Challenging racial privilege in International Experiential Learning programs with Canadian university students

by

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Abstract

This study examines the experiences of Canadian undergraduate students who have completed an International Experiential Learning (IEL) trip in Uganda. Through qualitative pre-trip and post-trip interviews as well as journals, I investigate how students' understandings of racial privilege were maintained or disrupted through their work and participation in an IEL program. Using the lenses of postcolonialism and critical whiteness studies, three themes emerged in the data including imaginary Africa, helping and growing, and Canadian identity. My findings suggest that students have gained greater awareness of their racial privilege after their trip. I argue that IEL programs have the potential to challenge Canadian students' understandings of the Global South in ways that help them identify their social location and personal motivations for enrolling in an IEL program. I contend that this will minimize the likelihood of reinforcing racial privilege dynamics between the Global North and South and promote critical reflection of how racial privilege impacts everyday lives beyond the IEL experience.

Keywords: International Experiential Learning; racial privilege; Canadian identity; global citizenship; critical whiteness studies; postcolonialism.

Dedication

I am dedicating this work to my parents, Que and Binh, who came to this country so that I would have the opportunities they did not. I am forever indebted to their courage and perseverance.

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List of Acronyms

CWS	Critical Whiteness Studies
IEL	International Experiential Learning
ISL	International Service Learning
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
SFU	Simon Fraser University
VfD	Volunteers for Development
YVA	Youth Volunteer Abroad

Chapter 1.

Introduction

Over the last two decades, International Experiential Learning (IEL) programs at post-secondary institutions have grown substantially as evidenced by the adoption of global citizenship education and international volunteer trips in Canada (Tiessen & Heron, 2012). According to the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC, 2014), approximately 25,000 full-time undergraduate students have participated in an international experience in 2012-2013 alone. This grew exponentially in 2016-2017: the Canadian Bureau of International Education reported that at least 15% (or 300,000) of Canadian post-secondary students participated in a service/study abroad experience in that year (Larsen, 2016). As of 2014, there are more than 20 Canadian organizations that send youth abroad to promote global citizenship (Ngo, 2014). IEL programming appeals to students for various reasons, such as the potential to effectively change the world, to show others a better way to do things, and to experience local community interaction or adventure (Chapman, 2016).

In 2012-2013, I participated in an IEL program during my undergraduate degree where I volunteered at a school in Vietnam. I was curious to learn more about whether international volunteer programs contributed towards poverty alleviation. Upon reflection, I realized that the NGO for which I was working might not be contributing to the goals of international development. Rather, the NGO focused on ensuring that the volunteers themselves felt 'good' rather than meeting the needs of the community that they were serving. My sense of wanting to "help" was misplaced—the main beneficiary of the program was myself and not the local community. That feeling of discomfort intensified when working as a trip facilitator for two years with a similar International Service Learning (ISL) program. I witnessed the potentially transformative impact of volunteering abroad on young people and yet noticed how many students listed "wanting to help" or "saving people" as their main motivation for participating in the trip. Having experienced both positive and negative impacts of ISL and IEL programming, I wanted to discover more about the direct and indirect impacts on Canadians and understand their motivations for travel. Specifically, this study began as a general inquiry on critiquing IEL

programming and evolved into a deeper investigation of how participants experience racial privilege during their trip. Racial privilege refers to the unearned systemic and institutional benefits that the white dominant group acquire, which in turn, disadvantages people of colour (Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2012).

Growing interest and investment in IEL programs in Canadian universities make it necessary to critically examine the supposed positive impacts of programming, such as global citizenship, cross-cultural competency, and poverty alleviation. In this study, I am interested in understanding how undergraduate student participants make meaning of racial privilege during their trip experiences. My research questions include:

- How do students make meaning of racial privilege during their IEL trip experiences?

- How is racial privilege maintained or disrupted through IEL programs?

This is an important line of inquiry because few studies of IEL (Heron, 2007; Ngo, 2014: Thomas & Luba, 2017) have directly addressed racial privilege. This study contributes to a small body of literature that explores the important dimension of race inherent in current IEL programs. As most literature critiques the positive and negative ethical considerations of programming, few scholars offer in-depth analysis of the student experience and their relationship with racial privilege.

1.1. Organization of Thesis

My thesis includes seven chapters. In Chapter Two, I review the existing literature on topics of IEL programming, followed by an overview of the two theoretical frameworks that guide this study: Critical Whiteness Studies (CWS) and Postcolonialism. In Chapter Three, I outline the methodological design and procedures employed in the study, including data collection and data analysis. The following three chapters are data findings chapters. Each of the data findings chapters represent a prevalent theme related to the relationship between racial privilege and IEL programming. The chapters are organized in terms of the data findings, followed by data analysis and discussion for each respective theme. Chapter Four, "Imaginary Africa," reports how participants describe Uganda. Chapter Five, "Helping and Growing," presents participants' motivations for travelling on an IEL trip. Chapter Six, "Canadian Identity," explores how participants make meaning of their IEL experience as Canadian citizens. In the

concluding chapter, I outline overall connections between the literature and key findings of the study. Based on those findings, I discuss contributions to the literature in the field of IEL programming, offer implications of findings from the study, contributions of the study, and recommendations for areas of further research.

1.2. Terms Used in Thesis

Various terms are used in the literature to describe travel abroad educational/volunteer programs in the Global South such as, Volunteers for Development (VfD), Youth Volunteer Abroad (YVA) programs, 'study abroad programs', International Service Learning (ISL) programs, 'voluntourism', 'work-study programs', or International Experiential Learning (IEL) programs. For the purposes of this study, I use the term International Experiential Learning (IEL) to describe such programs. Unlike ISL, IEL programs are rooted in the effort to move students from civic knowledge in classrooms to civic engagement by doing experiential learning overseas. This is different from ISL because ISL the "service learning" aspects emphasize a service being provided to the host country. This inherently creates a power dynamic between the ones receiving the service and the ones providing the service (Bamber, 2016). According to Thomas & Luba (2017), IEL programs are described as:

> Short-term placements (of less than one year) of undergraduate students in the Global South, in either workplace or classroom settings. There is a "learning by doing" component, as the term experiential indicates, and often a volunteer ethos in terms of making a contribution to international development efforts in the host community. (p. 5)

Despite an array of other terms used to describe international volunteer travel, Thomas and Luba's (2017) definition is used this thesis. This definition incorporates many key aspects of the IEL experience: short time frame of most IEL experiences, includes volunteer and study aspects that vary with trips, and emphasizes the "learning by doing" mentality that differs from ISL.

Another common term utilized in development discourse is global citizenship. Global citizenship is one of the main objectives of IEL programs (Cameron, 2014; Macdonald, 2014; Jefferess, 2008) and the term has been heavily debated among scholars, mostly because its meaning is contested by diverse stakeholder in different contexts. For example, global citizenship is defined differently from a university student

perspective hoping to find a global experience to add to their resume compared to a post-secondary institution competing against other schools to gain a competitive edge. In this thesis, I define global citizenship as, "a way of understanding the world in which an individual's attitudes and behaviours reflect a compassion and concern for the marginalized and/or poor and for the relationship between poverty and wealth- within and between communities, countries and regions" (Heron, 2011, p. 112).

I use the terms Global South and Global North to describe countries that have traditionally fallen into the category of developing and developed countries. These categories were created during the development era that began in 1949 when President of the United States, Harry Truman, referred to certain countries as "underdeveloped" and in need of improvement and growth (Esteva, 2010). Since then, the labels 'developed' and 'under-developed' have been used to refer to the economic status of countries. The notion of 'development' has primarily focused on aiding countries in escaping the labels of underdeveloped or developing (Esteva, 2010). Historically, scholars have used various terms to describe countries in a position of power, such as Global North, developed, West, or First World. In turn, terms to describe countries comprised predominantly of people who are less wealthy than those in the Global North include Global South, developing, Two-Thirds World, Three-Fourths World, Non-West, or Third World.

In the 1970s, following widespread critique of the terms "First World" and "Third World", the terms "Global North" and "Global South" were coined as alternative designations for "developed" and "developing" countries (Gale, 2008). Despite countries in the North and countries in the South sharing similar economic and historical characteristics, there is no clear definition for either term (Gale, 2008). The terms are still problematic as not all countries in the South would be considered "developing" and not all countries in the North are considered "developed". Further, the terms originate from Northern or Western practitioners. They are, however, widely used by scholars who recognize them to be a social construct (similar to race) (Cameron, 2014; Heron, 2007; Heron, 2011; Howard & Burns, 2015; Ngo, 2014; Pluim & Jorgenson, 2012; Tiessen, 2012; Wehbi, 2009). The use of "Global North" and "Global South" in this thesis acknowledges the contested nature of these terms.

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1.2.1. White Privilege

White privilege is defined as rights and advantages that benefit the dominant (white) group and in turn, disadvantages other marginalized (racialized) groups. The dominant group has historically held advantages in regards to power and economic resources. In this study, I rely on Peggy McIntosh's (1988) influential analogy of the "invisible knapsack" to describe white privilege (p. 10). McIntosh's metaphor refers to an elusive package of unearned advantages; where owners of this package are oblivious to its existence, yet continually rely on its assets (Wildman, 2005). Racial privilege is significant on both a personal and systemic level, where beliefs and values of the white privileged group form societal norms and considered universal (Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2012). A key criterion of racial privilege is the social and institutional power it holds over society, which is so influential that it feels invisible. The oblivious yet pervasive nature of racial privilege reiterates the importance to explore its existence in IEL programming to avoid reinforcing power dynamic between the Global South and Global North.

Chapter 2.

Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

In the following chapter, I provide a brief overview of the existing literature on IEL programming and its relationship to racial privilege. Then, I discuss the two main theoretical frameworks that guide my research, Critical Whiteness Studies (CWS) and postcolonialism.

2.1. Literature Review

As the growing trend of IEL trips becomes increasingly available to Canadian students, it is essential to assess how racial privilege is inherent in the design of IEL programs in order to avoid reproducing power dynamics between the Global North and Global South. In this section, I will review the studies that reveal what we currently know about IEL programs in a Canadian context. IEL is a topic that is becoming an increasing area of research and has focused on a multitude of contexts such as post-secondary institutions (Cameron, 2014; Chapman, 2016; Drolet, 2014; Epprecht, 2004; Heron, 2011; Jorgenson & Shultz, 2012; Stein, 2015; Tiessen, 2012; Tiessen & Epprecht, 2012; Tiessen & Heron, 2012), teacher education (Sanatoro & Major, 2012; Santoro & Major, 2012), and social work placements (Wehbi, 2009). In a review of books and articles from 2004 to 2016 in various development journals, I found the following topics among the studies: racial privilege prevalent in IEL programming, Canadian identity formulated through IEL trips, and how IEL programs are considered a transformative experience for participants. I present five themes in the current literature relevant to my research inquiry: global citizenship, ethical concerns of IEL programming, colonial legacy, Canadian identity and potential for transformative impacts.

2.1.1. Global Citizenship

An important component of IEL programming is the concept of global citizenship because programs are conceptualized around enhancing global citizenship for participants (Stein, 2015). Key themes in global citizenship literature look at determining a universal definition for the term (Stein, 2015; Cameron, 2014; Macdonald, 2014),

problematizing the power dynamics inherent in the concept (Jefferess, 2008), and 'thick' global citizenship/cosmopolitanism (Cameron, 2014).

Cameron (2014) claims global citizenship is an ambiguous term used in educational rhetoric that relies on its conceptual vagueness to represent many different and often contradictory ideas. This is shown when Stein (2015) argues that global citizenship does not have legal or political legitimacy, which makes the concept vague and open to interpretation. As Macdonald (2014) states, "the global citizen assumes the right to travel unhindered, to penetrate cultures without the hassle of boundaries, to extend his or her rights of citizenship transnationally, and to unabashedly profit from this imperialist global arrangement" (p. 27). Jefferess (2008) extends on Macdonald's argument by arguing not everyone is able to be a global citizen, as the concept produces a binary of insiders and outsiders (Jefferess, 2008). Jefferess complicates matters further when he states:

> The notion of global citizenship functions metaphorically… there is no global state apparatus that can ensure these rights…the vast majority of the people in the world have very little ability to officially participate in the governance of their lives…the discourse of global citizenship is…primarily concerned with identity and not with political subjectivity. Hence, citizenship, in this formation, cannot (yet) mean participation and inclusion, rights and responsibilities. (Jefferess, 2008, p. 28-29)

In other words, Jefferess argues that the concept of global citizenship is a fabrication of universal social rights without any sort of governance to ensure that these rules are upheld. However, this is problematic considering the term global citizenship is heavily used as a tool for IEL trip marketing (Jefferess, 2008). Global citizenship is advertised as an educational outcome of IEL trips, although there is a lack of evidence to support this claim. Currently, the concept avoids raising awareness of global citizenship that breaks any status quo of racial dynamics and instead reproduces the obliviousness of racial privilege.

Cameron (2014) argues that global citizenship is aligned with core principles of cosmopolitanism. Cosmopolitanism is defined as a concept used in theoretical arguments on moral obligations to the rest of humanity, and global citizenship is considered more 'user friendly' than cosmopolitanism (Cameron, 2014). Grounding global citizenship in cosmopolitanism requires reflection on positive and negative moral obligations – meaning ways in which we can do good and how not to cause harm or

benefit from harm done to others. Cameron (2014) claims the conceptual piece missing from global citizenship is negative obligations and argues programs would benefit from re-introducing this concept as part of the structural design of IEL programs. As many students understand how to 'do good' while participating in an IEL program, few understand how their behaviours may indirectly contribute to the suffering of others (Cameron, 2014). According to Cameron (2014), thick global citizenship refers to the moral obligation to explore complicity in global inequality and causal relationships. In other words, there is an obligation to look at how we are positively contributing to the global community and also how we are negatively affecting members of vulnerable and marginalized groups. The concept of thick global citizenship contributes to my research inquiry because it underscores the moral obligation for IEL trip participants to consider their social location and how that may negatively impact the host community.

2.1.2. Ethical Concerns of IEL Programming

A prevalent theme in the literature explores moral and ethical implications of IEL programs that interconnect with race relations between the Global South and North. I will investigate this theme by presenting several ethical concerns of IEL programs: motivations for travel, effects on the host community, accessibility of IEL trips, and the consequences of global citizenship as an anticipated outcome of programming.

An important ethical component to explore is the motivation for student participation in IEL trips, acknowledging that those motivations could be rooted in racial privilege. Travers (2014) argues that it is essential to explore the motivation to travel abroad in order to measure the transformative impact the trip has on participants. Tiessen and Huish (2014) echo this argument by encouraging participants to be mindful of their personal motivations, potential harmful impacts, and not treat this experience as only a means to test out potential career options. Furthermore, Heron (2011) concludes that the desire to travel was one of the biggest motivations for participating in an IEL program, reiterating a one-directional flow of benefits toward the participant and away from the host community. Tiessen (2012) argues, "The self-oriented nature of the motivations expressed by the participants is … in the context of the one-directional flow of perceived benefits from the global south to the Canadian volunteers" (p. 2). In a study on student motivations for volunteering abroad, Tiessen (2012) found that personal growth is a dominant motivation and she asserts that, "egoistic, self oriented and

extrinsic values" (p. 2) are associated with motivation. Furthermore, Tiessen argues, "the absence of references to other potential motivations such as social justice, solidarity or the promotion of equal rights raises additional questions about the motivations for learn/volunteer abroad programs and the direction in which benefits flow" (2012, p.2).

Cameron (2014) argues that there are both positive and negative responsibilities that emerge for individuals in affluent countries. This generates a duty to positively affect those suffering from a lack of basic necessities paired with a responsibility to not contribute towards or benefit from their suffering (Cameron, 2014). For example, Cameron asserts that individuals in the Global North indirectly benefit from unjust global trade agreements through access to cheap resources and materials at the expense of communities in the Global South (2014). This argument illuminates the underlying ethical dilemma that IEL programs present: not only is there a moral obligation to positively influence those suffering, there is also a need to explore how to avoid exploitation of the Global South for personal gain. A postcolonial perspective urges volunteers from the Global North to avoid benefitting from exploiting the Global South, in addition to how they can positively affect people in the host community.

Similarly, Jefferess (2012) critiques voluntourism for its negative impacts on the host community. These impacts include: new colonial paternalism created in host communities, volunteers being unfit and untrained, development projects focused on symptoms of poverty rather than root causes, and children in host communities becoming exploited and commodified in order for participants to receive the "orphanage" experience (Jefferess, 2012). This is confirmed in a study by Chapman (2016) that reports student volunteers not speaking the same language as children in foreign orphanages is problematic, as local children glorified foreign students, idolized their material possessions, and left children to deal with further losses once trip participants returned to their home country. This refers to the exploitation of the Global South that Cameron (2014) urges volunteers to consider, and highlights how volunteers from the Global North may be benefitting from the exploitation of children in the Global South.

Another ethical consideration is the qualifications for volunteer positions in foreign countries that differ from Canadian standards. For example, Chapman (2016) argues that in Canada, those who work with children must obtain a police check to guarantee a clean criminal record and minimize the risk of child abuse. However, most

IEL programs in the Global South do not require a police check from their participants, endangering children in host communities (Chapman, 2016). Another negative impact is the displacement of local workers by volunteers in construction projects such as the building of schools and latrines (Chapman, 2016). Similarly, Tiessen & Heron (2012) discuss negative impacts of IEL trips on the host community such as creating false hope in the community, maintaining foreigner stereotypes, fostering a lack of impact for development projects, and perpetuating negative cultural and behavioural impacts. This is an important aspect of IEL programming to consider as it reinforces the experiential learning model to serve the needs of students rather than poverty alleviation in the host country. Therefore, racial privilege is maintained in favour of the white northern-based volunteers by prioritizing their needs over the host community.

Some scholars raise an equity concern regarding the accessibility of IEL programs for all students (Tiessen & Epprecht, 2014; Jorgenson & Shultz, 2012). For example, Tiessen & Epprecht (2014) argue that there are socioeconomic challenges that prevent some youth from participating in these programs in college or university. Despite IEL programs being highly sought after by students and professors, only a select few will be able to participate because it requires capital of all forms: social, economic, and cultural (Jorgenson & Shultz, 2012). This aspect relates to race and socioeconomic class, as the affordability of travel calls for speculation on which socioeconomic groups will reap the benefits from participating in an IEL program. Privileged groups that are likely to be predominantly white will be the main beneficiaries of such programs. This association with whiteness and wealth is problematic as it situates participants as the "white saviour" (Pluim & Jorgenson, 2012) and introduces another social dynamic to consider – intersectionality between race and socioeconomic class. *Intersectionality* is the term used to recognize that people hold positions in multiple groups, both oppressed and privileged, and these positions intersect in complex ways (Crenshaw, 1991). As such, these programs can further create divisiveness between those that can and cannot afford IEL experiences.

Several studies focus on the inequitable policy and structural design of IEL programming. Tiessen (2007) highlights how the various stakeholders such as students, professors/educators, administrators and government officials may not always share the same motivations for IEL programs. For example, Tiessen (2012) reports that the financial investment into international development volunteer programs in Canada is

significant, which further complicates the agenda for IEL programs. The unclear understanding of the purpose of sending students abroad increases the likelihood of the impacts of these programs to remain uncertain. As Younis (2007) poignantly states, "…how ethical [are] funding programs that affect people with no voice in what is funded?" (p. 38). This power dynamic centers the participants of the program as the main beneficiary of the programming over poverty alleviation in the host community. As such, it is important to consider how the structural design of the program continues to privilege participants in the Global North. This power dynamic between racialized beings are explored in the next thematic section about how the colonial legacy has played a significant role in developing perceptions of "Other" in IEL programs.

2.1.3. Colonial legacy – Perceptions of "Other"

The Canadian literature on IEL programming reveals a long history of situating the Global South as the "Other". This has racial implications that situate the Global South dependent on aid and "saving" from the Global North. Epprecht (2004) unveils that work-study programs have existed within Canada as early as the 1950s and are foundational in forming the Canadian identity, with religious and secular organizations and NGOs created along the moral imperative to "help the poor" and advocate for social justice. During the late 1950s and early 1960s, volunteering began to be recognized as a form of international development, and Canadian NGOs began sending volunteers overseas (Ngo, 2014). Wehbi (2009) expands by stating the charity perspective that has permeated the history of social work between the Global South and North is dangerous, as it emphasizes the perspective of people in the South as helpless victims who can do nothing until the rich and powerful intervene to save them. Pluim & Jorgenson (2012) explain voluntourism to be a paradox that "provides another source of consumption that will only endanger the very communities and environments that the volunteer tourist seeks to protect" (p. 32). In other words, Pluim & Jorgenson believe that despite positive intentions of wanting to volunteer overseas, negative impacts and exploitation of marginalized groups will undoubtedly occur. This implicates a racial privilege dynamic that allows people in the Global North to benefit from the exploitation of marginalized groups in the Global South.

Ngo (2014) contends that colonialism can manifest in various ways through volunteerism. Ngo explains, "the partnership between North and South organizations

can reproduce systems of dependence through funding and structural expertise, and this can trickle down to the work of the volunteers" (2014, p. 56). Similarly, Howard & Burns (2015) argue that international volunteering is contradictory, as neo-colonial framings cast the Global South as tragic victims that require rescuing whilst situating the Global North as the saviour; yet global citizenship, empowerment, mutual learning, and reciprocal partnerships are coined as outcomes for international volunteering. According to Pluim & Jorgenson (2012), the social construct of race has given a reason for societies to segregate and exploit people throughout history. As a result of categorizing different races as remote, primitive, or uncivilized, colonization is enabled by creating dependency and hegemony. Therefore, "postcolonization [sic] relies more than simply perceiving that one culture is foreign or alien to another; it involves one group maintaining power over another through strategies, technologies and practices of domination" (Pluim & Jorgenson, 2012, p. 28). Colonial studies scholars suggest colonialism did not end with the return of lands and political sovereignty; instead, colonialism subversively exists today in forms of hegemony such as neo-colonialism, military control, international trade markets, and international development (Pluim & Jorgenson, 2012). Pluim & Jorgenson (2012) argue that from a post-colonial lens, youth volunteer abroad programs contribute to historical colonial structures by perpetuating dominant values and indirectly reinforcing the superiority-inferiority binary. Consequently, despite positive intentions of wanting to "help" and volunteer overseas, these IEL programs perpetuate the dominant narrative of the Global South as inferior while the Global North remains superior. This concept is thinly veiled in race relations as the narrative situates the white saviours in the North in a powerful position over the countries primarily comprised of people of colour in the South. This superiority-inferiority binary informed my study by providing theory and language to interpret responses from the Canadian students during data collection.

Many scholars in IEL and development discourse research power dynamics between "developed" and "developing" countries. For example, Macdonald (2014) states:

> Dividing the world into two categories based on their 'development', with tenses that indicate either completion of the task of development or a current engagement with it, juxtaposes peoples in specific relations to one another, and the West as the end of a line of progress the rest of the world is journeying towards. (p. 214)

Furthermore, Jefferess (2002) argues, "it should not be assumed that people in the South desire to develop in a similar fashion as the North or that Canadian material culture should be the implicit standard of 'development'" (p. 11). This is problematic, as it paints a picture that developing countries are the impoverished "Others" who are passive victims in their circumstances (Jefferess, 2012). The shape of development discourse continues to dominate over the perspective of the privileged in developed countries, which directly translates to the existing social inequities prevalent in IEL programming.

Heron (2007) contends this is a result of the media age in which we live that increases the "Othering" that occurs with representations over time. This is caused in part because of the images received in the Global North of the Global South without historical analysis (Heron, 2007). Another form of "Othering" is the concept of exoticizing of the "Other" which can occur with participants upon returning from their placement (Larsen, 2016). In another example, Sanatoro & Major (2012) contend the gaze of the locals may fall on the participants, as the locals viewed participants as the "exotic Other". Heron (2007) argues that "Othering" can occur with culture shock, as material conditions that participants encounter during their trip are considered vastly different from their lives in Canada, therefore positioning the host communities as "Other" through "undifferentiated foreignness" (p. 59). The social construction of the "Other" in IEL programs is important to consider on a study focused on racial privilege because situating people from the Global South as the foreign "Other" inherently creates a power imbalance in favour of participants from the Global North.

2.1.4. Canadian Identity

Several scholars (Fizzell & Epprecht, 2014; Pluim & Jorgenson, 2012; Drolet, 2014; Clost, 2014) have expanded on IEL as colonial projects that sustain white settler privilege. Referring to Canadian IEL participants, Fizzell & Epprecht (2014) state:

> Students coming to the realization that they cannot change others can be considered an important learning goal. However, without realizing it, this participant is implying that there is something inherent in the North American culture or lifestyle that brings about a higher standard of living than that of the host community. (p. 123)

There is a common misconception that the way of the Canadian white perspective is the standard, and it is critical to highlight the need to problematize this concept in order for realistic expectations to be set before the IEL trip.

Pluim & Jorgenson (2012) assert that structural barriers exist in youth volunteering abroad programs, including the way in which participants are typically comprised of middle to upper-class youth with Canadian values that reflect their social positioning. Therefore, as Drolet (2014) states, "students who engage in international experiential learning must be conscious of their social location and have an understanding of how their Canadian education can be rooted in Western perspectives and ideologies that affect their practice and their values" (p. 185-186). Clost (2014) expands this thought by emphasizing how volunteering abroad is marketed to Canadians as a way to attain a global perspective through the usage of photographs that highlight the positive, constructive role that Canadians play in the developing world narrative. Specifically, the role of a child caregiver is projected onto Canadian women, as the market is flooded with images of young white women acting as a mother figure to children of colour in developing nations (Clost, 2014). Clost alludes to a marketing strategy for IEL programs that address race and class. Similarly, Pluim & Jorgenson (2012) report that the overwhelming majority of the demographic participating in IEL programs is white and female. Heron (2007) expands by arguing colonial continuities exist in the construction of gender, which situates white middle-class women to feel the need to perform "goodness" by helping others. Development work and international volunteering fulfill this imperative for female members of the dominant group in Canada and other Northern countries (Heron, 2007). This is an important concern, as King (2004) argues that IEL programs can reinforce prejudices and perpetuate power inequities between developed and developing countries.

Another important consideration is dominant Canadian values being indirectly projected onto host communities. Pluim & Jorgensen (2012) assert that one method through which Canadian values are indirectly promoted is formal educational programming by development agencies. As some agencies advertise IEL trips to provide curriculum development and school construction, Canadian values, knowledge and experiences are positioned as a dominant perspective that guides the ethical framework (Pluim & Jorgenson, 2012). Despite some scholarship referencing Canadian values (Fizzell & Epprecht, 2014; Drolet, 2014; Clost, 2014; Pluim & Jorgenson, 2012), I argue

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this is problematic as the concept of Canadian values used in these articles refers to the white dominant group. That distinction is important to make, as not all societal groupings of people in Canada share the same perspective.

2.1.5. Transformative Impacts

Scholars studying IEL programs have generally explored the impacts made on participants through three aspects – cross-cultural understanding, expanding students' ideas about future careers, and the benefits of experiential learning. What is missing from these studies is the focus on racial privilege and race. Pluim & Jorgenson (2012) state a major advantage of IEL trips is the lifelong, in-depth, and transformational learning benefits gained during trip for participants. Drolet (2014) supports this argument by acknowledging that cross-cultural collaboration cultivates new knowledge and understanding. As argued by Pluim & Jorgenson (2012), this cross-cultural experience, "exposes students to different ways of thinking and being in the world and fosters their abilities to better understand international issues, to think through multiple perspectives and to build relationships with people from different backgrounds" (p. 27). Furthermore, relationships develop across cultures as well as between participants, which is a tremendously valuable element of IEL trips (Pluim & Jorgenson, 2012). Epprecht (2004) echoes the transformational impacts of IEL trips by suggesting that cultural exchanges foster greater student autonomy and allow students to naturally learn without the direct supervision of their home educational institution. As such, Ngo (2014) argues that cross-cultural competency is not always a natural result of IEL programs, and needs to become a purposeful pedagogy.

Conversely, Tiessen (2014) argues that little evidence is available to discover the motivations and benefits of IEL trips in the context of cross-cultural understanding and solidarity. In a study conducted by Tiessen (2014), 34% of the participants indicated cross-cultural understanding to be the main motivation for participating in IEL trips. Considering the short length of trips that Canadian universities are adopting, the likelihood of genuine cross-cultural understanding is questionable. Tiessen (2014) concludes that while the international experience did not increase cross-cultural understanding, it did affect participants' career goals in some capacity, exposing them to the practical side of development work.

Tiessen's (2014) study found another benefit to IEL programs— experiences that allow undergraduate students to help decide their future careers. In many ways, Tiessen's study acknowledged the potential for IEL trips to be an effective method of experiential learning. However, a racial dynamic is introduced when a majority of research focuses on participants from the Global North over-looking how the host community in the South may be impacted by IEL programs. For example, Baker-Boosamra et al. (2006) offer another perspective by suggesting that a common reason for host communities to participate in IEL programs is the cultural exchange. These scholars argue that stakeholders in the host community understand the benefits of mutual understanding and exchange of ideas by creating relationships of solidarity (Baker-Boosamra et al., 2006). The essence of these arguments suggests that IEL trips have potential to be valuable and worthwhile opportunities for both participants and host communities, but life-long benefits are more likely to occur for participants than for the host community.

Roddick (2014) claims that after returning home from a trip, participants are welcomed with the expectation to participate in social justice activities that intend on educating the Canadian public about development issues related to the host community and by extension, the Global South. This is problematic, as students may experience conflicting emotions, such as:

1. Their inability to find time to fully articulate their experience abroad with others;

2. Feeling as though time spent abroad was not real (or a real "time out" from life);

3. Discovering that their international experience was not enough to solidify "expert" status on international development. (Roddick, 2014, p. 259)

As a result, this disrupts participants' in-depth reflection on their personal experiences while abroad, can promote a platform to speak on behalf of countries in the Global South and cause participants to assume their experiences make them experts about that specific country. The sense of speaking on behalf of countries is closely related to *mastering place*. According to Macdonald (2014), mastering place refers to the narratives of place used to define and claim expertise of a place. Macdonald explains, "this mastering often negates nuances and complexities while figuring the narrator as the

'knower'" (p. 218). This sense of mastering place is tied to racial privilege because of how confidently participants describe the host community relative to how well they believe they understand the local culture and people. Furthermore, a key feature of colonization places the colonizers as the 'knowers' that speak on behalf of the colonized. Baillie Smith & Laurie (2011) reiterate the pressure on participants to have a transformational outcome after their trip when stating:

> The state, the corporate sector and non-government organisations (NGOs), increasingly share a narrative emphasising international volunteering's capacity to develop volunteers whose impacts on global equity or their professional identities emerge on their return as much as during their stay overseas. (p. 545)

In essence, Baillie Smith & Laurie (2011) suggest an underlying expectation that participation in an IEL trip will foster transformational impacts that will guide participants in shaping their professional identities. However, there is limited literature available to support these claims and it cannot be guaranteed that life-changing impacts will occur.

2.1.6. Summary

The literature presented in this review has substantially influenced my study and helped to identify further gaps in research. I chose to explore racial privilege because of my past experiences with IEL programs and academic interests. From the literature on the one-directional flow of benefits in favour of the Global North (Tiessen, 2012; Heron, 2011), this study centers the perspectives of participants in order to explore how their motivations for travel affect their volunteer experience. As scholars (Tiessen & Huish, 2014; Travers, 2014; Heron, 2011; Cameron, 2014) argue that motivations for travel are rooted in self growth and development, my research aims to take it one step further by making connections between personal motivations and racial privilege.

Overall, scholars who examine how participants described racial privilege throughout their IEL trip experience inform my research. Several studies have troubled the superior/inferior binary between the Global North/South (Howard & Burns, 2015; Pluim & Jorgenson, 2012). This has impacted the critical perspective my thesis has taken to analyze a power dynamic that has affected the structural design of current IEL programming. Furthermore, various aspects of the colonial construction of the "Other' impacted my study, such as considering when/how instances of exoticizing the "Other"

is present in the data. Another consideration in my data analysis was how the participants formulated perceptions of "Other".

Another critical component of the literature review that informs my study is the scholarship involving Canadian identity (Fizzell & Epprecht, 2014; Pluim & Jorgenson, 2012). Exploring concepts of Canadian identity through a racial privilege lens builds on other scholarship that trouble assimilating Canadian identity as western perspectives and ideologies. My research is informed by taking a closer look at the relationship between Canadian national identity and racial privilege. Furthermore, my research aims to examine the language used to describe Canadian perspectives and prove that not all Canadians share the same perspective. Having presented the existing literature on what we understand about IEL programming and racial privilege, I will now detail the theoretical framework that my study is informed by.

2.2. Theoretical Framework

This section explores theories and concepts that shape the conceptual basis of my research inquiry. The two theoretical frameworks that inform my analysis and discussion of the data are Critical Whiteness Studies and Postcolonial Theory.

2.2.1. Critical Whiteness Studies

Critical Whiteness Studies (CWS) is the growing scholarship that addresses the invisible structures that reproduce white supremacy and privilege. These studies have drawn from the works of previously marginalized people of colour that have challenged, and continue to challenge notions of whiteness (Matias, 2016). The key premise that CWS relies on is that whiteness is a social construct that creates barriers between groups that influence identities (Matias, 2016). CWS relies on the premise that, "white supremacy is maintained by the hegemonic naturalization of whiteness" (Matias, 2016, p. 86). CWS seeks to deconstruct this naturalization process to understand the standards that underpin whiteness and how that can create unearned benefits for Whites.

An essential component of critical whiteness studies is the relationship between privilege and power. According to DiAngelo (2016), privilege refers to the rights, benefits,

and resources constantly available to members of the dominant group, and maintains power by disadvantaging other marginalized groups. DiAngelo states, "the fact that an assumed right is not granted to everyone turns it into a privilege - an unearned advantage" (2016, p. 69). One of the most distinguishable traits of privilege is that it is usually not recognized as such by the dominant group because it is assumed that privilege is available to all, they have earned it, or they are lucky (DiAngelo, 2016). According to Johnson (2006), one the most visible consequences of privilege is the unequal distributions of jobs, wealth, income, and all aspects related to income such as education, housing, and healthcare. This class privilege allows people to assume general acceptance in the world and operate in a relatively wide comfort zone (Johnson, 2006). The ease of not being aware of privilege is what Johnson (2006) calls the "luxury of obliviousness" (p. 21). Being conscious of privilege requires an effort and commitment that can be easily dismissed by the dominant group. This obliviousness to privilege informs my study by providing insight on how participant's views on their own social location have been structured.

Similarly, Peggy McIntosh (1989) categorizes privilege into two types. The first one is labelled *unearned entitlements*, which are things of value that all people should have a right to, but is only made available to the dominant group. Therefore, when the entitlement is only made available to certain groups, this becomes an unearned advantage. The second form of privilege is *conferred dominance*, which adds another complex layer to privilege by giving one group power over the other (McIntosh, 1989). Conferred dominance is prevalent in racial privilege and relevant to this study because my research looks at how the power dynamic between the dominant group (Global North) and other marginalized groups (Global South) is inherent in IEL programs. It is imperative to examine that relationship as participants describe their connection to the host country and interaction with the community.

Whiteness in IEL programming is defined as, "Receiving preferential treatment in small and big ways because of being white… also having access to and acceptance in the wider expatriate community" (Heron, 2007, p. 95). Thus, the implications are problematic since whiteness clearly indicates dominance in relations of power. An area of focus in this study is to explore how white privilege influences IEL programming. This lens will be utilized when analyzing participant responses to take a closer look at the northern-based volunteer and host community. The critical whiteness lens will be used to

interpret how participants describe aspects of Uganda (people and culture) prior to trip and how those perspectives change at different stages throughout the IEL trip experience. Additionally, I will use this framework to interpret how mastering place and personal interests underscore motivations for participating in an IEL trip. Lastly, I use this theoretical lens to identify how participants define privilege and how racial privilege is apparent in their IEL experience.

Referring back to Crenshaw's (1991) work on intersectionality, it is important to recognize that race is not the only dimension of privilege. This is a critical component to my study, as various dimensions of class and gender privilege also emerged from the data. Privilege is intersectional. For instance, one cannot identify racial privilege without also focusing on class, nor can one define class privilege without simultaneously attending to gender (Johnson, 2006). Class privilege is briefly mentioned in chapters four and five, and focused on in more depth in chapter six. For the purposes of this study, racial privilege is the main focus of analysis; however, other dimensions of privilege are also prevalent which I make clear in the section on "Canadian Identity."

2.2.2. Postcolonialism

Postcolonial scholarship emerged from the colonization process by exploring the structural and systemic power relations that are still prevalent in current society. My use of postcolonial theory is in relation to the production and reinforcement of colonial meanings and therefore, colonial hegemony (Ghandi, 1998). Postcolonial theory provides, "a way of addressing the cultural production of those societies affected by the historical phenomenon of colonialism" (Ashcroft, 2001, p. 7). Canada as a colonial settler society in the Global North requires a deeper investigation to examine how this has impacted historically colonized countries in the Global South. Therefore, a postcolonial perspective is imperative to my study.

In 1978, Edward Said released his landmark book *Orientalism*, marking the beginning of postcolonial studies. The text demonstrates how the categorization of West and East, or for Said, the "Occident" and the "Orient" was not a natural process. Said's work focuses on the production of the Occident's assumptions and commonplace understandings about the Orient (Hall, 2007). As a result, this text's contribution to post-colonial scholarship emphasizes the revelation of the "reciprocal relationship between

colonial knowledge and colonial power" (Ghandi, 1998, p. 67), reinforcing the Occident's authority over the Orient. This is exemplified when Ghandi (1998) argues discourse is considered Orientalist when the Occident claims the right to speak on behalf of the mute (Orient), describing the Orient negatively as the impoverished "Other". Therefore, this places the Orient as a subject race dominated by a race that thinks they know what is best for them better than they could know themselves. This power dynamic between the Orient and Occident aligns with development discourse that examines the relationship between the Global South and Global North.

A key component of postcolonialism that is relevant to my study is travel or travel writing. Edwards & Graulund (2010) compare travel narratives to other textual practices associated with colonial expansion and suggest travel writing reinforces notions of difference that has justified colonialism. Therefore, travel writing allowed European powers to control nations outside of Europe beyond the expansion of land (Edwards & Graulund (2010). This dominance is a critical aspect of the construction of modern-day conceptions of identity such as gender, race, and economic status (Ivison, 2003). A postcolonial perspective examines how the traveller is an observer of colonial nations and how privilege and power continue to be reinforced when travelling to the Global South. This is an important aspect of my study as IEL programs integrate volunteering abroad to the Global South in order to explore and 'help' a country overseas. This theory paired with CWS will support my study's focus on white privilege and identity, and how that contrasts the local Ugandan community.

Referring back to Pluim & Jorgenson's (2012) argument that IEL programs contributing to historical colonial structures by perpetuating dominant values continues to reinforce the superior/inferior binary between the Global North/South. Historically, colonial rule was affirmed by theories that reference, "people in the colonized world as inferior, childlike, or feminine, incapable of looking after themselves… and requiring the paternal rule of the west for their own best interests (today they are deemed to require 'development')" (Young, 2003, p. 2). The theorization of how the "Other" has been represented in the Global North is specifically relevant to my thesis, as it helps me to understand how the participants of the study position themselves as white "Canadian" students travelling to help or understand the "Other" in Uganda.

Critical whiteness studies and postcolonialism inform my analysis of data for this study. The foundation of critical whiteness studies challenges the evolving relationship between race, privilege, and power. Postcolonial theory looks at the colonization process and its ongoing effects. This has influenced my data analysis to identify the power dynamics inherent between white students from Canada (Global North) and local Ugandans (Global South) and how that intersects with the IEL trip experience.

Chapter 3.

Methodology

My research seeks to understand the IEL trip experience through the perspective of Canadian undergraduate students. In this study, I aim to develop an understanding of how racial privilege and colonialism permeate the structural design of IEL programs. This line of inquiry centers the perspective of white Canadian undergraduate students and their trip experience by taking into consideration what prior knowledge participants have before their trip and how they are making meaning of the trip experience while in Uganda, and by documenting their reflections on their trip experience once they have returned to Canada. Therefore, a qualitative research method was the most suitable approach. My research inquiry attends to how students make meaning of and/or fail to recognize racial privilege during their IEL trips.

3.1. Research Design

My study has an inductive and qualitative approach that is informed by phenomenological practices (Creswell, 2012). According to Yin (2011), this approach allows the data to lead to the materialization of concepts that allows the researcher to build understanding. The intention of a qualitative study is to understand individual experiences of a central phenomenon, rather than to generalize a population (Creswell, 2012). As a qualitative researcher, I recognize how participants of this study are influenced by their personal cultural experiences and how these perspectives are formed and adopted through interactions with others and through cultural and historical norms (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

A qualitative research approach was essential because this study centered the experiences and perspective of university students participating in an IEL program. According to Yin (2011), there are five features of qualitative research: investigating meaning in people's lives through real-world experiences, representing the perspectives of participants in the study, acknowledging the contextual conditions which participants lived within, adding insights to existing concepts that help explain human behaviour or the studied phenomenon, and utilizing multiple sources of evidence instead of relying on

a single source. Furthermore, Yin (2011) describes the strength of qualitative research as the potential to represent the views and perspectives of participants of a study. Therefore, the characteristics and strengths of qualitative research are particularly suited to the study's purpose of examining the meaning of an IEL experience through the lived experiences of participants, while taking into consideration the contextual conditions of the participants.

As a past participant of an IEL program in 2012-2013 inclusive of my undergraduate degree in International Development and then as a facilitator for ISL trips in 2015-2016, I have been a participant and facilitator in a volunteer abroad experience. I provide an insider perspective because of my experiences that allow me to understand the culture of the IEL field. Additionally, I recognize that being a member of a racial minority may affect the kind of data I collect and therefore affect interpretation by having a heightened awareness of racial privilege. My role in this study was to investigate the perspectives of my participants and use the literature and theories on IEL programming to understand the participants' feelings and motivations. By choosing to investigate this line of inquiry, I employed several strategies to bring an outsider perspective. I am aware that the data collected and interpreted are influenced by these experiences, and strategies of trustworthiness will be outlined in a later section.

3.2. Participants

After ethics approval was received from Simon Fraser University (SFU), I brainstormed ways to find my sample group. To collect my data, I chose purposive sampling (Yin, 2011), selecting an organization to collect participants that will yield the most relevant and purposeful information. As it is important to select a sample that obtains the broadest range of perspective on the subject of study (Kuzel, 1992), a general set of inclusion and exclusion criteria was set to determine the sample group. Participants were selected on the following criteria:

1. Has not travelled to the IEL destination yet

2. Living in Canada and available for an interview before and after their IEL trip

3. Currently attending a Canadian higher education institution

The study excluded participants living outside of Canada, as this study focused on the perspective of Canadian university students.

To find participants, I researched Canadian based organizations that offered IEL trips as a service to university age students. I discovered an organization based out of Vancouver that had a cohort of students about to travel over the summer of 2017. These students were participating in an IEL program from an organization that has university students from all over Canada and the U.S. travel to Uganda for a three-month study and internship program in Kampala. I reached out to the founder of the organization with my research objectives via email and scheduled an in-person meeting. After meeting with the founder of the organization, I received approval from the organization to reach out to a cohort of students that had not yet travelled to Uganda. The founder agreed to pass along my recruitment flyers that invited participants to email me directly if they were interested in participating in the study. Four students reached out stating interest, with three completing the study.

The three participants of the study were Canadian university students ranging from ages 20-21 years old and based in Ontario. All participants self-identified as white and female, with two students (Annalise and Meredith) studying International Development at their respective Canadian universities, and one student (Olivia) studying Law and Communications. Pseudonyms are used in this study to protect the identity of participants. Meredith and Annalise completed all three phases of data collection, but Olivia opted not to complete a journal. As such, information on her IEL trip experience is limited to only a pre-trip and post-trip interview.

3.3. Data Collection

I chose qualitative methods of in-depth interviews and journals – to collect data. The gathering of this data took place from May 2017 to September 2017, allowing me to understand the perspectives of student participants throughout their IEL trip experience. The four-month time frame allowed me to interview students prior to travelling on their trip, provide journals for participants to fill in during their trip, and interview students again shortly after they have returned to Canada.

Data was collected in three phases: pre-trip interviews, journals, and post-trip interviews. The interviews took place over Skype because participants were based in Ontario and not able to meet in the Vancouver area. The journals were collected through email communication once participants returned from their trip. According to Johnson (2001), in-depth interviews seek "deeper" knowledge of personal matters, such as lived experience, values and decision, cultural knowledge or perspective. Since the focus of this qualitative study was on the personal perspective of participants and their lived experiences during IEL trips, interviews are the most appropriate method to collect data. Participants were interviewed for a one-hour period a few weeks prior to their IEL trip experience and again a few weeks after returning from Uganda. The interview process was semi-structured with a set of open-ended questions considered as a guide and allowed for additional follow up questions in response to the participant's answers. The set questions that were asked of all participants inquired about their knowledge of international development issues and local culture, individual expectations of IEL trip, and motivations for travelling on an IEL experience[1].

A pre-trip and post-trip interview structure is appropriate for this study in order to determine where the participants are located on international development topics prior to the IEL program compared to after the trip when participants have had time to critically reflect on their experience. Elliott (2012) argues that a repeated interview structure helps establish internal validity of the findings, as researchers can compare if the participants are consistent between the interviews. Furthermore, the emphasis of interviewees setting the agenda while interviewers listen to, rather than suppress their lived experiences (Elliott, 2012) is a major reason why this data collection method was most appropriate for my research objectives. The questions that guided the interview asked participants to compare their expected outcomes of their trip to their lived experiences while in Uganda. The open-ended nature of the interview invited participants to voice final reflections and learning outcomes after returning to Canada.

Additionally, the participants of this study were provided with a journal with a set of guiding questions that focused on their experiences while on trip. A journal is a diary and a log that provides a description of experiences and account of personal reflections and events (Chabon & Lee-Wilkerson, 2006). The process of journaling can be

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[1] Interview guide is in Appendix A.

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considered "expressive writing" or "therapeutic writing" (Kerner & Fitzpatrick, 2007). According to Hayman et al. (2012), journaling as part of qualitative research can be used as a means of data that records information for later analysis. Furthermore, journaling can be used with other data to enrich information gathered from interviews (Hayman et al., 2012). For this study, I opted for a journal because I did not travel to Uganda with participants and it was imperative to capture their thoughts while overseas. This strategy supplemented the data collected from interviews to deepen the understanding by identifying patterns or changes in participants' perspectives throughout the IEL trip. It also allowed a first person perspective important for understanding their relationship to others and their own social location. Guiding questions were added into the journals that prompted participants to reflect and think more deeply about their experience. Students were invited to incorporate photos of their trip in the journal to supplement their logs but opted not to include them.

Data was collected and protected in adherence with Research Ethics Board (REB) guidelines at SFU. All interviews were conducted on Skype and audio recorded through a computer microphone or an iPad and files were stored in a secure folder on an SFU server. Audio files were transcribed on an encrypted laptop. When not in use, the audio files and transcriptions were saved on a password-protected and encrypted hard drive. The journals were also saved on the same encrypted hard drive. The audio-recordings were deleted soon after transcription was complete. Only my supervisors or I had access to the recordings or journals. To maintain confidentiality, the only files with identifiable participant information were the informed consent documents. These documents were stored in a locked filing cabinet at SFU.

3.4. Data Analysis

I adopted Yin's (2011) five phases of qualitative analysis for this study. The phases are as follows: compiling, disassembling, reassembling (and arraying), interpreting, and concluding (Yin, 2011). Yin (2011) argues that analysis first begins with compiling the data and organizing the data in order. The second phase, disassembling, requires breaking down the compiled data into smaller fragments. This procedure entailed assigning new labels or 'codes' to the fragments. I read the transcripts and journal entries, made notes in margins, and then formed initial codes according to the questions asked and the existing literature. Additionally, I adopted Miles et al.'s (2014)

approach to coding by first identifying the descriptive codes, then proceeded to identifying inferential (or pattern) codes in both the transcriptions of the interviews and in the journals. This phase aligned with the third phase (Yin, 2011), as reassembling requires reorganizing the fragments into different groups or sequences than the original notes. Radnor (2002) calls this *topic ordering* as themes emerged from reading the whole text and shaped the framework from which my analysis was created. When coding from emerging themes in the data, I cross-referenced and compared existing codes with other data collection phases (i.e. pre-trip interview with trip journals, trip journals with post-trip interview, pre-trip interview with post-trip interview, and all three phases collectively). This is a strategy of triangulating to build credibility for this study. Additionally, strategies of bracketing were adhered to mitigate potential biases throughout the research process (Morgan, 2011).

The fourth phase, interpreting, involves taking the reassembled material to create a new narrative that relates to my research objectives and inquiry. When analyzing the emerging themes in my data, I selected three main coding themes most pervasive in the data. These were considered the most prevalent because of reoccurring themes evident in all three data collection phases. The final stage, concluding, synthesizes the main themes and identifies key information about the whole study. As such, these conclusions were connected to all phases of data analysis and are reflected in the final chapter of this thesis. As these five phases are interconnected, it is challenging to describe the data analysis process in a linear fashion, which speaks to the non-linear and emergent characteristics of qualitative research.

3.5. Trustworthiness

To build trustworthiness of the data in this study, several strategies outlined by Lincoln and Guba (1985) were employed. I adopted a few approaches that increase the probability that credible findings will be produced through pro-longed engagement and triangulation. First, pro-longed engagement is described as, "the investment of sufficient time to achieve certain purposes: learning the 'culture'…and building trust" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 301). I invested a sufficient amount of time collecting data from participants through three phases spanning four months that portrays an accurate depiction of the IEL experience. Furthermore, I was already very familiar with the culture of IEL trips as an "insider" accustomed to the IEL program format as a participant and a

facilitator. Secondly, three triangulation strategies were utilized: the use of multiple sources, methods and theories (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Using various sources and methods to collect data, such as using both interviews and journals, allowed me to compare participants' responses at different stages in their trip experience. Furthermore, I was able to compare data among all three participants who travelled to Uganda at the same time, strengthening my ability to draw accurate portrayals of their trip experiences. Additionally, I triangulated the data with multiple theories in existing research and literature to build credibility. Reviewing the current literature on IEL programming allowed me to identify a knowledge gap that was important to address and provided the language and theory to analyze the data in this study.

Although my previous academic and work experience was useful in knowing the culture of IEL as an insider, it is also important to acknowledge *researcher bias*. Researcher bias is explained as threats to the trustworthiness of the qualitative conclusions in a study, such as only selecting certain aspects of the data that fit into existing theories and the choosing to disseminate data that the researcher considers prominent (Miles et al., 2014). According to Maxwell (2005), it is impossible to eliminate the researcher's theories, beliefs, and conceptual lens in qualitative research. Instead, it is important to acknowledge how the researcher's particular values influence conclusions of the study (Maxwell, 2005). Therefore, *bracketing* was an essential strategy that I used to minimize that bias. According to Tufford & Newman (2012), bracketing is a method employed to increase the trustworthiness of a project by mitigating potential harmful effects of unacknowledged assumptions related to the research. Bracketing also allows the researcher to develop deeper levels of reflection throughout all stages of the qualitative research process (Tufford & Newman, 2012). Through strategies of bracketing, I recognized that each phenomenon (i.e. IEL trip) is unique and did not assume my experience as a trip participant to be synonymous with others'. I made every effort to ask open-ended questions and interpreted responses thoughtfully. During this process, it is of utmost importance that I kept an open mind when interpreting the data to avoid entrapment of my own ideologies. There are other limitations to this study outlined in the section below.

3.6. Limitations of the study

There are a few limitations to this study that emerged from the data collection process. Firstly, only three participants were interested in participating in the study. That did not allow for a more purposeful selection of participants that included a variety of backgrounds. Additionally, one participant chose not to complete a journal, so data for her trip experience was only limited, available through pre-trip and post-trip interviews.

Another limitation of the study was the absence of data collection during the participant's time in Uganda. This was restrictive because I was not able to observe participants during this experience. This was supplemented through journals that were submitted to me once participants returned from Uganda, but it is unknown when participants filled out the journal. Their perspective at the beginning of the trip may be different compared to nearing the end of their experience. As a result, the journaling method requires the entire trip experience to be grouped as one time period although perspectives may have shifted during this time.

Although being an insider of knowledge on IEL trips was helpful to understand the culture of IEL programs, my research inquiry focused on understanding racial privilege. Therefore, my biases as an insider and person of colour may have influenced my interpretation. However, I did triangulate the data through three data collection phases and compared participants' responses to one another to provide a holistic perspective on the IEL experience. I also relied on the literature of the IEL experience to support the analysis of data. Furthermore, I was aware of my biases during interpretation and took measures to ensure I was not assuming participant experiences were the same as my own. These measures included asking for clarification when students used terms such as 'white saviour' and 'privilege' and making every effort to interpret responses thoughtfully and with an open mind.

In this chapter, I described the qualitative research approach I have taken with my study. I have described my methods of data collection (in-depth interviews and journals) and outlined what strategies were employed to analyze the data. I employed strategies of triangulation, and prolonged engagement to build trustworthiness. I described aspects of researchers bias and limited selection for participants as limitations to my study and offered strategies on how those limitations were addressed.

Chapter 4.

Theme One: Imaginary Africa

One theme that arose from participants' interviews was their description of Africa before their time in Uganda and after. Prior to their IEL trip, participants described what they knew about Uganda and what they heard from other people about it. They each drew on an "imaginary Africa" one that came out of media representations, personal research, and word of mouth from peers. With their journals and post-trip interviews, participants detailed how they built their understanding of Uganda and planned to continue their relationship with Uganda once their IEL trip was completed. Findings from the data are organized into two sub-themes: country and local people.

4.1. Country

As participants described their initial thoughts about Uganda in the pre-trip interviews, it became apparent they were excited about travelling to an unfamiliar continent. For example, when asked to describe what they were most excited about experiencing while in Uganda, Annalise explained she previously travelled to Ecuador on an ISL trip and was excited to travel to an African country like Uganda because it seemed "gorgeous and exciting." She mentioned that she was relieved that local people in Kampala speak English. She stated that she was worried about stereotypes she had heard from peers about Africa. She explained:

> My worries are very minimal compared to my family and the stigma that I've gotten in saying that I'm going to Africa, and having people be like, now learn how to shoot a gun and learn weird stuff like that… it's come up so many times where Africa is civil war and conflict, and corruption and guns and HIV… apparently, the people are extremely friendly and nice and intelligent, so I want to bring that knowledge back for myself and I think that as soon as you step into that environment, you take a look at your own stereotypes that I obviously have in the back of my head.

The passage above demonstrated Annalise's understanding of Africa prior to travelling to Uganda.

Meredith explained that she imagined Kampala to be different from other areas in Uganda. According to Meredith, "Kampala is quite metropolitan compared to many other areas of Uganda, so I think that'll be very interesting to see." She claimed to have researched Uganda because a report was required for a university credit. The report included topics such as the history of the city, country, and current social situations. Despite doing extensive research, Meredith understood that she might experience a few uncertainties during her time in Uganda. She stated:

> I've looked at how life is in Kampala but I don't know if I'm going to have an opportunity to travel much outside of Kampala, so I think that will be interesting.

In contrast, Olivia stated that she had not done much research about Uganda other than the basics and what she had heard from other people. She explained:

> I mean you can Google things about the country but it's different cause you're on the other side of the world so it's different than when you're there, you're interested in certain things, and then you go about learning it, you're more likely to remember the stuff.

As this quote suggests, Olivia doesn't have specifics on what Uganda will be. However, she does signal openness about learning and building knowledge. All three participants display different levels of preparation prior to trip and offer few details on Uganda.

Upon arriving in Uganda, participants began to compare their initial assumptions to what they were witnessing while living in Kampala through their journals. For example, Meredith's journal described Kampala being different from the typical media representation of Africa. She wrote:

> Kampala does have slums and I did see shoeless children in the streets on my way to work, but many people here have beautiful homes and most of the people I've met enjoy their lives in Kampala… It's also a very beautiful country and that the images of a fly in the eye of a child or pictures of Somali refugees in boats are not representative of the whole of Africa and of the reality many people live in Kampala.

In her journal entry, Meredith dismissed the stereotypical images of Africa to adequately characterize the realities for many people that live in Africa. This is important to showcase Meredith's perception of the country and local people and how that evolved from her pre-trip journal. As a result of the IEL experience, Meredith explained that she felt slightly desensitized to images of poverty. She described:

> On my journey from home to work and vice versa, I see wonderful houses, people in suits… [and] well taken care of roads. But I also see shoeless children on my way, as well as numerous run-down buildings… After nearly three months of seeing those sights, it becomes just part of the day, and I feel like I'm less affected by those sights now. I don't know if that's good or bad.

Meredith's final statement of uncertainty illustrated an internal struggle experienced while on her trip. The cause of this internal conflict resulted from Meredith witnessing poverty first-hand that may not have occurred unless she participated in this IEL experience.

In the post-trip interviews, all three participants noted the difference in what they saw living in Uganda and what they assumed prior to the IEL experience. For example, Meredith noted her surprise at how her apartment in Uganda was nicer than any space she lived in during her undergraduate studies in Canada. The location of the apartment was in an expat neighbourhood, which had a neighbouring community that Meredith noted was considered a slum. She described the income disparity with an example of advertising she saw in both neighbourhoods. She explained:

> You have bulletin boards in Bukoto that were fair-skinned South Asian people or straight up white people… in those neighbourhoods, you have advertisements that are very clearly directed at foreigners or more affluent populations in the country. But if you go into the slum areas, the advertisements were of Ugandans… directed towards populations, the wealth disparity and the inequality in wealth was very apparent between expats and the general population of the locals and that was just seen in the upkeep of different areas.

This example describes the divide between white foreigners and local Ugandans that Meredith notices in neighbouring communities in Uganda.

Olivia labelled her IEL trip experience as, "the best summer of my life" and described a major highlight being the weekend getaways. She listed her weekend trips to Rwanda and going white water rafting on the Nile as the most memorable parts of her experience. In her post-trip interview, Olivia does not describe the country in detail; however, she asserted that she saw more of Uganda through independent travels than her local internship. She specified:

> My kind of learning and understanding of Uganda was through my own interactions, outside. Anytime we would go out to a restaurant, travel to a different place and stuff like that. That is when I got exposed to certain things and saw more of Uganda.

Since Olivia provided little information on her understanding of Uganda prior to her experience, the passage above indicated that learning took place from an immersive experience while in the country. This aligned with her previous comment about not doing much research prior to the trip, preferring to learn while in Uganda. When asked about how her understanding of development has changed from this IEL experience, she was shocked by how developed Uganda appeared to be. She explained:

> They don't really need people, you know how people come in to build schools, and they don't need any of that shit… It was a lot more developed than I thought it would be and it changed my whole perception of how people think. In particular, ME to WE and all those programs, how they go in and kind of put the picture into the minds of the students that Africa needs our help and Uganda needs to be more developed because they're not developed and they don't have the resources to do this. They do have the resources… They do have the people willing to do it, they don't need young students to build houses or build schools for them.

Olivia described Ugandans to be capable of developing their own country independent of external organizations. In essence, Olivia revealed a new perspective of development work in Uganda because of her IEL experience.

4.2. Local People

Throughout the interviews, all three participants mentioned interactions they had with the local community and how they built relationships with the local people. As described in the previous section, Annalise's family and friends had concerns about her travelling to Uganda. Later in her journal, Annalise shared her own perspective. She described Ugandan people to be friendly, outgoing, and to have a "divine sense of humour and hospitality." She stated:

> There was one memorable time I was standing…in the rain for several minutes, and a shopkeeper on the other side of the street actually ventured out into the rain with an umbrella… and pulled me by the hand into her shop to sit down and keep me out of the rain.

She also had friendly conversations with her boda drivers (described as motorcycle taxis). She added that the local people with whom she interacted wanted to learn more about her and Canada, and appreciated that she had the opportunity to learn more about Uganda from them. Throughout the journals and post-trip interviews, Annalise frequently mentioned the friendly nature of Ugandans and as a result, made her feel less

stressed. She elaborated that she appreciated being able to discover new aspects of herself while in Uganda. Similarly, Olivia considered Ugandans to be happier than Canadians. She claimed some of the people she interacted with in Uganda did not complain about the little things in life. Olivia explained, "…they're very calm, relaxed, they don't complain as much. Something could go wrong but they're not stressed out about it, they don't really care. Well they do care but it's not like, here we would get anxiety over it."

Extending Annalise's and Olivia's positive descriptions of Ugandans, Meredith recalled that she enjoyed conversations with her coworkers because she felt that a relationship was forming with the local community, which allowed her to feel less like an outsider. She developed a positive relationship with her boda driver and with a woman who brought lunch to her office. She wrote:

> Innocent the boda driver picks me up every day to go to work and to come back home, and he's a nice guy who always been very honest with me regarding telling me when I pay too much or where I should be going to buy things. Then there's June the lunch lady who is a stellar cook... Both Innocent and June have helped me become more comfortable while I've been in Uganda and I'm grateful for them.

Therefore, the relationships that Meredith built with the local community through the internship allowed her to feel more comfortable while living in Uganda. This contrasts the other two participants in the study that have described different comfort levels with interacting with the local people.

Similarly, Olivia's relationship with the local community was primarily with her co-workers. Outside of the workplace, she recalled that it was easy to meet people in the bars and clubs in Uganda. She admitted to meeting some locals when going out but added that there was not as much interaction with locals compared to that with expats. When asked if she felt comfortable interacting with locals, she responded:

> Yeah, most of the time. It depends on who you're kind of talking to and meeting. Because obviously there are some who don't seem like- it's kind of like meeting people in Canada. There are some people who you would not socialize with because you just don't trust them or anything. But overall, it was fine.

This passage described Olivia's low level of trust with the local people when going out in Kampala. Olivia did not go into further detail about what made people appear trustworthy.

In Annalise's post-trip interview, she described an experience that she relates to the term, *poverty porn*[2]. Annalise observed a friend misrepresenting the local Ugandan people through strategically choosing what aspects of Uganda to photograph while out in the field for her internship. She explained the photos of people in the community were intentionally edited to a black and white filter so subjects would appear more disadvantaged. She argued that this was harmful because, "[it] didn't portray the dynamic nature of life there that sort of painted it as one picture of disease and degradation whereas there are so many other aspects of it too." She stated her familiarity with the concept prior to the trip, but this scenario illustrated a lived experience witnessing aspects of poverty porn.

The participants faced other challenging interactions during their IEL trips. Meredith described an awkward encounter with a local Uber driver that stood out to her. Prior to this conversation, she was accustomed to interacting with her coworkers that are proud of being Ugandan. However, she said the drive was uncomfortable because she claimed that this Uber driver was resentful toward his own country. She explained:

> He really fit into this, you guys have to come over here and save us, and we're not doing well. It was every type of stereotype that you would assume about the white saviour trope… and then there was a subtle resentment towards, well why can't I help him more or something.

In this interaction, the driver commented on Meredith's whiteness and the long history of white northern-based volunteers coming over to Africa. She stated she did not know how to handle the situation because the NGO she interned at relied on local leaders that had a sense of pride and hope for their country. Meredith described it as "jarring" to interact with someone that insisted that Uganda was in need of saving at the hands of the Global North. She admitted that she had been in a social bubble of development workers and Ugandans that were generally optimistic during her trip experience. That bubble burst when encountering someone that view development work to be dependent on foreign assistance. She concluded, "It made me realize that there definitely are multiple perspectives going on in Uganda and I have been very insular with one." This statement exemplified the potential educational impact of IEL programming as Meredith realized that perspectives from members of the same group may still have different opinions.

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[2] Poverty porn, also known as "development porn" or "famine porn", is defined as any form of media that manipulates the conditions of the poor in the Global South to generate sympathy and increase support for a cause or elicit a charitable donation (OBrien, 2011)

Later in post-trip interviews, participants were asked how they planned to continue their relationship with the local community. Annalise stated her desire to return to Uganda as soon as possible and to continue working with the local NGO to create promotional videos. Meredith asserted she does not believe the relationship with her boda driver will continue, but is Facebook friends with her co-workers and reached out to her supervisors requesting an update on the projects in which she was involved. She explained an emails exchange about the conclusion of the projects, but it is unlikely they will stay in contact long term. She concluded, "I think that I have built a strong enough relationship that if I do travel back or if they ever come over to Canada, it wouldn't feel awkward to reach out to them." Alternatively, Olivia insisted that if her supervisor were to visit Canada, then it would be "no problem." She explained:

> It is kind of hard to like, maintain relationships with people you make over there because they are in a different time zone first of all so it's hard to even like communicate… it'd be hard to maintain a conversation with her because…she's busy, like I understand because I'm a student right now.

Olivia indicated challenges to a continued relationship with the local community because of the different time zones and busy schedules. All three participants' perspectives on a continued relationship with local people in Uganda varied depending on their personal connection to the local culture and community.

4.3. Discussion

Throughout the data collection process, stereotypes of Africa were a prevalent topic of discussion. Annalise recalled in the pre-trip interview that an unidentified source told her that Ugandans are 'nice, friendly, and intelligent'. After experiencing Uganda first-hand, Annalise confirmed these sentiments in her post-trip interviews as she reiterated the same opinion. She expanded her thoughts when discussing the culture of Uganda and how that resonated with her and stated that she planned to return to Uganda. There are two important aspects to consider. First, through a postcolonial lens, there is an element of exoticizing the "Other" (Larsen, 2016) as Annalise states her admiration for Ugandan people. Referring to Sanatoro & Major's (2012) argument of the exotic gaze, the gaze of the participant focuses on glorifying the local culture as she categorizes an entire group to share the same traits. Secondly, Annalise troubled the dominant narrative of Africa as a poor continent in need of saving, stating that there

were other perspectives in Uganda that exist other than that of the poor starving African. This provides a counter-narrative to the dominant portrayal of Africa, as it shows Annalise deepening her understanding of development from a critical perspective. This disruption to the stereotypical representation of Africa is further disrupted through Meredith's experiencing living in Kampala. When stating her shock of the nice apartments and safe neighbourhoods, Meredith unveils her previous assumptions on what living in Africa would be like and how that has been interrupted because of her trip experience.

Similarly, Meredith stated in her pre-trip interview that she imagined Kampala to be more metropolitan than other areas. However, later in her journal and post-trip interview, she continued to build her knowledge of Uganda. For example, she described seeing the income disparity in different communities through advertisements, which signals a shift in perspective to build a deeper understanding of development. She made connections with what she was experiencing and seeing while in Uganda to gain a more critical perspective on Africa's portrayal in the Canadian media. As participants began to describe their expectations, I questioned how they came to that opinion prior to travelling to Uganda. Through a postcolonial lens, I theorize current "travel writing" aspects could have influenced their responses. As Edwards & Grulund (2010) argue that modern-day conceptions of identity are a product of past travel narratives that exploit the Global South and this may have inadvertently impacted how participants define the Canadian identity and how that differs from the Ugandan identity.

In post-trip interviews, Olivia insisted that Ugandans appear to be happier than Canadians are. As she described Ugandans as relaxed with little to complain or stress about, I wonder how Olivia came to understand this perspective of the local people. There is an element of "mastering place" (Macdonald, 2014, p. 218) that underscored these iterations and I began to question if participants walked away from this IEL experience feeling a sense of expertise on Uganda's culture and lifestyle. Olivia's utterance describing the local culture and people situated her self as the knower of Uganda culture, yet it is unclear how this information can be known as an outsider of Uganda.

When Annalise describes an experience connected to poverty porn, she exemplifies the potential for IEL trips to enhance classroom learning. Annalise connects

a key concept of development from her university studies with her lived experience in Uganda. This connects to the criticism that large development NGOs receive because of how they portray poor people in the Global South (Chapman, 2016). As this was mentioned in her post-trip interview, this indicates a scenario that stood out for her from her trip experience. However, Drolet (2014) argues that participants must understand how their Canadian education is rooted in Western perspectives. Annalise acknowledges an important concept in international development education but fails to recognize how her perspective may have been influenced by her Canadian Western education. Therefore, it is important to provide support in the field or upon returning from trip for participants to describe and unpack their experiences. This could strongly influence the educational impacts of IEL programming if key concepts of development (i.e. whiteness and privilege) were revisited throughout the trip experience.

Referring back to Olivia's comments on development work in Uganda, she used the term "help". She argued that Ugandans do not need people to come in and build schools because they know how to do it themselves. This touched upon a common narrative of "helping" that takes place in development discourse. As Tiessen (2012) describes:

> Motivations expressed as a helping imperative or the desire to help others re-affirms the one-directional nature of international development volunteer profits in favour of those from the global north. The discourse and imagined self of 'helper' is expressed in relation to the benefits accrued to the ones offering said 'help' rather than the 'beneficiaries'. The northern-based volunteers thus seek out the 'effect that 'helping' the passive Other will have on our own life experiences' (Heron, 2007, p. 5). (p. 2)

In essence, Olivia argues that the people in Africa do not need help from northern-based volunteers, yet does not acknowledge the colonial history that caused the 'poor, starving Africa' narrative to form in the first place. This made me question what material is covered to participants in pre-departure training, and if/how racial privilege and the white saviour trope is explored prior to the IEL trip. This is essential to the IEL programming as it can provide participants with the knowledge and understanding of the negative influence northern-based volunteers have on a host community. Furthermore, the mastery of place is implicitly present in Olivia's statement. Although she is defending Uganda, it is not her place to do so with her limited knowledge of the country and people and not being a member of that group. Aspects of mastering place emphasize the

postcolonial rhetoric commonly used when people in the Global North describe countries in the Global South.

When Meredith detailed her relationship with the local community (the boda driver and woman that brought lunch to her office), she stated that these interactions greatly impact her day. However, these two individuals rely on Meredith's money to initiate that relationship. When one is paying another individual for a service or good, there is an immediate power dynamic that gives power to the one controlling the money. This reinforces a power dynamic between a white middle-class person controlling the money flow, remaining superior over the racialized being. Therefore, this reinforces a superior/inferior dynamic (Pluim & Jorgenson, 2012) between the Global South and North. As Meredith states that these individuals were her connection to Uganda, she did not acknowledge the power dynamic inherent in these relationships. Class is also a factor in this scenario as Meredith has the resources to hire a driver. Furthermore, Meredith fails to understand that this relationship would not exist without her paying for a good or service, indicating a lack of consideration of class privilege. This illustrates how Meredith did not reflect on her own privileges with her relationship with the local community.

The majority of the data reveals that according to participants, they believe that Ugandans are not in need of saving. An important element to unpack in the data is how participants plan to continue their relationship with the local community. This is to critique the one-directional flow of benefits that focuses on northern-based volunteers, as argued by Tiessen (2012) and Heron (2011). The one-directional flow reiterates the colonial relationship between the Global South and North, which Heron (2011) argues favours the northern-based volunteers. As previously mentioned, Annalise wanted to return to Uganda and continue to do work for her internship. I argue this illustrates a potential disruption to the one-directional flow of benefits because Annalise plans to continue a future in Uganda. In contrast, Meredith had her co-workers on social media and continued to correspond with her supervisor via email to get updates on the projects in which she was involved. She acknowledged that the email communication will not likely last forever, but if she were to return to Uganda, she would feel comfortable reaching out to them. This demonstrates an investment in the projects that she had worked on. However, her connection to the country differs from that of Annalise because the benefits of the IEL program have been solely on the participant. Lastly, Olivia

mentioned that she has her supervisor on a digital chat application, but it has been difficult to schedule time to talk because of different time zones. However, she claimed that if her supervisor came to Canada, then it would be "no problem." I interpret Olivia's response to indicate a lack of consideration for a continued relationship with Uganda upon returning to Canada, reinforcing the one-directional flow of benefits to the participant. Overall, participants' responses to a continued relationship vary depending on their connection to the local people and culture. With one participant, this disrupts the one-directional flow of benefits as Annalise continues to work with and help the local NGO she interned with. This indicates mutually valuable relationship over the other two participants who have not shown a strong likelihood of a continued relationship with the local people in Uganda.

The data show a disruption of previous stereotypes held by the participants prior to this IEL experience. A postcolonial lens highlights how patterns of colonialism and racial privilege exist when Canadian participants describe the country. Avoidance of unpacking this privilege can be detrimental to the process as participants may return to Canada with a sense of mastering place (Macdonald, 2014), which can do more harm than good. There is a strong centering of the participants perspective to theorize the impacts of the IEL trip on each individual. The next theme continues to center the complex relationship of the North vs. South by exploring the participant's motivations for participating in an IEL trip.

Chapter 5.

Theme Two: Helping and Growing

The topic of helping and growing was prevalent in all of the data as every participant focused on personal growth and development as the main motivation for participating in an IEL program. This theme is organized chronologically: pre-trip interviews, journals, and post-trip interviews.

5.1. Pre-Trip Interviews

One of the first questions I asked in the pre-trip interviews was, "what are you excited about experiencing while on trip?" All participants emphasized their personal development, such as learning from the experience, changing personal perceptions, or gaining experience working in the international development field or work experience generally. In the pre-trip interview, Annalise recalled that other people recommended enjoying the culture in Africa. She explained:

> They encourage you to go out and have fun and listen to music and travel Rwanda and Tanzania and Kenya, so all those are opportunities where I have the freedom to experience things in a different way and get to know people in a different way and sort of bring that context back is what I'm expecting.

She added that she did not expect to help the people of Uganda and emphasized that she was there to learn. Later in the conversation, I asked her what her goals were while on trip. She mentioned a few, such as challenging herself to change her perceptions and her own stereotypes. This is related to personal growth that she envisioned would occur while in Uganda. She added that she wanted to see what she could learn and do in an office environment. This referred to gaining more work experience, which is connected to professional development. Additionally, she planned to travel around and outside of Uganda as much as possible. She concluded that she would like to bring back something "life-changing" with her.

Meredith focused on another motivation for participating in an IEL trip, albeit similarly related to professional development. She asserted that the main reason why she decided to go into the program was to gain experience working in the international

development field. She was excited to have the opportunity to work with the NGO she was matched with for the program. She hoped to learn more about how their operations work and gain experience with their research projects. Meredith theorized that she would like to pursue a career in research, however at the time, did not have any experience to test if that was the field she wanted to pursue. Personal interests are rooted in Meredith's motivations, as her time in Uganda formed her understanding of development and tested career options.

Similarly, Olivia stated her excitement about her internship at a local law firm because of the relevancy to the field that she is currently studying. This extended on Meredith's motivations, as she also claimed her main motivation was to test her internship as a future career option. Olivia had done research about the law firm and claimed she would be working alongside experts in the field, so she would like to observe and learn from their experiences. When asked about her goals for the trip, she vaguely responded on her desire to enjoy her time there and immerse herself in the culture to become more familiar with Ugandan customs.

5.2. Journals

Two participants of the study wrote in their journal and both reiterated their personal motivations for participating in the IEL program. Passages from journals illustrate how personal growth and development continued to be important for participants during their time in Uganda.

When asked how the program had affected her perspective, Annalise claimed to have noticed many changes to her perspective related to personal outlook. She explained:

> It seems a cliché to say that I went abroad and discovered "what life is really about" or "what matters," but I've noticed a few concrete changes in what I care about and what I don't... For example, I used to worry a lot about how things 'looked'… like [on] social media: if it 'looked' like I posted too often or 'looked' like I was too vain or had too few friends…What matters is my experience and my perception of myself.

This change in perspective connected to the personal growth that Annalise previously mentioned in her pre-trip interview.

Meredith listed several goals she hoped to learn more about while on trip. The list encompassed different aspects of the IEL trip that mostly focused on learning more about the local NGO she will be interning at and on learning more about Uganda. They included learning more about the relationship between the NGO and the local government, learning how research is conducted, and learning how NGOs operate. The aspects of Uganda that she wanted to learn more about was how the public views refugees in Uganda, how the global environmental effects are impacting Uganda, or how religion influences society and politics. This extensive list provides an insightful look at the educational goals that Meredith has set. This list may not directly indicate personal growth to be a factor, and yet these goals are related to personal learning and educational outcomes the participant hopes to achieve. Furthermore, Meredith saw the IEL program as an opportunity to explore her interest working in East Africa in the future. This is related to her motivations for travel, as it provides explanation to what she would like to get out of this program. In the end, Meredith concluded she would not likely return to East Africa for work.

From her trip experience, Meredith declared that she did not feel like her understanding of international development has shifted. She stated having first-hand experience with development connected to theories learned in class but acknowledged that there is plenty she does not understand about development. This is another instance of personal growth because the evaluation of the impact of IEL programs is focused on the individual participant's learning rather than on benefitting the local community or contributing to poverty education. She stated that after learning from her local colleagues in Uganda who have returned home to contribute to their community after studying abroad, Meredith envisioned herself in Canada to learn how she can help her own country.

5.3. Post-Trip Interviews

In the post-trip interviews, participants were asked if their expectations of the IEL trip were met. All participants noted different aspects of the program that were memorable and described transformative impacts, although these outcomes were focused on benefitting the participant and not the host community.

Annalise described the difficulty of returning to Canada because of her life-changing experience. She explained:

> It's almost to the point where when someone says, how was your trip, that's strange because I lived there... It wasn't really the same experience as going on vacation at all… It wasn't like that at all because you live and experience a culture and then I got to travel around East Africa as well but I'd say that it was definitely life changing.

This highlighted Annalise's strong connection to Uganda by claiming the experience was more than a vacation for her. When asked about how her perspective has changed about international development since her IEL experience, Meredith claimed to have a better sense of what field she would like to pursue. She described:

> I became before more hopeful in terms of my career and what's available out there for working in international development. Before the internship, I was kind of lost with what I wanted to do. I had an idea that research is where I wanted to go but now I'm set that research is where I want to go.

The focus on self is evident as her pursuit to gain more experience from her internship is rooted in personal motivation to get a better idea of her future career options. Furthermore, Meredith claimed to have become more aware of the issues from her IEL experience. She recalled, "…I feel like I learned a lot about stuff I don't know and what I want to learn more about." Meredith acknowledged that she has learned a lot from the IEL experience and has a better understanding of what she would like to learn more about upon returning to Canada. She identified that the program gave her a lot of practical experience in the field of international development and she gained a better perspective on the realities of how development works. She clarified, "I understand now how slow the development process truly is and how much bureaucracy is involved in creating, implementing, and operating development programs." This provides evidence that some of Meredith's goals previously stated in the journal (such as learning how NGOs operate in Uganda and how research is conducted) have been answered.

In contrast to Meredith's emphasis on learning development, Olivia emphasized her personal travel as a memorable aspect of the IEL trip. Olivia claimed this IEL experience was the best summer of her life, recalling excursions that they went on throughout her time in Uganda as the most notable, such as weekend getaways in Rwanda and white water rafting on the Nile. It is clear from this response that Olivia focused on her personal travel without mention of any educational impacts or the

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possible internship experiences that stood out for her. When asked how her internship experience went compared to her expectations in the pre-trip interviews, she recognized aspects of her internship that she did not enjoy. She explained, "I kind of realized that you're stuck in an office, you're drafting documents, you're doing endless research. Sometimes it's research on stuff that you don't want to do research on or care about. It's a lot of business." This contrasted with her pre-trip interview response, which stated she was looking forward to learning from her internship and to getting more field experience to test if pursuing law would be a potential career option. As most of her internship was spent working in an office environment, she found it difficult to do research on topics that she did not care about.

5.4. Discussion

I had originally suspected that participants would refer to personal motivations for participating in an IEL experience, although I did not expect the theme to be so prevalent in the data. Personal growth appears to be an essential and event critical component of the trip, despite this IEL program not being advertised as such.

The emphasis on self-growth and personal development underscores the focus on the one-directional flow of benefits (Heron, 2011) that favours northern volunteers. Pre-trip interviews began by asking participants what they were most excited about experiencing while on trip. While all participants listed getting experience in the field which they were interested in, Annalise emphasized her desire to challenge her own perceptions and stereotypes and to bring back something "life-changing". The desire to change perspective favours Annalise and does not flow back to the host community that she benefits from. At another point in the interview, she claimed to miss the perspective that Uganda gave her and was worried that it would slip away once back in Canada. Again, Annalise's comments emphasize a one-directional flow of benefits. Her hope to gain a different perspective and bring it back to Canada does not directly benefit Uganda. With all three participants aiming to gain more work experience in a field related to their studies, the flow of benefits continually favour the participants. The prevalent goal of individual growth is emphasized by the fact that none of the participants referenced collective motivations such as social justice, solidarity, or promotion of equal rights (Tiessen, 2012). Annalise wished to bring back something life-changing, Meredith hoped for development field experience, and Olivia aimed to test career options; these

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motivations are rooted in personal growth, foregoing motivations of 'helping' Uganda and direct the flow of benefits in favour of the northern-based volunteers.

Both participants that completed journals indicate personal motivations attached to their expected outcomes of the IEL trip. Annalise claimed that the concrete changes she noticed were about her discernment on what matters most to her. She also acknowledged that her experiences and how she perceives herself are most important. These concrete changes that Annalise described emphasize personal growth, but an absence in promoting global citizenship. Again, this connects to the one-directional flow of benefits that favour the northern-based volunteer rather than contributing to development work in Uganda.

I interpret participants' motivation for partaking in an IEL trip experience from a postcolonial perspective. Meredith asserted that the time spent in Uganda has not changed her understanding of development or perspective on the role of development in the world. However, she admitted that the IEL trip enabled her to connect first-hand experiences with development theories learned in class. Jefferess (2012) argues that although IEL programs promise enrichment to the traveller, it also constitutes a new form of colonial control that typically harms the host community. Furthermore, IEL programs reinforce "a consumer-capitalist culture that focuses on the needs and interests of the most privileged" (p. 23). From the perspective of postcolonialism, this illustrates an exploitation of the Global South from the northern participant benefitting from the relationships with the local people and experiences in Uganda. Olivia's reference to personal travel as the most memorable aspect of the program alludes to the financial privilege she holds in Uganda. Personal travel is separate from the IEL experience as the primary mandate for such programs is to volunteer at a local NGO. Olivia's trip turns more to tourism during her weekend trips to Rwanda or white water rafting on the Nile. The reflections on personal travel fail to mention the economic privilege that allows her to take these excursions. Here, Johnson's (2006, p. 21) notion of privilege as the "luxury of obliviousness" prevails.

The data illustrates a shift in Meredith's understanding of international development. In her pre-trip interview, she explained she wanted to see if she could work and live in East Africa in the future but her journal and post-trip interview indicated that she is unlikely to return and work in Uganda. Meredith detailed that her colleagues

returned to Uganda after studying abroad in order to bring back that knowledge to help their local community. That inspired her to seek career options at home in Canada. I argue this reveals an expansion in her understanding of development, as she moves away from viewing development being only in the Global South. The shift in perspective to stay and explore development options in Canada signifies a viewpoint that there is a need for local development in addition to development overseas. From the perspective of postcolonialism, we can see that the characteristics of what defines countries in the Global South and North have become blurred. I argue that remnants of colonialism and 'travel writing' are inherent in development that categorizes countries in the Global South as inferior to the Global North. As development discourse has primarily focused on aid and development in the Global South, Meredith disrupts this notion by wanting to find ways to support development work in Canada. Despite Canada being a colonial settler country in the Global North, this IEL experience allows Meredith to question the notion of development itself and how and where it is applied.

While it is unsurprising that motivation to participate in an IEL trip experience is rooted in personal growth, I argue this is because personal motivations are inherent in the structural design of the program. In the post-trip interviews, participants discussed whether the trip met their expectations. The results varied by participants, but overall their reflections remain focused exclusively on personal growth. For Annalise, she insisted her time in Uganda was more than a vacation, as she felt fully immersed in the culture and lifestyle. She claimed that the memorable moments were getting to travel independently and being satisfied overall with the IEL program. Similarly, Meredith explained that this IEL program allowed her to become more hopeful in her career. As she initially stated in pre-trip interviews, she would like to explore options in research and what opportunities are available once she graduated from her undergraduate degree. Meredith signalled that her personal goals for the program were achieved by having direction about her career path toward development work in Canada. It is challenging to define the purposes of this trip other than personal growth and motivation. Evidently, this period of time allows participants to immerse in a different culture and lifestyle and understand personal career options for the future. This is inherent in the structural design of IEL programming, as a short-term (three month) trip does not provide adequate time for participants to contribute in meaningful ways to host

communities in the Global South (Tiessen, 2014). As a result of this limited time, concerns of global citizenship and "Othering" are evident in the data.

What are the implications when the primary motivation for participating in an IEL experience is rooted in personal growth and development? I argue that personal growth is not a negative outcome of IEL programs, but it is important to look at how IEL programs are designed and advertised. Annalise illustrates an understanding that the purpose of this IEL experience was meant to benefit participants and not Uganda, and this argument consistently appears in participants' responses. This outcome is not surprising given that personal growth is key to the current definition of global citizenship upon which this program is based on. IEL and ISL programming typically used the term global citizen to refer to a theoretical global community connected by a shared humanity (Andreotti, 2006). As Jefferess (2011) states:

> To be a global citizen requires helping Others in need—through humanitarian projects…global citizenship asserts a recognition of a shared humanity as the basis for conceiving of interconnection; relies on a universalist vision of what the good life or ideal world constitutes; assumes the autonomy and agency of the individual subject to act or to help; and enacts responsibility for, rather than to, the Other. (p. 3)

Jefferess (2011) argues global citizenship requires helping the "Other" while assuming a universal image of what an ideal world is and allows individuals to assume responsibility to help the "Other". This contrasts opinions of the participants, as their focus on individual growth funnels benefits towards themselves and not the "Other". Jefferess's view above underscores a commitment to the global community, but all three participants rarely mention helping others in need when describing their motivations for participating in an IEL experience.

There is an inherent power imbalance in the structural design of IEL programming. In the past, IEL programs have claimed participants in the Global North to be able to change the lives of people in the Global South and situate participants in a position of power and privilege, where they assume the power to help "Others" in the Global South (Pluim & Jorgenson, 2012). Furthermore, this positions northern-based volunteers as experts able to decide what development is necessary in order to lift the "Other" out of poverty. This notion is disrupted for some, as Olivia argued that ISL programming with northern-based volunteers supporting development projects in the

Global South was not necessary because the local community can do it themselves. However, the reality of local NGOs focusing to meet unrealistic expectations of the northern-based volunteers inevitably shifted the focus away from projects aiming to address poverty alleviation (Younis, 2007), which is a critical component to development work. The IEL program examined in this study has made strides towards participants' acknowledging their privilege and problematizing the helping narrative. For example, Annalise acknowledged the founder of the organization spoke to the group of participants prior to trip to let them know they are not there to help or save anyone. According to Annalise, he explained that the local NGOs they are interning at existed before the participants' involvement and that they will still be there after the participants returned to Canada. Therefore, key aspects of this IEL program were to learn and take in information rather than try to "help" or "save" anyone. I contend that these shifts in perspective allow participants to have realistic expectations of their experience; however, not all IEL and ISL programs currently share the same messaging. Participants of this study indicate an acknowledgement they are not the white saviours, but I contend that not all Canadians share the same perspective. Canadian identity is examined in the next theme, unpacking how participants describe their IEL experiences from a Canadian perspective as a standard.

Chapter 6.

Theme Three: Canadian Identity

This theme emerged as participants described their experiences in Uganda in comparison to the Canadian lifestyle with which they were familiar. In other words, this theme, the Canadian comfort zone, will look at how the IEL experience is interpreted through a Canadian lens and will present data that compares participant's experiences in Uganda to the typical behaviours assumed in Canada.

6.1. Canadian comfort zone

In Annalise's post-trip interview, she exclaimed her desire to return to Uganda as soon as possible. She listed a few factors that made it challenging, such as being unsure what to do if she were to return. For example, she described the main hurdle was schooling:

> Schooling systems there aren't up to the same level as I would take for my education and like, based on what other people have said and stuff, so…it's not like I can just go back and study there and do my masters there really so it's all a lot of uncertainty which is exciting too but also stressful.

Annalise did not believe that the quality of education in Uganda was the same as in Canada, which presented an issue when considering a way to return to Uganda. She mentioned that this opinion is partly formed because of what other people have said. It is unclear who those people are and what their experience with the Ugandan education system may be.

Another example connected to Canadian identity is Annalise's discussion of the inefficient government practices in Uganda. She stated that prior to travelling to Uganda, it was challenging to imagine how inefficient the Ugandan government could be. She attributed that first-hand experience of seeing how corruption is a significant barrier to development was important to apply ideas learned in her education. Furthermore, she recalled other barriers to development such as; the hot weather, power outages, plumbing problems, and traffic. She explained that these issues were more apparent in Uganda, as it is assumed that these would not be areas of concern at a workplace in

Canada. This suggested a growth in perspective of the many barriers of development and how her IEL experienced has deepened her understanding of development work. Furthermore, she stated the Ugandan government was inefficient and corrupt, but that comment was made in comparison to her understanding of the Canadian government.

Each participant had a different perspective on how they defined the term privilege, such as having more options, being financially able to afford IEL trips, or having access to resources. Annalise stated, "privilege is exactly what I am," which is being born into a situation that gives you more options compared to others. She described that privilege means not having to worry about food security, having a roof over your head, and having people to rely on. In summary, Annalise equated privilege to having basic needs met and money. Another aspect of privilege that Annalise discussed is privilege in relation to tourism. She explained:

> There was one quote in a journal I was reading about tourism that said, "we as locals hate tourists because tourists are able to escape their own banality and boredom and turn our banality and boredom into a source of pleasure for themselves".

She then situated herself in this quote and expressed her experience learning about the impoverished conditions that people from other countries live in to be a privilege. Although Annalise acknowledged benefiting from others in unfortunate circumstances is a privilege, she considered it necessary. She stated that she believed that, "it's better to do it than not do it, maybe. I don't know". She concluded that privilege is being handed rights and freedoms that a majority of people do not get and taking that for granted.

Similarly, Meredith also equated privilege to money and opportunity. At first, Meredith struggled with defining the term in her pre-trip interview. She explained that privilege was a word commonly used, yet difficult to define. Eventually, she interpreted privilege in relation to her IEL experience, acknowledging her own privilege of being able to financially afford participation on an IEL trip. She reflected on her ability to travel to Uganda for a summer and then wondered what would happen once she returned to Canada. She acknowledged that she would continue with her undergraduate degree and the people living in Uganda would have to deal with the consequences of her decision to travel to Uganda. Therefore, she has contemplated if she will be doing more harm than good by going to Uganda. As a result, she admitted to reflecting on how to mitigate and avoid doing harm while in Uganda.

Extending on Annalise and Meredith's observations of privilege, Olivia described privilege as having resources and alluded to herself as being privileged. She stated:

> I would say that we're privileged here in a way that we are able to have access to certain resources and amenities that other people in the world don't have access to. So, in a way, that's what privilege would be. When you have access to certain resources and certain opportunities that other people might not.

The connection to Canadian identity is signalled as she described her understanding of privilege from a Canadian student lens. In the quote above, she stated "we" when speaking about privilege, positioning herself to be in a position of privilege. At another point in the pre-trip interview, the topic of culture shock arose in Olivia's interview. When asked to define culture shock in her own words, Olivia stated, "…stuff that you're not used to. Because we're very westernized here…we do things a certain way and then going abroad they obviously have their own culture, something that might be normal for them isn't normal for us." These two examples exemplify Olivia's position when using the terms "we" and "other people in the world". This is relevant because Olivia revealed her perspective on Canadian identity when using the term "we".

In her journal, Annalise indicated that privilege was something she considered often and was brought to her attention by others in Uganda. She stated that she was expected to be rich based on her skin tone, along with the other Westerners in Uganda. Annalise wrote:

> This expectation manifests itself in many ways in everyday life: people will be aggressive in trying to sell you things, and quote higher prices for goods and services than they would for someone who looks like a local, people are more likely to be interested in talking to you and 'helping' you with the expectation that they will be rewarded monetarily, there is more outward romantic attention than locals receive.

Annalise stated that as a result of this behaviour, she has become more aware of her societal positioning. She stated:

> Every day when I walk out of my home to catch a ride to work, I am conscious of the fact that more drivers will immediately be attracted to my business, be more likely to stop for me, call me 'madam', ask me how I am, than if I were black or appeared less wealthy.

This is one of the first instances that race is mentioned when discussing privilege. Annalise provided examples of circumstances that made her aware of the special

treatment she received because of assumed wealth. As a result, the concept of racial privilege has become one that Annalise is constantly made aware of. This continued to be a prevalent topic of discussion, as Meredith also discussed her awareness of her racial privilege in Uganda. According to Meredith:

> I was aware of my privilege of being a white woman from a middle-class family in Canada while I was living in Canada, but being here has reinforced the notion of privilege for me. At home, while I may be aware of my privilege, in my daily life it isn't a constant and ongoing consideration I have in everything I do. But here, privilege is exposed so bluntly, and the division between foreigners and locals is quite apparent. Foreigners, especially white foreigners are associated with wealth and money.

In essence, the racial divide between white foreigners and local Ugandans in Uganda is apparent in everyday life that is not in Canada. This indicates an awareness of the preferential treatment she benefits from. At another point in her journal, she stated her discomfort with how her whiteness had impacted her interactions with the local community. She described:

> Being a white, foreign female in Uganda is a weird experience, and I find myself having to determine the motivations behind people's interactions with me more often than I do while I'm in Canada. For example, while going out with friends to bars, we often attract a lot of attention, and more people will come up to us. But I've learned that often that attention is not out of genuine interest in getting to know us, but comes from an interest in being associated with white people.

This association with whiteness is related to Canadian identity, as Meredith compared her experiences going out in Uganda to her time in Canada paired with problematic motivations of locals who she had interacted with. Later in her post-trip interview, she admitted to initially feeling uncomfortable building relationships with the local community because she was nervous about being taken advantage of as a foreigner. She confessed that she was not as open with interacting with the community until later pushing herself to speak with her boda driver and asking more about his life and family.

Meredith shared a scenario in Uganda that echoed her sentiments about white privilege being apparent in Uganda. She stated that one of her friends had lost her phone and went to the police station to report the missing phone. She recalled three local people waiting in line, yet her friend (who Meredith described as white) was served first. She alluded to preferential treatment of white foreigners in Uganda and how that reinforced the power dynamic between the Global North and Global South.

In contrast, Meredith provided a different take on privilege in her journal. When asked what different aspects of culture she is experiencing while on trip, Meredith organized her thoughts into five distinct categories. The category most important to unpack is her description of sexism and harassment in Uganda. From her time in Uganda, she stated that she could never feel comfortable with the amount of catcalling and vulgar attention she received. Furthermore, she encountered a line of questioning from colleagues when travelling around Uganda, asking if her father gave her permission to travel. In Meredith's view:

> The patriarchal beliefs held by many is an upsetting and frustrating aspect of society in Uganda, because if you try to challenge I worry I come off as offensive and ignorant to the culture. But at the same time, I don't feel comfortable compromising my ethics to live here without confrontation.

This illuminated an aspect of the Uganda culture that Meredith is struggling with because of her beliefs and morals from her own Canadian identity.

Later in her journal when discussing her future career options in Canada, Meredith stated her admiration for co-workers who had chosen to return to Uganda after completing their education in order to support their local community (as discussed in Helping and Growing chapter). This subject continued when Meredith discussed the potential for her to complete her undergraduate degree and pursue a development career in Canada. In Meredith's view:

> While Canada is a great country and I love living there, how Indigenous people are treated by the Canadian government and by the settler population is incredibly frustrating and infuriating. Due to those feelings… I want to explore my interest in Canada and use next summer as an opportunity to understand options are available for me in Canada.

Meredith acknowledged the Canadian colonial history that affected Indigenous peoples and stated her disapproval of their treatment at the hands of the settler population. This indicates a struggle with her Canadian identity and reveals some of Meredith's knowledge of Canadian history.

In contrast, Meredith unpacked another aspect of privilege in her journal. She considered herself privileged by being able to afford this IEL experience and had the option to leave at any time. According to Meredith, "I've realized that my whole experience of being able to travel to Uganda and leave when I want is marked by

privilege." This conveys how she considers her Canadian identity as marked by her own privilege and options available to her because of her citizenship. She reiterated this argument later in her post-trip interview, stating that if she chose to leave early, she would lose a few thousand dollars and not get a credit, but she stated, "it's only a couple of thousand dollars". Later, she acknowledged that she benefitted from privilege by not having to worry about her safety because of her whiteness. She described her living in an expat neighbourhood and felt comfortable walking around at night. She compared the neighbourhood that she was living in to that of her colleagues' at her internship workplace who lived in different neighbourhoods and were assaulted.

Olivia was asked what privilege means to her now after her time in Uganda and initially stated that she did not know and that it was difficult to answer. Upon reflection, she stated that she felt privileged in Uganda and did not feel similarly in Canada. Olivia claimed that in Canada, everyone travels and own laptops, and does not feel privileged as a result. Meanwhile, in Uganda, she was asked by local interns how she could afford to come to Uganda and commented on how lucky she was to have had the opportunity.

6.2. Discussion

Throughout the data, various utterances unveil participants describing their experiences in Uganda from a Canadian perspective. From a postcolonial perspective, participants seemed unaware of how their Canadian identity was used as a standard when describing their trip experiences. For example, Annalise described the potential of moving back to Uganda but she was concerned about the quality of education in Uganda. She proves that her Canadian lens is measuring the quality of education when she alludes to the education in Uganda being less reputable than in Canada.

Additionally, Annalise described Uganda's inefficient government practices in relation to Canada. She stated that prior to travelling to Uganda, it was difficult to understand what caused an inefficient government. In Uganda, she experienced factors that slowed down seemingly simple processes she had not previously considered, such as weather conditions, power outages, and traffic. Her first-hand development work experience provided a deeper understanding of the field and addressed the educational impacts of IEL programming by connecting theories to lived experiences. I interpret Annalise's statement with a CWS lens as she describes living and working in Canada as

a privilege. Furthermore, she compares her experiences in Uganda to be less efficient than Canada. This reveals the Canadian perspective that Annalise is interpreting the scenario and how that differs from local Ugandans.

All three participants were asked in their pre-trip interviews what privilege meant to them. Two acknowledged their own privilege while one seemingly distanced herself from a position of privilege. When asked what privilege means to her, Annalise immediately responded, "privilege is exactly what I am." She explained privilege as having more opportunities and options compared to others. Later, she explained that privilege is also connected to financial security and IEL programming. Although Annalise acknowledged learning from people in impoverished conditions is a privilege, she still considered it essential. I use a CWS perspective to interpret this response. Although Annalise acknowledges her privilege, her definition of privilege fails to mention race or acknowledge her whiteness. Similarly, Meredith interpreted privilege to be the accessibility of IEL programs. She stated her position of privilege by being able to afford IEL program costs and not having to deal with the consequences of her time in Uganda once back in Canada. She reflected that once her time in Uganda was complete, she would return to Canada without having to consider the impact of her work during the internship or the impacts on the local community. Once again, the participant acknowledges privilege but her definition does not include white privilege.

Meredith's explanation complemented Annalise's when she stated her concern for doing more harm than good by travelling to Uganda. This is a similar thought to Annalise; however, Annalise argued that it is still important to participate in such programs that require international travel and volunteering. Olivia interpreted the meaning of privilege similarly to the other two participants by stating privilege is defined by having access to resources and amenities that others do not. This is related to Annalise's definition of privilege by describing accessibility to opportunities that others do not have. To revisit a previous quote, Olivia stated:

> I would say that we're privileged here in a way that we are able to have access to certain resources and amenities that other people in the world don't have access to. So in a way, that's kind of like what privilege would be. When you have access to certain resources and certain opportunities that other people might not.

Olivia used the term "we" when referring to privilege, implicitly addressing her own privilege without naming it directly. If she is suggesting "we" as all Canadians, it

becomes problematic because not all Canadians hold the same worldview or benefit from the same privileges as Olivia. This illustrates a disruption of Canada's national identity as a "helping nation". Adopting a similar argument, Drolet (2014) argues students participating in IEL must reflect on their social location and understand how their education in Canada is rooted in Western ideologies that affect their values and perspectives. As a result, I contend this argument relates to Olivia's usage of "we" when referring to all Canadians, as she does not acknowledge her perspective comes from a Western ideology and therefore, affects her lens. In contrast, Meredith addressed this issue in her post-trip interview when discussing the power dynamics existing with the Indigenous population and the settler population in Canada, while describing conflicting feelings with pursuing a career in Canada because of the colonial history and mistreatment of Indigenous people. Additionally, Olivia positioned herself to be in a position of power but does not describe who she is referring to when stating "other people". I interpret "other people" to relate to social constructs of the "Other". Heron (2007) reports that "Othering" can occur with culture shock, as material conditions that participants encounter on trip may be considered vastly different from their lives in Canada, therefore positioning the host communities as "Other" through "undifferentiated foreignness" (p. 59). Olivia exemplified this "Othering" by distancing her own material wealth from the others who do not share the same privilege.

There are various ways to interpret how participants defined "privilege". Prior to travelling to Uganda, there was no indication that race was a part of participant's definitions. There is evidence that signals a change in perspective in later phases (i.e. journals and post-trip interview) of the study. From the baseline knowledge of privilege in the pre-trip interviews focusing on financial stability and material wealth, there is a shift to focus on race while in Uganda. In journals, Annalise described an increase of attention because of her skin tone and therefore, her own racial identity. She explained that this heightened awareness of her race meant that people were aggressive with selling things and quoted her higher prices for goods and that she received help from locals with the expectation of monetary compensation for that assistance. She stated her awareness of her societal positioning while in Uganda and how whiteness came with assumptions about wealth. Meredith echoed this response, stating that she was aware of privilege when in Canada, but notions of privilege were reinforced while in Uganda. She stated that privilege was exposed very bluntly in her time in Uganda, making the

division between foreigners and locals very clear. Both Annalise's and Meredith's descriptions of their whiteness during their experience underscore how race intersects with class. This illustrates the effects of privilege when wealth is assumed because of whiteness. This confirms Pluim & Jorgenson's (2012) argument that whiteness and wealth creates a "white saviour" dynamic. I revisit Crenshaw's (1991) definition of intersectionality to consider how participants hold positions in multiple groups, holding privilege with whiteness and class but may experience oppression as a female.

Meredith addressed the gender dynamics in Uganda by explaining experiencing a patriarchal society that she was unfamiliar with and was a point of contention during her IEL experience. Meredith argued these behaviours to be sexist but admitted her apprehension in challenging this behaviour for fear of offending or appearing to be culturally ignorant. I interpret this scenario to address intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1991), as there are various perspectives that one individual can hold. For example, Meredith admitted her privilege as a white person, but explained the discrimination she experienced in Uganda because of being a woman. This illustrates participants who may experience privilege in some respects, can still experience disadvantages through another lens.

Despite Meredith stating her awareness of her privilege coming from a white middle-class family in Canada prior to her experience, she did not disclose that information until completing her journal. Meredith admitted that in Canada she may have been aware of privilege, but it was not a constant consideration in everyday life for her. This shift in understanding of privilege that is more comprehensive and holistic elucidates the potential of transformative impacts on IEL programs. Pluim & Jorgenson (2012) argue that a major advantage of IEL trips compared to other methods of learning is the lifelong, in-depth, and transformational learning benefits gained during trip. They argue that this is one of the most powerful methods of learning as it has the potential to expose complicated issues that are challenging to discuss and learn in a regular classroom setting (Pluim & Jorgenson, 2012). One of these challenges could be recognizing racial privilege and how one benefits from this privilege and could therefore, negatively impact others. For example, having an internship at a local NGO that could have given that experience to a local student in Uganda rather than a northern-based volunteer. Furthermore, other examples include receiving better treatment because of whiteness, which is defined and analyzed below.

Annalise and Meredith referred to receiving preferential treatment during their time in Uganda. Through various scenarios described by participants, prevalent indicators of whiteness are explored. For example, Meredith described special treatment in a police station and being served first despite a line-up of locals ahead of them unveiled the preferential treatment that Heron (2007) refers to. Meredith noted the power dynamics existing in that interaction and evidence of catering towards white foreigners, but she did not explicitly problematize that treatment. Furthermore, she did not divulge if they had accepted that preferential treatment or not, therefore benefitting from racial privilege. From this police station example, power dynamics may have been acknowledged, but the colonial history that associated whiteness for wealth was not mentioned. This scenario serves as an example that unveils dismissal of a colonial history that continues to reinforce everyday iterations of Northern superior and Southern inferior binary.

Overall, through centering the perspective of the participants of an IEL experience, the Canadian lens permeated through their description of Uganda and Ugandan people. According to Epprecht (2004), historical work-study programs were foundational to forming Canada's identity on a global platform as NGOs formed with a moral imperative to "help the poor". Furthermore, Pluim & Jorgenson (2012) argue the unequal benefits amongst parties cause an inevitable "Othering" of the host community, resulting in a superior/inferior power dynamic between host communities and northern volunteers. Meredith acknowledging the mistreatment of Indigenous populations in Canada caused by the Canadian government indicates a disruption of the misconception of Canada as a helping nation. It is further complicated by adding another dimension to the identity of Canada as a helping nation that has a history of oppression. Later, Meredith stated her desire to learn more about development projects focusing on marginalized communities within Canada. This signals a disruption of Canadian identity blurring the lines between labels of which countries should be considered "developed" and "developing".

Chapter 7.

Conclusion

An in-depth description and discussion of participants' experiences suggest the impacts of IEL programs vary depending on individual lived experiences and perspectives. Several key findings and overall trends from all three themes summarize the prevalence of racial privilege in IEL programs. I will then outline the implications from the findings of this study and will conclude with suggestions for areas of further research.

7.1. Key Findings

In the first theme, Imaginary Africa, participants indicated a struggle with their evolving perception of Africa during their time in Uganda. For example, when Olivia stated her realization that the people of Uganda do not need help from the Global North, this illustrated a change in perspective on meaningful development work. In contrast, Meredith explained an experience with a Ugandan driver that insisted Uganda needs saving at the hands of the Global North, which helped her realize how one perspective is not representative of an entire group of people. Both examples suggest a disruption from previously held perspectives of Uganda and Ugandan people. Similarly, both Meredith and Annalise referenced the misrepresentation of Africa. Disrupting the notion that everyone in Africa knows how to shoot a gun or has HIV, Annalise argued that the people of Uganda are friendly and welcoming. Thus, a key finding from the research illustrates a level of disruption in perspectives that participants may experience from participating in an IEL experience. However, the level of disruption is dependent on a participant's awareness of their societal position and openness to disrupt their own perspective.

Another key finding is the sense of mastering place that has been pervasive when participants describe the local people in Uganda. For example, when Olivia described Ugandans as calm and relaxed people that do not stress and do not care, there were assumptions being made about a group of people that Olivia is not part of. Olivia did not explain how she came to know this about Ugandans, but I interpret her statement to illustrate the risk of participating in an IEL experience. If students are

travelling to the Global South short-term without adequate education on the local people and culture and awareness of their societal positioning, there is a heightened risk of students returning to their home country feeling like experts of a marginalized group. Olivia's statement describing Ugandans as a collective group who do not stress or worry about things demonstrated this sense of mastering place (Macdonald, 2014). There is an additional concern when a member of a dominant group feels comfortable to speak on behalf of a marginalized group. This impacted my interpretation of this statement because Olivia is not Ugandan and has only spent three months there. In another example, Annalise described Ugandans as friendly and welcoming. There is an element of exoticizing the "Other" (Larsen, 2016) that occurs when Annalise glorifies all Uganda people to adopt the same appealing characteristics. This differs from Olivia's statement because although Annalise has spent a similar amount of time in Uganda, I interpret her response to be disruptive of the negative stereotypes of Africa that she has previously mentioned (i.e. how others have commented on gun violence and disease in Uganda).

During post-trip interviews, I was curious to learn more about how participants would continue their relationship with Uganda upon returning to Canada. This was important to discuss because this speaks to the level of commitment to learning more about the community in Uganda and how racial privilege factors into this relationship. This also illuminates the pervasive concept of the one-directional flow of benefits inherent in the IEL experience (Tiessen, 2012; Heron, 2011). As one participant described her commitment to returning to Uganda as soon as she can, she also continued her relationship by continuing to support the local NGO she interned at. Another participant referred to the valuable work that her NGO has done and continued to email her coworkers and manager about the projects she was involved with. However, she stated that it is unlikely this communication will last forever. The final participant stated that if her coworkers were to visit Canada, then it would be no problem. She also mentioned that she had the phone numbers of her colleagues, but with the time difference, it was challenging to communicate. All three participants held various perspectives on how a continued relationship would occur with the local people in Uganda. This highlights their varying levels of personal connection to the country. Furthermore, each participant's response reflects their commitment to the development work that they experienced in Uganda, and their interest in disrupting their own

perspectives to move away from the Canadian comfort zone outlined in the third theme, Canadian Identity.

A key finding from the Helping and Growing chapter is the main motivation for participation in an IEL experience. Throughout the participants' responses, there is evidence of growth for individuals and potential for transformative impacts to occur, and yet this growth is focused on self. This confirms the various scholars that have argued motivations for travel is rooted in self-growth (Tiessen & Huish, 2014; Travers, 2014; Heron, 2011; Cameron, 2014). While participants described their motivation for participation as gaining work experience, testing career options, learning about other cultures and disrupting previously held stereotypes of people in Africa, the focus is on how the IEL program will benefit the individual. Furthermore, when participants were asked about the impact of IEL programming, there was an overwhelming response connected to growth in their own perspective rather than to the impact that the internship had made on the country. Although the founder of the organization had spoken to participants prior to trip to disrupt expectations of helping or saving people in Uganda, it appears in this study that the power dynamic still exists, and the focus of participants is mostly on the positive benefits accruing to themselves.

Similarly, another major concept explored in the second theme is the one-directional flow of benefits inherent in IEL programming. There is evidence of harmful impacts of the structural design of the program because it is focused on the needs of the participant rather than poverty alleviation. This provoked my reflection on the original intention of IEL programming, and whether that has been lost over time. IEL programming has historically been related to the international development field as a strategy to "help the poor" and advocate for social justice (Epprecht, 2004). As such, I wonder how the current structure works towards addressing poverty alleviation. The absence of poverty alleviation objectives creates a hindrance for participants and the host country alike to address power dynamics and systemic oppression between the Global South and North.

An important finding that emerged in the Canadian Identity chapter involved participants conceptualizing privilege from their worldview. As the first theme signified a disruption in perceptions of Africa, a level of disruption continued when participants defined privilege before and after their IEL trip. In pre-trip interviews, participants

equated privilege to money, opportunities and resources. Later in journals and post-trip interviews, their perceptions of privilege had deepened to include racial privilege. Furthermore, some participants acknowledged their own privilege of being white individuals travelling to the Global South. I interpret this to be an extension of Pluim & Jorgenson's (2012) argument that IEL programs have the potential to have lifelong transformational learning benefits. As stated by Pluim & Jorgenson (2012), this cross-cultural experience, "exposes students to different ways of thinking and being in the world and fosters their abilities to better understand international issues, to think through multiple perspectives and to build relationships with people from different backgrounds" (p. 27). This illustrates that the IEL experience expands participants' understanding of privilege and highlights the potential for transformative impacts to occur because of their participation.

Throughout all three phases of data collection, participants use varying terms to describe white people. It is important to note the hesitancy participants had with using the term "white" to describe themselves during pre-trip interviews. Terms being used included; expat, foreigner, or stating 'my skin tone' to refer to white identity. I argue one reason for the use of these alternative terms being used is discomfort associated with the participants labelling themselves in a position of power. The negative connotation surrounding whiteness and the white saviour complex in an IEL program would cause participants to refrain from wanting to be associated as part of settler society. Interestingly, various participants described situations where they indirectly benefitted from white privilege, such as Meredith receiving preferential treatment at a police station while in Uganda. A key component to racial privilege is the elusive nature of its existence. With participants hesitant to name their whiteness, I contend that this is due to their lack of awareness of privilege and therefore, leads to a denial of how they benefit from racial privilege. Robin DiAngelo (2011) coined the term *white fragility* to describe how directly addressing racism and the privilege of whites can prompt a wide range of defensive moves. These reactions can include anger, withdrawal, argumentation, or cognitive dissonance (DiAngelo, 2016). In this scenario, participants avoided stating their whiteness to avoid admitting their privilege. Despite some participants considering how they benefitted from racial privilege during this trip experience, they still accepted the preferential treatment, which pays tribute to the cognitive dissonance that DiAngelo (2011; 2016) refers to.

Overall, both positive and negative impacts of IEL programming are evident in the data. From evaluating the current impact of IEL programs, it is important to understand and learn from the negative impacts in order for participants to shift away from problematic behaviour on trip. According to the data, a major positive impact of IEL program is participants learning more about themselves and their identity to provide participants with the opportunity to identify their own privilege. However, the risk of mastering place of the host country can have adverse effects on an individual. Furthermore, the positive influence of IEL programs is centered on self, rather than working toward poverty alleviation or genuine global citizenship. In this IEL program, individuals were briefed to learn about concepts of the white saviour complex prior to trip, but it remains unknown if concepts of mastering place or white privilege were discussed prior to trip. This program has made efforts to manage the expectations of participants, as shown by participants claiming a desire not to "save" people in Uganda during pre-trip interviews. Nevertheless, I argue there are still areas of improvement for programming.

7.2. Implications of Findings

This study illustrated how we might better understand racial privilege dynamics connected to IEL programs. Beyond the scope of this one group of participants, there are a few implications that would be useful when designing IEL programs. I offer the following implications of the findings: racial privilege needing to be addressed in greater detail prior to trip and programs incorporating discussions of people's experience during trip and providing support once returned to Canada.

IEL programs could foster and encourage understanding of what privileges they hold over the communities in the Global South if they encourage participants to reflect on their social location and motivations for participation before their trip experience. That way, participants have a solid understanding of privilege prior to trip and reduce behaviours that are harmful to the host country. Managing these expectations of participants could avoid behaviours characterized as the white saviour trope, and minimize risk of mastering place. Furthermore, as this study focuses on racial dynamics between participants and the local Ugandan community, it is important for participants to consider how they may experience privilege in some aspects, but experience disadvantages in others. For example, Meredith described her frustrations with

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harassment and her disdain for the patriarchal society she experienced in Uganda. This was an opportunity for Meredith to unpack privilege through a gender lens and how that may influence her perspective.

Reflecting on personal motivations for participating in an IEL trip experience will provide awareness of the power dynamics between the Global North and South and eventually understand how to minimize these harmful behaviours once participants return to Canada. Challenging participants to consider their motivations to travel paired with a stronger sense of racial privilege will hopefully minimize the likelihood for participants to adopt a saviour mentality over the host community. From her trip experience, Olivia argued that Uganda was not in need of saving from the Global North because they are capable of helping themselves. This illustrates a disruption of the white saviour trope that could be adapted to aspects of IEL programming. Having particiapants reflect on their personal motivations for travel would hopefully minimize aspects of mastering place that is shown to naturally occur during the trip experience.

Another key implication to consider is the value in discussing participant experiences during and after their trip. The great detail and thoughtful responses in the participants' journals exemplify critical analysis of their personal experiences. As participants connect theories learned in classrooms to lived experiences, I consider how this could be adapted into the design of programs to foster stronger educational impacts. If IEL programs integrate journals or discussions to encourage participants to critically reflect on their surroundings and experiences, this could provide students with the opportunity to connect their education to their trip experiences. Furthermore, if discussions amongst participants are facilitated during trip, these group discussions could increase the likelihood of positive educational impacts for all participants rather than a few.

If IEL programs implement strategies to unpack key aspects of privilege and connected the topic throughout the trip experiences, this could minimize the likelihood of attitudes of the white saviour trope or mastering place to reproduce. Furthermore, if participants were to reflect on how their individual behaviours may negatively affect the local community, this could build a stronger connection with the Global South that disrupts the superior/inferior binary typically assumed between the Global North/South.

7.3. Contributions of the Study

Drawing on an equity framework, this study contributes knowledge about how racial privilege defines the experiences of students in a Canadian IEL program, and how that privilege can and should be disrupted. My findings have implications for theory, practice, and research within the field of international education. By centering and interrogating the perspectives of white, middle class female participants, I provide evidence of how racial privilege works and how it informs the IEL trip experience. Participant interviews suggest that IEL programs reproduce familiar forms of racial privilege, such as the white saviour trope and the imperative to master place that, from a social justice perspective, need to be challenged. Specifically, this work has implications for IEL programming, especially the adoption of pedagogical strategies that foreground racial privilege. These educative tactics include:

1. Pre-trip education about the history of colonialism within the particular country a student will visit, how these colonial relationships continue into the present, and how students benefit from these histories of domination

2. The use of critical reflection journals that guide students to consider their own racial privilege during the trip

3. Post-trip interviewing strategies and supports that attend to racial privilege and that follow up on students' long term learning from the program.

This research contributes to the growing body of literature on intersectionality and privilege in IEL programs and international volunteer trips in general in its calls for critical awareness of and a critical pedagogy for disrupting how racial privilege organizes the programming for and experiences of participants.

7.4. Areas for Further Research

Upon reflection on this study, several areas require further investigation. A few topics explored below are pre-trip preparation, post-trip support and long-term impacts of IEL programming. I conclude that more research is required to adequately measure the impact of trips on participants and how racial privilege factors into the design of IEL programs. Firstly, it is important to evaluate the level of support pre and post trip. An area of further research is in measuring participants' initial baseline knowledge of

international development, of power dynamics between the Global North and South, and of racial privilege. All three participants had varying levels of knowledge of international development prior to the trip. As such, I argue that the educational impacts of the program vary depending on each participant's willingness to expand their learning on previously held concepts of power dynamics and racial privilege. In essence, the following question needs to be addressed: what is their starting point prior to trip and what level of disruption is the participant open to? Evaluating the value of individuals reflecting on societal positioning and their own privilege prior to their trip provides a baseline measurement for participants of an IEL trip. As evidenced in the data, reflection takes place upon returning from the IEL trip. Annalise's struggle to reintegrate upon returning to Canada proves that there is a need to support participants' process and reflect on their trip experiences. Additionally, both Annalise and Meredith described some experiences as "jarring" to see. An area of further research could be to evaluate the quality of post-trip support in IEL programs in regards to the reintegration to a "Canadian" lifestyle.

As the post-trip interviews were conducted a few weeks after returning from Uganda, I am curious to learn more about the significance of this IEL program on participants long-term. Did Annalise return to Uganda? Did Meredith continue her career path in development organizations in Canada? Acknowledging the time of post-trip interviews was shortly after an IEL experience, the trip was top of mind for participants, making interviews full of vivid experiences and lessons learnt from the trip. However, if IEL programming lacks adequate post-trip support upon returning to Canada, these transformational impacts may be short-lived and dissipate over time. This is reiterated when Annalise claimed that she considered East Africa to be her home and she missed the perspective it gave her and feared that perspective would slip away. If post-trip interviews were conducted a year or two later, would the memories still be as vivid? Would the lessons learned continue to have an impact on their everyday lives in Canada? Most importantly, further research is needed on providing quality programming for participants to continue disrupting their worldview beyond the IEL trip experience.

I conclude my study with a few final reflections. As someone that has participated in IEL programming in various roles, this research inquiry was five years in the making. I wonder how the impact of this research could have changed my IEL experience back in 2012 or improved my facilitation skills as an in-country facilitator in 2014. Moving

forward, as I present this thesis that examines racial privilege in IEL programs, I wonder how else this framework could be adapted to other aspects of international development education. Therefore, my academic pursuit to challenge racial privilege is only beginning.

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Appendix A.

Interview Guides

Pre-Trip Interview Guide

1. Please state your name, age, and program/school you are currently attending.

2. What do you know about the host country/community? What research have you done so far?

3. What can you tell me about International Development? How does that relate to your program experience?

4. What are your expectations of this trip?

5. What are your personal goals for this trip?

6. What are you most excited about experiencing while on trip? What are you nervous about?

7. Anything else you would like to say or mention?

Post-Trip Interview Guide

1. How did your trip go?

2. What part of the trip was most memorable and why? **Can probe here- what happened when you landed? What was the airport like? Where did you stay? What food did you have?

3. How did you build relationships with the community? ** Who did you meet? Who were they? Who is the person you got to know the most?

4. Paint a picture for me. Where did you stay? Are you used to travelling a lot? How did that impact you?

5. How do you foresee this relationship continuing?

6. What did you learn about/from your host community? (Follow up from earlier questions)

7. What did you learn about these kinds of relationships or initiatives in your coursework or in your schooling (current/past)?

8. Now that you have gone on this trip, what does privilege mean to you? (Follow up from first interview)

9. What have you learned about international development from your school experiences (high school, undergrad, informal learning) Now that you have gone on your trip, can you add to anything that you have learned?

10. Now that you have returned from your trip, what are you still wondering?

11. Did your trip meet your expectations? Why or why not?

Journal Guided Questions

1. What questions do you have about the development in Uganda?

2. Reflecting on your expectations of the program, is the program meeting your expectations? Why or why not?

3. How is your relationship with the local community going?

4. How is your experience being away from Canada? How would you describe this experience to others back in Canada?

5. What aspects of a different culture are you experiencing? How are they different?

6. How is this experience changing you? How has this program affected your perspective?

7. How do you plan on continuing a relationship with Uganda once you have returned to Canada?

8. Would you consider yourself to be a global citizen? How so?

9. How did this program inform your understanding of International Development?

10. How does the word "privilege" relate to your experience?

Appendix B.

Sample Consent Form

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

**Challenging Racial Privilege in International Experiential Learning Programs
with Canadian University Students**

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

Research Project Title: Challenging Racial Privilege in International Experiential
Learning Programs with Canadian University Students

Principal Investigator: Victoria Lam, Faculty of Education, Simon Fraser University
(SFU).

Faculty Supervisors:

Dr. Kumari Beck, Associate Professor, Faculty of Education, SFU.

Dr. Elizabeth Marshall, Associate Professor, Faculty of Education, SFU.

Invitation and Study Purpose

The purpose of this study is to learn more about the impacts of International Experiential
Learning (IEL) programs on Canadian university students. This study will help us
understand the motivations that students have for participating in an international
volunteering experience and how that influences their opinions of international
development. You are being invited to take part in this research study because you are
19 years of age or older and participating in an IEL program.

I plan to investigate the following research questions:

How do IEL programs inform the participants' perspective of international development
issues?

How do participants perceive the impact of IEL programs?

Your Participation is Voluntary

Your participation is voluntary. You have the right to refuse to participate in this study. If
you decide to participate, you may still choose to withdraw from the study at any time

without any negative consequences to the education, employment, or other services to which you are entitled or are presently receiving.

Study Procedures

As a participant of this study, you will be asked to participate in two interviews and maintain a journal (either physical journal or online file) while on trip. You will be interviewed once prior to trip (pre-trip interview) and once more after returning from your trip (post-trip interview). Each interview will be limited to no more than one hour and will be audio recorded for transcription purposes. If you live outside of Greater Vancouver, I will arrange a Skype meeting at a time convenient for you. You will also be asked to keep a journal and answer 10 set questions at any time during the trip. The journaling process varies depending on your preference, but it is estimated that the time commitment is no more than 3-5 hours. The total time commitment for this study with interviews and journaling is estimated to be approx. 5-7 hours.

If you live outside of Greater Vancouver, I will provide you with an electronic copy of the consent form. I will review the consent form in detail and answer any questions that you may have over Skype. If you decide to be part of the study, you will be asked to print and sign the consent form, and then scan and return the signed form back to me electronically. Video-conferencing may not be a confidential medium of communication, unless a Skype-to-Skype connection is established.

After you have signed the consent form, the investigator will ask you for some general information (i.e. your understanding of international development issues, experience with International Experiential Learning programs, etc.). The interview will cover topics related to international experiential learning including your expectations of the trip, what you hope to learn, knowledge of the placement, people, and international development.

A trip journal will be provided to you (either physical journal or online file, depending on your preference) and journal expectations will be reviewed. The journal will have 10 questions that are meant to prompt reflection of your trip experience. You are asked to reflect on the 10 questions and fill them in at some point during your trip experience. Photos and/or drawings about your trip experience are encouraged in these journals. These photos will be utilized to discuss your IEL trip experiences and will not be used in the thesis in order to maintain confidentiality. Journals will be mailed back to you once this study has been completed, at your request.

The second interview will be conducted a few weeks after you have returned from your trip and the investigator will debrief your trip experiences and collect the journal once the interview is complete. The second interview will follow up with your initial responses in the first interview and ask questions about your understanding of international development issues and IEL experience.

Photography, Video/Audio Recording

All interviews will be audio recorded using a laptop microphone or iPad and files will be stored on a secure SFU server (as described at https://www.sfu.ca/itservices/collaboration/sfu-vault.html). The audio files will be transcribed by myself on a laptop. When not in use, the audio files and transcriptions will be saved on a password-protected, encrypted hard drive in a locked filing cabinet, at SFU. The online journals will be saved on the same encrypted hard drive and the physical journals and laptop will be kept in the same locked filing cabinet when not in use. The only files with identifiable participant information will be the informed consent forms. Consent documents will be secured in the locked filing cabinet at SFU. Pseudonyms will be used for all other study data. Only my supervisors and I will have access to the data collected.

The audio recordings will be permanently deleted soon after transcription is completed. All physical documents and data related to this study will be kept for five years after thesis completion under SFU safeguard (tentatively March 1, 2023). After this period, information will be permanently eliminated.

Compensation for Study

There is no compensation for participating in this study.

Potential Risks of the Study

Risks associated with participation of this study are minimal. You may experience emotional moments as you discuss your experiences. However, the risks of harm are unlikely to be higher than those encountered in everyday life. Some of the questions the investigator might ask may seem sensitive or personal. To minimize risks, you may refuse to respond to any question and can withdraw from the study at any time.

Potential Benefits of the Study

You may benefit from this study by gaining an awareness of IEL, international travel, and international development issues. It is possible that you may become more knowledgeable about these issues as a result of your participation in the study.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality will be strictly protected at all times. Participant identity will not be released without your consent unless required by law. Pseudonyms will be used, and participants will not be identified by name in any reports of the completed study. All data

reports and audio tapes will be kept on an encrypted and password protected computer disk or in a locked file cabinet at SFU. Only the principal investigator and faculty supervisors will have access to the data. Audiotaped material will not be used in any presentations without your written permission.

Withdrawal

If you decide to withdraw at any time, all data collected about you during your enrolment in the study will be destroyed. Refusal to participate or withdraw after agreeing to participate will not have any adverse effect or consequences on the participants, their employment, education, or services.

Study Results

The results of this study will be reported to a masters thesis committee and may also be published in journal articles and/or books. The findings may be presented at academic conferences and/or events. If you would like a copy of the study results, please contact Victoria Lam or verbally during interviews. Results can be shared via e-mail.

Contact for Information About the Study

If you have any questions or would like more information about this study, you may contact Victoria Lam.

Contact for Concerns

If you have any concerns about any aspects of this research, please feel free to contact:

Dr. Kumari Beck, Associate Professor, Faculty of Education

and/or

Dr. Elizabeth Marshall, Associate Professor, Faculty of Education

and/or

Dr. Jeffrey Toward, Director, Office of Research Ethics

Participant consent and signature

You have the right to refuse to participate in this study. If you decide to participate, you may choose to leave the study at any time without giving a reason.

Your signature indicates that you consent to participate in this study, and that you have received a copy of this consent form for your own records.

_____

Participant Signature   Date (yyyy/mm/dd)

_____

Printed name of the participant signing above

Please check one box below:

☐ I consent to be audiotaped for the purposes of this study.

☐ I do not consent to be audiotaped for the purposes of this study.

_____

Your name (Please print)

_____

Your Signature   Date (yyyy/mm/dd)

Please check one box below:

☐ I consent to be re-contacted for a follow up interview or if my interview is required for use in a future study.

☐ I do not consent to be re-contacted if my interview is required for use in a future study.

_____

Your name (Please print)

_____

Your Signature   Date (yyyy/mm/dd)