of the alumni in the countries in which we work. One

graduate commented, "The relief and brightness that a team brings to our orphanage, even if only for a short time, is so worth it. Our kids have been abandoned and it is hard when someone they love now leaves again, but isn't it better to have been loved and played with for a short time, rather than not because we are scared to leave someone? I say it's better to have been loved – even if it means going through a separation again".

5.4.1.3 Through Cognitive Changes

This example of tension with respect to others and relationships may in fact represent the greatest attribute of IS-L – that of forcing students to consider significant "big life issues". In their IS-L experiences, students are confronted first-hand with complex situations and issues like poverty, justice and the consequences of historical power imbalances and governing structures. As Theme 2 demonstrated, the cognitive dissonance experienced on these trips almost "automatically" brings consideration for most and additional research and change for many. This illustrates Kohlberg's (1975) assertion that moral growth emerges from thinking about moral problems.

Being confronted by moral issues and dilemmas is commonplace on these trips. Of all topics discussed on the survey, wrestling with poverty seemed to evoke the strongest response. 45% of respondents indicated they have compassion for the homeless and stated that they became slower to judge them after their trip. Conversely, 36.7% indicated that they believe that unemployment is the fault of individuals. So amidst compassion, there still seems to be a suggestion that people are responsible for their own destiny or choices, and there exists the belief that the homeless have not made wise choices. Perhaps to some extent this is accurate; however, it may also indicate a lack of full understanding concerning the complexities of poverty. I am guessing that some of this comes from hearing the stories of the many homeless with whom teams interact. Teenagers are quick to judge and in my experience in debriefing teams, students have been quick to identify "where a person went wrong". This study seems to suggest that perceptions that are formed on these trips may be long lasting. This merits further investigation if we seek to shape perception and moral commitment.

5.4.1.4 Through Polarities

When faced with these "big issues", students indicated they felt either empowered or incapacitated. IS-L programs need to be acutely aware of this polarity. Seeking to

empower our students to be agents of change requires contextualizing their overseas experience by ensuring they are rooted in understanding. Understanding the history and culture of the area is fundamental not only to cognitive resolution of these issues, but also to creating a sense that life could indeed be changed or different. This requires strategic teaching, a willingness to wrestle through the "big questions" alongside students, and coaching and encouraging towards action and change. It would be my hope that when this is done effectively, the 20% of respondents on this survey who indicated that they did not feel a responsibility or the ability to solve social problems and the 13.8% who did not feel that they could make a difference in the inequities of the world would become further engaged.

I believe it is also important to realize that not all trip participants will necessarily "catch the vision for enacting social justice". We are by nature consumers in a world that focuses on self. However, although the challenge of recognizing the "other" and their needs may seem monumental in a developmental period when adolescents are obsessed with self and forming their identity, how incredibly formative experiences like IS-L can be. Of his IS-L experience, one respondent said, "Of course I was challenged in many ways. Thinking about wealth and poverty, what is necessary to survive and how I can personally make a difference in the world [sic]. Even as a teenager, you gotta [sic] know you can do something for those people".

It is also very important for leaders to perpetuate the idea that small things can make a difference and are the first steps to change. Students need to see that they can indeed "do something". Several students identified this as a key realization on their trips.

One of the interesting findings on this survey was the disparity between the 89% of students who indicated that they think they can make a difference globally and the 54% who indicated that they currently strive to make a difference globally. A similar situation arose when 69% of participants felt they were thinking more critically about social justice and yet only 54% felt they had a responsibility to solve issues of social justice. Those numbers suggest that although the belief is there, the follow-through (behavior) is not necessarily present in the way one might expect for some survey participants.

One of the comments that was made repeatedly on the survey was a sense of not knowing how to become involved after arriving home or being so inundated with requests for help, not knowing quite where to start. This is also of some concern and bears further consideration. How do we ensure that through short-term IS-L

experiences, students are motivated or convinced of need and their ability to help and then continue to engage on a local or global level? This issue will be further discussed in the upcoming section on re-entry.

As we leave this discussion, an important point needs to be made: When seeking to measure the impact of an IS-L program on moral development and behaviour, one looks instinctively to continued service. There may be a moral awareness and commitment that is demonstrated in ways other than direct service. Some respondents expressed they wrestled with issues relative to the allocation of finances and resources and felt compelled to contribute in other ways. These people are no less concerned about the issues of poverty and social justice, they simply enact their moral commitment in a different manner. There is still the shift to consider "the other" of which Durkheim (1961) speaks and such thinking still demonstrates the moral sensitivity, judgment, motivation and implementation conceptualized by Narvaez & Rest (1995). This also exemplifies Kohlberg's (1975) notion of post-conventional/self-accepted moral principles in which "standards conformed to are internal, and action decisions are based on an inner process of thought and judgement concerning right and wrong" (p. 32). This is Kohlberg's highest level and stage of moral reasoning – where people develop the morality of individual principles of conscience.

Other students, although the minority in this particular study, have come back dissatisfied and have not continued in a life of service. A final factor that was not researched, but must be considered, is the degree to which short-term participants build a cultural framework around their single experience of interacting with host families and missionaries/workers at their destination. In reality, in a two to four week experience, participants gain a very limited snapshot of life in a different culture. Again, this is a caution that needs to be clearly communicated to students in order to prevent wide-sweeping conclusions generated from a fairly short and narrow experience. That said, this study focussed on perceptions and most participants in this study indicated that they felt they learned, were challenged and many felt they had changed through their IS-L experience.

5.4.1.5   Through Faith Development

Students described being challenged to try new things and were proud to be more independent and to self-manage their lives for weeks in a foreign setting. They spoke of

skill development and growth that emerged from challenges but also of encountering new depths in their faith as they sought help in settings they perceived too difficult for them. Even those with negative perceptions of these trips could indicate some way that he/she had been challenged or grown personally on the trip. Many of their descriptions included comments regarding growing in their faith and "being transformed" by not only a new understanding of the world and their place in it, but also of their relationship to God. This growth is foundational as we recognize that responding out of guilt as a motivator has short-term impact. This is often the case in humanitarian responses to world crises. I believe the meter behind enduring social change must be personal transformation. Transformation occurs when a heart and mind are impacted. When this occurs, action ensues and change may be sustained. Participants in this study described impact to both heart and mind.

Respondents' comments reflected different stages of moral development. For many, faith played an apparent role in their moral development. Westerhoff (1976) describes four styles of faith, "experienced, affiliative, searching and owned". The IS-L experiences of respondents covered the spectrum of Westerhoff's styles in providing the setting that incited participants to question, to search, to connect and to respond to moral imperatives. Most often, the life questions generated through these experiences enabled further development of faith and allowed students to "own" their beliefs and values. It is through this declension that action ensued. It became apparent that faith found expression in both reflection and action. Participant stories demonstrated both.

Interestingly, although many participants described the trip as pivotal to faith development, some returned with further questions and doubts. Again, this can be construed as part of their moral development. As mentioned, two students indicated that they would prefer to do philanthropic service with agencies that are not faith-based. Both of these students served on teams where they were asked to share their faith at times when they perceived it was superficial and inappropriate. This reiterates the adolescent need for authenticity and it speaks to the need for leaders to clearly communicate expectations and a sense of mission/vision and purpose for the trips. Students need to know what they are doing, why they are doing it and have to personally engage in the mission of the trips – whatever that may be. This also speaks to the need to carefully consider what activities are most beneficial in a short-term IS-L experience – beneficial for both the host country and the student travellers.

5.5 Questions Five: Changes Into Action and Behavior - Tenet Two of the Triadic Framework: Practicing Moral Action

Throughout this study, it became apparent that IS-L experiences shape cognitive and personal development. But do they influence future behaviour? Practicing moral action is the second tenet of the triadic framework. Survey respondents discussed their subsequent involvement in both local and international service. The survey showed that many MEI graduates have gone on to engage with both their local and global communities in a myriad of ways. 78.2% of respondents are engaged at the community level and 64.3% indicated that they have served again overseas. Participants also indicated that they are contributing to local and international needs financially. IS-L trips elicit a call for action and provide many students with an introductory and structured opportunity to engage in service. For some this is the beginning of a life-long habit. One respondent remarked, "You'll never serve twice if you don't serve once".

5.6 Question Six: Service after Graduating

One of the exciting findings that emerged from this study was the fact that MEI graduates are very involved both in their home communities and abroad. The breadth of their service is reflected in Chapter 4. Overall, participants indicated that their IS-L experience contributed to their continued involvement with others. 80% indicated their trip fostered a continued desire and responsibility to serve. 74.1% indicated the trip had a direct impact on them serving again and 70% indicated these trips cause a strengthened commitment to international work. As already noted, 64.3% have travelled to another country and served subsequent to the trip and 71.3% indicated they would consider one day moving to another country to serve.

Before we move into a discussion regarding the final questions posed regarding the purpose of schooling and the implications that emerged in this study, it is important to look at a mechanism that drove some of the cognitive and behavioural changes that participants described. Reflection proved to be a significant means for transformation for study participants. Reflection is the third and final tenet of the triadic framework.

5.7 Tenet Three of the Triadic Framework: Engaging in Reflective Dialogue

In such an intense experiential and learning environment, teams must make a careful attempt to process experiences, complex emotions and events. It is the bringing together of the external and internal, to which Dewey (1938) referred. Freire (1998) further developed the reflective element, stating that critical thinking through reflection, analysis and dialogue creates a critical consciousness that then leads to action. Warring (2008) asserts that global understanding can only come through this "critically conscious reflection". The fact that students constructed meaning and derived learning from their IS-L experience during their trips was evident in their responses; however, there was a desire for even more reflection. Engaging in reflective dialogue is the third and final tenet of the triadic framework of moral development. It is the process whereby experiences are assessed and meaning is assigned (Kolb, 1984).

5.7.1.1 The Significance of Group Reflection

Piaget (1965) said that people construct meaning by reflecting and making sense of past actions and experience. Participants also affirmed Vygotsky's (1978) assertion that the social context is foundational in social learning. They described social, cultural, political, ideological and economic forces influencing their thinking. Vygotsky (1978) described reflection as a social process where individuals make sense together. To some extent, service has to be consciously and deliberately transformed into learning. "Reflection is the glue that holds service and learning together to provide educative experiences" (Eyler et al, 1996, p. 16). Each IS-L experience needs to be woven into the "interconnected web of varied experience" that Baxter-Magolda (1999) describes.

Time for reflection on these trips is critical and I am hypothesizing that it not only helps create long-term impact, but also fosters sustainable impact. Students need a safe venue to ask the tough questions that have arisen and to talk through what they have observed. They need time to reflect on what they believe God is saying and doing and what their own decisions and choices are and will be. Such reflection also facilitates the reframing of what they have observed and supports the processing of what they have experienced. Along with debriefing cultural dissonance, group reflection provides an opportunity to affirm personal strengths in students and to guide and coach them in what they are doing. This can add to further personal growth.

Team members in this study indicated an appreciation for team times and expressed a hunger for more. One team member commented, "I did not feel that there was much input into helping us process and debrief each day by my leader. I really needed that". Those on teams who took that time mentioned the daily time of group reflection frequently in surveys. One participant lamented, "We should have discussed impactful things more as a team". Another participant who looked back negatively on her experience cautioned, "These trips can make or break a fragile faith in a teenager".

The impact of journaling and discussion in "the height of the moment" when impact is being experienced cannot be underestimated and teams need to consistently build time for this into their scheduling. Time set aside for reflection and debriefing should be protected and considered almost sacred by team leaders. It is recognized that this is not an easy task with full days of service and subsequent team fatigue, but it needs to be made a priority. Intentional reflection could also serve to tie IS-L trips more effectively to the school curriculum.

5.7.1.2 Demonstrating Higher Level Thinking

Developing students who are skilled in critical thinking is a much desired educational outcome in our classrooms today. Survey and interview participant responses demonstrated depth as they reflected back on their trips and as they continued to wrestle with some significant issues and questions that arose from their experiences. Participants expressed a high level of support for the program and the type of critical thinking it elicits. They stated they would be quick to recommend these trips to others.

5.7.1.3 Advice to those Considering an IS-L Experience

When participants were asked what they would say to someone considering an IS-L trip, one responded, "I would tell people GO GO GO. I would show them some pictures to pull up memories and I believe that they would see some definite excitement on my face." Another said he/she would say:

> You will never regret choosing to make a difference in others' live [sic]. It is a great opportunity and if they can afford it, they should go. They should not think that if they go overseas on this one trip that they will change that country they go to forever. If they view it as a learning experience, they will get a lot out of it. If they view it as something to primarily benefit those whom they are serving, they may feel disgruntled

or dissatisfied upon their return and have a heightened experience of "post-mission trip blues".

Another advised putting aside financial considerations:

Don't think twice and just go! The money will come together and the experience will be unforgettable. There is so much we can value in learning from others and other cultures that you will take with you through life – longer than you realize.

Another concurred, "I would say by all means go. It will change your life more than you think, you will have lifelong memories, and there is no better way to have a greater understanding of the world around you. Although you might be more impacted than the people you are going to help, they will appreciate your effort more than you know."

Some felt the secondary years are a great time for this experience.

Changes in international cultures and countries occur at a very slow rate and are not effected [sic] by such short trips. However, to the students, change happens very quickly. The students need to see and experience new cultures. The most significant change is within the student going on the trip. There are countless stories of how a student goes on a trip, changes within, of how they look outwardly instead of selfishly at the world around them while they are in high school.

Another added:

Though these S-L experiences may not alter social justice around the world, it plants seeds in the lives of young people who may go on to create major change in the world. It gives students a much-needed glimpse of how life is done in other parts of the world. Lastly, it teaches students to put aside their own needs and focus on serving others, a skill that is invaluable for survival in daily life.

One respondent noted, "This program is extremely important. It affects peoples' lives in a positive way. I don't how much more important anything could be." Another remarked, "It is the most amazing thing to spend your spring break just serving God. He can do so much in you and with you, if you just say, 'I'm here to serve'. Everyone should have the chance to go." Another commented on the trip's spiritual impact:

It not only opens students' eyes to the reality of the world around them, it also creates a great opportunity to depend on God. They are out of their comfort zone, they are learning how to serve, how to pray, how to see the power of God touch peoples' lives, how to bless others without anything in return. It is a fantastic opportunity for people of any age to get involved in.

Some said they would "personalize their encouragement" to embark on an IS-L trip if they had the opportunity to address others. One participant said, "I would speak from my own personal experiences and how God got a hold of my life on this trip." Another said, "All I could offer in terms of why to go is that my decisions to go on my trips have been some of the best decisions of my life".

Their practical advice regarding expectations for these trips included, "Go with open eyes and without expectations!" "You need to have an open mind and roll with the punches. Expecting the worst means that when you receive something better you are genuinely surprised and thankful." Another said, "I would tell them to make sure their focus is not on themselves or what they will get out of the trip, but what they can give", and someone else offered, "I would caution them to be prepared for poor living conditions. This is not a vacation." Another concluded, "I would encourage them to really dissect and understand their motivation for going, to create specific goals to focus on in terms of personal growth and to push oneself to go beyond personal comfort zones and levels. Life will be drastically altered if you go with the right motivation."

One graduate said, "An IS-L program serves as a real life simulation. I would really encourage MEI to keep this program. It has impacted my life and I know I am hooked." Another suggested, "SL trips should be mandatory to graduate from MEI because they are so life changing. This is a Christian school and people should have to do such a trip. Service is essential part of who we are." Someone else echoed the thoughts of Dewey (1938) as he advocated bringing school and life together and giving students an opportunity to practice goodness, when she commented, "It's a priceless and remarkably effective teaching opportunity through hands on work and experience that cannot be given through classroom or textbook studies." Another agreed, stating:

> There is no classroom activity/learning that can be as impacting as a local or global S-L experience. Whether or not students will understand the impacts during the experience, they will be impacted by the experience.

Another concluded simply with three words, "It changes your life".

However, at least two people strongly disagreed:

> They {the trips} are a waste of money and of time. I would consider them more useful if time was taken to educate the students on exactly what they were trying to accomplish and what, in a more definable way, were the major struggles of those they were trying to help. I find myself constantly wondering how 'moral' these trips are if kids just ask for money

to go on a trip with friends, and 'do God's work' while the donators [sic] are the ones who actually sacrifice their time and money.

...To pay $2000 or whatever to send a 17-year-old kid there and do some sweeping etc. is an ineffective use of funds. To train a local to grow and hire local labour at local, fair rates would save a lot of money, have a lasting impact on the community, and not require too many wealthy white Canadians.

They were not alone. Another also commented, "These trips are a waste of money."

5.7.1.4 Justifiable Expenditure for Moral Development?

Participants were asked whether they felt this was indeed true – would sending the money for these trips to the third world country be of greater benefit than sending a team? Their ensuing discussion was a powerful demonstration of reflective practice but also of a desire to enact their moral commitment in a meaningful manner. 57.5% responded that their money could not have been used in a more significant way than taking the trip, 19.5% felt that it could have and 23% remained neutral. This corresponded with the view of the 56% of people who indicated that they could not have had an experience with similar impact at home. Comments were mixed and questions about the use of resources and finances to provide service opportunities and moral practice clearly evoked the cognitive dissonance discussed earlier. One person commented:

There is some truth to that statement {that money would be better sent than spent on student travel}. I feel that trips are selfish in the sense that it almost does greater good for the students than for the communities in which they are working. That being said, changing the lives of students is still money well spent.

Said another, "I would whole-heartedly agree with this statement. Short-term trips are fine, if you are an educator or a medical person. Otherwise, it is simply self-serving, despite how people may delude themselves."

Another participant corroborated this:

I would tell people point-blank that these trips are self-serving and they could do greater good to the world by giving that money to medical funds or putting it towards an education fund they will use to get educated and then make an impact on a higher scale. If they still felt that they needed to sacrifice, there are multiple soup kitchens and shelters in the lower mainland – it is less glamorous, but much more ethical.

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Someone countered:

> It may be true that from a purely economic standpoint, money could be better used. It depends on the purpose of the trip. For MEI, your task from parents and the community is to educate young people. Seeing and participating in other countries is a fantastic educational opportunity and I would encourage anyone to do it. I don't think there is a more real learning environment, a more challenging learning environment than being on one of these trips. It was well worth the money from an educational point of view.

Two others concurred:

> Just giving money would benefit the country/people in needs. But I see these trips as not only helping those in the country, but also helping those that [sic] go. As a youth pastor, I have wrestled with spending a lot of money for kids to go on a missions trip each year. But the benefits I see in the lives of students outweigh this. It creates more internationally/social justice aware people who are more likely to give to these cause than if they hadn't gone on a trip in the first place.

> I am on the fence on this one. I can definitely agree that often the good that could be done in a country simply with the huge amount of money spent on a trip like this outweighs what a team can do in 1-2 weeks. We should not come across as the rich North Americans who decide what the world will need without consultation with them, and just arrive, quickly do something and leave. However, if a trip is done wisely, in response to a true need that cannot be met by local people already, in full consultation with the local people, and with great cultural sensitivity, it can be positive for both the local people and team members whom I believe are changed for life in varying extents. I also think it gives people an opportunity to explore whether long-term service fits who they are or something they are called to do.

One person also reflected a mixed opinion,

> For the most part I agree with that statement, but since the trip did change me for the future, the term 'waste of money' is a poor choice in words. It's not that it's a waste of money, it's a use of money. It's not the BEST usage of money though. All decisions come down to poor, good, better or best. We should aim for the BEST at all times.

Another student who returned to work long-term with the same organization he had served with on his MEI trip, again candidly described a changed perspective:

> You will get plenty of happy clappy [sic] responses, which is exactly the way I felt after the trip. But after a longer time of examining down there the following year, my perspective changed. I saw many groups come for "short term trips", when all they did was move some bricks around and

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> take a few days of vacation. My thinking was challenged when I thought that {the money spent on} these trips alone could solve much of the struggle in third world countries.

One person wrote, "If the only goal is to improve short-term situations in a third world country, then it is a waste of money. If the development of the students is important, then no, money doesn't solve all the third world problems". Admitted another, "That {spending money on IS-L trips is a waste} might be actually be true! However, it is really important that the kids in this culture see with their own eyes that our affluent ways of life here are the exception, not the rule for most inhabitants of this world. Hopefully this shapes their understanding." Another summarized briefly, "You don't get the impact if you just send the money. You have to go...guaranteed your heart will change." An engineer advised, "As we say in engineering, you have to look at the 'life cycle cost', not just the initial expense."

One participant shared these realizations:

> The impact that a short-term team has on the community it is serving may be negligible compared to the impact that same trip has on its participants. This is a controversial phrase and its one that people may not want to hear. I did not realize the truth of this when I went on my trip. A realization of this truth makes this question irrelevant. If the goal of the trip is to have an immediate social benefit on a third-world country, then yes, these trips are a waste of money. However, if the goal is to raise up people who are sacrificially willing to serve and have a lasting impact, then no amount of money spent on these trips is a waste.

Respondents repeatedly mentioned the relational impact of serving on those served. "I can see how a person would think that {spending money on IS-L trips is a waste}. The money involved in getting a whole team of students to an international location is tremendous. However, people benefit greatly from human interaction, and appreciate the fact that someone came so far just to serve them." Another suggested, "If your friend just gave you money all the time but didn't spend any time with you, you do not think that they actually really care. It actually doesn't take much effort to just give money." Another said,

> I think that these trips are character building and the contact that the people living in these other countries have with Canadians, I feel is beneficial for them just as much as it's beneficial for the students going on a trip. It shows the people in these Third World Countries that there are people who care about them and they can actually see them physically not just receive money or food.

Like-minded, someone noted,

> I would say the money is a very small part of the impact of these trips. The biggest impact is spending time with the people who live there, listening to them, having dinner with them; the camaraderie outweighs the monetary benefit to them.

Moreover, someone else summarized, "Anyone can send money. It's a win win for kids going and hosts." Others said, "If I am honest, third world countries don't need money as much as people showing them love and compassion", and "Money does not help people, it runs out. Interaction with people and educating them about life and faith is what lasts." Five others mentioned some doubt or discomfort about sending money to a third world destination:

> People in this world are corrupt. Just because you send $1000 to a third world country doesn't mean the money is going to be used for good.

> Sending money to the third world is a fantastic way to ensure the financing of fanatic rebel organization/unnecessary aid relief bureaucracy. Too often relief money falls into the wrong hands or is put into administration. I prefer to see someone I know personally go out and administer aid.

> So much money that is sent is mismanaged and doesn't get to the people who need it most. There is a shortage of workers actually out there in other countries doing the work, so just sending money won't help as much as people might think.

> Sending money does not usually impact or change the person who is sending it. Sending PEOPLE has the potential to impact the destination AND those who are being sent. In my mind, it is an irreplaceable experience. The impact can be felt in that country as well as back home.

> Pouring money in the form of relief efforts into third world countries is not the best way to change those countries either. You have to change hearts, not just finances, in order to make a lasting difference.

Another respondent said, "The short term trips are definitely worth all the money put into them. Our team got to give our extra money from our trip costs to the local people. Because we paid so much, this made the fund-raising worth it because we got to give the money to the local people of Haiti, plus see where it was going". Others also spoke about the need or benefit to "see" first-hand. "Sending money to these countries will probably have a greater benefit to the people of the host country. Nonetheless, unless

Canadians set foot in another country to understand how other countries differ, both socially and economically, they won't have the full understanding of social justice" and "It's important to see first-hand the need and the response we can make to it". Another said,

> The more the people connect with different cultures and see other ways of life, the greater the sense of global community and responsibility toward one another. You just have to be careful to structure the experience in a way that has positive outcomes for both the participant and the host countries/cultures/individuals...

Someone said, "Spending time there makes more of an impact on your life and theirs". This was followed by a comment by another, "Kids who serve on short term teams are more likely to be generous in their adult lives and their giving may exceed the money that was spent going on the initial trip. People are better off in the long run." One person wrote:

> In the short run, short-term trips are a big waste of money. It is ineffective to send some high school kids who didn't know how to build houses, to build houses. One airplane ticket could have financed a local builder for at least a month. But the long-term increased giving and increased social awareness has real, untold and long lasting consequences that could be more important than sending money.

This was personalized as one respondent reflected,

> If I didn't go, I wouldn't have ended up marrying my wife and adopting a child from South Africa. I wouldn't see the need to help out Ethiopians and get them wells for clean drinking water. Ya [sic] I guess I could have just sent the money but then my life would not have been different and that's what these trips do – change peoples' lives.

Lastly, another concluded:

> There is far less impact on the lives of students staying here and giving than there is in actually stepping out and expanding one's understanding and knowledge of the world, which is equally as important as giving.

Again, although most were positive, it is important to note that some saw IS-L to be of greater benefit to western youth than to those in the third world.

5.7.1.5 Educational Investment

Respondents saw the idea that IS-L experiences shape students as global citizens as justification for the expenditures of this program. Many spoke of hope for the future:

> Part of the purpose of the trip is to change the people going on it so that they commit to a long-term goal of helping those people. A greater life commitment by these people is better than a large one-time donation.

> When is it ever a waste of money to help others, even those going? To impact lives, challenge ways of thinking, possibly even spark long-term projects down the road. Building bridges amongst communities is only a good thing.

> The future decision and impacts of students that participate in these trips cannot be calculated, but if it could it would far outweigh the cost of sending them on these trips. The only way the future will change is when people start making right choices. One of the ways to help people make right choices is to get them involved in an activity such as service-learning, where they can experience and 'feel' a different culture and the impact that societies have on each other.

In fact, many referred to IS-L as an investment. Someone said, "It is not a waste of money because it is a learning experience. Many people spend much more money on degrees that they don't take as much away from as this trip." Others said:

> It's an investment into those students' lives and if only a few of them serve people the rest of their lives then it is all worth it! In the short term, it may be a better investment to send money to an existing organization for the people of that country, but in the long-term when your students [sic] lives are changed and they approach life with humankind in mind instead of self, the world will be a better place.

> These trips are producing quality, character filled students who God is raising up to change the world one person at a time in their future. Without this opportunity, there is a risk that students will remain self-centred and self-focused which will be detrimental to their development of loving, caring, world-concerned Christians, ready to serve.

> Educating young leaders to have sensitivity and engage in the international community could have a significant return on investment that will make substantial difference in years to come. It is about teaching and deploying these students with this special lens across different regions, professions and sectors. They become ambassadors of a special faith-based empathic perspective.

One person suggested, "There needs to be balance. I wouldn't have needed 5 or 10 trips as a teen, but a first time exposure is pretty formative". Even someone who showed reserved support for the program wrote, "Even if I wasn't impacted deeply in a spiritual or moral way, it was still a great experience. I think the potential for change is huge, perhaps I was in a bad place and did not get all that I could out of it, also my particular team structure was not the greatest. But aside from me, I think it is great."

One of the graduates currently in full-time overseas service gave the last word on this matter:

> From my experience on the field, I have discerned that the two greatest needs are money and people. Of these, people are definitely the most. We live in a wealthy society where many people are looking to throw money at charities and organizations to help make a difference. It is much rarer that you find people willing to give up both their time and comforts to take this money and put it to use. These IS-L trips provide an opportunity for young people to experience the need of our world in a real way, and might lead them to make a choice to help meet that need in ways others won't. I think this is something desperately needed. In my view, these trips are more of an investment in the students than in the actual projects they participate in. Even after two more lengthy trips after MEI, I still feel that my trips benefit me more than those I am sent to serve. I hope now that I will be able to reinvest all those things that I have learned and experienced in my future trips. That's the goal at least. I think the biggest benefit from the monetary investment I got for my trips is that I am willing to serve and do it again.

Of all topics, perhaps this interaction regarding finances most demonstrated a level of reflection, of really wrestling with the issues and of forming opinions and action consistent with descriptions of moral development and subsequent commitment.

As I conclude my comments on transformative reflection, it is important to consider participant re-entry into Canada. Participants described a struggle upon returning home.

5.7.1.6 Debriefing

Overall trip debriefing, reflection, and re-entry back into home life in Canada can be complex for those who participate in IS-L experiences. Pirolo (1987) talks about cultural stress in reverse as people return from an IS-L trip. He outlines some common re-entry behaviour. Condemning the home culture for materialism or a different looking spirituality is common. Some participants feel negative, internalize and then withdraw. This alienation may be partly due to unprocessed experience and may be complicated

by their expectations of a "life-changing experience" that may not have looked quite as they imagined. Others revert to their pre-trip lifestyle and deny that anything has just occurred. Obviously, these are unhealthy responses, but they point to the need for deep reflection enabling students to process their experiences and to talk about their readjustment to home. According to Pirolo, there needs to be an integration of what has occurred with life at home. Kiely (2004) refers to this as processing and connecting.

5.7.1.7 Struggle in Re-Entry

A number of participants indicated re-entering life in Canada was an area of significant struggle. From the number who indicated this, it can be deduced that issues pertaining to returning home and separating from the community and the accountability of team have perhaps been overlooked to a great extent in the MEI IS-L program. Two areas of concern related to re-entry emerged in this area of the study. First, the degree to which participants felt they struggled at home and fought regression is problematic. Survey responses indicated that this difficulty was remembered with clarity, years later. A number of participants wished for more time with their team or some one-on-one debriefing with a leader. Second, many participants related a significant struggle to find or connect with continued service opportunities at home.

Proponents of IS-L programs would hope that changes in thought and behaviour would not be culture specific, but would transfer into lifestyle and action at home. While it is true that many former participants are serving at home and abroad, there are some who are not carrying through on some of the beliefs and commitments expressed immediately after their trips. One student summarized, "This trip had a deep impact soon after the trip and challenged my view of what I want to do with my life, but there was little follow up after the trip and I quickly go lost. So I went to university to get a degree in order to get a good job".

A perceived diminishing spiritual impact is consistent with existing research. Friesen (2004) found a similar perception in his study, with even more regression in changes than indicated by this study's participants. He also found that a year after the trip, almost an equal number of participants moved away from future service work as those who moved towards it.

Currently, MEI devotes little time and resources into this area of our program. Most leaders are happy to return home and are immediately thrown back into teaching and

their personal routines. Perhaps there is a better means for participants to share their experience and integrate all their changes and learning into regular, everyday life in Canada. One parent also suggested that leaders "spend more time debriefing with students after they return from their trips, not only helping them process their experiences, but also applying what they've learned and new commitments they may have made in their world back home."

Service, the focus of these trips, also seems to get lost in the transfer from airport to home. Survey participants indicated a desire to "plug in locally" but often did not follow-through. This lessening or loss of "a life service focus" is disconcerting. If a life of service is truly a desired program outcome, helping students pursue opportunities for local service engagement should naturally follow these trips.

5.8 Questions Seven and Eight: International Service-Learning, Citizenship and the Goals of Schooling

The seventh and eighth questions in this study addressed the overarching purpose of schooling and the types of citizens we seek to develop. In Chapters 1 and 2 of this study, I established that schools should be concerned with producing responsible citizens who seek and are empowered to create a world of freedom, justice and rights for all human beings. Study participants described how they had gained an appreciation and tolerance for others through their IS-L experience. 87.5% of participants reported feeling like they had experienced a different culture in their time away and 86.3% felt that the trip had helped them appreciate cultural and ethnic diversity. Participants expressed a perceived increased understanding of issues such as poverty, injustice and corruption. Their experiences evoked a sense of personal responsibility – 85% felt the trip had increased their understanding for the need for service work and 69% felt that the trips had made them think more critically about social justice. Several participants described further involvement in social justice causes, and both local and international service. Survey participants indicated a high level of participation in both civic responsibilities and communities of faith. Program graduates are clearly engaged in society. In this study, I assert that moral development and action underlie the subsequent and continued global engagement that participants display in their lives.

5.8.1.1 Continuing Trips

Providing an initial exposure and opportunity for international service within the context of a school program is unique. Experiential learning activities in school settings tend to be costly and not without risk, particularly when they are international in nature. When considering whether IS-L programs contribute to the goals of schooling, the question must also be asked whether IS-L programs meet the goals of experiential learning outlined by Dewey (1938) and then Kolb (1984) – giving students authentic learning environments that develop competence; developing a sense of community with a growing understanding of rights and responsibilities; allowing and empowering students to become effective change agents. Does a "transformation of experience" (Kolb, 1984) occur and is IS-L a program worth pursuing?

In this study, the IS-L alumni overwhelmingly affirmed the existence of this program and encouraged its continuation. "It is an amazing opportunity for teenagers to go out and see the world, to broaden their horizons and really contribute to making the world a better place." Comments in support ranged from general to powerful, "I think these trips are the most awesome opportunity that some people will have in their whole lives." "This was probably my best memory of high school and definitely the most growing experience." Another claimed: "This trip made me who I am". Another urged, "People just have to go. It has the potential to change how they see everything", and another said, "People need to go – they are needed". Finally, someone spoke to those looking for good reasons to participate: "They {these trips} provide perspective and experience of things that are very real and prevalent in our world. Experiencing something is always more influential than reading about something." Another program graduate said,

> The service experience is something you keep with you forever. Where else are you immersed completely out of your local comfort zone, without the safety blanket of home {?} It is an invaluable experience for kids today – especially coming from a close-knit community like Abbotsford.

In reflecting on his/her own experience, another respondent answered:

> It was exactly what I needed at that age. An introduction to the real world. I don't think you can hope to accomplish much more than that with 2 weeks and a bunch of high school students. The great part is most of these trips are actually beneficial in ways beyond this. To me, the students are the focus and the leaders are the ones with the toughest job.

It is unusual and noteworthy for a school program to receive affirmation and a recommendation that it continue from 97.7% of participants and 100% of parents surveyed. Clearly, the program has strong parent and alumni support and is perceived to contribute to subsequent moral action.

5.9 Question Nine: Implications of the Study

Although the focus of this study has been on lives impacted rather than on the MEI IS-L program itself, some helpful information emerged for program development as respondents identified elements of the program that they perceived as weak and needing attention. The last research question in this study sought to identify implications that emerged through participant perception. I will now discuss programmatic implications and recommendations when considering future trips. I will then outline some recommendations for practice and policy. I will conclude by identifying areas for further research

5.9.1 Implications – Programmatic Considerations

Respondents in this study suggested that IS-L experiences helped them make sense of their lives and shaped how they chose to live their lives. They described moments of personal transformation in threshold experiences. Many felt that IS-L trips incited an enlarged worldview, self-discovery, cognitive changes, increased engagement and greater relations with others, spiritual growth, struggles upon re-entry and continued involvement. The study demonstrated how situating oneself through developmental changes, practicing moral action and engaging in reflective dialogue were aspects that enable this to occur and contributed to their moral development and subsequent life choices. In reviewing this study, there is a sense that the IS-L program has purpose and is successfully meeting its overall objectives and raison d'être.

Participants also indicated that the trips were often different from that which they expected. Much of the disparity between expectations and these trips is caused by the instability of circumstances in these countries and the fact that continuous change and unplanned revisions to itineraries must simply be expected when travelling to third world countries. Students must learn to realize that the best plans are not often executed as envisioned.

However, students also expressed some disappointments that bear consideration when seeking to strengthen a program. Areas to address include: leadership, preparation, team composition, service opportunities, reflection and re-entry.

5.9.1.1 Leadership

One thought that emerged from this survey is that IS-L programs need to carefully consider the selection of team leaders. With a sweeping glance of survey comments by destination, team members easily identified three distinct teams in MEI program history as being problematic. Leadership of these teams played a significant role in team members' discontent.

Leaders play an important role for these teams in both organizing and managing. One respondent commented, "I especially remember learning about the leaders and how they were actually fun people too. I hadn't had much fun with teachers at MEI before or after the trip". Another commented, "Picking leaders that everyone would get along with, or leaders that everyone respects is a big thing in making the team enjoy themselves more".

When selecting leaders, character qualities and leadership style need to be carefully considered. One participant commented, "I never saw any of the qualities we are supposed to show others in our leaders. That's a major problem." Another respondent perceived, "There were huge problems with leadership on my team and the leadership clearly did not like certain people on the team". Another recommended, "I don't have anything against the program but one suggestion that relates to the leaders of my specific team is not to plan too much and be spontaneous with circumstances and situations. We were always in too much of a hurry." Another concurred, "I would get the leaders more prepared so they didn't feel so uptight and worked up about the activities we were going to do."

A lack of leadership skills in some leaders also caused concern. "The thing that plagued us every day and that is the first thing that comes to mind is the disunity in our team. We were constantly arguing and getting irritated with each other and nobody addressed it".

Another issue that was frequently discussed was the issue of spouses of staff members leading trips. "Our whole team was disappointed with the horrible leadership. Teachers should not bring their husbands and wives when they don't like teenagers". Participants

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also mentioned the lack of authority that a staff spouse had with the team and the fact that the team needs leaders "not mothers". This came up eleven times in the study and ten of the eleven were in a negative context. Obviously, this bears consideration.

What became clear through participant comments was that leaders need to recognize that they are being observed and have an amazing opportunity to mentor youth. "One of my leaders in no way whatsoever showed any leadership skills and did not lead by example. My other leader had to carry the full load," said one person. Another said, "I grew up in an okay but not great home. My leader became the example of a good parent and Christian and actually just a really good person to me. I sucked up what she said and still to this day try to live like she did on that trip. I still call or visit her every once in a while."

5.9.1.2 Leaders as Role Models and Mentors

A leader has the power to shape and reframe experiences and to speak words of affirmation to students on the team. The specific comments participants remembered from years past was astounding and demonstrates how important and formative these experiences can be. One team member told a story of stepping out and accomplishing something in which she took great pride. Her accomplishment was later diminished publicly by a leader's comments. To this day, she looks back on that with sadness. Another team member reflected on his trip leader with disappointment after the leader experienced a moral failure after leading the trip. "I don't know what to think about all he talked about and said on that trip anymore. It feels like he is a hypocrite".

The power of an effective team leader and mentor is perhaps most evident in the story of a former MEI teacher and team leader who now serves with Youth With A Mission (YWAM) in Australia. He continues to speak into the lives of former students, having four of his former IS-L students including his own daughter, along with their spouses (and in some cases children) work alongside him in media and video production in Perth. All raise their own financial support to serve there.

The critical nature and mantle of leadership emerged through participant comments. It is clearly both a privilege and a significant responsibility to lead IS-L teams overseas. Leaders for IS-L experiences need to be thoughtfully selected.

5.9.1.3 Preparation

Preparing for IS-L experiences can be challenging. Participants made several comments wishing they had been more informed about schedules and other issues, "I wish I knew about the weather and knew we would be painting to know what clothes to bring". One respondent also wished that accommodations had been screened a little more carefully or that she had been better informed. "My homestay parents smoked 60 cigarettes a day and this is unsafe. I have a new appreciation for clean air but students may have allergies to smoke." Participants also expressed a desire to know more of the target language and more about the culture, "I wish I knew more Spanish so that I could know more about the kids and be able to talk to them. I also wish I knew more about the history of the culture and the people". A lack of contextual information and understanding was mentioned repeatedly on surveys, by over twenty respondents. These elements may also constitute part of the linkage to curriculum that appears, to a large extent, to be missing in the MEI IS-L program.

5.9.1.4 Team Composition

Another recurring theme on the survey was that of team size and composition. There was a clear call for smaller teams. Many students on large teams felt that size was detrimental. "Trying to bond with that many people was impossible". Another said, "Please make smaller teams. It is practically impossible to connect with 20 other people. I only got really close to one person because of it." A third commented, "I think a smaller group is better. There is less tension and you get to know each other better."

Balancing genders was suggested several times. There has indeed been an imbalance on teams in the MEI program, but it is due to consistent lower program participation rate by males. Each year male applicants are equally divided amongst the teams. The single gender Haiti team also cautioned against having a single-gendered team. "Having 12 girls together all the time made it hard to be patient – amongst other problems."

The most repeated and significant comment regarding teams was the idea that some students are not suited to go on these trips. Participants felt that some students had been too strongly encouraged by certain teachers to participate or had been permitted to sign up when they should not have been. This became a burden and distraction for their teammates. That said, some felt part of their role on the trip had been to encourage

these very teammates. "There were a lot of hurting people on my team and being able to reach them in some way was on my heart". Nevertheless, leaders ought to consider whether that should be the focus for any student on a trip. One student summarized the need to carefully consider leaders and team members alike: "I learned that inter-personal struggles and team dynamics play a big part in affecting a trip for every team member".

5.9.1.5 Quality of Experience

When considering the value of the IS-L experience, the most important criterion participants identified was the feeling that they were meeting a perceived or actual need. It was not necessarily the type of service they were offering that mattered to them. People want to make a difference in the lives of others. This pursuit of significance seemed to define the trip for participants. Many of them commented on wanting to have a "clear sense of purpose". Every participant who indicated they struggled on their trip mentioned lacking that sense of purpose.

Clearly, trip organizers need to carefully select trips that provide opportunities that are meaningful to participants. A sense of mission or vision should be communicated to the teams. That vision may need to be refocused as often the unexpected tends to arise in third world settings, but a re-framing and an identification of significance and purpose should remain constant.

In terms of meaning, it did not seem to matter whether a trip had a manual labour focus or was more relational in nature. However, as a sense of reciprocity was so impacting for so many, it would seem important to facilitate this through some sort of relational service accompanying projects that are more physical/labour oriented. In terms of degrees of impact, the trips where students lived in homestay situations seemed to leave the greatest impression on participants. This was likely due to the 24/7 immersion in cross-cultural settings.

5.9.1.6 Hard is good

Many of the memories shared by participants through the discussion of photos or through stories pointed to situations that participants deemed hard or challenging. As much as participants seemed afraid to step out, that is where much personal growth occurred and lasting memories were made. It became clear that leaders should not

strive to make these trips emotionally or physically easy. As one interviewee stated, "Challenges build character!"

5.9.1.7 Less Free Time

Working with teenagers can be challenging. It appears that some of the trips within the MEI program have been operating under the false impression that leisure and work must be balanced on these assignments. Students from nine teams commented on this. "For the next trip, I'd recommend that the trip schedule be looked at more closely. There was a lot more touring than actual service done, and it probably should've been vice-versa". "We spent a lot of driving from one place to the next". Another said, "Our trip was too heavy on recreation when most of us wanted to spend more time with the kids." Others suggested, "Do more service stuff and less touring and vacation. I really enjoyed the vacation days but I would have preferred more service activities because that was the purpose of this trip" and "After five days working, it wasn't appropriate to spend the rest of our time on recreation and vacation." This seemed to be most mentioned by those who travelled to Mexico, which interestingly is a shorter trip. Several students expressed displeasure with stopping at Six Flags or Disneyland Amusement Parks on the way there or home. However, the desire to work more was also widespread amongst teams who were commenting on various destinations, and so again merits further consideration program-wide. Although one opposing voice noted, "Looking back, it seemed a bit more like a holiday to some extent but for where I was at, I know I probably couldn't have handled anything more than it was".

5.9.2   Implications - Recommendations for Practice

Although the majority of feedback on the MEI IS-L program was positive in this study, survey and interview responses exposed several issues for further consideration and suggestions for refining current practice. As indicated, the following recommendations for strengthening the program emerge from this study:

It is recommended that MEI:

- Develop clear policies on team leadership, carefully identifying appropriate leaders and in particular carefully considering leaders who are not teachers.

- Equip IS-L team leaders through providing leadership training – particularly in the areas of leading small group reflective times, team dynamics, mentoring young adolescents, and debriefing the IS-L experience.

- Assess each potential destination with consideration to the quality of experiences, ensuring obvious benefit and purpose to both the host country and students.

- Intentionally seek and build into the program the element of "reciprocity" through ensuring an element of relational service, homestays etc. occurs on each trip.

- Carefully consider group size and composition when assembling teams and examine its procedures for screening of applicants to ensure they are well suited for the intensity of an IS-L experience.

- Encourage leaders to clearly and repeatedly communicate a sense of vision/mission/purpose for each trip in a manner that the student is able to understand, see and articulate this purpose both before leaving and during their trip.

- Refine policies and processes for team preparation and orientation including increasing language and historical/cultural education while giving greater emphasis to the curricular linkage.

- Re-examine the balance between time for work/service and recreation on each trip.

- Restructure the reflective elements of the program, ensuring time for structured reflection and increased debriefing/integration of experiences while on-site overseas.

- Design and implement a program for debriefing team participants and for assisting with re-entry into culture upon returning from overseas.

- Network with local community agencies regarding opportunities for continued service upon students' return to Canada after an IS-L experience, with the goal of fostering continued service at home.

5.9.3   Implications - Recommendations for Further Research

Participants in this study described some enduring effects of a short-term IS-L experience. With the exception of a few, most respondents perceived these impacts to be many. This study raised several questions for further research. The following questions warrant further investigation:

- What factors within a program increase the likelihood that students will experience life-long transformation? What is the relationship and interaction among these factors?
- Is an IS-L experience during the period of adolescence particularly influential?
- To what extent does the length of trip influence the likelihood of a lasting impact?
- What cognitive processes are used to make meaning from an IS-L experience?
- If IS-L is a reciprocal experience, what is the impact on and what are the perceptions of communities who have repeatedly hosted MEI teams?
- Upon returning home, what factors mediate a powerful IS-L experience?
- What support is needed upon re-entry to encourage sustained service and retain personal growth?

Most of these questions focus on the change or transformation that occurs in participants as we seek to understand how change happens and how it is sustained. On a practical note, this study illustrated that the issues of re-entry and re-integration into life "at home" also bears further consideration when we think about sustainable change.

Additionally, after examining the impact on our students, it would also be very interesting to follow up on the host sites to see whether long-term impact is felt as a result of relationships formed and continued visits from short-term MEI IS-L teams.

Finally, it would be interesting to explore IS-L with more of a longitudinal focus. Perhaps following one specific team of students more intensively and taking pre-trip data as a baseline to compare it to data taken while on assignment (from both their and the host's point of view), would provide a more comprehensive picture of transformation. Following student stories more regularly for some years after graduating would also give a more complete picture of the long-term impact of IS-L experiences.

5.10 Concluding Comments

Taking a group of teenagers overseas for two weeks to serve other people appears somewhat innovative in a "ME-oriented society", where the stereotype of teenagers is anything but positive. IS-L is part of an ambitious move from learning in a traditional classroom to using authentic situations to elicit socially responsible education. Although a theoretical grounding for the power of learning and development through experience and through service directed towards the welfare of others emerged years ago in the writing of John Dewey, scholars suggest that schools still lean toward formal rather than practical intelligence where learning is not necessarily connected to real life.

The implications of this study are many. The majority of participant comments presented IS-L as a viable means by which to extend student worldviews, to prepare students for a globalized world and to encourage active citizenship for their own good and that of others. Repeatedly, participants commented that their knowledge was extended far beyond what they believed could be achieved through traditional classroom learning. One respondent summarized:

> My trips allowed me windows into other cultures, and those types of first-hand encounters are simply not available any way else. My view of the world has broadened, so I began to learn that not everything is like Canada. Those cross-cultural experiences were key to help forming and informing the way I see the world today.

Another stated, "I believe these trips teach different things that can't be taught in the classroom – cross-cultural experiences, opportunities to step up as an individual and get out of your comfort zone, doing something you've never done before, learning how to work in a team." A parent concurred: "Part of developing well-rounded adults is for them to be exposed to how others live around the world and first-hand experiences cannot be taught in a classroom. It's a huge part of stretching their faith also". Participants and parents acknowledged both a practical and a cognitive aspect to learning on these trips.

IS-L removes the barrier between classroom and world and contextualizes thought and reasoning outside of the walls of a classroom, bringing to life issues that are routinely considered within curriculum. Is this not what we seek to do as educators – to bring authenticity in the classroom? IS-L programs provide one means for us to "school" outside the walls of a traditional classroom.

Both service and learning are essential components of this model. Although all service is of some worth, the dash in "Service-Learning" between service and learning is highly significant. For it could be easy to serve without much learning, but in S-L, it is essential that the service and learning goals are weighed equally and enhance each other. Educators have long recognized the value of experience and of engaging student in "doing". However, the theoretical suggestion that service be **balanced** with learning must be considered. This came to life in the comments of survey participants as they described how in serving, questions arose for them. Implicit in their comments was a call to more teaching, a call for more structured reflection and a call for help to navigate through some significant life issues that naturally arose in and through their service.

As a team leader and co-coordinator of a high school IS-L program, this study was invaluable. It was good to step back, to be analytical and somewhat clinical. Listening to participant stories five to ten years after their trips was both rewarding and heart breaking. To hear what stands out in the minds of people years after they travelled was enlightening. To understand perceived program shortcomings was helpful.

Overall, this study was the story of lives impacted. Most interesting was how many participants attempted to discuss how identity, interpersonal and cognitive development on these trips had resulted in moral development and further action. Participants described a journey that paralleled Kiely's (2005a) transformation model where participants cross-contextual borders, experience dissonance, personalize, process and connect. Moral development and action converge at the end of these processes.

Most participants in this study indicated that their IS-L experience(s) had personal, cognitive and spiritual impact that led to increased identity formation and moral development. This then led to subsequent positive action and citizenship. Generally, respondents in this study saw their IS-L experience to be positive and IS-L to be an effective means of global education. In fact, one student observed, "You can learn as much in a two week trip as you do at school all year".

In considering IS-L programs, there is great value in listening to the experiences and reflections of those who travelled as adolescents. Their longitudinal perspective regarding enduring impact is helpful and further program development should carefully consider the perceptions of alumni as they reflect on these personal experiences.

From this study, one can conclude that incorporating IS-L into schools may be an effective means of extending worldviews, developing good citizens and fostering socialization and social responsibility. There is much potential in IS-L as a form of moral education. It is worth exploring as it propels students toward personal and moral development, moral action and transformative reflection.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Erik Erikson's Stages of Psycho-Social Development

Appendix 2: Kohlberg's Theory of Moral Development

Kolberg's theory specifies six stages of moral development, arranged in three levels.

Level I: Preconventional/Premoral

Moral values reside in external, quasi-physical events, or in bad acts. The child is responsive to rules and evaluative labels, but views them in terms of pleasant or unpleasant consequences of actions, or in terms of the physical power of those who impose the rules.

Stage 1: Obedience and punishment orientation

- Egocentric deference to superior power or prestige, or a trouble-avoiding set.
- Objective responsibility.

Stage 2: Naively egoistic orientation

- Right action is that which is instrumental in satisfying the self's needs and occasionally others'.
- Relativism of values to each actor's needs and perspectives.
- Naive egalitarianism,orientation to exchange and reciprocity.

Level II: Conventional/Role Conformity

Moral values reside in performing the right role, in maintaining the conventional order and expectancies of others as a value in its own right.

Stage 3: Good-boy/good-girl orientation

- Orientation to approval, to pleasing and helping others.
- Conformity to stereotypical images of majority or natural role behavior.
- Action is evaluated in terms of intentions.

Stage 4: Authority and social-order-maintaining orientation

- Orientation to "doing duty" and to showing respect for authority and maintaining the given social order or its own sake.
- Regard for earned expectations of others.
- Differentiates actions out of a sense of obligation to rules from actions for generally "nice" or natural motives.

Level III: Post conventional/Self-Accepted Moral Principles

Morality is defined in terms of conformity to shared standards, rights, or duties apart from supporting authority. The standards conformed to are internal, and action-decisions are based on an inner process of thought and judgement concerning right and wrong.

Stage 5: Contractual/legalistic orientation

- Norms of right and wrong are defined in terms of laws or institutionalized rules, which seem to have a rational basis.
- When conflict arises between individual needs and law or contract, though sympathetic to the former, the individual believes the latter must prevail because of its greater functional rationality for society, the majority will and welfare.

Stage 6: The morality of individual principles of conscience

- Orientation not only toward existing social rules, but also toward the conscience as a directing agent, mutual trust and respect, and principles of moral choice involving logical universalities and consistency.
- Action is controlled by internalized ideals that exert a pressure to act accordingly regardless of the reactions of others in the immediate environment.
- If one acts otherwise, self-condemnation and guilt results

Appendix 3: Letters of Permission

Mennonite Educational Institute
4081 Clearbrook Rd
Abbotsford
V4X 2M8

t. 604.859.3700
f. 604.859.9206
www.mesoc.com

October 13, 2008

Ms Heather Smith
30688 Steelhead Court
Abbotsford, BC V2T 6V1

Dear Heather:

This letter authorizes you to complete your doctoral research project on the moral education of adolescents, specifically within the MEI Service Learning Program.

MEI requires that all surveys and interviews may be conducted after you have received approval from the SFU Ethics Review Board and that appropriate consent, contact information and purpose statement is communicated to all students participating in the study.

MEI wishes you well in your research and requests an executive summary of your findings at the conclusion of your thesis.

Sincerely yours,

Peter Froese,
Superintendent, MEI Schools

Cc   Administrator File

Jan. 11, 2009

To whom it may concern,

As indicated in my letter in 2008, Heather Smith has the permission of MEI Schools to conduct research on the perceived long-term impact of International service learning on moral development and behavior.

As a current MEI staff member and as researcher of a thesis sanctioned by MEI Schools, Heather Smith has permission to access the following:

- Lists of MEI alumni who have participated in our Service-Learning program and their current contact information. This list may be used to contact study participants with an invitation to participate in her study.
- Team journals and feedback forms collected by the school after each service-learning trip
- Videos and pictures of the service-learning trips that remain on file at the school

Sincerely,

Peter Froese
Superintendent

REB Ratification Approval

Date	File	Principal Investigator	Supervisor
7 April 2010	[2010s0005]	Smith, Heather	Graduate Student

Ratification Level	Department / School	Title
Minor	Education	The Perceived Influence of an International Service-Learning Program on the Long-Term Moral Development and Behavior of its Participants.

Hello Heather,

Thanks you for your response dated ___6 April 2010_____in response to the Ratification Request dated _____9 March 2010_____.

Please take this as approval of your response and consider this project now approved by the REB.

Thanks for dealing with this and

Regards

Hal Weinberg, Director
Office of Research Ethics

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Appendix 4: MEI Connections Article – Mission Accomplished?

Equipping Students For Life and Forever… Mission Accomplished?

Since 1995, over one thousand students and staff members have engaged in MEI Service-Learning (missions) trips over their spring break and summer vacation. Student journals, team reflections, trip evaluation forms, and anecdotal feedback immediately after the trips lead us to believe these trips have a positive impact. We hypothesize that cross-cultural service experiences affect students in many positive ways and the school has remained committed to this program for fifteen years. However, we have never truly looked at whether these trips have long-term impact. Are International service-learning opportunities truly transformative? Are these trips achieving the goal of creating global citizens? Do they affect personal development and subsequent community and International engagement? We want to know!

In 1995, incorporating a service-learning program into a school's program was fairly innovative. Some questioned the relevancy of such an initiative to an educational program. The purpose of schooling has long been considered and debated. John Goodlad (2008) called upon community leaders, educators and policymakers to agree on the democratic purpose of public schooling and to work together toward its advancement. This unity has appeared elusive as the public's agenda for schools continues to expand while resources simultaneously decline. Seemingly, the intended and desired outcomes of our education system are instead continuously evolving, along with the scope and sequence of curriculum to be delivered.

Are International service-learning opportunities truly transformative?

Are these trips achieving the goal of creating global citizens?

Do they affect personal development and subsequent community and International engagement?

6

Mission Accomplished - cont.

However, despite the broad stroke swinging of the educational pendulum from one initiative to perceived innovation and back, something however, has remained constant. The call to raise moral, productive, and engaged citizens has remained a consistent thread in the history of education. Methods and strategies may have changed, but the mission to educate students to be knowledgeable, responsible, socially skilled, caring, and contributing citizens remains intact. Society seeks to procreate generations of actively engaged, influential people.

So are we, at MEI achieving this shared vision? Are graduates engaging at local and global levels productively? Several authors (Newman 1985; Astin & Sax, 1998; Putnam, 2000; Bellah et al 1985) have commented on unprecedented levels of individualism, apathy and materialism as well as an apparent "civic decay" (Putnam, 1996) as the younger generations decline connection and shun civic engagement in modern society. A 1998 report from the U.S. National Commission on Civic Renewal cautioned that many of us "lack confidence in our capacity to make basic moral and civic judgments...and to make a difference", and cautioned we are in danger of becoming "a nation of spectators" (p. 4).

MEI strives to *Equip Students for Life and Forever*. It is our desire to develop people to be actively contributing global citizens. It is with this belief, that we implemented our International Service-learning program in 1995. Service has grown to be an important construct and educational objective within MEI schools that contributes to our equipping mission. It is the desire of MEI to develop students who live well with and for others. As we now provide education to students from Preschool to Grade 12 on MEI's Abbotsford campus, an intentional effort has been made to teach students how to serve and to provide opportunities for service and involvement throughout their years at the school. Students are intentionally exposed to, and drawn towards work in their own schools and communities as well as those in developing countries.

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? Mission Accomplished - cont.

MEI has pursued service-learning as a means to provide experiential and meaningful education that elicits the virtues or goodness of students in caring for others. We have heard of and seen the impact students, groups and entire schools have had on the community. We are now wondering about the long-term impact these activities have on our own students.

In an effort to measure the impact of our service-learning program, MEI has sanctioned a study that will ask alumni who participated in International service-learning trips to respond to a survey/interview. Heather Smith, one of the founders of the International Service Learning program and leader of fifteen International trips, will undertake this study as part of her doctoral program at Simon Fraser University. Beginning in January, she will be contacting alumni to request participation in the study.

If you are willing to share a personal story about the impact of MEI Missions/Service-learning in your life, or a meaningful picture, story or journal entry, please contact Heather at hsmith@meisoc.com.

It is hoped that results of this study will be available by December of 2010. ◆

References
Astin, A. & Sax, L. J. (1998). How undergraduates are affected by service participation. Journal of College Student Development 39, 251-263.
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Newman, F. (1985). Higher education and the American resurgence. Princeton, N.J.: Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.
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MEI Adds a 3rd Bus

MEI has received numerous requests from parents for a bus service to Mission. Many families made their registration at MEI conditional on providing transportation from our out-lying communities. We have been able to address this need. We have added bus service to Mission and have over 40 students traveling to MEI on a fee-for-service basis. The Mission bus is in addition to the Arnold/Whatcom Road and Chilliwack buses that have been operating for several years. Each of these buses is also near capacity.

MEI is pleased to be able to offer this service to our families and we are seeing a value-added benefit to our bus service. The traffic congestion in the morning and afternoon is much more manageable since we have 160 students travelling on MEI buses.

What's New with You?

Have you undergone a radical life or career change? Or overcome adversity of a particularly challenging situation?

We're looking for story ideas!

If you'd be willing to be profiled in Connections or would like to update us with your latest contact information, email ljohnsen@meisoc.com.

Other story ideas and alumni updates welcome too.

Keep in Touch!

Christ was born in the first century, yet he belongs to all centuries. He was born a Jew, yet He belongs to all races. He was born in Bethlehem, yet He belongs to all countries.

George W. Truett

Appendix 5: MEI Trip Evaluation Template

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Please complete the following form as honestly and as completely as you can. Your responses will enable us to serve MEI students better through our Service-Learning Program. Your completed form may be returned to either your leader or to the Director of Programs.

TEAM NAME: _____

A	PRE-TRIP PLANNING					
	To what extent do you agree with the following statements?	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Comment
1.	An appropriate amount of time was spent in planning and preparation.					
2.	Our team spent an appropriate amount of time in personal prayer for the trip.					
3.	I was well prepared in knowing what our itinerary and responsibilities would be.					
4.	I was adequately informed about the cultural distinctives of the country we visited.					
5.	Fundraising opportunities were adequate in helping me raise the needed funds.					
B	**ORIENTATION**					
1.	The location served our purpose well.					
2.	Eating and sleeping arrangements were good.					
3.	My heart, mind, and soul were spiritually prepared for service.					

	To what extent do you agree with the following statements?	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	No comment
5.	The teaching sessions were helpful in preparing me to serve					
6.	The length of the Orientation was appropriate for preparing us for our trips					
C	**ACTUAL TRIP**					
	To what extent do you agree with the following statements?	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Comment
1.	The travel arrangements were well taken care of.					
2.	My appreciation for another culture increased as a result of the Service-Learning Trip.					
3.	I experienced the "joy of serving" on the Service-Learning Trip.					
4.	I felt God was able to work through me to impact other people's lives.					
5.	The leaders on my team did a good job of organizing and leading the team.					
6.	The leaders on my team related well to the students on the team.					
7.	I learned to love others in a more significant way.					
8.	I gained a new appreciation for the members of my team.					
9.	There was a good balance between work/service and recreation.					
10.	My physical needs (health, safety, rest) were adequately met.					
11.	An appropriate amount of time was spent together with my individual team.					

	To what extent do you agree with the following statements?	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	No comment
12.	The activities planned were meaningful and rewarding.					
13.	Our hosting organization/people had all the details well taken care of.					
14.	I would recommend that we send a team to this destination again.					
D	**POST-TRIP REFLECTIONS**					
	To what extent to you agree with the following statements?	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	No comment
1.	My personal devotions have improved after participating on this trip.					
2.	My relationship with Jesus Christ has been strengthened as a result of what I learned and experienced on this trip.					
3.	I believe that the Service-Learning Trip was a very positive experience for me.					
4.	I would now be more willing, prepared, and open to being a missionary, if God called me to be one.					
5.	The Service-Learning Trip helped prepare me for life and service in the real world.					
6.	I would go on another Service-Learning Trip if I had another opportunity.					

Equipping students for life and forever

AMEI

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n

1. What was God doing in your life during Orientation?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

2. What was the most significant aspect of your trip?

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3. What changes, if any, would you suggest be made to our Service-Learning & Service Program?

_____

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_____

4. Describe one situation where you were deeply moved.

_____

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5. How have you been changed?

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Appendix 6: Invitation to Participate

Dear MEI Missions Program Alumnus!

You are receiving this letter because you travelled on an MEI Service-Learning team between 1995 and 2005. By now you have moved on in your life having had all sorts of great experiences. To be honest, I'd rather be having coffee with you right now – getting an update.

I am still at MEI, and am currently the Principal of MEI Middle School. I am working on my doctorate and my area of research is a follow-up on our Serving-Learning Program. I have just come back from my twenty-first MEI trip and we've sure learned a lot since that first trip to Haiti in 1995!! Special thanks to that team of "guinea pigs"!! I am now examining whether these trips have a long-term impact in my study entitled: *The Perceived Influence of an International Service-Learning Program on Long-Term Moral Development and Behavior*.

I need your help! **Would you answer some questions about your experience as an MEI Service-Learning participant for me?** It should take between 20 and 30 minutes. My survey is online and can be found at:

If you would prefer a hard copy of the survey, please phone me at 604.859.3700 (500) or email me at hsmith@meisoc.com and I will get one to you ASAP.

Would you go to your computer now? If you wouldn't mind doing this today or tomorrow, I would greatly appreciate the immediate feedback. Good survey response rates are difficult to get and I am determined to prove that MEI can defeat those odds. You will be helping me achieve my goal of getting a doctorate, while contributing to research on like programs and shaping the future of the MEI Service-Learning program as we study what you have to say.

Thanks for being totally honest and giving me some of your time! The reverse side of this letter contains some additional information.

Sincerely,

Heather Smith

MEI Service-Learning Program - Influence of an International Service-Learning Program

Thanks for participating in my research. I am asking you to answer some questions honestly and with abandon. I want to hear the good, bad and indifferent. Tell me what you really think! Here are some additional details before you login to my survey at:

https://data.grapevinesurveys.com/survey.asp?sid=2010615141767
(Password is mei)

Research Question:

What is the Perceived Influence of an International Service-Learning program on the Long-term Moral Development and Behavior of its Participants?

Consent to Participate:

I understand clearly that the purpose of this research entitled: "The Perceived Influence of an International Service-Learning Program on the Long-Term Moral Development and Behavior of its Participants" is to examine any enduring effects of service-learning on participants' moral development and behavior. It is believed that this information will contribute to the body of literature on service-learning as it examines (1) a Canadian high school experience (2) an International experience and (3) the perceived long-term impact.

I understand that this study will invite people who travelled with the MEI Service-Learning program between 1995-2005 to share their reflections about their experiences. The MEI Board has sanctioned this study by giving approval to conduct this study as has the Simon Fraser University (SFU) Ethics Review Board. I understand that I am being asked to complete an on-line questionnaire about my experiences and attitudes toward and behaviors involving community service, International service-learning and social justice. This survey will take between 20 and 30 minutes to complete. The Grapevine Survey website is secure, has SSL Encryption 128 bit and the Iserver is hosted in an IBM data Center. You will require a password to log-in to the survey. Once completed, survey data will be accessible to the researcher only. I understand that I may be invited to participate in an additional future interview about my experiences/to share souvenirs, journals or pictures of my trip. With my permission, this interview would be recorded and I may request that the recorder be turned off at any time during the interview. I understand that after the interview is transcribed, all names will be removed from the data and the tape will be destroyed. At any time, I have the right to review, edit or erase all or part of the recording. I understand that the information that I reveal in this study will be kept confidential. All the data will be coded and anything that is included in the study will be done so anonymously. When the results of the study are published, I will not be identified by name. I understand that I will be able to obtain research results through Heather Smith, once the project is complete. Any data collected will be password protected and kept in a locked filing cabinet during the study, paper documents will be shredded and electronic files deleted after the completion of the study. Data will be destroyed in 2012 as required by Simon Fraser University. I understand that my participation in this study is completely voluntary and that I may choose to withdraw at any point for any reason. This study is not believed to constitute any physical or psychological risk to the participants; however, counselling through MEI Schools will be available if desired. I understand I may contact Heather Smith at hsmith@meisoc.com or the Simon Fraser University (SFU) Ethics Office at hal_weinberg@sfu.ca. By now logging in and continuing to fill out this survey, I indicate that I have read and understand the information provided above and willingly agree to participate in this research study.

Appendix 7: Reminder Postcard

MEI Missions Alumni

Parents please pass this on if your son/daughter has moved.

Help Needed!

I am still looking for people to respond to my follow-up questionnaire on your experience with the MEI Missions program (now called Service-Learning), for my doctoral research.

Could you please take a moment to fill in the on-line questions at:

https://data.grapevinesurveys.com/survey.asp?sid=2010615141767

The password is the three letter name of our school, in lower case.

Questions? Contact Heather at hsmith@meisoc.com

MEI Missions Alumni

Parents please pass this on if your son/daughter has moved.

Help Needed!

I am still looking for people to respond to my follow-up questionnaire on your experience with the MEI Missions program (now called Service-Learning), for my doctoral research.

Could you please take a moment to fill in the on-line questions at:

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Questions? Contact Heather at hsmith@meisoc.com

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Could you please take a moment to fill in the on-line questions at:

https://data.grapevinesurveys.com/survey.asp?sid=2010615141767

The password is the three letter name of our school, in lower case.

Questions? Contact Heather at hsmith@meisoc.com

Appendix 8: Survey

The Influence of an International Service-Learning Program

Hi!

Thanks for participating in my research. I am asking you to answer 61 questions honestly and with abandon. I want to hear the good, bad and indifferent. Tell me what you really think! Please find below the same details regarding the study and consent to participate that were (e)mailed to you with my invitation to participate. The survey is taking people an average of 30-45 minutes to complete so far - longer if you travelled farther back!! Thanks so much for your time.

Research Question: What is the Perceived Influence of an International Service-Learning program on the Long-term Moral Development and Behavior of its Participants?

Consent to Participate:

I understand clearly that the purpose of this research entitled: "The Perceived Influence of an International Service-Learning Program on the Long-Term Moral Development and Behavior of its Participants" is to examine any enduring effects of service-learning on participants' moral development and behavior. It is believed that this information will contribute to the body of literature on service-learning as it examines (1) a Canadian high school experience (2) an international experience and (3) the perceived long-term impact. I understand that this study will invite people who travelled with the MEI Service-Learning program between 1995-2005 to share their reflections about their experiences. The MEI Board has sanctioned this study by giving approval to conduct this study as has the SFU Ethics Review Board. I understand that I am being asked to complete an on-line questionnaire about my experiences and attitudes toward and behaviors involving community service, international service-learning and social justice. This survey will take between 30-45 minutes to complete. The Grapevine Survey website is secure, has SSL Encryption 128 bit and the Iserver is hosted in an IBM data Center. You will require a password to log-in to the survey. Once completed, survey data will be accessible to the researcher only. I understand that I may be invited to participate in an additional future interview about my experiences/to share souvenirs, journals or pictures of my trip. With my permission, this interview would be recorded and I may request that the recorder be turned off at any time during the interview. I understand that after the interview is transcribed, all names will be removed from the data and the tape will be destroyed. At any time, I have the right to review, edit or erase all or part of the recording. I understand that the information that I reveal in this study will be kept confidential. All the data will be coded and anything that is included in the study will be done so anonymously. When the results of the study are published, I will not be identified by name. I understand that I will be able to obtain research results through Heather Smith, once the project is complete. Any data collected will be password protected and kept in a locked filing cabinet during the study. Paper documents will be shredded and electronic files deleted after the completion of the study. Data will be destroyed in 2012 as required by Simon Fraser University. I understand that my participation in this study is completely voluntary and that I may choose to withdraw at any point for any reason. This study is not believed to constitute any physical or psychological risk to the participants, however, counseling through MEI Schools will be available if desired. I understand I may contact Heather Smith at hsmith@meiscc.com or the SFU Ethics Office at hal_weinberg@sfu.ca. By now continuing on to fill out this survey, I indicate that I have read and understand the information provided above and willingly agree to participate in this research study.

1. Name

_____

2. Gender

◯ Male

◯ Female

3. Graduation Year:

◯ 1995

◯ 1996

◯ 1997

◯ 1998

◯ 1999

◯ 2000

◯ 2001

◯ 2002

◯ 2003

◯ 2004

◯ 2005

◯ 2006

4. In what grace(s) did you participate in (an) MEI Service-Learning (SL) trip(s)?

☐ Grade 10

☐ Grade 11

☐ Grade 12

5. Were you acively practicing a faith when you went on a Service-Learning trip with MEI?

[YES] [NO]

6. If yes, how would you describe your faith at that time?

- ⬤ Christian
- ⬤ Sikh
- ⬤ New Age
- ⬤ None of the above

7. What have you been up to? Briefly describe what you've been invovled in since graduating from MEI in the following areas:

1. Post-Secondary courses/programs

2. Careers

3. Involvement in Community/Internationally

4. Family

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

8. Reflecting back to BEFORE your MEI Service-Learning (SL) trip:

	YES	NO
Before the trip, had you participated in an International SL experience?	⬤	⬤
Before the trip, would you consider yourself to be aware of social injustices?	⬤	⬤
Before the trip, were you involved in service activities in your community?	⬤	⬤

Before the trip did you
contribute
money   to
those   in
need?

9. Telling the Story: Trip Reflections

Why did you sign up for an international service-learning trip? When you
first applied to the MEI Missions/Service-Learning program, what was
your motivation?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

10. MEI Trip Destination(s): Where did you go on (an) MEI Service-Learning
trip(s)?

☐ Argentina

☐ Cambodia

☐ Costa Rica

☐ Czech Republic

☐ Germany

☐ Haiti

☐ Honduras

☐ Hong Kong

☐ Kenya

☐ Mexico

☐ Philippines

☐ Thailand

☐ Ukraine

☐ Venezuela

11. What did you and your team do on this trip? Describe the service
component of the trip.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

12. Was what you experienced different than you expected?

| YES | NO |

If yes, how so?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

13. Do you feel that you met the needs of a person or community? In what way(s)?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

14. What two experiences stand out the most clearly from your trip?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

15. What is the personal accomplishment that you are most proud of during that trip?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

16. What did you feel was your most significant failure? What would you have liked to do better?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

17. Would you say that anything troubled or "disturbed" you on this trip?

YES   NO

If so, what?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

18. Was your thinking challenged in any way on this trip?

YES   NO

If yes, please comment on how any conviction, assumption or value that you hold/held was challenged.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

19. Did this trip influence the way you think you see the world?

YES   NO

If so, how?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

20. Did any "big" questions about life come to mind during this trip?

YES   NO

If yes, what were those life questions?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

21. Would you say that your perspective changed in any way from this trip?

| YES | NO |

If so, how?
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

22. Did you find anything overwhelming on this trip?

| YES | NO |

If so, what did you find overwhelming?
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

23. What cultural differences, learning experiences, conflicts did you find challenging on this trip?
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

24. What were some insights you gained from those who lived in your host country?
_____
_____
_____

25. Did you feel that you were imposing in any way on your trip(s)?

YES   NO

If NO, why do you think that? If YES, in what way?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

26. Do you ever find yourself thinking about the people you met and stayed with?

YES   NO

If so, who in particular?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

27. Were there people or groups in Canada who were brought to mind through your experiences on the trip?

YES   NO

If so, who were these people?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

28. What was the greatest challenge or hurdle for you returning home?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

34. Now, years later, what kind of enduring impact would you say this trip has in your life?

☐ Positive Impact

☐ Neutral Impact

☐ Negative Impact

35. If you were changed, how would you say that you were changed by this trip?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

36. Did this change last?

[YES] [NO]

If you answered NO, why do you think so? If you answered YES, how has it had an on-going impact in your life years later?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

37. Would you say that you grew in your faith (or spiritually) during this trip?

[YES] [NO]

38. Please rate the following statements:

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Agree	Agree	I Feel Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Cannot Rate

This trip made me feel responsible to participate in more service work.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

This trip increased my understanding for the need for service work internationally.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

This trip caused me to view possessions and other material items differently.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

I feel like I experienced another culture on this trip.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

I could have had a similar experience with similar impact at home.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

This trip broadened my understanding of people and places.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

This trip developed personal qualities such as confidence and independence in me.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

I did not acquire any new skills or knowledge on this trip.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

This trip caused me to volunteer and serve more when I got home.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

I learned about working more effectively with a team on this trip.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

This trip connected what I studied at school to real life outside of school.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

I have increased my giving to others because I went on this trip.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

I feel that God used me on this trip.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

This trip got me thinking more critically about issues of social justice.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

This trip encouraged me to contribute to other causes and be more involved.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

I make quick judgments about homeless people.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

Having an impact on the world is within the reach of most individuals.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

I learned things about myself on this trip.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

I realized on this trip that the world's problems are much too big for me to address.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

I feel that I can make a difference in the world.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

39. On a scale of 1-4, how important is it for adults to contribute time to:

1 Extremely Important	2 Important	3 Somewhat important	4 Not Very Important

their community

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

their country

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

the world

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

40. I am currently involved in promoting social justice or supporting a specific "cause".

YES   NO

If yes, which one(s)?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

41. Reflection is recognized as a component of Service-Learning. How and when did you reflect? Was time for reflection adequate on your trip?

_____

_____

_____

_____

42. Since the NEI trip, I have volunteered to help people in need.

| YES | NO |

If yes, in what context?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

43. Have you currently (over the past 12 months), done any of the following?

	1	2
	NO	YES

Socialized with someone of another race, religion or ethnic group.

| 1 | | 2 |

Discussed politics or community issues.

| 1 | | 2 |

Performed volunteer work with no compensation.

| 1 | | 2 |

Assumed a leadership role.

| 1 | | 2 |

44. Of what importance would you rate the following:

1	2	3	4
Very important	Somewhat important	Not important	Unsure

Keeping informed about current events around the world.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 |

Experiencing life within different cultures.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 |

Helping other people.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 |

Being well-off financially.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 |

Socializing here at home with people of different backgrounds.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 |

Voting in elections.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 |

Treating all people with respect.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 |

Engaging with other countries.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 |

Improving society.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 |

Being involved in your community.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 |

Being considered ethical.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 |

Attending church or religious services regularly.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 |

Being considered a leader.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 |

Giving occasionally to charity.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 |

Sacrificing oneself to give to others - giving sacrifically.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 |

45. Please rate the following:

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Cannot Rate

My SL trip helped me identify with a being part of a bigger community.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

I believe I can contribute to solving some of the problems nations face today.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

I believe that some people are poor because of a lack of effort.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

This trip increased my sense of responsibility to do something about the problems in our community.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

I believe in helping people I know more than helping strangers.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

It is important to help others, regardless of whether one is paid.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

I believe that unemployment is the fault of society rather than individuals.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

I have a responsibility to solve our social problems.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

I believe that I can make a difference in the lives of people in other countries.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

I feel uncomfortable working with people who are different from me in race or wealth.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

My international experience increased my confidence that I can contribute to improving life for others.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

Since my international trip, I have been active in helping address the needs of others.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

Since my trip, I have again travelled to another country to serve.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

I stay up to date on current social and political events around the world.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

I read an international story in a book, magazine, newspaper or on the Internet at least once a week.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

I invest in multicultural friendships and relationships and interact with people from other cultures, races and religions regularly.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

My international trip helped me appreciate cultural and ethnic diversity.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

I realized that I cannot make a difference to the inequities of the world.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

My service trip increased my dedication to social justice.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

I do not feel that this trip caused me to grow in faith.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

I have financially supported international projects/missionaries since my trip.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

I have contributed to international humanitarian relief in the past 12 months.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

When I see someone being treated poorly, I respond.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

I have donated to a local community cause/project in the last 12 months.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

My trip experience was overwhelming and contributed to a feeling that societal changes are unlikely.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

I did not enjoy the cultural differences that I experienced.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

My service trip increased my empathy for other people.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

I strive to make a difference globally right now.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

I feel that I could have used my money to help people in a more significant way rather than taking this trip.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

My service trip increased my motivation to participate in advocacy for others.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

46. Overall, comment on the impact of your Service-Learning trip on your commitment to international involvement.

☐ Strengthened it

☐ No significant impact

☐ Weakened it

47. Would you say that your MEI Service-Learning trip played a role in you serving again?

YES   NO

If so, how?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

48. In what way(s) would you say that this trip fell short or did not meet your expectations?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

49. Have you gone on any long-term (over one month) international service-learning trips since graduating?

YES   NO

If yes, please describe that/those experience(s).

_____

_____

_____

50. Would you say that MEI played a role in you serving again?

YES   NO

If yes, how or why?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

51. Would you consider participating in another international Service-Learning trip in the future?

YES   NO

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

52. Have you been involved in any LOCAL humanitarian/philanthropic/service-related activiites since your graduation?

YES   NO

If so, please comment.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

53. Would you consider one day moving to another country to serve in a more full-time capacity?

YES   NO

Comments?

_____

_____

_____

_____
_____
_____

54. If someone were to ask you, **"Why is it important to be involved/active in the international community?"**, how would you respond?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

55. Relative to other kinds of school activities and assignments, how effective as a learning exercise was service-learning?

⬤ More

⬤ Same

⬤ Less

56. Should MEI continue to offer these short-term Service-Learning experiences?

| YES | NO |

Why or why not?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

57. How would you respond to the statement that: **"Short-term trips are a waste of money and simply sending the money for these trips to the third-world country would have greater impact"?**

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

58. What would have made the service-learning experience at MEI better for you?

_____

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

59. If you were asked for your opinion by a current student considering going on such a trip, what would you tell them in terms of going? What would you say was/is the significance of your service?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

60. What is one thing that you had to come to understand about the culture in which you were working?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

61. Almost Done!!

	1 YES	2 NO
Did you journal on your trip?	[1]	[2]
Would you be willing to share your trip journal?	[1]	[2]
Would you be willing to be interviewed about your service-learning experience at MEI?	[1]	[2]

If you are open to further contact, what is the best way to reach you for follow-up?

_____
_____
_____
_____

Appendix 9: Interview Questions

<u>Opening Remarks</u>:

Thank you for participating in an interview. This interview will not last longer than an hour and will be audiotaped and transcribed. These tapes and transcripts will be kept locked in a cabinet and will be destroyed in 2012.

You have been asked to participate in this interview because I think you have something important to say about your experience in _____. As you recall, I am looking at the impact of service-learning.

I want to hear what you have experienced and thought – not what you think others may like to hear, so please share honestly. If you feel uncomfortable with any question, please feel free to pass on a question, choosing not to respond. Feel free to ask for clarification of any question.

Semi-Structured Interview Questions:

You have had a chance to answer my survey, what were your impressions of the survey?

Did you find that the questions took you back to the trip and all that happened for you in that experience?

How would you describe your IS-L experience? Give me a brief overview of your service-learning trip.

Can you tell me about your experience with the locals on your trip?

What is particularly memorable about your time away from Canada?

What, if anything surprised you on this trip?

What negative things would you consider happened on your trip?

Do you feel that your team contributed to society on this trip? Why or why not? How?

Do you feel that the experience contributed to your formation in any way? If yes, how, If no, why not?

On the survey you identified some meaningful experiences (What two experiences stand out the most clearly from your trip?). Tell me about those experiences.

What was the most life-impacting thing for you about this trip?

Did this trip influence the way you see the world? How?

What did you learn about yourself on this trip?

Did any "life questions" emerge for you from this trip?

How was coming home?   What did you experience in re-entry?

Would you say this trip did or did not affect your identity development? Why/Why not?

Would you say this trip did or did not affect your moral development Why/Why not?

Has your experience continued to shape your thinking or behavior? In what way?

What touched you the most on this trip? What memory from the trip stands out for you? What particular picture/imprint comes to your mind?

Why do you think that has this particular picture stayed with you?

What are your thoughts about the trip now as you reflect back on when it came in your life and its subsequent impact?

If sharing photographs

As you look through these pictures, what stands out to you?

Which picture captures a meaningful moment for you? Tell me about it.

Tell me about one person in these pictures.

Do you look at these pictures often?

Did this trip change any of your perceptions/notions prior to the trip?

Since Trip

How would you best say this experience affected you – not at all, short-term, long-term?

How do you think you grew as a result of your service-learning experience?

Discuss your involvement in service since the MEI service-learning trip.

Did/How did that trip shape or contribute to who you are today? What areas of your life were impacted?

What do you tell people about that trip?

<u>Program Thoughts</u>

Do you think you gained something in an overseas experience that could not be gained locally? How/What?

Could you comment on your thoughts whether MEI continue to offer these short-term service learning experiences? Why or why not?

How would you respond to the statement that short-term trips are a waste of money and simply sending the money for these trips to the third-world country would have greater benefit?

What would have made the IS-L trip better for you?

If you were asked by another person considering going on such a trip, what would you tell them they may gain from such an experience? What would you say was/is the significance of your service?

Appendix 10: Parent Feedback Request

August 2010

Dear Parent of MEI Missions Alumni,

You are receiving this letter because you have had more than one child live the MEI Missions (International Service-Learning) experience between 1995-2005!

I am currently doing doctoral research on the perceived impact of International Service-Learning on long-term moral development and behavior. I have spent the last year collecting and analysing data, and the last phase for me is talking to parents about your perceptions as you look at any role these trips may have played in your son/daughter's lives. Additional information about this study is located on the back of this letter.

Would you be willing to take a few minutes to answer the enclosed eleven questions (feel free to expand on another paper if I've crowded your answers? I know some of you may be speaking of multiple experiences!). Please note that you do not need to answer EVERY question for each child separately. If your impressions are more general in nature, that's fine. When answering, anything goes! I appreciate honest answers – I will not be disappointed if I receive negative answers!   If you'd like to include your name, you may, but anonymous is fine as well.

Please return the questionnaire in the envelope provided as quickly as possible. If you would prefer to fax it back, please feel free to do so 604.859.3701. If you would prefer an electronic copy of this questionnaire, please email me at hsmith@meisoc.com, and I will email one back into which you can type.

Thank you very much for your time and thoughts,

Heather Smith

MEI Missions Program - Influence of an International Service-Learning Program

<u>**Research Question**</u>:

What is the Perceived Influence of an International Service-Learning program on the Long-term Moral Development and Behavior of its Participants?

<u>Study Information and Consent to Participate</u>:

I understand clearly that the purpose of this research entitled: "The Perceived Influence of an International Service-Learning Program on the Long-Term Moral Development and Behavior of its Participants" is to examine any enduring effects of service-learning on participants' moral development and behavior. It is believed that this information will contribute to the body of literature on service-learning as it examines (1) a Canadian high school experience (2) an International experience and (3) the perceived long-term impact.

I understand that this study will invite people who travelled with the MEI Service-Learning program between 1995-2005 (and their parents) to share their reflections about their experiences. The MEI Board has sanctioned this study by giving approval to conduct this study, as has the Simon Fraser University (SFU) Ethics Review Board. I understand that I am being asked to complete a short questionnaire about the experience and my observations regarding attitudes toward and behaviors involving international service-learning. This survey will take between 15-20 minutes to complete. I understand that all names will be removed from the data. I understand that the information that I reveal in this study will be kept confidential. All the data will be coded and anything that is included in the study will be done so anonymously. When the results of the study are published, I will not be identified by name. I understand that I will be able to obtain research results through Heather Smith, once the project is complete. Any data collected will be password protected and kept in a locked filing cabinet during the study, paper documents will be shredded and electronic files deleted after the completion of the study. Data will be destroyed in 2012 as required by Simon Fraser University. I understand that my participation in this study is voluntary and that I may choose to withdraw at any point for any reason. This study is not believed to constitute any physical or psychological risk to the participants. I understand I may contact Heather Smith at hsmith@meisoc.com or the Simon Fraser University (SFU) Ethics Office at hal_weinberg@sfu.ca. By now continuing to fill out this survey, I indicate that I have read and understand the information provided above and willingly agree to participate in this research study.

Parent Feedback
MEI International Service-Learning

1. What are your initial thoughts about the MEI Missions Program?

2. Did you see your sons/daughters personally positively impacted by this experience?
   a. Did it affect **their thinking**?

   b. Did it affect their **identity development**? How?

   c. Did it affect their **relationship with God**? How?

   d. Did it affect their **priorities or direction?** How?

   e. **Other Impact?** Describe.

3. Would you directly link this trip to any long-term changes in their behavior? If so, explain.

4. Please comment on any **negative** experience or any negative effects of this program.

5. What's the main thing you noticed in them when your sons/daughters came home?

6. Were you aware that your kids were struggling with anything related to re-entry into life in Abbotsford when they came back? What were those issues?

7. Do you remember anything specific that your children shared about their trip in terms of impacting experiences? What?

8. Did any of your children pursue future service either at home or abroad? Explain.

9. Have your children become interested or involved in any particular issues of social justice or social responsibility since their trip? Explain.

10. Should a school such as MEI be offering such a program? Why/why not?

11. In your view, how could MEI improve this program?

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